COURSE GUIDE

POL 831
THEORY AND METHODOLOGY OF COMPARATIVE POLITICS

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is a Masters' Degree course designed to give students an in-depth understanding of the Theory and Methodology of Comparative Politics.

This material is intended to be an accessible text on the Theory and Methodology of Comparative Politics. It is specifically designed with immediate focus on Comparative Politics. The course consciously interrogates the leading theories and methods of comparative politics.

The study of comparative politics is conducted under a wide range of theoretical frameworks. Some of the theories emerge from within the discipline of political science, while others were imported, either in whole or in part, from other disciplines within the social sciences.

Theories such as: structural-functionalism, modernization, political economy, and the political system were examined. Other components of the course include political development, comparative political history, a survey of theories explaining the processes of democratization and democratic stability.

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INTRODUCTION

Comparative politics is, on one hand, one of the subfields in political science that is concerned with the appraisal of domestic politics across nations. On the other hand, it is a method of study in political science.

As a method of study, it is based on the empirical approach called the comparative method. Together, comparative politics is the study of the domestic politics, political institutions, and conflicts of countries. It often takes the form of comparisons among countries and through time within single country, with the ultimate aim of revealing patterns of similarity and difference. Some political theorists have argued that comparative politics does not have a functional focus in itself, instead a methodological one (Lijphart, Arend, 1971). In this course, you shall be exposed to a range of theories and methods of comparative politics.

Specifically, the course content covers theories such as structural-functionalism, modernization, political economy, and the political system. Other components of the course include, comparative methods, political development, comparative political history, a survey of theories explaining the processes of democratization and democratic stability.

Course Aims and Objectives

Broadly, this course is designed to provide a critical analysis of the major theories and methods of comparative politics.

The specific objectives of the course are to:

a) Educate and expose learners to the various theories of comparative politics.
b) Draw the attention of learners to the methodological focus of comparative politics.
c) Introduce learners to the goal of systematic comparison, such as the development of typology, induction of concept, classifications, hypothesis testing, and prediction.

WORKING THROUGH THE COURSE

To complete the course, you are required to read the study units and other related materials. You will also need to undertake practical exercises for which you need a pen, a note-book, and other materials that will be listed in this guide. The exercises are to aid you in understanding the theories and methods being taught. At the end of each unit, you will be required to submit written assignment for assessment purposes.

THE COURSE MATERIAL

In all of the courses, you will find the major components thus:

1) Course Guide
2) Study Units
3) Textbooks
4) Assignments

STUDY UNITS

There are 20 study units in this course. They are:

Module 1 The Subject Matter of Comparative Politics

Unit 1 Definition of Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method
Unit 2 Origin and Historical Development of Comparative Politics
Unit 3 Major Approaches to the Study of Comparative Politics
Unit 4 The Importance Comparative Politics to Political Analysis
Unit 5 Issues and Limitations in Comparative Political Analysis

Module 2 Theories of Comparative Politics

Unit 1 Structural-functionalism and Comparative Politics
Unit 2 Modernization Theory and Comparative Politics
Unit 3 The System Theory and Comparative Politics
Unit 4 Political Economy and Comparative Politics
Unit 5 Theories of Dependency and Comparative Politics

Module 3 Methods and Strategies of Comparison

Unit 1 Comparative Methods in Comparative Politics
Unit 2 Strategy of Comparative Politics – Comparing Many Countries
Unit 3 Strategy of Comparative Politics – Comparing Few Countries
Unit 4 Strategy of Comparative Politics – Single Country Studies (Case Studies)
Unit 5 New Challenges for Comparative Politics

Module 4 Comparative Analysis of Obasanjo and Buhari foreign policy, comparative party system, comparative perspectives on state, Democracy and Government

As you can observe, the course begins with the basics and expands into a more elaborate, complex and detailed form. All you need to do is to follow the instructions as provided in each unit. In addition, some self-assessment exercises have been provided with which you can test your progress with the text and determine if your study is fulfilling the stated objectives.

TEXTBOOKS AND REFERENCES

At the end of each unit, you will find a list of relevant reference materials which you may wish to consult as the need arises. This course material has being design to provide you with the most important information you need to pass this course. However, I would encourage you, as a postgraduate student to cultivate the habit of consulting as many relevant materials as you are able to lay your hands within the time available to you. In particular, be sure to consult whatever material you are advised to consult before attempting any exercise.

COURSE OVERVIEW PRESENTATION SCHEME

There are 20 units in this course. You are to spend one week on each unit. One of the advantages of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) is that you can read and work through the designed course materials at your own pace, and at your own convenience. The course material replaces the lecturer that stands before you physically in the classroom.
All the units have similar features. Each unit begins with the introduction and ends with reference/suggestions for further readings.

Units	**Title of Work**	**Week Activity**	**Assignment (End-of-Unit)**
Course Guide			
MODULE 1	**THE SUBJECT MATTER OF COMPARATIVE POLITICS**		
Unit 1	Definition of Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method		
Unit 2	Origin and Historical Development of Comparative Politics		
Unit 3	Major Approaches to the Study of Comparative Politics.		
Unit 4	The Importance of Comparative Politics to Political Analysis		
Unit 5	Issues and Limitations in Comparative Political Analysis		
MODULE 2	**THEORIES OF COMPARATIVE POLITICS**		
Unit 1	Structural-functionalism and Comparative Politics		
Unit 2	Modernization Theory and Comparative Politics		
Unit 3	The System Theory and Comparative Politics		
Unit 4	Political Economy and Comparative Politics		
Unit 5	Theories of Dependency and Comparative Politics		
MODULE 3	**METHODS AND STRATEGIES OF COMPARISON**		
Unit 1	Comparative Methods in Comparative Politics		
Unit 2	Strategy of Comparative Politics – Comparing Many Countries		
Unit 3	Strategy of Comparative Politics – Comparing Few Countries		
Unit 4	Strategy of Comparative Politics – Single Country Studies (Case Studies)		

Unit 5	New Challenges for Comparative Politics		
MODULE 4	**MODULE 4: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF OBASANJO AND BUHARI FOREIGN POLICY, COMPARATIVE PARTY SYSTEM, COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES ON STATE, DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNMENT**		
Unit 1	Comparative Analysis of Obasanjo and Buhari's Foreign Policy under Democracy		
Unit 2	Party System: A Comparative Perspective		
Unit 3	Theories of Democracy and Democratic Stability		
Unit 4	Types of Government in Comparative Perspective		
Unit 5	State in Comparative Perspective		

WHAT YOU WILL NEED IN THE COURSE

There are a few recommended texts at the end of each module that you are expected to access or purchase. Some of these texts could be available in some of the libraries across the country. In addition, you could use your computer to access the internet where you can find limitless number of materials that could be of help in understanding this course. It is important that you find time to study these texts carefully.

TUTORS AND TUTORIALS

The course provides fifteen (15) hours of tutorials in support of the course. You will be notified of the dates and locations of these tutorials, together with the name and phone number of your tutor as soon as you are allocated a tutorial group. Your tutor will mark and comment on your assignments, and watch you as you progress in the course. Send in your tutor-marked assignments promptly, and ensure you contact your tutor on any difficulty with your self-assessment exercise, tutor-marked assignment, and the grading of an assignment. As a postgraduate student, your attendance and contributions to discussions as well as sample questions are to be taken seriously because they will aid your cumulative performance in the course.

ASSESSMENT EXERCISES

In this course, there are two major aspects of assessment. First is the Tutor-Marked Assignments; second is a written examination. In handling these assignments, you are expected to apply the information, knowledge and experience acquired during the course. The tutor-marked assignments are now being done online. Ensure that you register all your courses so that you can have easy access to the online assignments. Your score in the online assignments will account for 30 per cent of your total coursework. At the end of the course, you will need to sit for a final examination. This examination will account for the other 70 per cent of your total course mark.

TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENTS (TMAs)

Usually, there are four online tutor-marked assignments in this course. Each assignment will be marked over ten percent. The best three (that is the highest three of the 10 marks) will be counted. This implies that the total mark for the best three assignments will constitute 30% of your total course work. You will be able to complete your online assignments successfully from the information and materials contained in your references, reading and study units.

FINAL EXAMINATION AND GRADING

The final examination for POL 831 (Theory and Method of Comparative Politics) will be of three hours duration and have a value of 70% of the total course grade. The examination will consist of multiple choice and fill-in-the-gaps questions which will reflect the practice exercises and tutor-marked assignments you have previously encountered. All areas of the course will be assessed. It is important that you use adequate time to revise the entire course. You may find it useful to review your tutor-marked assignments before the examination. The final examination covers information from all aspects of the course.

HOW TO GET THE BEST FROM THIS COURSE

1. There are 20 units in this course. You are to spend one week in each unit. 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 own pace, and at a time and place that suites 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 tell you when to read and which are your text materials or recommended books. You are provided

exercises to do at appropriate points, just as a lecturer might give you in a class exercise.

2. 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 other units and the course 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 chance of passing the course.
3. The main body of the unit guides you through the required reading from other sources. This will usually be either from your reference or from a reading section.
4. The following is a practical strategy for working through the course. If you run into any trouble, telephone your tutor or visit the study centre nearest to you. 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.
5. Read this course guide thoroughly. It is your first assignment.
6. 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.
7. Important information; e.g. details of your tutorials and the date of the first day of the semester is available at the study centre.
8. 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.
9. Once you have created your own study schedule, do everything to stay faithful to it.
10. The major reason that students fail is that they get behind in their coursework. If you get into difficulties with your schedule, please let your tutor or course coordinator know before it is too late for help.
11. Turn to Unit 1, and read the introduction and the objectives for the unit.
12. Assemble the study materials. You will need your references for the unit you are studying at any point in time.
13. As you work through the unit, you will know what sources to consult for further information.
14. Visit your study centre whenever you need up-to-date information.
15. Well before the relevant online TMA due dates, visit your study centre for relevant information and updates. 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.

16. 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. 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 space your study so that you can keep yourself on schedule.
17. 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).

CONCLUSION

This is a theoretical as well as methodological course and so, you will get the best out of it if you can read wide, listen to as well as examine the various theoretical and methodological perspectives raised in this course.

SUMMARY

This Course Guide has been designed to furnish you with the information you need for productive and rewarding experience in the course. By the end of it all, how much you get from it depends on how much you put into it in terms of learning time, effort and planning.

On behalf of the NOUN, I wish you all the best in POL 831 and in the entire programme!

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MAIN COURSE

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MODULE 1 THE SUBJECT MATTER OF COMPARATIVE POLITICS

These two words – ‘Comparative Politics’ should not be strange to students of Political Science, especially students at the postgraduate level of study. Most probably, some of you would have been taught Introduction to Comparative Politics or Methodology of Comparative Politics or Comparative Federalism at the under graduate level. That notwithstanding, this module is specifically designed to refresh students on the basic essentials of Comparative Politics as well as Comparative Methods in Political Science. It begins with a conceptual clarification on the meaning of Comparative Politics, to the historical development of the field, to major approaches to the study of comparative Politics and ends with the benefits and essence of comparatively politics to Political Science. This module is therefore, thematically structured into five units that comprehensively present vital details that will guide you as follows:

Unit 1 Definition of Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method
Unit 2 Origin and Historical Development of Comparative Politics
Unit 3 Major Approaches to the Study of Comparative Politics.
Unit 4 The Importance of the Comparative Politics to Political Analysis
Unit 5 Issues in Comparative Political Analysis

Therefore, it is important you study each of the unit carefully as you are expected to answer some questions to evaluate your understanding on the various issues as discussed. Possible answers to the questions are provided under each of the unit accordingly.

UNIT 1 Definition of Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method

Unit Structure

1.1 Introduction
1.2 Learning Outcomes
1.3 Meaning of Comparative Politics
  1.3.1 Some Scholarly Definitions of Comparative Politics
  1.3.2 Features of Comparative Politics
1.4 The Subject Matter of Comparative Method
1.5 Reasons for Comparison
1.6 Summary
1.7 References/Further Readings
1.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

1.1 Introduction

This unit is important as it will examine the general background information about the concept of comparative politics. The unit is divided into five parts: meaning and scholarly definitions of Comparative Politics, features of comparative politics, subject matter of comparative politics, reasons for comparison and lastly a brief summary is provided. Comparative politics is a key area in political science. It is considered in this course as the study of domestic politics, political institutions, and conflicts of countries. It often encompasses comparisons among countries and through time within single countries, emphasizing major patterns of similarity and difference. It is within this framework of definitional that this unit proceeded.

1.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- define the field of comparative politics.
- describe some major features of comparative politics
- enumerate reasons for comparison

1.3 Meaning and Substance of Comparative Politics

Comparative politics is the study and appraisal of domestic politics across countries. Comparative politics has a long and very eminent history dating back just before the origin of systematic political studies in ancient Greece and Rome (Schmitter, 2006). Even ancient people, compared their situations with those of other people's with whom they came in contact.

Comparative politics is a key area in political science, characterized by an empirical approach based on the comparative method. Comparative politics is an integral and significant sub-discipline, and one of the three major fields of political science, alongside political theory and international relations. Comparative politics, as a field of study, provides researchers with an array of conceptual and analytical tools that can be used to address and answer to real life political questions (Lim, 2010). Put differently, comparative politics is the study of the domestic politics, political institutions, and conflicts of countries.

It often encompasses comparisons among countries and through time within single countries, emphasizing major patterns of similarity and difference. That is, as a subject of study, comparative politics focuses on understanding and explaining political phenomena that take place within a state, society, country, or political system. In other words comparative politics focuses on internal political structures (like legislature, judiciary and executives), actors (voters, parties, and interest groups), processes (policy-making, communication, political culture, political socialisation) and analysing them empirically by defining, describing, explaining and predicting their variety (similarities and differences) across political systems, whether national political systems, regional, municipal, or even supra-national political systems (Caramani, 2011).

Some political theorists like Arend Lijphart argued that comparative politics does not have a functional focus in itself, instead a methodological one – the comparative method (Lijphart, Arend, 1971). In simple term, comparative politics is not defined by the object of its study, but by the method it applies to study political phenomena. Peter Mair and Richard Rose gave modern definition of comparative politics and stated that comparative politics is elaborated by a combination of a substantive focus on the study of countries' political systems and a method of recognising and explaining similarities and differences between these countries using common models (Peter, 1996).

In the field of Comparative politics, the term politics has three connotations which include political activities, political process and political power.

- **Political activity** consists of the efforts by which the conditions of conflicts are created and resolved in a way pertaining to the interest of people as far as possible who play in their part in struggle for power.
- **Political process** is an extension of political activity.
- **Political power** is the major topic in comparative politics. The term power has been defined by different writers. Friedrich described power as a certain kind of human relationship. Whereas Tawney explained power as a capacity of an individual or group of individuals to modify the conduct of other individuals in a manner which he desires (Johari, 1982).

When applied to particular fields of study, comparative politics denotes by other names, such as comparative government (the comparative study of forms of government) or comparative foreign policy (comparing the foreign policies of different States in order to establish general empirical connections between the characteristics of the State and the characteristics of its foreign policy).

1.1.1 Some Scholarly Definitions of Comparative Politics

We will highlight a few definitions of comparative politics as provided by some political scholars:

> 'Comparative politics involves the systematic study and comparison of the world's political systems. It seeks to explain differences between as well as similarities among countries. In contrast to journalistic reporting on a single country, comparative politics is particularly interested in exploring patterns, processes, and regularities among political systems' (Wiarda, 2000: 7).

> 'Comparative politics involves both a subject of study – foreign countries – and a method of study – comparison' (Wilson 1996: 4).

> Comparative politics entails two things:

> First a world, second a discipline. As a 'world,' comparative politics encompasses political behaviour and institutions in all parts of the earth… The 'discipline' of comparative politics is a field of study that desperately tries to keep up with, to encompass, to understand, to explain, and perhaps to influence the fascinating and often riotous world of comparative politics' (Lane 1997:2).

> 'Comparative politics involves no more and no less than a comparative study of politics – a search for similarities and differences between and among political phenomena, including political institutions (such as legislatures, political parties, or political interest groups), political behaviour (such as voting, demonstrating, or reading political pamphlets), or political ideas (such as liberalism, conservatism, or Marxism). Everything that politics studies, comparative politics studies; the latter just undertakes the study with an explicit comparative methodology in mind' (Mahler 2000:3).

Van Biezen and Caramani (2006), defined comparative politics by a combination of substance (the study of countries and their political systems, actors and processes) and method (identifying and explaining differences and similarities between cases following established rules and standards of comparative analysis and using concepts that are applicable in more than one case or country.

Self-Assessment Exercises 1

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minutes:

1. Attempt a definition of Comparative Politics.
2. State Wilson's 1996 definition of comparative politics.

1.3.2 Features of Comparative Politics

Comparative politics is marked by a number of features. They include:

i. **Analytical and empirical research:** Studies under the field of comparative politics are conducted within the epistemological principle of empiricism
ii. **Objective study of politics:** A value-free empirical study-It rejects normative descriptive methods of comparative government.
iii. **Study of the infra-structure of politics***:* Comparative Politics, now analyses the actual behaviour of individuals; groups structures, sub-systems and systems in relation to environment. It studies the actual behaviour of all institutions.
iv. **Inter-disciplinary focus***:* Comparative Politics focuses upon interdisciplinary approach. It studies politics with the help of other social science like psychology, sociology, anthropology and economics. It studies political processes in both developed and developing countries. The biased and parochial nature of traditional studies stands replaced and the study of political systems of Asia, Africa, and Latin America enjoys equal importance with the study of African and European political systems.
v. **Theory building as the objective:** The objective of Comparative politics study is scientific theory building.
vi. **Adoption of political systems:** With above features, Comparative politics is emerged as a new science of politics. It has prohibited the non-comprehensive scope, formal character, legal and institutionalized framework, normative approach and parochial nature of the traditional comparative government studies (Caramani, 2011).

Self-Assessment Exercises 2

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 2 minutes:

1. Comparative politics is the study and appraisal of domestic politics across countries……. (True or False)?
2. Arend Lijphart argued that comparative politics does not have a functional focus in itself, instead…………..?

1.2 The Subject Matter of Comparative Method

In general the comparative method is the oldest and most popular method of acquiring knowledge. Philippe C Schmitter observed that comparison is an analytical method – perhaps, the best available one for advancing valid and cumulative knowledge about politics (Schmitter 2006).

The foundations of the comparative method were laid down in the mid-19th century by John Stuart Mill, who described a number of methods for finding causal factors. In the case of Mill's method of agreement one needs to look for events that occur whenever the phenomenon being studied occurs. The single event that is found to be common to all occurrences of the phenomenon is said to be the cause. Mill's method of difference asks to see if changes in a phenomenon occur whenever a particular event changes. The single event that is found to change when differences occur in the phenomenon is said to be the cause.

Arend Lijphart was among the first scholars who started a discussion on the comparative method within political science. In his famous article *Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method,* he described the comparative method 'as one of the basic methods, the others being: the experimental, statistical, and case study methods of establishing general empirical propositions.' It is, in the first place, definitely a method, not just 'a convenient term vaguely symbolizing the focus of one's research interests.' Nor is it a special set of substantive concerns in the sense of Shmuel N. Eisenstadt's definition of the comparative approach in social research; he states that the term does not 'properly designate a specific method..., but rather a special focus on cross-societal, institutional, or macro-societal aspects of societies and social analysis' (Lijphart 1971: 682).

As Charles Ragin points out, comparative researchers examine patterns of similarities and differences across a moderate number of cases. The typical comparative study has anywhere from a handful to fifty or more cases. The number of cases is limited because one of the concerns of comparative research is to establish familiarity with each case included in a study. According to Ragin there are three main goals of comparative research which include: Exploring diversity; Interpreting cultural or historical significance; and Advancing theory.

1.5 Reasons for Comparison

For Todd Landman (2008), there are four main reasons for comparison, they include:

i. Contextual description,
ii. Classification and 'typologizing'
iii. Hypothesis-testing
iv. Theory-building and prediction.

It is important to note that description and classification are the building blocks of comparative politics. Classification simplifies descriptions of the important objects of comparative inquiry. Good classification should have well-defined categories into which empirical evidence can be organized. Categories that make up a classification scheme can be derived inductively from careful consideration of available evidence or through a process of deduction in which 'ideal' types are generated (Sodaro, 2008; Landman 2008: 7).

The most famous effort at classification is found in Aristotle's *Politics*, in which he establishes six types of rule. Based on the combination of their form of rule (good or corrupt) and the number of those who rule (one, few, or many), Aristotle derived the following six forms: monarchy, aristocracy, polity, tyranny, oligarchy, and democracy (Landman 2008: 7).
Hypothesis-testing is the second step in a comparative analysis. Once things have been described and classified, the comparative scholar can move on to search for those factors that may help explain what has been described and classified. Since the 1950s, political scientists have increasingly sought to use comparative methods to help build more complete theories of politics. Comparison of countries allows rival explanations to be ruled out and hypotheses derived from certain theoretical perspectives to be tested through examining cross-national similarities and differences (Schmitter, 2006). Prediction is the final and most difficult objective of comparative study as it is a logical extension of hypothesis-testing to make predictions about outcomes in other countries based on the generalizations from the initial comparison, or to make claims about future political outcomes. Prediction in comparative politics tends to be made in probabilistic terms, such as 'countries with systems of proportional representation are more likely to have multiple

politicalparties' (Landman 2008: 10). Further explanation on the comparative method will be provided in the subsequent sections.

Self-Assessment Exercises 3

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 2 minutes:

1. According to Todd Landman, four major reasons for comparison include: i…….ii……iii….iv…..?
2. The history of comparative politics could be traced to the Ancient Greece…True or False

1.6 Summary

In this unit we have observed that comparative politics is the study and appraisal of domestic politics across countries with a long history dating back to ancient Greece and Rome. As a field of study, comparative politics provides us with a ready array of conceptual and analytical tools that we can use to address and answer to real life political questions. It refers to the study of the domestic politics, political institutions, and conflicts of countries. It often encompasses comparisons among countries and through time within single countries, emphasizing major patterns of similarity and difference.

On the other hand, comparative method was described as the oldest and most popular method of acquiring knowledge with its foundation laid in the mid-19th century by John Stuart Mill, who described a number of methods for finding causal factors. The comparative method is described as one of the basic methods, the others being: the experimental, statistical, and case study methods of establishing general empirical propositions. The reasons for comparison were highlighted as: contextual description, classification and 'typologizing' hypothesis-testing, and theory-building and prediction.

1.7 References/Further Readings/Web Resources

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1.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answers to SAEs 1

1. Comparative politics is the study and appraisal of domestic politics across countries.
2. ‘Comparative politics involves both a subject of study – foreign countries – and a method of study – comparison’ (Wilson 1996: 4).

Answers to SAEs 2

1. True
2. A methodological one

Answers to SAEs 3

1.
i. contextual description,
ii. classification and ‘typologizing’
iii. hypothesis-testing
iv. theory-building and prediction

2. True

Unit 2 Origin and Historical Development of Comparative Politics

Unit Structure

2.1 Introduction
2.2 Learning Outcomes
2.3 Origin and Historical Development of Comparative Politics
  2.3.1 Pre-modern Era
  2.3.2 Modern Era
  2.3.3 Post-modern Era
  2.3.4 Analytical Development
2.4 Summary
2.5 References/Further Readings
2.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

2.1 Introduction

Comparative Politics did not start as a full-fledged discipline. Like every other field of study, it began as part, or a branch of an older discipline like Philosophy. Specifically, comparative politics was nurtured in political science. Currently, it is considered as a subfield of political science among others subfields like political theory and international relations. Thus, comparative politics has nurtured and developed into a subfield, having acquired enrichment both in content and methodology. This unit examines the history and evolution of comparative politics, with particular reference to the different eras that have dominated the different phases in the evolution and development of the discipline.

2.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the history and evolution of comparative politics as a discipline from infancy to adulthood
- discuss the development of comparative politics under the pre-modern era
- discuss the development of comparative politics under the modern era
- discuss the development of comparative politics under the post-modern era

2.3 Origin and Historical Development of Comparative Politics

2.3.1 Pre-modern Era

Edward Freeman in one of the first books in the field of comparative politics noted that 'the establishment of Comparative Method of study has been the greatest intellectual achievement of our time' (Freeman 1896: 1). However, the roots of comparative political analysis are found in Ancient Greece as the first comparative studies begin with Aristotle (384–322 B. C. E), who studied different constitutions of Greek city-states.

Characteristics of the pre-modern era

- Speculative, normative, ethnocentric and anecdotical.
- Boundaries with philosophy, history and jurisprudence were not clearly defined.
- Machiavelli, Montesquieu, de Tocqueville came close to founding of comparative politics.
- Main goal of analysis was to establish classifications and typologies, to describe polity, but not politics or policies.
- Concerned with evolutionary models.

Self-Assessment Exercises 1

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 2 minutes:

1. Aristotle is considered the father of comparative politics ……. (True or False)?
2. Mention two features of comparative politics in the pre-modern era……………?

2.3.2 Modern Era

As Klaus von Beyme recently noted, Machiavelli in the pre-modern era came closest to a modern social science approach. Moreover, great social theorists made an invaluable impact on the development of contemporary comparative politics. For instance, Machiavelli (1469–1527) sought to compare and evaluate the merits of different forms of rule. Thomas Hobbes (1632–1704) developed the idea of a 'social

contract' and Karl Marx (1818–1883) developed the theory of economic and political development and revolutionary change.
However, comparative politics was established as an academic discipline only in the very late 19th and the beginning of the 20th century (Caramani, 2006). Still prior to the 1950s comparative politics was mostly normative and descriptive or dominated by the so-called traditional approach and being at the pre-modern phase of its development. In 1955 Roy Macridis launched a diatribe against traditional comparative politics. He accused the discipline of being formal-legalistic because of the studying of formal institutions over non-formal political processes, descriptive rather than analytic, case study-orientated rather than genuinely comparative, and Eurocentric with its emphasis on Great Britain, France, Germany and the Soviet Union.

Characteristics of the modern era

- Separate disciplines of sociology and political science established since Chicago school
- Behaviourism is a dominant approach with an empirical testing of generalizations
- Comparative politics is established in academia
- Movement from classifications to analysis of politics and policies.

Self-Assessment Exercises 2

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 2 minutes:

1. In its modern form, comparative politics was dominated by France, US and Britain (True or False)?
2. The behavioural school was founded from Chicago True or False

2.3.3 Post-modern era

The postmodern era begins with the emphasis on 'scientific' comparative politics situated mainly within the behavioural approach in social sciences. Behaviouralism in comparative politics, as in other fields of political science, stood for two distinct ideas. One concerned the proper subject matter of comparative politics. In this regard, behaviouralists reacted against a definition of the field that restricted its scope to the study of formal institutions of government and sought to include a range of informal procedures and behaviours – related to interest groups, political parties, mass communication, political culture, and political socialization – that were seen as key to the functioning of the political system. A second key idea was the need for a scientific approach to theory and methods. Behaviouralists were opposed to what they saw as vague, rarefied theory and a theoretical empirics, and argued for systematic theory and empirical testing. The behavioural era in comparative politics is sometimes described as a modern period of its evolution (Beyme, 2008).

Characteristic of the post-modern era

- Social facts are social constructs
- Theories, contents and methods are influenced by political event
- Modernization, decolonization, transition to democracy etc. influenced comparative politics.

Post-modernism in comparative politics meant first of all domination of new historical institutionalism in a style of Max Weber and Emile Durkheim's early system approach (Beyme, 2008). Moreover, economic theories and cultural approaches appeared in comparative research as well. Klaus von Beyme noted that 'the evolution of comparative politics was not a self-steering development, but one that proved to be deeply influenced by political events' (Beyme 2008: 35) such as decolonization, transition to democracy and so on. Munck and Snyder (2007), traced key developments in the field of comparative politics during the twentieth century in their book *Passion, Craft and Method of Comparative Politics*.

2.3.4 Analytical Development

The discipline of comparative politics has under gone three different analytical traditions (Van Biezen and Caramani 2006). They include:

i. The **first tradition** is oriented towards the study of single countries. This reflects the understanding of comparative politics in its formative years in the US, where it mainly meant the study of political system outside the US, often in isolation from another and involving little, if any comparison. For long comparative politics especially in the Anglo-Saxon world-has meant the study of foreign countries.
ii. The **second tradition** is methodological and is principally concerned with establishing rules and standards of comparative analysis. This tradition addresses the question of how comparative analyses should be carried out in order to enhance their potential for the descriptive accumulation of comparative information, explanation and prediction. This strand is concerned with rigorous conceptual, logical and statistical techniques of

analysis, involving also issues of measurement and case selection.

iii. The **third tradition** of comparative politics is analytical, in that it combines empirical substance and method. The body of literature in this tradition is primarily concerned with the identification and explanation of differences and similarities between countries and their institutions, actors, and processes through systematic comparison using cases of a common phenomenon. Its principal goal is to be explanatory. It aims to go beyond merely ideographic descriptions and ultimately aspires to arrive at the identification of law like explanations (Daniele Caramani 2008).

Table showing the most influential researchers of comparative politics in the second half of the 20th century

Researcher		**Contribution**
1.	Gabriel A. Almond	Structural functionalism and political development
2.	Barrington Moore, Jr	The critical spirit and comparative historical analysis
3.	Robert A. Dahl	Normative theory, empirical research, and democracy
4.	Juan J. Linz	Political regimes and the quest for knowledge
5.	Samuel p. Huntington	Order and conflict in global perspective
6.	Order and conflict in global perspective	Political institutions, divided societies, and consociational democracy
7.	Guillermo O’Donnell	Democratization, political engagement, and agenda-setting research
8.	Philippe C. Schmitter	Corporatism, democracy, and conceptual travelling
9.	James C. Scott	Peasants, power, and the art of resistance

10	Alfred Stepan	Democratic governance and the craft of case-based research
11	Adam Przeworski	Capitalism, democracy, and science
12	Robert H. Bates	Markets, politics, and choice
13	David Collier	Culture, rationality, and the search for discipline
14	Theda Skocpol	States, revolutions, and the comparative historical imagination

Source: Krupavičius, Isoda and Vaišnoras, 2013.

Self-Assessment Exercises 3

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 2 minutes:

1. In comparative politics the behavioural approach emphasies the study of political behaviour via scientific method….. True or False?
2. Gabriel A Almond and Robert A Dahl were some of the influential researchers of the second half of the 20th century… True or False?

2.4 Summary

The history and evolution of comparative politics could be traceable to ancient Greece. Specifically, the roots of comparative political analysis are found in Ancient Greece as the first comparative studies begin with Aristotle (384–322 B. C. E), who studied different constitutions of Greek city-states. However, comparative politics was established as an academic discipline in the late 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. Still prior to the 1950s comparative politics was mostly normative and descriptive or dominated by the so-called traditional approach and being at the pre-modern phase of its development. Scientific comparative politics begins mainly with the rise of behaviourism in social sciences.

Behaviouralism in comparative politics, as in other fields of political science, stood for two distinct ideas. One concerned the proper subject matter of comparative politics. In this regard, behaviouralists reacted against a definition of the field that restricted its scope to the formal institutions of government and sought to include a range of informal procedures and behaviours – related to interest groups, political parties, mass communication, political culture, and political socialization – that were seen as key to the functioning of the political system. A second key idea was the need for a scientific approach to theory and methods. Behaviouralists were opposed to what they saw as vague, rarefied theory and atheoretical empirics, and argued for systematic theory and empirical testing. The behavioural era in comparative politics is sometimes described as a modern period of its evolution.

2.5 References/Further Reading/Web Resources

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Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answers to SAEs 1
1. True
2. Speculative and normative

Answers to SAEs 2
1. True
2. True

Answers to SAEs 3
1. True
2. True

UNIT 3 Major Approaches to the Study of Comparative Politics

Unit Structure

3.1 Introduction

Political scientists use different approaches to arrive at greater political understanding. Thus, there are several approaches to the study of political science as well as comparative politics. These approaches are used by political scientists to study the complexity of political systems, institution and behaviour. In this unit, we will examine the various approaches to the study of politics with the aim of showing their relevance to the understanding of Comparative Politics. Three of these approaches have been identified. These are normative-philosophical, descriptive-institutional, and modern approaches.

3.2 Learning Outcomes

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

- explain the different approaches to the study of politics
- understand the limitations of each approach to our understanding of politics
- compare and contrast the various approaches

3.3.1 The Normative Philosophical Approach

The Normative-philosophical also known as traditional approach to Political Science was broadly predominant in the classical era of the study of politics. This approach was mainly associated with the traditional outlook of politics which underlined the study of the state and government (Fabbrini & Molutsi, 2011). Consequently, traditional approach is principally concerned with the study of the organization and activities of the state and principles and the ideas which motivate political organizations and activities. This approach was normative and principled. The political philosophers supporting this approach raised questions such 'what should be an ideal state?' According to them, the study of Political Science should be limited to the formal structures of the government, laws, rules and regulations. Therefore, the supporters of the traditional approach stress various norms such as what 'ought to be' or 'should be' rather than 'what is'.

The normative-philosophical approach is marked by the following features:

- Traditional approach is mostly normative and stresses on the values of politics.
- The traditional approach gives prominence to the study of different formal political structures.
- Traditional approach made very little attempt to relate theory and research.
- This approach consider that since facts and values are closely interlinked, studies in Political Science can never be scientific.

Self-Assessment Exercises 1

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 2 minutes:

1. The normative-philosophical method is also known as …….?
2. The normative-philosophical method opines that the study of politics can never be scientific….. True or False?

3.3.2 Variants of the Normative-Philosophica to the Study of Comparative Politics

The following are categorized as traditional approach:

Philosophical approach

Philosophical approach is considered as one of the oldest approaches to study politics. Customarily, the study of politics was subjugated by philosophical reflections on universal political values that were regarded as essential to the just state and the good state. The oldest approach to the study of politics is philosophical. Philosophy is the study or science of truths or principles underlying all knowledge and being. It entails that philosophy or philosophical approach tries to explore the truth of political incidents or events. It discovers the objective of political writings or the purpose of political writer.

Main aim of philosophical approach is to evaluate the consequences of events in a logical and scientific manner. Van Dyke opined that "philosophy denotes thought about thought. Somewhat more broadly it denotes general conceptions of ends and means, purposes and methods." The purpose of philosophical approach is to explain the words and terms used by the political theorists. The enquiry started by the philosophical approach removes confusion about the assumptions.

Several Greek philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle were the creators of this approach. The main subject of Plato's writings was to define the nature of an ideal society. This approach states that values are inseparable from facts. It is mainly an ethical and normative study of politics, hence is concerned with what 'should be' or 'ought to be'. This approach seeks to understand our fundamental nature and aim as human beings, recognizing principles and standards of right conduct in political life. It is normative in character and believes in developing norms or certain standards. It followed the logical method where investigator has his own values and determined philosophies. Benefit of philosophical approach is that it enters into the depth of every aspect of political phenomena and examines them without any partiality. Its interpretation of political activities conjures interest in the minds of students of politics. Words and phrases used by philosophers highlight point on the subject. Philosophical approach enhances linguistic clarity. That is why it is said that this approach aims at thought about thought (Krupavičius, Isoda and Vaišnoras, 2013).

Philosophical approach use procedure of logical analysis. It uses reason to explore the truth. The truth which this approach establishes may be of various kinds – normative, descriptive or prescriptive. But the philosophical approach is indifferent to the nature or category of truth. This approach also tries to establish standards of good, right and just. Many critics observed that this approach determines what is in the interest of the public and he identifies interest more with ends than with means (Lim, 2010).

In the contemporary Greek city-states of Plato morality, moral values and idealism ruined to such an extent that he received a great shock and seriously thought to recuperate these and this urge encouraged him to write *The Republic*. He wanted to establish that politics and morality are not etheric concepts. Rather, an ideal and moral body politic can be made a real one through the selfless administration by a philosopher-king. John Locke composed his Second Treatise to rationalize the interests and objectives of the new middle class and he struggle of people for liberty.

Other political philosopher such as Machiavelli and Hobbes wrote to support royal absolutism. Some critics may not agree with the views of these philosophers or the arguments of these books, but it must not be forgotten that the books were written at particular and critical moment of history. It is well established that Philosophical approach helps people to understand the contemporary history and the nature of politics suggested by philosophers. In other words, the philosophical approach aids to comprehend the political ideologies of past centuries. In this sense, the philosophical approach is very important for researchers and people.

Application of the philosophical approach in political science focuses on the great ideas, values and doctrines of politics. The normative-philosophical approach is the ancient and the least scientific approach to the study of politics and it has been taken over although not completely displaced by contemporary approaches.

Weakness of the Philosophical Approach

Nevertheless philosophical approach is highly important for scholars and other people to the study of politics, critics have raised several problems about its worth. It is documented in literature that one of the central ideas of political philosophy is idealism and it is conspicuous in Plato’s The Republic. Critics argued that idealism itself is quite good but when its practical application arises it appears to be a myth.

Plato emphasized Idealism in his theory, but it had not practical importance and be fully realised that idealism would never be translated into reality. It is a subject of absolute imagination. Machiavelli and Hobbes wrote with the only purpose of supporting the status quo.

The philosophical intellectuals of the earlier periods were impractical philosophers. They had no intention to promulgate ideas which can change society. They were apathetic to people's liking and disliking, their love for liberty, their sorrows and sufferings and they failed to provide prophylactic devices. As an academic discipline, philosophical approach is appropriate, but in practical guide for action, it has barely any importance.

Historical approach

This approach states that political theory can be only understood when the historical factors are taken into consideration. It highlights on the study of history of every political reality to analyse any situation. Political theorists like Machiavelli, Sabine and Dunning believed that politics and history are strongly inter-related, and therefore, the study of politics always should have a historical viewpoint. Sabine considered that Political Science should include all those subjects which have been discussed in the writings of different political thinkers since Plato. History defines about the past as well as links it with the present events. Without studying the past political events, institutions and political environment, the analysis of the present would remain largely imperfect (Lim, 2010).

Main attribute of historical approach is that history as a written or recorded subject and focuses on the past events. From history, researchers come to know how man was in the past and what he is now. History is the store-house of events. From the profiles, autobiographies, descriptions by authors and journalists investigators know what event occurred in the past. It is to be prominent that the events must have political revealing or they must be politically significant. These events provide the best materials upon which theory and principles of political science are built. History communicates researchers how government, political parties and many other institutions worked, their successes and failures and from these, they receive lessons which guide them in determining the future course of action.

Weakness of the Historical Approach

The historical approach to the study of politics has numerous challenges from several quarters. One of the main fulcrums of the challenges is that history has two faces. One is documentation of facts which is quite naive and the other is construal of facts and phenomena. The accretion of evidences is to be judged from a proper perspective. The implication is that adequate care should be taken while evaluating evidence and facts and such a caution is not always strictly followed and, as a result, the historical facts do not serve the purpose of those who use it. This is the main complaint against the historical approach to the study of politics.

Alan Ball has also criticized the historical approach. He debated that "past evidence does leave-alarming gaps, and political history is often simply a record of great men and great events, rather than a comprehensive account of total political activity." Very few historians interpret historical events and evidences broadly and freely.

3.3,3 Descriptive-Institutional Approach

Perhaps, the greatest legacy that philosophy, history and law have bestowed to the study of politics is in the field of institutional approach. Institutional approach is ancient and important approach to the study of Political Science. These approach mainly deals with the formal aspects of government and politics. Institutional approach is concerned with the study of the formal political structures like legislature, executive, and judiciary. It focused on the rules of the political system, the powers of the various institutions, the legislative bodies, and how the constitution worked. Main drawback of this approach was its narrow focus on formal structures and arrangements. Broadly, an institution can be described as any persistent system of activities in any pattern of group behaviour. More concretely, an institution has been regarded as offices and agencies arranged in a hierarchy, each agency having certain functions and powers (Lim, 2010).

The study of institutions has been dominant not only to the arena of comparative politics, but to the political science field as a whole. Many writers have argued that institutions have shaped political behaviour and social change. These authors have taken an "institutionalist" approach which treat institutions as independent variables (Lim, 2010).

The institutional approach to political analysis emphasises on the formal structures and agencies of government. It originally concentrated on the development and operation of legislatures, executives and judiciaries. As the approach developed however, the list is extended to include political parties, constitutions, bureaucracies, interest groups and other institutions which are more or less enduringly engaged in politics.

Though, descriptive-institutional approach is slightly old, political experts still concentrate chiefly on scrutinising the major political institutions of the state such as the executive, legislature, the civil service, the judiciary and local government, and from these examinations, valuable insights as to their organisation can be drawn, proposals for reform conversed and general conclusions obtainable. The approach has been critiqued for the disregard of the informal aspects of politics, such as, individual norms, social beliefs, cultural values, groups' attitudes, personality and the processes. Institutional approach is also criticized for being too narrow. It ignores the role of individuals who constitute and operate the formal as well as informal structures and substructures of a political system. Another problem is that the meaning and the range of an institutional system vary with the view of the scholars. Researchers of this approach ignored the international politics (Johari, 1982).

Self-Assessment Exercises 2

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 2 minutes:

1. The institutional approach emphasises on the formal structures and agencies of government …. True or False?

2. The core institutions of the government include …..?

3.3.4 Variant of the Descriptive-Institutional Approach to the Study of Comparative Politics

Legal approach

There is another strand of the Institutional descriptive approach known as the legal approach. This approach considers the state as the central organization for the creation and enforcement of laws. Therefore, this approach is associated with the legal process, legal bodies or institutions, and judiciary. In this approach, the study of politics is mixed with legal processes and institutions. Theme of law and justice are treated as not mere affairs of jurisprudence rather political scientists look at state as the maintainer of an effective and equitable system of law and order. Matters relating to the organizations, jurisdiction and independence of judicial institutions become and essential concern of political scientists. This approach treats the state primarily as an organization for creation and enforcement of law (Johari, 1982).

The supporters of this approach are Cicero, Bodin, Hobbes, John Austin, Dicey and Henry Maine. In the system of Hobbes, the head of the state is highest legal authority and his command is law that must be obeyed either to avoid punishment following its infraction or to keep the dreadful state of nature away. Other scientists described that the study of politics is bound with legal process of country and the existence of harmonious state of liberty and equality is earmarked by the rule of law (Johari, 1982).

The legal approach is applied to national as well as international politics. It stands on assumptions that law prescribes action to be taken in given contingency and also forbids the same in certain other situations. It also emphasizes the fact that where the citizens are law abiding, the knowledge of the law offers an important basis for predictions relating to political behaviour of people. Though it is effective approach but not free from criticism. This approach is narrow. Law include only one aspect of people's life. It cannot cover entire behaviour of political actions (Johari, 1982).

The weakness of the Descriptive-Institutional approaches

The descriptive-institutional approaches have gloomily failed to identify the role of the individuals who are important in moulding and remoulding the shape and nature of politics. In fact, individuals are important players of both national and international politics; rather here, the focus is directed to the institutions. It is astounding that in all the institutions, there are individuals who control the structure, functions and other aspects. Singling out institutions and neglecting individuals cannot be pronounced as proper methods to study politics. The definition politics as the study of institution is nothing but an overstatement or a travesty of truth.

Other political researchers argued that traditional and descriptive-institutional approaches are mainly descriptive. Politics does not rule out description, but it is also analytical. Sheer description of facts does not inevitably establish the subject matter of political science. Its purpose is study the depth of every incident. Investigators want to know not only occurrence, but also why a particular incident occurs at a particular time.

The standpoint of the traditionalists is limited within the institutions. Political researchers in modern world are not motivated to limit their analysis of politics within institutions. They have explored the role of environment into which is included international politics multinational corporations, non-governmental organisations or trans-national bodies.

It is assumed that traditional analysis is inappropriate for all types of political systems both Western and non-Western. To recompense this deficiency, the political scientists of the post-Second World War period have developed a general system approach which is quite comprehensive.

3.3.5 Modern Approach to the Study of Comparative Politics

The political philosophers later on realized the need to study politics from a new viewpoint. Thus, to overcome the paucities of the traditional approaches, various new approaches have been promoted by the new political intellectuals. These new approaches are considered as the “modern approaches” to the study of Political Science. Many theorists regard these approaches as a reaction against the traditional approaches. These new approaches are mainly concerned with scientific study of politics. The first innovation in this regard comes with the advent of the behavioural revolution in Political Science.

Characteristics of Modern Approaches:

- These approaches draw conclusion from empirical data.
- These approaches go beyond the study of political structures and its historical analysis.
- Modern Approaches believe in inter-disciplinary study.
- They stress scientific methods of study and attempt to draw scientific conclusions in Political Science.

We shall discuss in the subsequent sections the variants of approaches that fall under the cluster of the modern approaches.

3.3.6 Behaviouralism

Behaviouralism is considered as contemporary approach to the study of political science. But this approach emerged during the 20th century. An important consideration of behaviouralism has been the study of political behaviour, as an area of study within Political Science. It concentrates is on the individual as voter, leader, revolutionary, party member and the influences of the group or the political system on the individual's political behaviour.

Behaviouralism stresses upon scientific, objective and value-free study of the political occurrences as conditioned by the environment, firmly the behaviour of the individuals involved in that phenomena. As such, it focuses on the role of the behaviour of the individual at various levels and the scientific analysis. Behaviouralism is the development of method against traditional political science which did not take into account if human behaviour as an actor in politics. Behaviouralism is quite different from behaviourism. Behaviourism is narrow in its application. It refers to the response of an organism as aroused by some stimulus. It does not consider role of the feelings, ideas, prejudices that determine the response of that individual. Behaviouralism does take into account the role of the feelings, ideas and prejudices. David Easton differentiates between behaviourism and behaviouralism through an example. The paradigm adopted by behaviourists, according to him is S-R (Stimulus-Response). But the behaviouralists have improved it by making it as S-O-R (Stimulus-Organism-Response). David Easton regards behavioural revolution is an intellectual tendency on the part of the political scientists to study empirically the political behaviour of persons.

Core Features of Behaviouralism

David Easton has identified some key features of behaviouralism which are regarded as its intellectual foundations to include:

- **Regularities:** This approach believes that there are certain consistencies in political behaviour which can be expressed in generalizations or theories in order to elucidate and predict political phenomena. In a particular situation, the Political behaviour of individuals may be more or less similar. Such regularities of behaviour may help the researcher to analyse a political situation as well as to predict the future political phenomena. Study of such regularities makes Political Science more scientific with some predictive value.
- **Verification:** The behaviouralists do not want to accept everything as established. Therefore, they stress testing and verifying everything. According to them, if phenomenon is not verified then it will not be scientific.
- **Techniques:** The behaviouralists stress on the use of those research tools and methods which generate valid, reliable and comparative data. A researcher must make use of refined tools like sample surveys, mathematical models, simulation.
- **Quantification:** After collecting data, the researcher should measure and quantify those data.
- **Values:** The behaviouralists have emphasised on separation of facts from values. They believe that to do objective research, one has to be value free. It means that the researcher should not have any pre-conceived idea or a prejudiced view.
- **Systematization:** According to the behaviouralists, research in Political Science must be systematic. Theory and research should go together.
- **Pure Science:** Another feature of behaviouralism has been its aim to make Political Science a "pure science". It believes that the study of Political Science should be verified by evidence.
- **Integration:** Behaviouralists stated that political Science should not be detached from various other social sciences such as history, sociology and economics. This approach denotes that political events are formed by various other factors in the society and therefore, it would be incorrect to separate Political Science from other disciplines.

Consequently, with the development of behaviouralism, novel thinking and new method of study were evolved in the field of Political Science.

The following are advantages of behavioural approach

- This approach attempts to make Political Science as a scientific method and brings it closer to the day to day life of the individuals.
- Behaviouralism has brought human behaviour into the arena of Political Science and thereby makes the study more relevant to the society.
- This approach helps in predicting future political events.

The behavioural approach has been supported by different political philosophers. However, the Behavioural approach also gripped under various criticisms for its scienticism. The following are the weaknesses of the approach:

- This approach has been criticized for its dependence on techniques and methods and ignoring the subject matter.
- The supporters of this approach were mistaken when they thought that human beings behave in similar ways in similar circumstances. Moreover, it is a difficult task to study human behaviour and to get a certain result.
- Most of the political phenomena are immeasurable. Therefore, it is always difficult to use scientific method in the study of Political Science. Furthermore, the researcher being a human being is not always value neutral as believed by the behaviouralists.
- Behaviouralism place overemphasizes on scientific techniques and methods.
- It is criticized as Pseudo-politics as it aims at upholding only American institutions as the best in the world.
- It stresses behavioural effect at the cost of institutional effect.
- It emphasizes static rather than current situations.
- It is a value free research, as its debate is not possible.

3.3.7 Political-Economic Approach:

Economics and politics are vital arenas of social science and in several respects they are closely related. In the prospectus of universities of India and many other countries a few decades ago, economics and political science established a single subject which suggests the close relationship between the two. This signifies that in the study of politics, economics has great importance (Caporaso and Levine, 1992).

When evaluating the economic approaches, it is established that the policy formulations of economic nature and determination of the principles of planning which has recently become a part of the governmental activity are done by the government. In majority of the countries, public issues are economic issues and sometimes the only actors are the personnel of the government such as the prime minister, president and other ministers. This obvious relationship between the two subjects has placed the economic approach in a suitable position (Apter, 1977).

Fiscal policies, industrial policy, agricultural policy, labour policy are all economic issues, but the foremost actors are the members of the government. The executive branch takes the final decision. There are many specialists and advisers. The implementation is approved by the government. Policy regarding production and distribution, though within the jurisdiction of economics, is always decided by the government. It is well recognized that the impact of success and failure of the economic policies depend upon the government. So discussion of politics cannot be successful without economics. The greatest attribution of the economic approach to the study of politics emanates from the writings of Marx and Engels. The principle of class struggle, increasing impoverishment and capitalism’s exploitation are based on economic factors. Marx and Engels have highlighted the heterogeneity of interests between the classes. Classes are formed on the basis of economic interests. Capitalist’s profit making motive leads to exploitation of workers. To liberate from exploitation, the workers are enforced to struggle. The idea of emancipation is associated with economic terms. Marx stated that politics is controlled by the persons who own sources of production and manage the process of distribution. Outside economic influence, politics has no independent authority (Freeman, 1989).

Marx’s theory of base (the state institution) and superstructure (society) is a matter of relationship between economics and politics. Possibly, Marx is the only philosopher who has vehemently argued the relationship between the two important subjects of social science. The interest group approach to the study of politics is popular in some liberal democratic countries and this conception is related with economic approach. Interest groups or pressure groups create pressure to achieve economic objectives. Therefore, interest group politics and economic approach are mutually dependent.

3.3.8 System Approach

This approach falls in the category of modern approach. The notion of Systems Theory was emerged from ancient time, dates back to 1920s. Ludwig Von Bertallanfy is considered as the earliest advocate of the general systems theory. He utilized this theory for the study of Biology. It is only after the Second World War, the social scientists claimed for the amalgamation of sciences for which they took the help of the systems theory. However, when the general systems theory in its abstract form traced back to natural sciences like Biology, in its operational form, they are found in Anthropology. Then it was embraced in Sociology and Psychology. In the decade of sixties, the systems theory became an important tool to evaluate and investigate key factors in Political Science. Among political scientists, David Easton has been the first to apply this theory to political analysis **(**Easton, **1**965).

This approach describes the relationship of political life with other aspects of social life. The idea of a system was initially borrowed from biology by Talcott Parsons who first promoted the concept of social system. Later on David Easton further developed the concept of a political system. This approach signified that a political system operates within the social environment. Consequently, it is not possible to analyse political events in isolation from other aspects of the society. To put in other way, influences from the society, be it economic, religious or otherwise, do shape the political process.

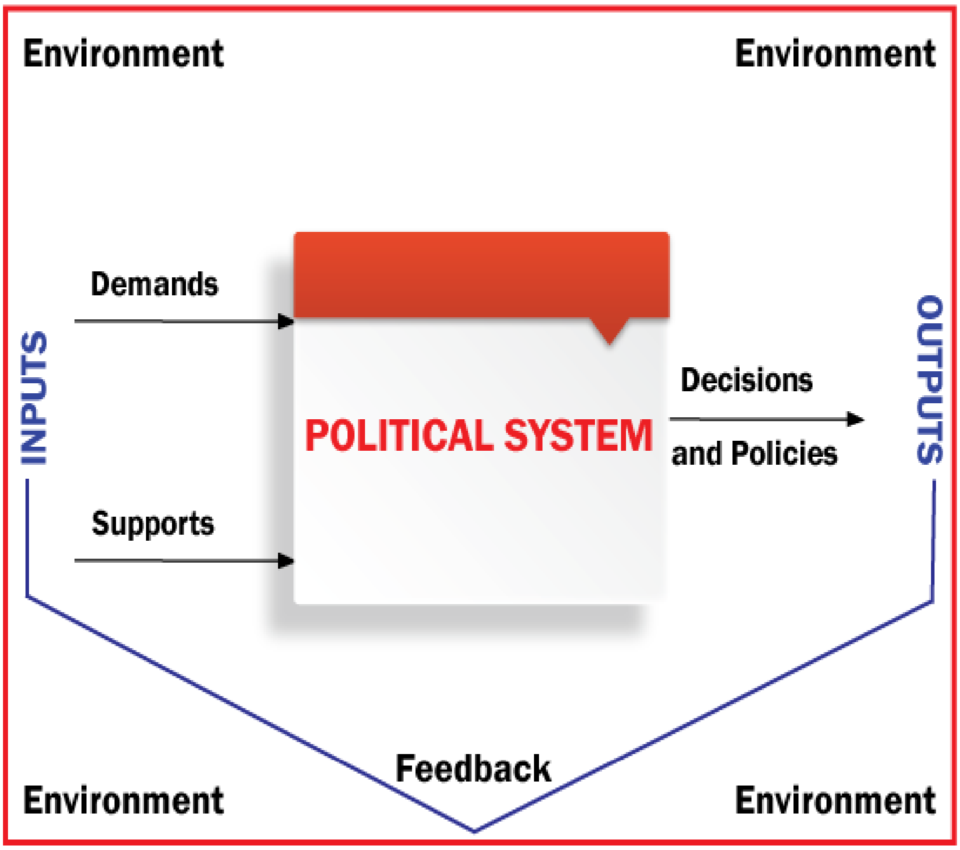

Diagram showing David Easton's system theory (Easton, 1965)

The political system operates within an environment. The environment produces demands from different parts of the society such as demand for reservation in the matter of employment for certain groups, demand for soothing working conditions or minimum wages, demand for better transportation facilities, demand for better health facilities. Different demands have different levels of support. Easton said that both 'demands' and 'supports' establish 'inputs.' The political system receives theses inputs from the environment. After considering various factors, the government decides to take action on some of these demands while others are not acted upon. Through, the conversion process, the inputs are converted into 'outputs' by the decision makers in the form of policies, decisions, rules, regulations and laws. The 'outputs' flow back into the environment through a 'feedback' mechanism, giving rise to fresh 'demands.' Accordingly, it is a recurring process. Presently, the term 'political system' has been chosen to the term state or government because it includes both formal and informal political instructions as well as processes that continue to exist in a society. Systems approach to political institutions by the behavioural school has evolved as a new concept (Almond and Powell, 1978).

David Easton, G. A. Almond and Morton A. Kaplan are credited for applying this approach in Political Science. According to this theory, political behaviour is conceived as a system and the political system is well defined as "Authoritative allocation of values with threat or actual use of deprivations to make them binding on all". It is the system of interactions to be found in independent societies which performs the functions of integration and adaptation both internally and externally by means of employment of legitimate physical compulsion. A political system has three important characteristics, specifically, comprehensiveness, interdependence and existence of boundaries.

However, the features of a political system are openness, adaptiveness, comprehensiveness, self-regulating, ongoing. It is composed of a number of structures which have specific functions. These functions are pigeonholed as input and output functions. A political system performs these in order to maintain itself.

3.3.9 Structural functional approach

According to this approach, the society is a single inter-related system where each part of the system has a definite and distinct role to play. The structural-functional approach may be considered as an offshoot of the system analysis. These approaches accentuate the structures and functions. Gabriel Almond was an advocate of this approach. He described political systems as a special system of interaction that exists in all societies performing certain functions. According to him, the main attributes of a political system are comprehensiveness, inter-dependence and existence of boundaries. Like Easton, Almond also believes that all political systems perform input and output functions (Almond and Powell, 1978).

The input functions of political systems are political socialization and recruitment, interest articulation, interest-aggression and political communication. Almond makes three-fold classifications of governmental output functions relating to policy making and implementation. These output functions are rule making, rule application and rule adjudication. Therefore, Almond believes that a stable and efficient political system converts inputs into outputs.

To summarize, the comparative study of politics and government scans political institutions from constitutions to executives to parliaments to parties to electoral laws and the processes and relationships that account for constancy and change in political economy, culture, conflict, government, rights and public policy. Comparative Politics encompasses the systematic study and comparison of the world's political systems. It describes differences between as well as similarities among countries. In contrast to journalistic reporting on a single country, comparative politics is mainly interested in discovering patterns, processes and regularities among political systems. It looks for trends, for changes in patterns and it tries to develop general hypothesis that define these trends. It seeks to do such comparisons thoroughly and systematically, without personal, biased, or philosophical axes to grind. It involves hard work, clear thinking, careful and thorough scholarship, and (hopefully) clear, consistent, and balanced writing.

Self-Assessment Exercises 3

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 2 minutes:

1. One of the advantages of the behavioural approach is to make the study of comparative politic scientific …. True or False?
2. Among the shortcomings of the behavioural approach is that some political phenomena are immeasurable. ….. True or False?

3.4 Summary

We have considered in this unit the major approaches to the study of comparative politics. The first to be examined was the normative-philosophical approach alongside its variants such as the philosophical and historical approaches. The second approach was the descriptive-institutional approach that emphasises the contribution of institutions to the understanding of politics. The last approach considered under this unit was the behavioural approach. The behavioural approach takes into consideration the behaviour of individual and group actors while insisting on the use of scientific methods.

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3.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answers to SAEs 1

1. Traditional
2. True

Answers to SAEs

1. True
2. Executive, legislative and judiciary

Answers to SAEs 3

1. True
2. True

Unit 4 The Usefulness of Comparative Politics

Unit Structure

4.1 Introduction

Making comparisons is a natural human activity. From ancient times to the present, generations of humans have sought to understand and explain the similarities and differences they perceive between themselves and others. Though historically, the discovery of new peoples was often the product of a desire to conquer them, the need to understand the similarities and differences between the conquerors and the conquered was none the less strong. Since the new millennium, citizens in all countries continue to compare their position in society to those of others in terms of their regional, ethnic, linguistic, religious, familial, and cultural allegiances and identities; material possessions; economic, social and political positions; and relative location in systems of power and authority. Students grow up worried about their types of fashion, circle of friends, collections of music, appearance and behaviour of their partners, money earned by their parents, universities they attend, and careers they may achieve

In sum, to compare is to be human. But beyond these everyday comparisons, how is the process of comparison scientific? And how does the comparison of countries help us understand the larger political world? In order to answer these important questions, this unit discussed four main reasons for comparison, including *contextual description*, *classification* and 'typologizing', *hypothesis-testing* and theory-building, and *prediction* (Hague *et al*. 1992:24–27; Mackie and Marsh 1995:173–176).

4.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- State clearly the reasons and usefulness of comparative politics
- Highlight the importance of comparative politics
- Appreciate the applicability of Comparative Politics to the broad field of Political Science

4.3 The Usefulness of Comparative Politics

4.3.1 Usefulness or reason for comparison

We shall discuss the activity of comparing countries under four main objectives, all of which are mutually reinforcing in any systematic comparative study, but some of which receive more emphasis than others, depending on the aspirations of the scholar. **Contextual description** allows political scientists to know what other countries are like. **Classification** makes the world of politics less complex, effectively providing the researcher with 'data containers' into which empirical evidence is organized (Sartori 1970:1039). **The hypothesis-testing** function of comparison allows the elimination of rival explanations about particular events, actors, structures, etc. in an effort to help build more general theories. Finally, comparison of countries and the generalizations that result from comparison allow **prediction** about the likely outcomes in other countries not included in the original comparison, or outcomes in the future given the presence of certain antecedent factors and conditions

4.3.2 Contextual description

This first reason of comparative politics is the process of describing the political phenomena and events of a particular country, or group of countries. Traditionally, in political science, this reason was realized in those countries that were different to those of the researcher. Indeed, as the field developed in American political science, a comparativist was considered anyone who carried out research on a country other than the United States. Through often highly detailed description, scholars sought to escape their own ethnocentrism by studying those countries and cultures foreign to them (Dogan and Pelassy 1990). The comparison to the researcher's own country is either implicit or explicit, and the goal of contextual description is either more knowledge about the nation studied, more knowledge about one's own political system, or both. The comparative literature is replete with examples of this kind of research, and it is often cited to represent ‘old’ comparative politics as opposed to the ‘new’ comparative politics, which has aspirations beyond mere description (Apter 1996). But the debate about what constitutes old and new comparison often misses the important point that all *systematic research begins with good description*. Thus description serves as an important component to the research process and ought to precede the other three reasons of comparison. Purely descriptive studies serve as the raw data for those comparative studies that aspire to higher levels of explanation, and provide initial hunches about which topics of research may be of interest and which factors may be important to explain observed phenomena that are related to those topics.

In the field of Latin American politics, Macauley’s (1967) *Sandino Affair* is a fine example of contextual description. The book is an exhaustive account of Agusto Sandino’s guerrilla campaign to oust US marines from Nicaragua after a presidential succession crisis. It details the specific events surrounding the succession crisis, the role of US intervention, the way in which Sandino upheld his principles of nonintervention through guerrilla attacks on US marines, and the eventual death of Sandino at the hands of Anastasio Somoza. The study serves as an example of what Almond (1996:52) calls ‘evidence without inference’, where the author tells the story of this remarkable political leader, but the story is not meant to make any larger statements about the struggle against imperialism. Rather, the focus is on the specific events that unfolded in Nicaragua, and the important roles played by the various characters in the historical events. None the less, the account could provide a wealth of evidence for comparative and single-case studies examining the role of indigenous resistance to outside intervention, the history of the rise of military authoritarianism in Central America, the roots of revolutionary movements (the contemporary Sandinistas from whom President Daniel Ortega comes), among many other relevant topics found in comparative politics both inside and outside Latin America.

4.3.3 Classification and Typologizing

In the search for cognitive simplification, comparativists often establish different conceptual classifications in order to group vast numbers of countries, political systems, events, etc. into distinct categories with identifiable and shared characteristics. Classification can be a simple dichotomy such as that between ‘authoritarianism’ and ‘democracy’, which draws on a set of theoretically-derived criteria that help determine where particular countries would fall. Or classification can be a more complex array of regimes and governmental systems that provides greater differentiation. Like contextual description, classification is a necessary component of systematic comparison, but in many ways represents a higher level of comparison since it seeks to group many separate descriptive entities into simpler categories. It reduces the complexity of the world by seeking out those qualities that countries share and those that they do not share. Moreover, classification schemes can be the first step towards capturing cross-national variation in political phenomena, such as democratic and authoritarian countries, developed and underdeveloped countries, core and peripheral countries, military and civilian regimes, among many other distinctions.

The process of classification is not new. The most famous effort at classification is found in Aristotle's *Politics* (Book 3, Chapters 6–7), in which he establishes six types of rule. Based on the combination of their form of rule (good or corrupt) and the number of those who rule (one, few, or many), Aristotle derived the following six forms: monarchy, aristocracy, polity, tyranny, oligarchy, and democracy (Hague *et al*. 1992). A more recent attempt at classification is found in Finer's (1997) *The History of Government*, which claims that since antiquity (*ca*. 3200 BC) all forms of government have belonged to one of the following four basic types: the palace polity, the church polity, the nobility polity, and the forum polity. Each type is differentiated by the nature of the ruling personnel. In the palace polity, decision-making rests with one individual. In the church polity, the church has a significant if not exclusive say in decision making. In the nobility polity, a certain pre-eminent sector of society has substantial influence on decision-making. In the forum polity, the authority is conferred on the rulers from below by a plural headed forum. Aristotle's classification was derived deductively and then 'matched' to actual city states, while Finer's classification scheme is based on empirical observation and inductive reasoning. Both scholars, however, seek to describe and simplify a more complex reality by identifying key features common to each type

Description and classification are the building blocks of comparative politics. Classification simplifies descriptions of the important objects of comparative inquiry. Good classification should have well-defined categories into which empirical evidence can be organized. Categories that make up a classification scheme can be derived inductively from careful consideration of available evidence or through a process of deduction in which 'ideal' types are generated.

We shall briefly examine the oldest example of regime classification and one of the most recent. Both Aristotle and Samuel Finer seek to establish simple classificatory schemes into which real societies can be placed. While Aristotle's scheme is founded on normative grounds, Finer's scheme is derived empirically.

Constitutions and their classifications

In Book 3 of *Politics*, Aristotle derives regime types which are divided on the one hand between those that are 'good' and those that are 'corrupt', and on the other, between the different number of rulers that make up the decision-making authority, namely, the one, the few, and the many. Good government rules in the common interest while corrupt government rules in the interests of those who comprise the dominant authority. The intersection between these two divisions yields six regime types, all of which appear below.

Aristotle's classification scheme

Form of Rule	**Those Who Rule**		
	One	**Few**	**Many**
Good	Monarchy (Kingship	Aristocracy	Polity
Corrupt	Tyranny	Oligarchy	Democracy (mob rule)

Sources: Adapted from Aristotle (1958: 110–115); Hague *et al*. (1992: 26); McClelland
(1997: 57)

The table above shows that the good types of government include monarchy, aristocracy, and polity. The corrupt types of government include tyranny, oligarchy, and democracy. Each type is based on a different idea of justice (McClelland 1997: 57). Thus, monarchy is rule by the one for the common interest, while tyranny is rule by the one for the one. Aristocracy is rule by the few for the common interest, while oligarchy is rule by the few for the few. Polity is rule by the many for the common good, while democracy is rule by the many for the many, or what Aristotle called 'mob rule'.

Types of regime

Finer (1997) adopted the Aristotelian approach to regime classification by identifying four 'pure' types of regime and their logical 'hybrids'. Each regime type is based on the nature of its ruling personnel. The pure types include the palace, the forum, the nobility, and the church. The hybrid types are the six possible combinations of the pure types, palace-forum, palace-nobility, palace-church, forum-nobility, forum-church, and nobility-church. These pure and hybrid types are meant to describe all the regime types that have existed in world history from 3200 BC to the modern nation state. Finer concedes that there are few instances of pure forms in history and that most polities fit one of his hybrid types.

Self-Assessment Exercises 1

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 2 minutes:

1. The first reason of comparative politics is to describe the political phenomena and events of a particular country, or group of countries.…. True or False?

2. Classification reduces the complexity of the world by seeking out those qualities that countries share and those that they do not ....…..?

4.3.4 Hypothesis-testing and Theory-building

Despite the differences between contextual description and classification, both forms of activity contribute to the next reason of comparison – hypothesis-testing. In other words, once things have been described and classified, the comparativist can then move on to search for those factors that may help explain what has been described and classified. Since the 1950s, political scientists have increasingly sought to use comparative methods to help build more complete theories of politics.

Comparison of countries allows rival explanations to be ruled out and hypotheses derived from certain theoretical perspectives to be tested through examining crossnational similarities and differences. Scholars using this mode of analysis, which is often seen as the *raison d'être* of the 'new' comparative politics (Mayer 1989), identify important variables, posit relationships to exist between them, and illustrate these relationships comparatively in an effort to generate and build comprehensive theories.

Arend Lijphart (1975) claims that comparison allows 'testing hypothesized empirical relationships among variables'. Similarly, Peter Katzenstein argues that 'comparative research is a focus on analytical relationships among variables validated by social science, a focus that is modified by differences in the context in which we observe and measure those variables' (in Kohli *et al.* 1995:11). Finally, Mayer (1989:46) argues somewhat more forcefully that 'the unique potential of comparative analysis lies in the cumulative and incremental addition of system-level attributes to existing explanatory theory, thereby making such theory progressively more complete'. In other words, comparison of countries and testing hypotheses contributes to the progressive accumulation of knowledge about the political world.

Multiple symposia on comparative politics in *World Politics* (Kohli *et al*. 1995), *American Political Science Review* (vol. 89, no. 2, pp. 454–481), and *Political Analysis* (Brady *et al*. 2006), as well as new monographs containing critical reflections on the state of comparative methodology suggest that questions of theory, explanation, and the role of comparison continue to be at the forefront of scholars minds (Flyvbjerg 2001; Brady and Collier 2004; George and Bennett 2005). Furthermore, the publication of truly comparative books in the field continues to demonstrate the fruitfulness of this mode of analysis. For example, Luebbert (1991) compares Britain, France, Switzerland, Belgium, The Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Italy, and Spain to uncover the class origins of regime type in inter-war Europe. Rueschemeyer *et al*. (1992) compare the historical experiences of the advanced industrial countries with those of the developing world to uncover the relationship between capitalist development and democracy. Wickham-Crowley (1993) compares instances of revolutionary activity in Latin America to discover the causal configuration of successful and unsuccessful social revolution in the region. Foweraker and Landman (1997) compare the authoritarian cases of Brazil, Chile, Mexico, and Spain to illustrate the relationship between citizenship rights and social movements. Dryzek and Holmes (2002) examines the ways in which citizens think and view democracy across eleven postcommunist countries. Hawkins (2002) uses the single case of Chile to examine how international mobilization condemning human rights abuses led 'rule-oriented' factions of the Pinochet regime to push for a democratic transition, the inferences from which are applied to the cases of Cuba and South Africa. Finally, Inglehart and Welzel (2005) compare cross-national survey and other data to assess the complex relationship between and among processes of modernization (or post-modernization), changing value systems, and democracy. In all these works, key explanatory and outcome variables are carefully defined and the relationships between them are demonstrated through comparison of empirical evidence.

In *Contemporary Democracies*, Powell (1982) examines a number of key hypotheses concerning voter participation in twenty-nine democratic countries. Participation is measured using voter turnout, or the percentage of the eligible voters who actually voted in national elections. He argues that voting participation ought to be higher in countries with higher levels of economic development (per capita GNP), a representational constitution, electoral laws that facilitate voting, and a party system with strong alignments to groups in society (Powell 1982). His statistical analysis of the data from these countries reveals positive effects for all these variables on voter participation. Moreover, his analysis shows that the level of economic development and constitutional structure are not directly related to voter participation, but that they lead to or help sustain the development of party systems and the choice of voting laws, which do get the voters to the polls.

Self-Assessment Exercises 2

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 2 minutes:

1. What is hypothesis?
2. Describe the meaning of theory-building.

4.3.5 Prediction

The final and most difficult reason of comparative politics is a logical extension of hypothesis-testing, namely, to make predictions about outcomes in other countries based on the generalizations from the initial comparison, or to make claims about future political outcomes. Prediction in comparative politics tends to be made in probabilistic terms, such as ‘countries with systems of proportional representation are more likely to have multiple political parties’. In this example, a political scientist would know the likely effect of a nation switching its electoral system from a plurality or ‘first-past-the-post’ rule to a proportional one (Hague *et al*. 1992). Another predictive example involves the benefits accrued to political incumbents in contesting future elections. Based on the empirical observations of past electoral contests, political scientists could be reasonably secure in predicting that the incumbent in any given election has a higher probability of winning the election than the non-incumbent (King *et al*. 1994).

Although prediction is less an aspiration of comparativists today than in the past, there are those who continue to couch their arguments in predictive language. For example, weak predictive arguments are found in Huntington’s (1996) *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the New World Order*, and strong predictive arguments are found in Vanhanen’s (1997) *The Prospects of Democracy*. Huntington (1996) identifies nine key cultural groupings which he believes currently characterize the world’s population, and predicts that future conflicts will be more likely to appear in the areas where two or more of these cultures meet or ‘clash’. Not only does he seek to predict future conflicts in the world, but claims that his ‘civilization’ approach accounts for more post-Cold War events than rival approaches. His predictions became all the more relevant after the terrorist attacks on the World

Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, which many saw as proof of a clash between the ‘Western’ and ‘Islamic’ civilizations outlined in his book. Subsequent analysis on pairs of states (or ‘dyads’) between 1969 and 2003 has shown that Huntington’s ‘West’ civilization has been significantly more targeted than other civilizational groups and that the Islam–West dyad encounters more terrorism, but in contrast to Huntington’s prediction, the Islamic group is not more violent *per se*, while overall levels of terrorism did not increase significantly after the Cold War (Neumayer and Plümper 2006).

Similarly, based on observations of the presence of economic resources and the occurrence of democracy in the world from the middle of the nineteenth century until today, Vanhanen (1997) predicts the degree to which individual countries and regions in the world are likely to become democratic, where his various results invite further research on the dynamics of democratization that moves beyond consideration of his socio-economic variables. Finally, in the field of human rights, Poe and Tate (1994) find from their analysis of the crossnational variation in the protection of human rights that economic development and democracy have a positive effect on the protection of human rights while involvement in international and civil war have a negative effect. Using these findings, Poe and Tate (1994) predict the likely over-time increases in repression (that is violations of human rights) due to the loss of democracy, involvement in international war, and experience of civil war, as well as predict the decrease in repression due to the increase in economic standing.

Making predictions using Democracy in East and Southeast Asia

Using similar methods as Burkhart and Lewis-Beck (1999), Vanhanen (1997) seeks to predict the expected level of democracy in specific countries and regions of the world based on their distribution of ‘power resources’. Democracy is measured by a combination of the smallest parties’ share of the vote and the percentage turnout. The distribution of power resources is measured by an index that combines the urban population, the non-agricultural population, proportion of students, the size of the literate population, the number of family farms, and the degree of decentralization of non-agricultural economic resources (Vanhanen 1997). By examining the relationship between the level of democracy and the distribution of power resources from 1850–1993, Vanhanen compares the actual 1993 values of democracy to those that were predicted using regression analysis.

The sixteen countries are listed along the horizontal axis and the values of the index of democratization are listed on the vertical axis. The predicted scores of democracy represent the level of democracy that each country ought to have obtained by 1993, given its corresponding distribution of power resources. The actual level is the score for 1993. The difference between the two values is known as the residual. Japan and South Korea appear to have obtained the levels of democracy that were predicted, while Malaysia, Mongolia, and the Philippines have higher levels of democracy than expected and Brunei, China, and Taiwan have lower scores than were expected. These varied results have several implications. First, the discrepancy between the actual and the predicted values may mean that something other than the distribution of power resources accounts for the level of democracy. Second, the deviant cases whose level of democracy is unexpected for 1993 may be temporary exceptions to the overall pattern. Third, the indicators that were used may not accurately reflect the concepts Vanhanen seeks to measure. Overall, however, the process of making predictions can raise new research questions and identify the need to focus on those cases that do not ‘fit’ the pattern.

4.3.5 Importance of comparison

Wh*y* study comparative politics? The study of comparative politics is focused first of all on each country’s internal politics, or how governments are structured, i. e. what are governing institutions and how their function; how governments interact with their population and what decisions are made; how political leaders and population behave in politics and how decisions are made; how and who makes or influences decisions or policy orientations, leadership, and other attributes of political decisions are vital components of comparative politics.
Famous American political scientist Robert Dahl was thinking that the essence of comparative politics is a study of power distribution in decision making situations. On the other hand, Jean Blondel noted that a primary object of comparative politics is public policy or outcomes of political action

Why we need to study comparative politics? According to Sodaro (2008: 28–29) the main purposes of studying comparative politics are as follows:

- widen our understanding of politics in other countries
- increase our appreciation of the advantages and disadvantages of our own political system and to enable us to learn from other countries
- develop a more sophisticated understanding of politics in general, for example, the relationships between governments and people, and other concepts and processes

- help us understand the linkages between domestic and international affairs
- help us see the relationship between politics and such fields as science and technology, the environment, public health, law, business, religion, ethnicity, and culture
- enable us to become more informed citizens: form our own political opinions, participate in political life, evaluate the actions and proposals of political leaders, and make our own political decisions and electoral choices
- sharpen our critical thinking skills by applying scientific logic and coherent argumentation to our understanding of political phenomena.

Self-Assessment Exercises 3

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 2 minutes:

1. Comparative politics widen our understanding of politics in other…..?
2. ...…... has outlined the importance of comparative politics?

4.4 Summary

In this unit, we demonstrated that the comparison of countries is useful for pure description, making classifications, hypothesis-testing, and prediction. We also identified some of the importance of comparison to include: it widen our understanding of politics in other countries; it increases our appreciation of the advantages and disadvantages of our own political system and to enable us to learn from other countries; it helps us develop a more sophisticated understanding of politics in general, for example, the relationships between governments and people, and other concepts and processes; it helps us understand the linkages between domestic and international affairs; it helps us see the relationship between politics and such fields as science and technology, the environment, public health, law, business, religion, ethnicity, and culture; it enables us to become more informed citizens: form our own political opinions, participate in political life, evaluate the actions and proposals of political leaders, and make our own political decisions and electoral choice; it sharpens our critical thinking skills by applying scientific logic and coherent argumentation to our understanding of political phenomena.

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4.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answers to SAEs 1

1. True
2. Share

Answers to SAEs 2

1. Hypothesis is a tentative research statement subject to verification.
2. Theory-building is a process of authenticating a theory through research process.

Answers to SAEs 3

1. Countries
2. Sodaro (2008)

Unit 5 Issues and Limitations in Comparative Political Analysis

Unit Structure

5.1 Introduction

Human thought has some bases for comparison. However, such a broad sense of the term “comparison” cannot procure an identity for the subfield of Comparative Politics. Only when comparison is applied as a method and is based on the scientific criteria, it can serve as a constituting characteristic of Comparative Politics. Hence, one must understand the difference between comparison and the comparative method. Comparison consists of confronting knowledge of and experience in familiar contexts with unknown contexts. Of course, the interpretation of familiar things can change after having gained experience in other cultural environments. A systematic comparison is based on explicit rules on what and how to compare. Besides, one of the main prerequisites for the application of the comparative method is to find criteria which permit a systematic comparison. Most of the time, these criteria cannot be derived directly from the observation of individual phenomena. In order to carry out comparisons, criteria need to be established which the phenomena which are to be compared have in common and which can be comparatively recorded. When we wish to compare two phenomena, we need to determine a criterion based on which we can carry out the comparison. In this unit, we shall critically examine the meaning of comparative political analysis.

5.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- understand the advantages of comparative political analysis;
- examine the boundary problem associated with comparative politics;
- examine the postmodern critique on theory and ethnocentrism of comparative politics;
- review the methodological problems associated with comparative political analysis.

5.3 Issues and Limitations in Comparative Political Analysis

5.3.1 Gains of Comparative Political Analysis

Comparison is a useful method to analyse the different political phenomena existing in the world. This not only widens understanding of politics of other countries but also handy to increase appreciation of the advantages and disadvantages of different political systems. Several reasons explain the necessity for comparison. The first strength of a comparative approach is that it enables the "comparativists" to find out, and by implication know more about the places where they would otherwise know little about. Having adequate and relevant background information about foreign governments not only helps to interpret new developments, it also helps with practical political relationships. In international politics, the fact that one is aware that the decision making environment in his domestic terrain is not the same with those of others is enough factor to influence the attitudinal modification in relating with other countries.

This explains why many scholars seriously advocate for studying the politics of other countries because it helps us to discover our own ethnocentrism, biases, narrowness, and subjectivity and the means to overcome it. Moreover, comparison empowers the political scientist with the potential for prediction and control. By this, a validated generalization offers the comparativists the potential for prediction.

Thus the ability to predict occurrence based on the relationships between variables and the outcomes that are consistently produced. If we find that parliamentary democracy have greater chances of uniting a highly fragmented society than the presidential system, we easily recommend the parliamentary democracy with multi-party arrangement to other fragmented societies.

In short, the comparative analysis has many advantages, of which three are more important. These are:

i. we cannot understand our own country without a knowledge of others;
ii. we cannot understand other countries without a knowledge of their background, institutions and history; and
iii. we cannot arrive at valid generalisations about government and politics without the comparative method.

While the comparative approach to political studies has proved useful in the study of politics, it nevertheless has its challenges. Many of the problems identified in the literature presuppose that explanation is the sole function of comparison. The following section discusses the various problems which are being faced by the scholars in the comparative political analysis or comparative study.

Self-Assessment Exercises 1

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 4 minutes:

1. What is the core advantage of comparison?
2. Are prediction and control part of the benefits of comparison…. True or False?

5.3.2 Problems of Comparative Political Analysis

There are certain difficulties and disadvantages in comparative analysis as well. Common problem of social sciences is that there are usually too many variables and too few cases. There are more than 200 countries in the world, but unfortunately for us, they are all quite different. It is impossible to compare radically different or completely identical countries. The other problem with the comparative method is that research might be not objective and the researcher deliberately chooses countries to show negative or positive moments to proof his/her point of view. Macridis (1955), questioned the way comparative political analysis had been practised in the past. He argued that comparative politics was parochial since it focused solely on the experiences of Western Europe. The descriptive rather than analytical orientation of comparative analysis also imposed obvious limitations on its wider applicability. Macridis states that comparative analysis that was carried out so far was mostly formalistic and legalistic; it lacks dynamism. Most importantly, he says, it highlighted individual case studies rather than comparisons of two and more societies. Apart from this, some of the other deficiencies or problems associated with Comparative Analysis and listed below.

Problem of Disciplinary Boundary

According to Neera Chandhoke, scholars of Comparative Politics are no longer confident that they can define or delineate either the boundaries, or the scope, or the method of comparative politics. For one, the precise status of the sub-discipline is in doubt. Comparative political analysis by its very nature is heavily dependent upon other subfields of political science, such as political theory, for its approaches, methods and concepts. Consequently, it has not been able to attain the status of, say political philosophy, which has generated its own internal debates, passions and furore over method and issues. A sub-discipline does not have to be foundational, as political philosophy is, but it does need to possess a central core of concepts, definitions and focus. These may have been borrowed from, and adapted from other fields, but nevertheless they do perform the function of serving as the referent point of inquiry. But in comparative politics there is no longer any central body of literature, any coordinating theory, let alone a set of concepts arrived at consensually which can function as a fulcrum for analysis.

The lack of an autonomous status, however relative such autonomy may be, means that comparative politics has not been able to stand on its own feet. But, then, either has it been able to locate itself vis-a-vis other sub-disciplines of political science. In many centres it is regarded as a part of area studies, or as an extension of international politics, or even business studies which is a legacy of American scholars, or slotted into policy research as is the trend in many research institutes. Consequently, it has come to acquire functional properties which change with the switch from field to field.

Self-Assessment Exercises 2

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 3 minutes:

1. Describe the problem of disciplinary boundaries as it relates to comparative politics.

5.3.3 The Postmodern Critique

The rise of postmodernism in the 1960s seriously raised some of the issues which have questioned the content and orientation of comparative politics. The postmodern perspective which questions the universality, grand theories, absolute generalization, has become critical to the orientations rely on the same tendencies.

The postmodernist attack on theory per se affects comparative politics in a fundamental sense. The postmodern critiques charge political theory in the metanarrative mode, with imposing coherence upon otherwise incoherent and incommensurable political phenomena. As Neera Chandhoke pointed out, since grand theory which forms the bedrock of comparison, has become the target of philosophical scepticism, comparative politics is the first casualty of this exercise. This is because large-scale historical comparisons draw their sustenance from metanarratives. These comparisons look for the recurrence of events and sequences across histories and cultures, and are based upon expectations of uniformities and causal regularities. The comparative method in political analysis is attacked because in its search for casual regularities it abstracts events and processes from their multilayered contexts.

According to these critics, events are only given meaning in particular contexts which possess various levels of temporality. Thus, causes cannot be abstracted from their narrative environments, and used to see why analytically similar causes beget different results. Consequently, comparative analysis is charged with reductionism, and with subordinating otherwise complex events to the variables which have been isolated for the purposes of comparison.

Ethnocentrism

Since comparative politics is, in principle, based upon the study of other societies and environments, such studies, as political theorists have come to recognise, are particularly vulnerable to charges of imperial biases and ethnocentrism which plagued the study of the ‘other’. This is true not only of colonial texts, but also of modernisation theories. Scholars are consequently hesitant to embark upon comparisons of the experience of other countries and other societies, because they are no longer sure whether their own frames of understanding are sensitive enough to the modes by which the people of those societies understand themselves.

5.3.4 Problems Associated With Globalization and Decline of Nation-State

Neera Chandhoke also pointed out the problems associated with the crisis of political institutions, indeed of the nation-state itself. Global flows of capital and technology, cultural practices, consumer seductions, cross-country labour migrations; monitoring of human rights violations; military interventions in the name of famine relief and prevention of ethnic cleansing and genocide as in Somalia, Rwanda, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria and many other third world countries from above, and deep rooted challenges to the very notion of the nation-state by autonomy movements from below, signify that the ideas and the institutions of a 'culturally homogeneous' nation-state which had come to pervade political thinking since the 18th century, are in crisis. Since, it were these very ideas and institutions that have been generally regarded as usual categories of analysis, this, not surprisingly, has led to doubt and hesitations in respect as to what is to be made the object of comparative analysis.

It was usually assumed in the main tenets of political science, that each society generated its own state. It was likewise assumed that the organisation of this state under the principle of self-determination as perfectly legitimate and desirable. Correspondingly, it was assumed that there existed a close correspondence between the practices of societies and those of states. But as we can see today, the histories of states and societies have come to acquire distinct and often divergent trajectories resulting in the breakup of nation-state as in former Yugoslavia or the former Soviet Union. The question of abstracting practices and institutions for comparison becomes that much more difficult when all historical givens are being challenged. Comparative politics needs to move outside the state-society correspondence framework, and whether political scientists whose discipline is rooted firmly in the concept of the state can do so, is doubtful.

5.3.5 Methodological Problem

Scholars also pointed out some of the problems associated with the very method of comparison itself. The following section will analyse them.

Problem of Cases and Variables

First, political scientists are unable to control the variables in the cases they study. In other words, in our search for cause-and-effect relationships, we are unable to make true comparisons because each of our cases is quite different. But comparative politics offers very few opportunities to control the variables because the variables are a function of real-world politics. Countries are amazingly diverse in terms of economics, culture, geography, resources, and political structures, and it is difficult to control for these differences. Secondly, Comparativists are often hampered by a limited number of cases. In the natural sciences, research is often conducted with a huge number of cases – hundreds of stars or thousands of individuals. This breadth allows researchers to select their cases in such a way as to control their variables, and the large number of cases also prevents any single unusual case from distorting the findings. But in comparative politics, we are limited by the number of countries in the world – fewer than 200 at present, most of which did not exist a few centuries ago. The third problem in comparative politics concerns how we access the cases we do have. Even with the limited number of countries available to study, research is further hindered by the barriers that make countries unique. As you might imagine, doing research in more than one country is extremely challenging. A researcher may be able to read Russian and travel to Russia frequently, but if he wants to compare communism between the Soviet Union and China, it would be ideal to be able to read Chinese and conduct research in China as well. Few comparativists have the language skills, time, or resources to conduct field research in a number of countries.

Self-Assessment Exercises 3

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 2 minutes:

1. Describe the cases and variable related problem in comparative politics?

5.4 Summary

In this unit, we explained the problems of comparative political analysis. It is necessary for the students to understand these problems so that they can avoid them and find out a proper solution for an accurate comparative study. Comparative method is definitely the best choice to study and analyze contemporary politics, but students should be aware of the difficulties associated with this method. Comparative method simplifies a complex political reality and makes it more manageable.

Comparative politics brings us into contact with political worlds other than our own and expands our political and cultural horizons. Comparative approach to studying of politics also enables us to move beyond mere description, toward explanation and within this method we can talk about comparative politics as a science. But on the other side, we shouldn’t forget that any research of comparative method is vulnerable to personal interests and motivations.

5.5 References/Further Reading/Web Resources

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5.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answers to SAEs 1

1. Several reasons explain the necessity for comparison. The first strength of a comparative approach is that it enables the “comparativists” to find out, and by implication know more about the places where they would otherwise know little about.
2. True

Answer to SAEs 2

1. The problem of boundaries has to do with the concern for scope and limit of the course.

Answers to SAEs 3

First, political scientists are unable to control the variables in the cases they study. In other words, in our search for cause-and-effect relationships, we are unable to make true comparisons because each of our cases is quite different. Secondly, Comparativists are often hampered by a limited number of cases.

MODULE 2 THEORIES OF COMPARATIVE POLITICS

Most people may not know much of anything about theory. Theory is either "so esoteric and complicated as to be incomprehensible" or "so commonplace and obvious as to be platitudinous" (Shoemaker, Jr, and Lasorsa 2003). Either way, to most people, theories seem to be of little use. In reality, however, people use theories every day about friendship, dating, success, and so on. A *scientific theory* is a set of logically consistent statements that tell us why the empirical social and political phenomena we observe, or the relationships between them, occur in the way they occur. More formally, a theory "is a system of constructs (concepts) and propositions (relationships between those constructs) that collectively present a logical, systematic, and coherent explanation of a phenomenon of interest within some assumptions and boundary conditions" (Bacharach 1989).

Simply, a theory is an interrelated set of propositions about empirical reality. Political scientists rely on theory to analyze public opinion or predict election results, and weather analysts apply theory to forecast weather conditions. Most people, however, misunderstand what a theory is and what a theory does. In this Module, we will examine a few number of theories in comparative politics to understand their meaning, significance to the understanding of comparative politics in specific and political science in general. Therefore, this module is thematically structured into five units that comprehensively present vital details that will clear your doubt and help you as follows:

Therefore, it is important you study each of the unit carefully as you are expected to answer some questions to evaluate your understanding on the various issues as discussed. Possible answers to the questions are provided under each of the unit accordingly.

Unit 1 Structural-Functionalism in Comparative Politics

Unit Structure

1.1 Introduction

In this unit, we begin with the structural-functional theory. The structural-functional theory is based on the concept of Political System. This model of political analysis has been widely used in the methods of comparative politics because it provides for standard categories for different types of political systems. It originated in the sphere of social anthropology in the writings of Radcliffe Brown and B. Malinowski. Then it was developed in the field of sociology by Talcott Parsons, Robert Merton, and Marion Levy. Gabriel Almond and his associates develop it into a tool of political analysis. We shall carefully examine its evolution, strength and weakness of the theory.

1.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- understand the evolution of structural-functionalism as a theory.
- discuss the essential propositions of the structural-functional theory to the study of comparative politics.
- appreciate the strength and weaknesses of structural-functionalism.

1.3 Structural-Functionalism as a theory in Comparative Politics

The term function first was used in mathematics: (x)f(y) = x(f)y, i.e., x and y are functionally related. Then, in economics: P = f(S, D), i.e., price of a commodity depends on the functional relationship between supply and demand. Then in Anthropology by Bronislaw Malinowski and Radcliffe Brown. Then in Sociology as advanced by Robert K Merton, Talcott Parsons and Marion Levy. Then in Political Science as opined by Gabriel A Almond and his colleagues for the first time in late 1950s and early 1960s (Ramesh, 2021.

The structural-functional theory was developed by Gabriel Almond and Powell in Comparative Politics in his work: *A Developmental Approach, 1966*. He and his associates argued that all political systems, regardless of their types, must perform specific sets of tasks if they are to remain in existence as systems in working order or equilibrium i.e. ongoing systems. These are the functional requirements of the system. They suggested the use of 'functions' and 'functional requisites' instead of 'inputs' and 'outputs' as modifications to Easton's modal. They have provided seven functions that a political system has to perform to sustain themselves and stay relevant. Structural-functionalism has grown from two academic traditions. In the first tradition, we can place the works of Malinowski, Radcliffe -Brown, and Talcott Parsons. In the second traditions, we can refer to the works of Arthur and David Truman. Both these traditions have converged in the contributions of Gabriel Almond, whose structural-functional approach made great impact on comparative politics.

Self-Assessment Exercises 1

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 2 minutes:

1. Structural-functionalism has grown from two academic traditions...True or False?

2. Gabriel Almond cannot be considered as a leading proponent of the Structural-functional theory….True or False?

1.3.1 The Core Proposition of the Structural-Functionalism

A structural-functional theory is a form of systemic analysis that looks at the political system as a coherent whole that influences and is in turn influenced by their environments. A political system is held together by the presence of legitimate force throughout the system. It has three characteristics:

- Comprehensiveness
- Independence
- Limited boundaries (Almond and Powell, 1966).

The interactions that take place within a system are not between individuals but between the roles which these individuals adopt. Lastly, the political system is an open system and is involved in communications with systems, beyond its boundaries.

We have to understand the meaning and implications of the twin terms, *structure* and *function* in the context of the structural-functional theory.

These terms have a distinct meaning in this theory than what are used in traditional social analysis. For Almond and Powell, function refers to particular sets of roles which are related to one another as structures. It also suggests that structures are those arrangements within a system which are concerned with the performance of functions or ‘roles’. Structures are patterns of action for a system of functions. A particular structure may perform different functions; again different set of structures may perform similar functions. In this theory, a social structure is considered as any pattern of behaviour, which has become the standard feature of a social system (Almond and Powell, 1966).

Structures may be of two-types: *concrete* such as government departments, corporations, bureaus, or they may be *analytic*, that is, concepts abstracted from concrete reality such as structures of ‘authority’, ‘power’, ‘control’ or ‘accountability.’ Generally, analytic structures have some concrete referents or bases. Thus, the term ‘structure’ in the structural-functional approach goes beyond formal structures and carries an additional connotation.

On the other hand, Almond and Powell conceived function as observable actions which make up the political system. Functions are those observed consequences which make for the adaptation and adjustment of a given system. Merton has classified function into manifest functions which are patterns of action whose consequences are both intended and recognized by the participants and which are clearly observable, while Latent functions are patterns of actions whose consequences are unintended and unrecognized by the participants and which are very complex and difficult to observe or even not observable at all. Generally, function is a synonym of ‘task’, like the functions of a chief executive or of President, Prime Minister, Chief Minister, or Chief

Secretary. However, in structural-functional analysis, a 'function' has two meanings:

- It is a pattern of interdependence or relationship between two or more structures.
- It refers to the consequences of a structure on other structures or on the whole system.

Essentially, 'interdependence' and 'influences' are similar in nature. They denote reciprocity of relationship between and among various structures or sub-structures or between structures and the total system. For instance, we examine in administrative analysis the relationship between financial management and planning or between control and accountability or between authority and responsibility. An analysis of such interdependence brings out the actual dynamics of an administrative system. Further, we also study under this theory the influence of a structure on the larger administrative system and the impact of the total administrative system on a particular structure. For instance, the effect of personnel policies on the overall performance of an administrative system and likewise, the influence of important policies and decisions on human resource management (Riggs, 1961).

It is important to note that a structure may be uni-functional or multi-functional. A uni-functional structure may perform only one function, like the Central Bureau of Investigation does, while a multifunctional structure like the President's Office or even the Police Department may perform several inter-related or distinct functions.

In developed countries, where the level of specialization is relatively high, we might find certain uni-functional structures, while in the developing world, where the degree of specialization is relatively lower, we tend to find structures that are multifunctional. In public administration, a uni-functional administrative system is difficult to envisage, since the bureaucracy is involved, directly or indirectly, in a variety of functions Simon (1966). Let us take an example of the formal or informal roles of bureaucracy in a developing country in democratic set up:

1. **Political:** Occasionally bureaucrats align with politicians in sharing influence and power, and sometimes, political leaders use administrators to achieve their political goals.
2. **Economic:** An administrative system has the responsibility to regulate and promote an economic system in the domains of agriculture, industry, irrigation, transport etc.

3. **Social:** Bureaucrats have the responsibility of playing an important role in designing policies in the spheres of education, health, gender justice, child welfare etc.
4. **Cultural:** The attitudes and behaviours of administrators influence the development of social attitudes and values in a society and vice versa.
5. **Technological:** An administrative system influences a technological system by determining its scope of operations, assigning its responsibilities, providing its resources, and preparing technocrats for specific obligations.

Herein, an administrative system influences the political, economic, social, cultural, and technological systems, and in turn, is influenced by all of them.

In the structural-functional theory, it is postulated that a function may be performed by one structure (which is rare) or by more than one structure. The administrative function is performed not just by bureaucrats but by many other actors of society. For instance, politicians make laws and policies that determine the scope of the administrative system; the economic system provides resources to the administrative system and gives it the responsibility of implementing economic policies; and at the social level; tribes, castes and innumerable socio-cultural groups put pressure on the administrative system to safeguard and promote their specific interests (Riggs, 1961).

In structural-functional analysis, it is postulated that there are certain ‘requisite’ functions in a society or organization that ensure their health and continuity, while there are also certain ‘prerequisite’ functions that are essential for the birth and survival of a social system. Riggs has identified five functional requisites for any society:

- Economic,
- Social,
- Communicational,
- Symbolic, and
- Political (Riggs, 1961).

We can assume that any administrative system will have the requisite functions of policy making, decision-making, planning, financial management, human resource management, engagement and participation of citizens etc. Likewise, creation of an administrative organization will need law, manpower, and finances, as prerequisites.

Application

While Gabriel Almond refers to the 'rule-implementation' function of a political system performed through the administrative system, he is conscious of the fact that bureaucracy is also involved in 'rule-making', though not in a formal manner. No law can be made without inputs from administration. Fred Riggs also used the structural-functional approach in constructing his models of 'agraria' and 'industria', and 'fused', 'prismatic' and 'diffracted societies.' Perhaps no other comparative administration scholar has gone beyond Riggs in the application of this approach in explaining the cross-national or cross-cultural administrative reality (Riggs, 1961).

Self-Assessment Exercises 2

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 2 minutes:

1. Write a brief note on structural-functionalism.

2. Identify the three characteristics of the structural-functional

1.3.2 The Strength and Usefulness of Structural-functionalism

Some of the strength of the structural-functional theory are as follows:

- Structural functional theory takes dynamic view of administrative structures and functions.
- It is 'systemic' in nature, looking at interactions and interrelationships among various structures.
- It is value-neutral.
- It emphasizes that certain structures that are found in developed administrative systems may not have their counterparts in developing nations, yet administrative functions are common in both.
- It points out that the absence of a structure does not mean that certain functions are not being performed. May be they are performed by certain other structures.
- It convinces that various indigenous structures in non-western nations may be useful in their distinct settings, even though they appear to be 'dysfunctional' from the point of view of western nations.
- The theory is ecological in character.

1.3.3 Limitation of Structural-functionalism

- It is too 'grand' a theory to offer operational definitions and researchable concepts.
- It is difficult to identify all the functions performed by a structure.
- Likewise, it is almost impossible to identify various structures performing particular functions.
- Its premises are too general, making it difficult to compare administrative systems across various nations and culture.

Despite the above limitations, the structural functional approach offers a new vision to look at the diversity in the nature, scope, performance, and impact of administrative systems in a comparative context.

Self-Assessment Exercises 3

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minutes:

1. List two strength of the structural-functional theory.
2. Identify two weaknesses of the structural-functional theory.

1.4 Summary

This Unit has dealt with the structural-functional theory with its multi-functionality in terms of political, economic, social, cultural, and technological premises; multi-structurality, requisites and pre-requisite functions, applications, and merits and limitations. The unit ended by stating the usefulness of the structural-functional theory such as taking the dynamic view of administrative structures and functions, looking at interactions and interrelationships among various structures, value-neutra among others.

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1.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answers to SAEs 1

1. True
2. False

Answers to SAEs 2

1. A structural-functional theory is a form of systemic analysis that looks at the political system as a coherent whole that influences and is in turn influenced by their environments. A political system is held together by the presence of legitimate force throughout the system.
2. It has three characteristics: comprehensiveness, independence and limited boundaries.

Answers to SAEs 3

1. Firstly, structural functional theory takes dynamic view of administrative structures and functions. Secondly, it is ‘systemic’ in nature, looking at interactions and interrelationships among various structures.
2. Firstly, it is too ‘grand’ a theory to offer operational definitions and researchable concepts. Secondly, it is difficult to identify all the functions performed by a structure

Unit 2 The Evolution of Political System Theory in Comparative Politics

Unit Structure

2.1 Introduction

Comparative politics generally operates at the macro-level, comparing whole political systems (Easton, 1966). The descriptive tradition of comparative politics had done that in its own manner for most of the history of the discipline. What was being sought then, however, was a version of comparative analysis that could cope with entire systems, yet could say something more about them analytically. The two principal versions of macro-theory were systems theory and structural-functionalism. We have discussed the structural-functional theory in the last unit. In this unit we shall examined a counterpart theory – the system theory. We shall consider its core argument, utility, and weaknesses.

2.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- Trace the evolutionary trajectory of the system theory
- Understand the core assumption of the system theory
- Appreciate the utility of the system theory
- Understand the weaknesses of the system theory

2.3 The Evolutionary Trajectory of Political System Theory in Comparative Politics

In the early 20th century, Systems Theory was first applied in Biology by Ludwig Von Bertallanfy. Then, in 1920s, Anthropologists Bronislaw Malinowski (*Argonauts of the Western Pacific*) and Radcliffe Brown (*Andaman Islanders*) used system theory as a theoretical tool for analyzing the behavioural patterns of the primitive tribes. For them it was more important to find out what part a pattern of behaviour in a given social system played in maintaining the system as a whole, rather than how the system had originated. Logical Positivists like Moritz Schilick, Rudolf Carnap, Otto Von Newrath, Victor Kraft and Herbert Feigl, who used to consider empirically observable and verifiable knowledge as the only valid knowledge had influenced the writings of Herbert Simon and other contemporary political thinkers. Sociologists Robert K Merton and Talcott Parsons for the first time had adopted the Systems Theory in their work. All these developments in the first half of the 20th century had impacted on the application of the Systems Theory to the study of Political Science.

David Easton, Gabriel Almond, G C Powell, Morton Kaplan, Karl Deutsch and other behaviouralists were the pioneers to adopt the Systems Theory for analyzing political phenomena and developing theories in Political Science during late 1950s and 1960s. System theory makes empirical and comparative study possible even of those political institutions, apart from the state, such as, international political system, city, political party, etc. The theory is helpful in studying changes like transformation, feedback, exchange, tension, conflict and development. Besides Easton, Gabriel Almond, Talcott Parsons, Karl Deutsch, Morton Kaplan and others have made such studies. Systems theory analyses interactions, structures, institutions, and processes pertaining to politics. Politics involves power, authority, physical coercion, and allocation of values for society.

In all shades of politics, political processes, and structures are enmeshed with several other elements, factors, and considerations. As such, a 'political system' cannot be physically separated from its non-political aspects, and is, therefore, usually understood and studied in an analytical manner. Society as a whole makes up the general social system, which contains many subsystems. Political system is one of these subsystems. When the political system is to be studied as a whole along with its intra-subsystems, then, it is treated as a 'system'. Besides that, 'system' can be considered as a part of environment. Thus, the concept of 'system' both in interlocking micro and macro forms saves us from the error of considering ‘systems’ as isolated, separate, or independent entities.

Besides throwing light on their interconnections, one can examine their discrete nature, and separate empirical existence. According to Almond, the political system in a society, is ‘legitimate, order maintaining’ or transforming system’. Wiseman maintains that every political system involves political structures, actors, or roles performed by their agents, interaction-patterns existing between individuals or collectivities, and political processes. In the ‘political system’ of Kaplan also, there are recognisable multivariate interests. Instead of always being opposite, sometimes they are complementary to each other. There are regular structures and channels to reach the decisions and judgments related to particular interests. General rules are prescribed to govern the actors and activities relating to particular decisions and judgments. Easton, therefore, regards the political system engaged in decision-making and implementing the authoritative allocation of values for society.

Self-Assessment Exercises 1

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minutes:

1. The following are proponents of system theory: Davide Easton, Gabriel Almond and Talcott Parsons…. True or False?

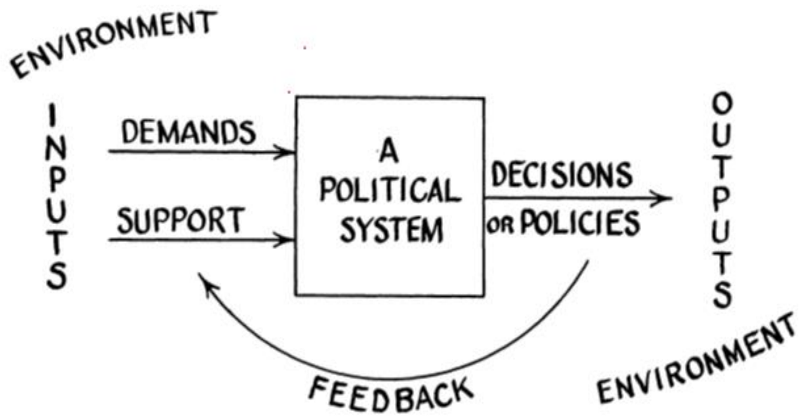
2. Briefly describe David Easton’s system theory.

2.3.1 The Core Proposition of the Political System Theory

As mentioned earlier, the development of systems level theory was characteristic of the early stages of the ‘behavioural revolution’ in the study of politics during the 1950s and 1960s. This theoretical development was in large part a reaction to the descriptive character of almost all studies in ‘comparative politics’ before then. Further, this theory was designed to be sufficiently general to be applicable to almost all political systems. This generality was designed to be in clear contrast to most comparative politics up till then, which had concentrated on the countries of Europe and North America. The generalisability of systems theory was especially important during an era in which a number of former colonial countries were gaining independence and had political practices and traditions very different from those of Western governments. Therefore, this theory tended to function at an extremely high level of generality, and could be applied to every system from tribal governments to the most advanced democratic political system.

The fundamental argument of systems theory was that politics and government could be conceptualised as a system of input, throughput and output functioning in an environment that provided the ‘energy’ required by the system. In the case of politics, that energy was ‘demands and supports’. Those factors comprised demands from groups and individuals for policy changes, the political support from the population in general, and other necessary resources such as tax money. The outputs of the system were policies, with a feedback loop reflecting responses to the policies that then initiated another round of political demands from the public to which the system would respond.

Under this theory, the government became the ‘black Box’ linking inputs to outputs. There was almost no specification of the institutions and processes that would be used to link inputs to outputs. This lack of specificity is perhaps understandable, given the goals of the scholars involved to eliminate any dependence upon specific and possibly ethnocentric ideas about how government should be conducted. Still, it made ‘government’ as we conventionally think about it appear an almost automatic process. The assumption was that the internal functioning of the system would make some direct linkage between ‘wants and demands’ expressed (in some manner) by the public and policies of government. This was a rather optimistic, democratic perspective, but it also ignored all the politics that we know takes place within that ‘black box’, and the marked differences between what goes into the box and what eventually comes out. There was some attempt to develop an idea of ‘withinputs’ to describe the machinations of governing, but that seemed to do little to clarify the process.



The flow model of political system presented by David Easton in “An Approach to theAnalysis of Political System” (in *World Politics*, Vol 9, No 3, April 1957, p 384)

1.3.2 The Key Concepts of System Theory Analysis

Below are some of the basic concepts used in system theory analysis:
System: It is useful to view political life as a system of behaviour. Political life may be described as a set or system of interactions defined by the fact that they are more or less directly related to the authoritative allocation of values for a society.

Environment: A system is distinguishable from the environment in which it exists and open to influences from it. Those aspects of a society that fall outside the boundaries of a political system can be generalized by stating that they consist of all the other subsystems of the society. They constitute the environment of the political system. Environment embraces the social as well as the physical environment. The environment of the political system is composed of two different types of systems: intrasocietal and extrasocietal.

Intrasocietal Environment: It is that part of the social and physical environment that lies *outside* the boundaries of a political system and yet *within* the same society. They include Ecological system; Biological system; Personality systems; Social systems.

Extrasocietal Environment: The systems that lie outside the society of which the political system itself is a social subsystem, yet having important consequences for the persistence or change of a political system constitute the extrasocietal environment of a political system. They consisted International Political systems; International Ecological systems; International Social systems. **Boundary:** Analytically, the boundaries of all systems may be interpreted as the criteria of inclusion in or exclusion from the systems forming the focus of interest. For the political system, the test is whether the interactions (of constituting actors) are more or less directly related to the authoritative allocations of values for a society.

Inputs: Inputs are indicators that will sum up most of the important effects that cross the boundary between the political system and the other systems belonging to its environment. They indicate the way in which environmental events and conditions modify and affect the operations of the political system. However there may be some kinds of inputs originating from the system itself, which are identified as 'withinputs'. There are two basic kinds of inputs: demands, or the raw material that the system is called upon to process, and support, or the energy to keep it going. These inputs give a political system its dynamic character.

Demands: Demands are those kinds of wants of persons or groups placed before the political system which require some special organized effort on the part of society to settle them authoritatively.

Support: Support is the energy in the form of actions or orientations promoting and resisting a political system. Actions may include voting for a political candidate or defending a decision by the highest court of the land. Whereas orientations imply deep-seated set of attitudes or predispositions such as loyalty to a political party or the ideals of democracy and patriotism. Support may be directed to three distinct objects of the political system: the authorities or the government of the day; the regime or the principles, values, legal structures and statutes that make up the constitutional framework of the system; and the political community as a whole, consisting of a group of persons that seek to settle difference or promote decisions through peaceful action in common.

Conversion Process: From among the variety of demands presented in a system, its members, particularly at times those who have the special responsibility of leadership, must select a few as the goals and objectives of the system and commit the limited resources of the society to their realization. Through this vast conversion process the inputs of demands and support are acted upon in such a way that it is possible for the system to persist and produce outputs meeting the demands of at least some of the members, and retaining the support of most. It is a way of translating demands and support for a system into authoritative allocations. Persistence of a system, its capacity to continue the production of authoritative outputs, will depend upon keeping the conversion process operating.

Outputs: Outputs are those kinds of occurrences concerned with the authoritative allocation of values or binding decisions and the actions implementing and related to them. They are exemplified in the statutes of a legal system, administrative decisions and actions, decrees, rules and other enunciated policies on the part of the political authorities. If outputs are to have any impact on support they must be able to meet the existing or anticipated demands of the members of the system.

Disturbances: A political system is subject to influences of many kinds coming to it from the environment or from things that happen within a political system, these are designated as disturbances.

Stress: Stress is a severe type of disturbance occurring in the environment of a political system that threatens to destroy it. A stress interferes in some fundamental way with the capacity of a political system to keep a conversion process working.

Regulation of Demand Stress: Demand stress must be regulated otherwise it could cause the collapse of a political system. This may be done by checking the volume of demands and augmenting the capacity of the system as well.

Structural Regulation: Regulating the structural regulators of the volume of demands or the gatekeepers of the society who stand athwart the admission channels to a system. For example, the interest groups, political parties, opinion leaders or the mass media in a modern system and the notables, an aristocracy or a military cadre in a traditional society.

Cultural Restraints: Cultural restrains would serve to modify the number of desires that members of a society would even presume to convert to demands. To pursue this policy a system may identify certain aspects of social life such as aesthetics, religion or even some kinds of economic wants as ‘not a subject for political action’.
Combination of Demands: The volume and variety of demands may be reduced at a very initial stage of their articulation through combination of two or more demands into one.

Increase Channels: The channels for communicating demands into outputs may be increased by implementing structural differentiation and augmenting the capacity of the system to handle a greater volume of demands. This helps a system to cope with potential stress.

Regulation of Support Stress: If support for a system threatens to fall below a minimum level then the system must either provide mechanism to revive the flagging support or its days will be numbered.

Structural Regulation: The most radical strategy for regulating support stress is to transform the goals and structures of a system as a means of maintaining at least some kind of mechanism for making authoritative allocations, such as by adopting a new constitutional order fundamentally different from the previous one.

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.\

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.

2.3.3 Systems Theory and Comparative Politics

As Ronald Chilcote pointed out, the classification of systems has caught the attention of comparativists ranging from Aristotle, who conceived societies in terms of monarchies, aristocracies, and democracies, to Gabriel Almond, who offered a breakdown of Anglo-American, continental European, totalitarian, and preindustrial systems. Similarly, many scholars provided various typologies to understand contemporary political systems. For instance, F. X. Sutton classify societies into agriculture and industrial systems; James S. Coleman wrote of competitive, semi competitive, and authoritarian systems, David Apter divided the world into dictatorial, oligarchical, indirectly representative, and directly representative systems. Fred W. Riggs analyzed fused, prismatic, and refracted systems, and S. N. Eisenstadt offered a comprehensive classification of primitive systems, patrimonial empires, nomad or conquest empires, city-states, feudal systems, centralized bureaucratic, autocratic empires, and modern systems; he further divided the modern systems into democratic, autocratic, totalitarian, and underdeveloped categories. Leonard Binder classification contains three types of systems: traditional, conventional, and rational systems. Edward Shills referred to political democracies, tutelary democracies, modernizing oligarchies, totalitarian oligarchies, and traditional oligarchies. Arend Lijphart compared majoritarian and consensus models of democracy.

The above examples indicates ways of organizing our understanding about reality and facilitating the use of a variety of classifications rather than relying on a single method. Though the system theory has implanted itself firmly in social sciences, but it has not resolved the doubt and uncertainty that also pervades social science. The obsession of social scientists with theories of systems is largely attributable to the desire to be able to predict accurately and thereby change things for the better.

The framework of system analysis is very important for the comparative analysis of diverse political units. It can also be applicable to the international political studies. Yet, this theory has some drawbacks in its generalization about the diverse political systems. This approach concerned political system as preoccupied with stability, maintenance, persistence, and equilibrium, a tendency derived from biology which could not be applicable to a political system. Hence, the system theory is rooted in conservatism and reaction, which colours most of the studies in Political Science carried out with the help of methodological tools evolved under the general frame-work of the systems theory (Riggs, 1961; Apter 1977).

Self-Assessment Exercises 2

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minutes:

1. System theory was part of the evolutionary trajectory of the behavioural approach…. True or False?

2. In the system theory………is the Black Box that links inputs and outputs?

2.3.4 The Strength and Usefulness of Political System Theory

- The system theory has made some real contributions to comparative politics. In the first place, the theory did accomplish what it intended, that is to provide a very general perspective on political life, which could be applied almost anywhere.
- The systems theory pointed out that government, like all systems, was dependent upon its environment, so that the importance of the social and economic underpinnings of government was reinforced. Despite that dependence on the environment, systems were conceptualized as having the capacity to make decisions that would reflect internal political realities; this was to some extent the beginning of discussions about the 'autonomy of the state' (Nordlinger, 1981; Migdal, 1988).
- The systems theory did point out than even in apparently totalitarian systems there had to be some connection between the demands of the public and the policies enacted. Relatedly, this approach also pointed out the degree of interconnections between all aspects of economy, society and the political system, as well as the complex (if unspecified) interactions that may occur within the political system itself (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967).
- Finally, systems theory pointed to the importance of feedback, and the need of governments to take into account their own previous actions when making policies. As a number of scholars (Wildavsky, 1980; Hogwood and Peters, 1985) have pointed out, policy is very often its own cause, and one round of policy-making almost inevitably produces political reactions, new policy problems, and a subsequent round of policy-making. This feedback-dominant perspective on governing was elaborated by Karl Deutsch in his conception of government as a cybernetic system - *The Nerves of Government* (1963). Deutsch developed an elaborate conceptualization of government as a system responding to changes in its environment, with the information-processing capacity of the public sector being its primary

attribute for making that linkage and in governing successfully, work that easily can be related to Deutsch's other work (1966) stressing the importance of political communications.

2.3.4 Limitation of the Political System Theory

The system theory has been criticized on the following grounds:

- It is a very complicated theory.
- The theory is quit abstract.
- The theory seeks to follow the laws of physical sciences rather than the laws of history.
- The theory is not original or organic to political science, rather, it is taken from biological sciences.
- The theory does not provide any explanation for the processes of social change in the society.
- Theory overlooked instances of socio-economic and political crises in the society.
- System theory is conservative in nature and status quo seeking.
- No recognition of the possibility of heterogeneity or diversity in political systems.
- It ignore the concept of sub-systems.
- The structures in the system theory are not properly studied.
- The system theory ignored any discussion on power and power relation in the society.

However the systems analysis is considered as a path-breaking and trend setting attempt towards building universally applicable general theories for analyzing and interpreting political life, thus unveiling new horizons in the study of Political Science.

Self-Assessment Exercises 3

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minutes:

1. Identify two merits of the system theory.

2. List two demerits of the system theory.

2.4 Summary

We have traced the development of systems level theory to the ‘behavioural revolution’ in the study of politics during the 1950s and 1960s. This theoretical development was in large part a reaction to the descriptive character of almost all studies in ‘comparative politics’ before then. Further, this theory was designed to be sufficiently general to be applicable to almost all political systems. This generality was designed to be in clear contrast to most comparative politics up till then, which had concentrated on the countries of Europe and North America.

The generalisability of systems theory was especially important during an era in which a number of former colonial countries were gaining independence and had political practices and traditions very different from those of Western governments. Therefore, this theory tended to function at an extremely high level of generality, and could be applied to every system from tribal governments to the most advanced democratic political system. We further discussed some key concepts associated to the system theory. Some limitations of the system theory was also highlighted.

2.5 References/Further Readings/Web Resources

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2.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answers to SAEs 1

1. True
2. David Easton, regards the political system engaged in decision-making and implementing the authoritative allocation of values for society

Answers to SAEs 2

1. True
2. Government

Answers to SAEs 3

1. The system theory has made some real contributions to comparative politics. First, the theory provides a very general perspective on political life, which could be applied almost anywhere. Second, the systems theory pointed out that government, like all systems, was dependent upon its environment, so that the importance of the social and economic underpinnings of government was reinforced.

2. First, it is a very complicated theory. Second, the theory is quit abstract.

UNIT 3 The Modernization Theory in Comparative Politics

Unit Structure

3.1 Introduction

In the changing world situation after the post 1945 era, the development of modernization theory in order to modernise the rest of the world in line with American development is interestingly significant in the history of development studies. However, the way modernization theory suggests for development and modernity proved to be controversial soon after its development as a theory. To explore these issues, this unit will first attempt to highlight the meaning of the term modernization from different perspectives, which is then followed by a discussion of the context in which the theory developed. Then it will focus on some basic objections embedded in the theory that offer critiques from many development studies scholars.

3.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit you will be able to:

- Trace the historical evolution of the modernization theory
- Examine the core proposition of the modernization theory
- Discuss strength and usefulness of the modernization theory
- Highlight the weaknesses of the modernization theory

3.3 The Evolution of Modernization Theory in Comparative Politics

For Alvin So, there are three main historical elements which were favorable to the evolution of the modernization theory of development after the Second World War. First, there was the rise of the United States as a superpower. While other Western nations, such as Great Britain, France, and Germany, were weakened by World War II, the United States emerged from the war strengthened, and became a world leader with the implementation of the Marshall Plan to reconstruct war-torn Western Europe.

Second, there was the spread of a united world communist movement. The Former Soviet Union extended its influence not only to Eastern Europe, but also to China and Korea. Third, there was the disintegration of European colonial empires in Asia, Africa and Latin America, giving birth to many new nation-states in the Third World. These nascent nation-states were in search of a model of development to promote their economy and to enhance their political independence.

Therefore, modernization theory is a description and explanation of the processes of transformation from traditional or underdeveloped societies to modern societies. In the words of one of the major proponents, "Historically, modernization is the process of change towards those types of social, economic, and political systems that have developed in Western Europe and North America from the seventeenth century to the nineteenth and have then spread to other European countries and in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to the South American, Asian, and African continents" (Eisenstadt 1966:1). Modernization theory has been one of the major perspectives in the sociology of comparative national development and underdevelopment since the 1950s. Primary attention has focused on ways in which past and present pre-modern societies become modern (that is Westernized) through processes of economic growth and change in social, political, and cultural structures.
In general, modernization theorists are concerned with economic growth within societies as indicated, for example, by measures of gross national product. Mechanization or industrialization are ingredients in the process of economic growth. Modernization theorists study the social, political, and cultural consequences of economic growth and the conditions that are important for industrialization and economic growth to occur. Indeed, a degree of circularity often characterizes discussions of social and economic change involved in modernization processes because of the notion, embedded in most modernization theories, of the functional compatibility of component parts.

It should be noted at the at this point that the concept of modernization in comparative politics does not refer simply to becoming current or "up to date" but rather specifies particular contents and processes of societal changes in the course of national development. Also, modernization theories of development do not necessarily bear any relationship to more recent philosophical concepts of "modernity" and "postmodernity."

Modernity in philosophical and epistemological discussions refers to the perspective that there is one true descriptive and explanatory model that reflects the actual world. Postmodernity is the stance that no single true description and explanation of reality exists but rather that knowledge, ideology, and science itself are based on subjective understandings of an entirely relational nature. While their philosophical underpinnings place most modernization theories of development into the "modern" rather than the "postmodern" context, these separate uses of the term *modernity* should not be confused.

Also, modernization, industrialization, and development are often used interchangeably but in fact refer to distinguishable phenomena. Industrialization is a narrower term than modernization, while development is more general. Industrialization involves the use of inanimate sources of power to mechanize production, and it involves increases in manufacturing, wage labor, income levels, and occupational diversification. It may or may not be present where there is political, social, or cultural modernization, and, conversely, it may exist in the absence of other aspects of modernization. Development (like industrialization) implies economic growth, but not necessarily through transformation from the predominance of primary production to manufacturing, and not necessarily as characterized by modernization theory. For example, while modernization theorists may define development mainly in terms of economic output per capita, other theorists may be more concerned about development of autonomous productive capacity, equitable distribution of wealth, or meeting basic human needs. Also, while modernization theories generally envision democratic and capitalist institutions or secularization of belief systems as components of modern society, other development perspectives may not. Indeed, dependency theorists even talk about the "development of underdevelopment" (Frank 1966).

3.3.1 Definition of the term modernization and modernization theory

The term modernization, has been defined from various perspectives along with its original meaning. One orientation to the term 'modernization' conceives it as a process of social change (Huntington

1968; Inkeles 1969; Schwartz 1972) while another orientation considers modernization not only as a change but also as a response to change (Eisenstadt 1966). According to Huntington (1968), modernization is a multidimensional process that includes transformation of human views and activities. However, Halpern (1966) who notes modernization as a response to change, focusses on the capacity of institutions to manage those changes effectively. Combining these two views into one, Eisenstadt (1966) argues modernization as a process of change and at the same time he stresses on the capacity of institutions to control or adjust to changes.

Similarly, the American economic historian Rostow (1960) presented a model, considered as the blueprint for modernization approach, signposting development as series of stages such as underdevelopment, transition and modernity. This blueprint of modernization approach implies that, in order to be modern like modern America, traditional countries must go through these stages of development. Modernization is implicitly meant in the model as the associations of production and standard of living characteristic of the western countries such as America.

Conversely, considering the Chinese modernization that includes family bondage, tradition, rural life and culture, Li (2009) Argues that scholars have reached consensus that modernization is a functional change of traditional societal arrangement. Therefore, modernization is a process of changing societies from pre-modern (traditional, pastoral and agricultural) to modern (industrialized, secular and urban).

Having understood the meaning of the term ‘modernization’, the context of modernization theory now needs to be taken into account. The theory emerged when development became an urgent issue after the Second World War in a context of international changing economic and political realities as mentioned earlier. The whole world was sharply divided into two blocks-capitalist and socialist, making a cold war situation. New countries were emerging from the decolonization of western colonies. Development for these new economies became an urgent issue of priority.

Hence, Tipps (1973) has argued that modernization theory developed as a response of the American political leaders and scholars to the post second world war period context. The Rostow model of economic development, as cited above, is a suitable example of what Tipps (1973) call the response of the American scholars. This model makes it clear that the implicit purpose of modernization theory is to shape the development of the emerging countries from the western colonies, sliding them towards the capitalist block. The context in which the theory was developed is particularly suitable to that culture, not necessarily suitable for others. This contextual emergence of the theory gave birth to doubts of the objectivity of modernization theory. For example, the theory has been accused of being ethnocentric. This question of ethnocentrism becomes apparent when a leading proponent of modernization theory, Eisenstadt (1966), explicitly explains modernisation as a process of societal change towards western model of development. The Rostow model and Parsons theory of variables along with other modernization theorists perhaps inaccurately suggest westernization for modernization of the non-western countries (Parsons 1964, Rostow 1960).

Self-Assessment Exercises 1

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minutes:

1. How will you describe the modernization theory?

2. W W Rostow is one of the most celebrated modernization theorists…True or

3.3.2 The Core Assumptions of the Modernization Theory

According to the modernization theory, modern societies are more productive, children are better educated, and the needy receive more welfare. According to Smelser's analysis, modern societies have the particular feature of social structural differentiation, that is to say a clear definition of functions and political roles from national institutions. Smelser argues that although structural differentiation has increased the functional capacity of modern organizations, it has also created the problem of integration, and of coordinating the activities of the various new institutions (Przeworski and Limongi, 1997)

To make political sense, Coleman stresses three main features of modern societies:

a. Differentiation of political structure;
b. Secularization of political culture – with the ethos of equality – which
c. Enhances the capacity of a society's political system.

The major assumptions of the modernization theory of development basically are:

i. Modernization is a phased process; for example Rostow has 5 phases according to his theory of economic development for a particular society, we shall come back to this later.
ii. Modernization is a homogenizing process, in this sense, we can say that modernization produces tendencies toward convergence among societies, for example, Levy (1967: 207) maintains that: “as time goes on, they and we will increasingly resemble one another because the patterns of modernization are such that the more highly modernized societies become, the more they resemble one another”.
iii. Modernization is a *europeanization* or *americanization* process; in the modernization literature, there is an attitude of complacency toward Western Europe and the United States. These nations are viewed as having unmatched economic prosperity and democratic stability (Tipps: 1976:14).
iv. In addition, modernization is an irreversible process, once started modernization cannot be stopped. In other words, once third world countries come into contact with the West, they will not be able to resist the impetus toward modernization. Modernization is a progressive process which in the long run is not only inevitable but desirable. According to Coleman, modernized political systems have a higher capacity to deal with the function of national identity, legitimacy penetration, participation, and distribution than traditional political systems.

Finally, modernization is a lengthy process. It is an evolutionary change, not a revolutionary one. It will take generations or even centuries to complete, and its profound impact will be felt only through time. All these assumptions are derived from European and American evolutionary theory.

There is also another set of classical assumptions based more strictly on the functionalism-structuralism theory which emphasizes the interdependence of social institutions, the importance of structural variables at the cultural level, and the built in process of change through homeostasis equilibrium. These are ideas derived especially from Parsons’ sociological theories. These assumptions are as follows:

i. Modernization is a systematic process. The attribute of modernity forms a consistent whole, thus appearing in a cluster rather than in isolation.

ii. Modernization is a transformative process; in order for a society to move into modernity its traditional structures and values must be totally replaced by a set of modern values.

iii. Modernization is an imminent process due to its systematic and transformative nature, which builds change into the social system.

One of the principal applications of the modernization theory has been the economic field related to public policy decisions. From this perspective, it is very well known that the economic theory of modernization is based on the five stages of development from Rostow's model. In summary, these five stages are:

i. traditional society,
ii. precondition for takeoff,
iii. the takeoff process,
iv. the drive to maturity, and
v. high mass consumption society.

According to this exposition, Rostow has found a possible solution for the promotion of Third World modernization. If the problem facing Third World countries resides in their lack of productive investments, then the solution lies in the provision of aid to these countries in the form of capital, technology, and expertise. The Marshall Plan and the Alliance for Progress in Latin America, are examples of programs which were influenced by Rostow's political theories.

The similarities between classical modernization studies and new modernization studies can be observed in the constancy of the research focus on Third World development; the analysis at a national level; the use of three main variables: internal factors, cultural values and social institutions; the key concepts of tradition and modernity; and the policy implications of modernization in the sense that it is considered to be generally beneficial to society as a whole.

However, there are also important distinctions between the classical studies and the new studies of the modernization school. For example, in the classical approach, tradition is an obstacle to development; in the new approach, tradition is an additive factor of development. With regard to methodology, the classical approach applies a theoretical construction with a high-level of abstraction; the new approach applies concrete case studies given in an historical context. Regarding the direction of development, the classical perspective uses an unidirectional path which tends toward the United States and European model, the new perspective prefers a multidirectional path of development. And finally, concerning external factors and conflict, the classical demonstrate a relative neglect of external factors and conflict, in contrast to the greater attention to external factors and conflicts practiced by the new approach.

Self-Assessment Exercises 2

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minutes:

1. According to the modernization theory modernize societies have structural similarity… True or False?

2. List the stages of development as identified by W W Rostow.

3.3.3 The Strength and Usefulness of Modernization Theory

The strengths of modernization theory can be defined in several aspects:

i. We can identify the basis of the research focus. Despite the fact that the main studies of modernization were carried out by a psychologist, a social psychologist, a sociologist of religion and a political sociologist, other authors have extended modernization theory into other spheres. For example, Bellah examines the role of the Tokugawas religion on pajanes economic development in South-East Asia with effects on villages of Cambodia, Laos and Burma; Lipset addresses the possible role of economic development in the democratization of Third World countries, and Inkeles discusses the consequences of the modernization process for individual attitudes and behavior.
ii. A second usefulness of the modernization perspective is the analytical framework. Authors assume that Third World countries are traditional and that Western countries are modern. In order to develop, those poor nations need to adopt Western values.
iii. The third usefulness is that its methodology is based on general studies; for example the expositions regarding the value factors in the Third World, and the differentiation between unstable democracies, dictatorships and stable dictatorships.

3.3.4 Limitation of the Modernization Theory

Modernization theory, on the other hand, was popular in the 1950s, but was under heavy attack at the end of the 60s. Criticisms of the theory include the following:

i. Development is not necessarily unidirectional. This is an example of the ethnocentricity of Rostow's perspective.
ii. The modernization perspective only shows one possible model of development. The favored example is the development pattern in the United States. Nevertheless, in contrast with this circumstance, we can see that there have been development advances in other nations, such as Taiwan and South Korea; and we must admit that their current development levels have been achieved by strong authoritarian regimes.
iii. Other critiques of the modernization theory regards the need to eliminate traditional values. Third World countries do not have an homogeneous set of traditional values; their value systems are highly heterogeneous. For example, Redfield 1965, distinguishes between the great traditional values (values of the elites), and the little tradition (values of the masses).
iv. Another aspect for criticism here is the fact that traditional and modern values are not necessarily always mutually exclusive: China, for example, despite advances in economic development continues to operate on traditional values and this appears to be the same situation in Japan. Moreover, it is not possible to say that traditional values are always dichotomous from modern status, for example, loyalty to the Emperor can be transformed to loyalty to the firm.

Self-Assessment Exercises 3

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minutes:

1. One of the merits of modernization theory is that the traditional societies should emulate the values of the developed societies…True or False?

2. Development is not necessarily unidirectional….. True or

3.4 Summary

In summary, there could be several versions of modernization theory, but its major implicit or explicit tenets are that: (1) societies develop through a series of evolutionary stages; (2) these stages are based on different degrees and patterns of social differentiation and reintegration of structural and cultural components that are functionally compatible for the maintenance of society; (3) contemporary developing societies are at a premodern stage of evolution and they eventually will achieve economic growth and will take on the social, political, and economic features of western European and North American societies which have progressed to the highest stage of social evolutionary development; (4) this modernization will result as complex Western technology is imported and traditional structural and cultural features incompatible with such development are overcome. At its core, modernization theory suggests that advanced industrial technology produces not only economic growth in developing societies but also other structural and cultural changes. The common characteristics that societies tend to develop as they become modern may differ from one version of modernization theory to another, but, in general, all assume that institutional structures and individual activities become more highly specialized, differentiated, and integrated into social, political, and economic forms characteristic of advanced Western societies. We have also stated that the theory has been criticized on several grounds. The theory has failed to take into consideration the context of the western society in which it developed and that of the pre-modern countries. This notion of linearity of modernization theory is completely unable to explain the non-linear human development phenomenon of the world.

Again the theory completely overlooks some crucial issues of humanitarian aspects making the theory problematic. For example, while issues such as equal income distribution, public health and environmental concerns are important considerations for development (Dreze and Sen 1999, Sen 1999), they are completely missing in the theory. In addition, the dichotomization of modernity and tradition offers serious critiques for the modernization theory. Modernization theorists characteristically view western countries as perfectly modern while undermining non-western societies as traditional and unchanged by contrast (Gilman 2003).

However, to a large extent, the modernization theory is still valid for the economic, social and political development of the countries, the approach has appeared questionable to many scholars of the field. This is not only because the theory is incapable of functioning as a framework of development but also because some objectionable assumptions are embedded in the theory. While these objections or limitations such as ethnocentrism, dichotomization of modernity and tradition, failure to recognise the external aspects of change and ambiguity are evident, the suitability and applicability of the theory are simply disproved.

3.8 References/Further Readings/Web Resources

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3.9 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answers to SAEs 1

1. Modernization theory is a description and explanation of the processes of transformation from traditional or underdeveloped societies to modern developed societies.
2. True.

Answers to SAEs 2

1. False
2. Answer: traditional society, precondition for takeoff, the takeoff process, the drive to maturity, and high mass consumption society

Answers to SAEs 3

1. True
2. True

Unit 4 Political Economy Approach in Comparative Politics

Unit Structure

4.1 Introduction

Political economy is an interdisciplinary branch of the social sciences that focuses on the interrelationships among individuals, governments, and public policy. For instance, political economists study how economic theories such as capitalism, socialism, and communism work in the real world. At its root, any economic theory is a methodology that is adopted as a means of directing the distribution of a finite amount of resources in a way that is beneficial for the greatest number of individuals. In a wider sense, political economy was once the common term used for the field we now call economics. Adam Smith, John Stuart Mill, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau all used the term to describe their theories. The briefer term economy was substituted in the early 20th century with the development of more rigorous statistical methods for analyzing economic factors. Therefore, the term political economy is still widely used to describe any government policy that has an economic impact. As such, the field of political economy specifically deals with the study of how economic theories such as capitalism or communism play out in the real world. Those who study political economy seek to understand how history, culture, and customs impact an economic system, and global political economy studies how political forces shape global economic interactions. Therefore, in this unit, we shall examine the core theories of political economy and their application.

4.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit you will be able to:

- Traced the historical evolution of political economy theory
- Discuss some types political economy theories
- Appreciate its strength, application and weaknesses.

4.3 The Evolution of Political Economy Approach in Comparative Politics

The concept of political economy is used since ancient times of intellectual inquiry but comparatively young in academic discipline. The analysis of political economy, both in practical terms and as moral philosophy, has been traced to Greek philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle as well as to the Scholastics and those who promulgated a philosophy based on natural law. A critical development in the intellectual inquiry of political economy was the prominence in the 16th to the18th century of the mercantilist school, which called for a strong role for the state in economic regulation. The writings of the Scottish economist, Sir James Steuart, 4th Baronet Denham, whose inquiry into the Principles of Political Economy (1767) is considered the first systematic work in English on economics, and the policies of Jean-Baptiste Colbert (1619-83), controller general to Louis XIV of France, typify mercantilism in theory and in practice, respectively.

Specifically, political economy appeared as a separate field of study in the mid-18th century, mostly as a reaction to mercantilism, when the Scottish philosophers Adam Smith and David Hume and the French economist Francois Quesnay began to approach this study in systematic rather than fragmentary terms. They took a secular approach, rejecting to explain the distribution of wealth and power in terms of God’s will and instead appealing to political, economic, technological, natural, and social factors and the complex interactions between them. Indeed, Smith’s landmark work, an Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations (1776), which provided the first comprehensive system of political economy expresses in its title the broad scope of early political economic analysis. Although the field itself was new, some of the ideas and approaches it drew upon were centuries old. It was influenced by the individualist orientation of the English political philosophers Thomas Hobbes and John Locke, the Realpolitik of the Italian political theorist Niccolo Machiavelli and the inductive method of scientific reasoning invented by the English philosopher Francis Bacon.

Theoretical studies of political economists in the 18th century highlighted the role of individuals over that of the state and generally attacked mercantilism. This is perhaps best exemplified by Smith's famous concept of the "invisible hand," in which he argued that state policies often were less effective in advancing social welfare than were the self-interested acts of individuals. Individuals intend to advance only their own welfare, Smith proclaimed, but in so doing, they also advance the interests of society as if they were guided by an invisible hand. Arguments such as these gave credence to individual-centred analysis and policies to counter the state-centred theories. During this period, the utilitarianism of Jeremy Bentham James Mill and Mill's son John Stuart Mill united together economic analysis for the expansion of democracy.
Smith's concept of individual-centred analysis of political economy did not go unchallenged. The German American economist Friedrich List developed a more-systematic analysis of mercantilism that contrasted his national system of political economy with Smith's "cosmo-political" system, which treated issues as if national borders and interests did not exist. In the mid-19th century, communist historian and economist Karl Marx proposed a class-based analysis of political economy that concluded in his huge treatise Das Kapital, the first volume of which was published in 1867.

The universal study of political economy that typifies the works of Smith, List, Marx, and others of their time was slowly darkened in the late 19th century by a group of more narrowly focused and methodologically conventional disciplines, each of which sought to throw light on particular elements of society, inevitably at the expense of a broader view of social interactions. By 1890, when English neoclassical economist Alfred Marshall published his textbook on the Principles of Economics, political economy as a distinct academic field had been essentially substituted in universities by the separate disciplines of economics, sociology, political science, and international relations. Marshall clearly separated his subject, economics or economic science from political economy, implicitly privileging the former over the latter, an act that revealed the general academic trend toward specialization along methodological lines.

In the second half of the 20th century, as the social sciences became increasingly abstract, formal, and specialized in both focus and methodology, political economy was revitalized to provide a comprehensive framework to understand complex national and international problems and events. Presently, the field of political economy embraces several areas of study, including the politics of economic relations, domestic political and economic issues, the comparative study of political and economic systems, and international political economy. The advent of international political economy, first within international relations and later as a distinct field of inquiry, marked the return of political economy to its ancestries as a holistic study of individuals, states, markets, and civilisation.

Self-Assessment Exercises 1

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minutes:

1. Adam Smith is the author of the book *The Wealth of Nations…* True or False?

2. Adam Coker is a political Economist of the 20th century… True or False?

4.3.1 Types of Political Economy Theory

Political economy is a branch of social science that studies the relationship that forms between a nation's population and its government when public policy is enacted. It is, therefore, the result of the interaction between politics and the economy which is considered the basis of the social science discipline.

There are several notable types of political economy theories:

4.3.2 The classical approach

Political Economy in the Classical Tradition

In this unit we explore the classical approach to political economy. The classical economists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were the first to use the term "political economy." The period covered by classical political economy cannot be stated exactly. A restricted definition would extend from Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* in 1776 to John's. Mill's *Principles of Political Economy* in 1848. A more encompassing periodization would stretch from the work of the Physiocrats in the middle of the eighteenth century to the death in 1883 of Karl Marx, whom many saw as the last important classical political economist. Marx himself is credited with coining the term "classical political economy" (Dasgupta, 1985: 12), dating it from the time of William Petty.

We will divide our consideration of classical political economy into two parts: the argument for market self-regulation and the theory of value and distribution. The first part concerns the nature of the market system and its relation to the state. The second concerns production and use of the economic surplus. The second part draws on more recent contributions within the classical tradition. Although using elements of the classical analytical framework, these recent theories suggest an approach to political economy in some ways at variance with that of the classical economists themselves.

The classical approach frames the central themes of political economy in a distinctive way. Most fundamentally, the classical economists played a major role in introducing and elaborating two core ideas: the separability of the economy and the primacy of the economic sphere.

Political economy gave considerable impetus to the shift of focus away from politics in understanding the forces that account for the large historical movements that mold the social world. Adam Smith saw the rise of civilized society as the result of profit-seeking behavior rather than of any plan known to and instituted by a political process or public authority. The transition from the “savage state of man” to civilized society was, for Smith, the historical work of capitalism. Yet, it was the unintended consequence of a multitude of actions taken for purely private purposes.

Marx took this idea much further. He described the process by which epochal changes were brought about in methods of production, social relations, and ways of life, all as the unintended consequences of the pursuit of private gain. Marx’s materialist conception of history expresses with special force the subordination of politics and of the decisions of a public authority to the immanent and inexorable forces set loose and operating within society. The emergence of political economy helped to mark the demotion of politics and the elevation of the nonpolitical part of civil life. Indeed, it contributes to the redefinition of civil life away from politics and in the modern direction of private affairs pursued outside of the household, in the world of business. The rise of political economy means the rise of civil society in contradistinction to politics.

The demotion of politics could hardly be better expressed than by the invisible hand metaphor of Adam Smith. Although Smith’s view is in some ways extreme, it very clearly articulates a new relationship between political and civil society (or politics and economics). This new relationship arises, in part, out of a rethinking of the possible and reasonable purpose of the state.

In the classical approach the term political economy refers to a system of private want satisfaction made up of independent private agents. During the period of classical political economy, several distinct but related terms are used to refer to this system of want satisfaction: civil society, market economy, bourgeois society, capitalism, and others. Each term describes the way in which society becomes predominantly an economic rather than political system. As it grows in strength, this system tends to displace politics even though it initially appears under a political designation. It sets up an ordering principle for society which, since it is nonpolitical, challenges the idea of society as a political system.

Adam Smith's now classic formulation of the link between private interest and public good in a market economy depends heavily on the argument that markets, if allowed to, will regulate themselves. Smith develops his argument as part of a critique of the policy of placing "Restraints upon the Importation from Foreign Countries of such Goods as can be Produced at Home." Smith begins by noting that the "monopoly of the home market" resulting from restraints on imports encourages certain domestic industries and increases the share of labor and capital devoted to those industries. But he questions whether this serves the public good. Serving the public good means increasing the "general industry of society" or channeling that industry in "the most advantageous direction."

The theory of market self-regulation is arguably the central achievement of the classical approach to political economy and the key to understanding how a classically influenced economist might understand the interrelation of the economic and the political. Modern theorists working in the classical tradition have not, however, all taken this viewpoint. Recent contributions have built on a different element of the classical analysis of market economy, one concerned more with the price system as it relates to the determination of wages and profits, less with its implications for market self-regulation. We now turn to this other dimension of the classical theory. This dimension begins with consideration of the relation between the social division of labor and commodity exchange.

The division of labor has a very close association with exchange. In the absence of a market for the product, it makes very little sense for an otherwise isolated individual to specialize in the way demanded by the division of labor. At the same time, participation in the division of labor requires the individual producer to exchange in order to acquire those elements of subsistence he or she does not produce. Adam Smith places this two-sided relationship between the market and the division of labor at the center of his analysis. With the division of labor every man "becomes in some measure a merchant" (1937:22). Our participation in a division of labor forces us to exchange. The type of mutual dependence associated with division of labor gives rise to the system of exchange. At the same time "the division of labor is limited by the extent of the market" (1937:17). The market also plays a part in stimulating the development of the division of labor. The division of labor occupies a position in the classical treatment of exchange analogous to that played by utility maximization in neoclassical theory. It accounts for the participation of the individual in a larger social reality. Finally, this theory advocates profit as a motive for advancement. Put simply, the idea behind capitalism is that private individuals and other actors are driven by their own interests – they control production and distribution, set prices, and create supply and demand

Self-Assessment Exercises 2

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minutes:

1. Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* was written in…….?
2. John's. Mill's *Principles of Political Economy* was published in ……?

4.3.3 Marxian political economy

With Marxism, there are many possible vantage points from which one can discuss political economy. Marxists have seen the political in the very separation of civil society from the public arena (limiting rights and equality to the latter), the class process by which surplus value is "appropriated" under capitalism, the role of the state in managing the interests and affairs of capital, political (that is, state-backed) guarantees of property rights, revolutionary activity to alter the political institutions of capitalism, and the bargaining between labor and capital for control of the economic surplus. Although these vantage points may supply political content to Marxian economics, the senses in which they do so are not obvious. Even the concept of class, certainly a mainstay of Marxian theory, is not obviously political.

Classes can exist even in a society where individuals are disconnected, unaware of common interests, and politically unorganized. Nevertheless, owners of capital may exist and hire those who sell their labor power. Further, production of value and surplus value can occur. In this kind of economy, politics would not be evident in the daily operation of class processes (though the state would have to underwrite private property rights). There would be no struggle for the surplus, no power bargaining between labor and capital, and no state intervention to control labor. The use of the term “political economy” in Marxian theory does not directly refer us to studies of the relation between economics and politics. Instead, it connotes a way of thinking about the economy rooted in the method and theories of the classical economists, especially Adam Smith and David Ricardo.

This method emphasizes the idea that a market economy operates according to laws rooted in the ongoing reproduction and expansion of a system of material interdependence between persons - a social division of labor as discussed above. This process follows laws that the classical economists thought were independent of the wills and desires of persons. To be sure, individuals within a market economy act independently and according to their desires. The matrix of individual wants directly determines what happens in the market. Yet behind these private wants stands an objective structure of reproduction whose requirements dominate the individual in the formation of his private interests. This domination justifies the theory in focusing on the (presumably) objective process of reproduction rather than on the subjective process of ranking opportunities or making choices.

The concept of class is central to Marxian theory. However, politically organized classes do not emerge spontaneously under capitalism. At first, individuals within the economy see themselves narrowly as isolated agents pursuing interests uniquely their own. Such interests may have nothing to do with the interests of others and may even set individuals in opposition one to another. Such interests are not, however, isolated and independent. Capitalist economy works in such a way as to set up a commonality of interest within certain classes of persons. The more individuals become aware of their common condition and purpose, the more they see their narrow material interest in a broader light. This process marks a transition from individual to class interest and ultimately, from material-economic to political interest. Such a transition is implicit in the separate private interests of persons, and provides us with the fundamental link between economics and politics.

The Marxian interpretation of the relationship between economics and politics centers on the idea of economic interests and the part they play in defining political agendas. However, the distance covered between pure economic interest and political action is considerable. Before economic interests can play a role in politics directly, individuals must be aware of their shared interests, organize on the basis of them, and overcome collective action problems. We will, therefore, begin with the way Marxists think about interests.

Marxists advance the following claims about interests:

1. Interests arise within the structure of production. The wants of the individual depend upon his place in the process of social reproduction. The individual has "economic" or "material" interests in satisfying his private wants. Within (civil) society, the position of the individual in the social division of labor determines his wants, which determine his interests.
2. Private (or self) interest can best be understood if we first understand the class to which the individual belongs. That is, the divisions within civil society primarily responsible for determining wants divide individuals into classes. Thus, the interests arising within civil society are implicitly class interests.

3. These interests of classes stand opposed. The degree to which one class achieves its material interest measures the degree to which the other fails.
4. Class interests arising within production become political interests involved in the struggle over state power.

While these four points identify important aspects of the transition from material interest to political action, we caution against a mechanical interpretation.
First, how do class interests and classes themselves arise within the economy?

Marx's economic theories provide a detailed answer to this question. As Charles Bettelheim points out, within his economic studies Marx seems to "inscribe the division of society into classes entirely within the *relations of production"* (1985:19).

According to Marx, a capitalist economy appears, on first glance, to consist of a vast accumulation of commodities, a set of individuals who own those commodities, and a set of (exchange) relations connecting those individuals. These individuals do not see themselves as members of a class, nor do they see their interests as class interests. In order to get from a world of individual and independent property owners to classes we need to know how the structure and dynamics of the capitalist economy lead to the grouping of persons and of wants, not only on the basis of their personal affinities or unique circumstances, but on the basis of their position within an objective structure of production.

The key element of Marx's argument for the emergence of classes starts by questioning the classical theory's understanding of the purpose of the market. Here Marxian theory argues that the market economy is not so much a mechanism for maximizing the private welfare of individuals generally as it is a means of facilitating the capitalist's appropriation of surplus-value and accumulation of capital. The market makes sense as a social institution because it makes possible self-aggrandizement and private accumulations of wealth in the form of capital. We can use one of Marx's better known formulations to clarify this idea.

The issues raised by the Marxian approach to class consciousness and political interest refer us to basic features of Marx's method. This method directs our attention to the circumstances of persons in (civil) society and finds in those circumstances both the logical and the historical origin for their political agendas. In one respect this method differs little from the utilitarian since both root politics in civil society. Unlike the utilitarians, however, Marxists retain the idea of universal interest and make claims regarding the universality or lack thereof of the interests emerging within the private sphere. Because of this, Marxism confronts issues not well defined within the utilitarian theories. Marxism concerns itself with the ways in which the circumstances of persons within the private sphere form and determine their consciousness, and how the development of society determines the private circumstances and their associated ways of life and ways of thinking.

As theory, Marxism concerns itself with the clash between differing conceptions of the well-ordered society. It sees the struggle between capital and labor as a struggle between fundamentally opposed judgments concerning what is, indeed, universal to the aspirations of persons. Does capitalism express the fundamental human aspiration to individual self-aggrandizement and pursuit of wealth? In this sense does capitalism accord with the general interests of society as well as the narrow interests of capitalists? Or, does the material situation of workers imbue them with a communal and egalitarian ethic more in line with the universal interests of persons?

Bear in mind, as we pursue the Marxian approach, the underlying methodological judgment concerning where we look for the source of universal interests – in civil society and not in politics or in the state. As one Marxist expresses it, civil society is the "real home, the theatre of history" (Bobbio, 1979:31). Finally, the Marxian political economy promotes the idea that the production and distribution of goods and wealth are maintained and regulated by society, rather than a particular group of people. The rationale behind this is that whatever is produced by society is done so because of those who participate, regardless of status, wealth, or position. Socialism aims to bridge the gap between rich and power, where one or more individuals don't have the majority of power and wealth.

4.3.4 **Neoclassical political economy**

The time since the publication of Adam Smith's *Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* in 1776 to the present day spans over two hundred years. Although there are important elements of continuity from Smith to the present world, neoclassical economics is not just a modern, updated version of classical political economy. The beginnings of the neoclassical system are placed in the 1870s with the rise of marginalist economics. Before the 1870s economics as a system of thought was dominated by the classical agenda: growth, distribution, and the labor theory of value. After the 1870s, this agenda changed in important ways, although it did not change overnight.

The structure of the neoclassical theory

Central to neoclassical thinking is the notion of "constrained choice." In this perspective, the individual is understood as a choosing agent, someone who decides among alternative courses of action according to how he imagines those actions will affect him. Economists educated in the neoclassical tradition assume that we are all motivated to seek the highest level of satisfaction of our wants, thus the highest degree of happiness we can achieve given the resources available to us.

In order to choose we must compare the satisfaction of various alternatives. This comparison results in a ranking of the options according to the level of satisfaction or happiness each might provide. This ranking is termed a "preference ordering." We place each option in rank order according to our preferences and attempt to attain that option highest in the ranking of our preferences or desires. The term "rational choice' refers to decision making based on an internally consistent ordering. A preference ordering is consistent if a preference for any item A over another item B joined to preference for B over C implies preference for A over C. Rational choice seeks the highest feasible level of subjective satisfaction for the individual. By making rational choices that follow our preferences, we *ipso facto* maximize our welfare. Rational choice means maximizing behavior. The neoclassical approach begins with the idea of the maximization of individual satisfaction. The next step is to use this idea to define conditions for maximization of the welfare of an interconnected system of individuals. Welfare for the group must be defined differently from (although on the basis of) the welfare of the individual alone. Maximum group welfare results from maximization of welfare on the part of each member separately only when the welfare of each is entirely independent. Group welfare takes on meaning when either of two conditions is met. First, acts of consumption affect individuals other than those who have chosen to engage in them.

Second, other persons provide opportunities for mutual enhancement of welfare through exchange. The first condition requires that the activity by which an individual experiences utility (consumption) affects other individuals either positively (that is, when my act of consumption yields an unintended benefit to someone else) or negatively (when my well-being is enhanced by an experience that harms others). Neoclassical theory terms these effects on others "externalities." When such externalities (or social consequences of private want satisfaction) exist, the welfare of the group cannot equal the sum of the welfare achieved by each individual on the assumption that satisfaction-yielding experiences are separable.

To sum up, neoclassical economics sees the market as the institution allowing maximum scope for free exchange and hence efficiency. The market allows one to reshuffle (use in alternative ways) resources and commodities so as to achieve their most desirable use. Viewed from the consumer's standpoint, there is a large number of bundles of consumer goods from which to choose. From the producer's position there is the possibility of combining productive factors in many different ways. Land, labor, and capital – all of which have important subcategories – can be mixed in different proportions to produce goods for sale on markets. This process of substitution will go on until societal resources have yielded maximum product for producers and maximum utility for consumers (Dasgupta, 1985).

Given the preceding description, it should be clear that, once the values of the exogenous variables (endowments, preferences, technology, and rules) are given, the results on the part of choosing agents can be known with precision. This prompts us to ask if neoclassical economics is an abstract logic of choice or a behavioral science that makes contingent (hence refutable) predictions about the activities of economic man in different situations. To the extent that rationality and maximizing behavior are axiomatic and preferences are derived *ex post* from the explained behavior, actions of economic agents are assumed to reflect just what these preferences are as well as the constraints that must have existed to prevent them from achieving more. To the extent that rationality is treated as a hypothesis about economic agents, an independent specification of preferences and a full account of constraints (the information available to agents, limits on calculating ability) is needed *ex ante*. If information on these factors is present, it is possible to treat outcomes as tests of refutable hypotheses about rationality, self-interest, and maximizing behavior.

Political economy in the neoclassical approach

How is the relation between economics and politics conceived in the neoclassical framework? Economics is the process by which we seek to maximize the satisfaction of our wants given the means available (and usually their distribution among us). This process underlies the workings both of markets and of political institutions. Whether we engage in private contract or collective action, our objective is to satisfy wants to the greatest degree possible. Thus, the ends of political and market action do not differ – economizing underlies both.

In the first instance, the market consists of a system of voluntary transactions between independent property owners pursuing their self-interest. To the neoclassical thinker, these transactions take place when they are deemed welfare-improving for both parties. When contracts are in fact voluntary, when no impediments exist to welfare-improving transactions, and when the consequences of those transactions affect only the contracting parties, market interaction should allow individuals to exploit fully opportunities to increase their level of satisfaction.

Neoclassical economics is a theory of voluntary exchange and efficient allocation of resources. Its analytical starting point is the self-interested individual, operating in an environment where many potential objects of satisfaction are in commodity form, and where, in Macpherson's words, the aim of action is "the competitive maximization of utilities" (1973: 5). In this kind of world, individuals will freely contract to do the best they can, subject to endowments, technology, and existing rules. The neoclassical idea of political economy is subsidiary to the central focus of efficient exchange within markets. Once individual welfare is at the center, and this welfare is equated with fulfilment of preferences, politics becomes an alternative instrument to achieve what cannot be efficiently achieved by the market. This makes market failure the master idea of neoclassical political economy.

4.3.5 Keynesian Political Economy

The Keynesian approach advances a critique of claims for market self-regulation common among classical and neoclassical thinkers. The Keynesian critique questions the claim that an unregulated market system will fully exploit society's productive potential. At its core, the argument for market self-regulation contends that the market system will bring together wants and means in such a way as to satisfy those wants so far as is possible given the means available. This is a claim about prices and demand. The prices of goods will adjust so as to assure the market will clear; what producers bring to the market will find buyers. The price mechanism assures adequate demand. It also directs capital investment into those lines, indicated by higher profitability, where more is needed.

In this argument, individual producers may fail to sell all they produce, or can produce, because what they have to sell is not wanted by those with the purchasing power to buy it. They have miscalculated in their decisions regarding the line of investment for their capital and produced the wrong goods. The low profit and income of these producers is the fate that befalls those who do not provide what consumers want. This can happen to the individual, but not to the aggregate of sellers.

The Keynesian critique argues that failure to find buyers can be a systemic problem having nothing to do with a bad fit between what has been produced and what is needed. It can result from the failure of the market mechanism to assure adequate purchasing power. It can thus fail to bring together wants and means, underutilizing society's existing productive capacity. This failure of aggregate demand differs fundamentally from the failure of particular demand. If the market tends systematically to generate failure of aggregate demand, this will affect how we judge its use as a mechanism for satisfying wants. This judgment bears on how we think of the relation of the world of private affairs to public authority, and therefore of the separability of the economy and its dominance over public life.

The Keynesian critique encourages us to reconsider the relation of politics to markets. Yet many Keynesian economists have drawn the conclusion that aggregate demand failure need not and should not be treated as a political problem. They argue instead that stability and adequate market functioning can be assured by the introduction of automatic mechanisms, and thus by administrative rather than political means.

Thus, Keynes argued against both the notion of equilibrium characteristic of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century economics and the notion of the "invisible hand," favored by Adam Smith and the early advocates of laissez-faire. Economists working in the Keynesian tradition accept the argument that capitalist economies, left to their own devices, will not make full use of the resources available to them. This failure necessitates government intervention. In this sense, the instability of capitalist economy casts doubt on the hypothesis of the invisible hand and therefore also on the implications that hypothesis has for political economy. It leads to arguments in favor of government policy aimed at assuring a stable process of reproduction and adequate levels of employment.

Those who research the political economy are called political economists. Their study generally involves the examination of how public policy, the political situation, and political institutions impact a country's economic standing and future through a sociological, political, and economic lens.

Political economy may draw upon sociology, economics, and political science to define how government, an economic system, and politics influence each other.

As mentioned earlier, the roots of political economy is traceable to the 18th century. Scholars during the period studied how wealth was distributed and administered between people. Some of the earlier works that examined this phenomenon included those by Adam Smith and John Stuart Mill.

Research by political economists is conducted in order to determine how public policy influences behavior, productivity, and trade. Much of their study helps them establish how money and power are distributed between people and different groups. They may do this through the study of specific fields such as law, bureaucratic politics, legislative behavior, the intersection of government and business, and regulation.

4.3.6 Comparative Political Economy

Comparative political economy examines the interactions between the state, markets, and society, both national and international. Both empirical and normative, it employs modern analytic tools and methodologies in its studies. Rational-choice theorists analyse individual behaviour and even the policies of states in terms of maximizing benefits and minimizing costs, and public-choice theorists focus on how policy choices are formed or controlled by incentives built into the routines of public and private organizations. Modelling techniques modified from econometrics are often applied to many different political economic questions.

Political economists try to understand domestic macroeconomic policy often study the influence of political institutions such as legislatures, executives, and judiciaries and the implementation of public policy by administrative agencies. The influence of political and societal actors such as interest groups, political parties, churches, elections, and the media and ideologies like democracy, fascism, or communism is also evaluated. Comparative analysis also considers the extent to which international political and economic conditions increasingly distorted in the line between domestic and foreign policies in different countries. For example, in many countries trade policy no longer reproduces strictly domestic objectives but also takes into account the trade policies of other governments and the directives of international financial institutions.

In present time, there is a focus on modelling economic policy and political institutions as to interactions between agents and economic and political institutions, including the seeming inconsistency of economic policy and economist's recommendations from the perspective of transaction costs. From the mid-1990s, the field has extended, in part aided by new cross-national data sets that allow tests of hypotheses on comparative economic systems and institutions. Themes have included the breakup of nations, the origins and rate of change of political institutions in relation to economic growth, development, backwardness, reform, and transition economies, the role of culture, ethnicity, and gender in explaining economic outcomes, macroeconomic policy, the environment, fairness, and the relation of constitutions to economic policy, theoretical and empirical.

4.3.7 The Strength and Application of the Political Economy Approach

Modern applications of the political economy study the works of more contemporary philosophers and economists, such as Karl Marx.
Marx became disenchanted with capitalism as a whole. He believed that individuals suffered under regimented social classes, where one or more individuals controlled the greater proportion of wealth. Under communist theories, this would be eradicated, allowing everyone to live equally while the economy functions based on the ability and needs of each participant. Under communist regimes, resources are controlled and distributed by the government.

Most people confuse socialism and communism. It's true there are some similarities – notably, that both stress bridging the gap between rich and poor, and that society should relegate equilibrium among all citizens. But there are inherent differences between the two. While resources in a communist society are owned and controlled by the government, individuals in a socialist society hold property. People can still purchase goods and services under socialism, while those who live in a communist society are provided with their basic necessities by the government.

Political economy approaches examination of political phenomena in three distinct ways:

- **Interdisciplinary studies:** The interdisciplinary approach draws on sociology, economics, and political science to define how government institutions, an economic system, and a political environment affect and influence each other.
- **New political economy:** This approach is studied as a set of actions and beliefs, and seeks to make explicit assumptions that lead to political debates about societal preferences. The new political economy combines the ideals of classical political economists and newer analytical advances in economics and politics.

  New political economy may study economic philosophies as the phenomenon to explain, as per the traditions of Marxian political economy. Charles S. Maier recommends that a political economy approach "interrogates economic doctrines to disclose their sociological and political premises in sum, it regards economic ideas and behaviour not as frameworks for analysis, but as beliefs and actions that must themselves be explained" (Mayer, Charles S. (1987). This approach notifies Andrew Gamble's The Free Economy and the Strong State (Palgrave Macmillan, 1988), and Colin Hay's The Political Economy of New Labour (Manchester UniversityPress, 1999). It also enlightens work published in New Political Economy, an international journal founded by Sheffield University scholars in 1996 (Baker, David, 2006).
- **International political economy:** Also called global political economy, which is slightly different, this approach analyzes the link between economics and international relations. It draws from many academic areas including political science, economics, sociology, cultural studies, and history. The international political economy is ultimately concerned with how political forces like states, individual actors, and institutions affect global economic interactions.

  International political economy is an interdisciplinary field encompassing approaches to the actions of various players. In the United States, these approaches are related with the journal International Organization, which in the 1970s became the leading journal of International political economy under the editorship of Robert Keohane, Peter J. Katzenstein, and Stephen Krasner. They are also allied with the journal The Review of International Political Economy. There also is a more critical school of International political economy, encouraged by philosophers such as Antonio Gramsci and Karl Polanyi and two major figures are Matthew Watson and Robert W. Cox (Cohen, Benjamin, 2007).

4.3.8 Limitation of the Political Economy Approach

We may see reason in the emphasis laid down by Marx on economic factors though history cannot be explained in terms of decisions made by politicians and kings acting in vacuum. The major problem arises when the views of Marx are offered as a complete explanation of an extremely complex phenomena. Many ideals which, according to Marx, were only reflections of material interests of one's place in the economic order, actually attain independent status. It is possible that Karl Marx and his colleague Engels recognized the over-emphasis that was laid on the economic factors. The excessive zeal of some of his admirers to make his ideas rigid led Marx on one occasion to say that he was not a Marxist. By this, he seems to have meant that he was rigid when they were applying the materialist conception of history.

Self-Assessment Exercises 3

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minutes:

1. The class analysis was developed by …………?
2. There is no difference between socialism and communism…. True or False?

4.4 Summary

We have observed that political economy is a social science dealing with the interrelationship of political and economic process. However, in general, there is no consensus among the scholars on what political economy is concerned with. For instance, a political economy approach in Sociology is applied to study the effects of people's involvement in society as members of groups, and how that changes their ability to function. While Political Science employs Political Economy to focus on the interaction between institutions and human behaviour, the way in which the former shapes choices and how the latter change institutional frameworks. Similarly, Anthropology, History, Economics, Human Geography, Cultural Studies and a whole array of disciplines and interdisciplinary fields employ political economy approach in a variety of ways. To sum up political economy approach, it becomes clear in contrasting various traditions of thinking that each focuses on different actors and driving forces in the world economy, and that each has a different conceptions of what ‘order’ means and what is necessary to achieve it.

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4.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answers to SAEs 1

1. True.
2. False.

Answers to SAEs 2

1. 1776
2. 1848

Answers to SAEs 3

1. Marxian theorists
2. False

Unit 5 Theories of Dependency and Comparative Politics

Unit Structure

5.1 Introduction

Dependency approach has been widely used by various scholars to explain the political realities in third world countries. Although this concept, in its original formulation, had aimed at explaining ‘development of underdevelopment’ of Latin American countries against the backdrop of international capitalist development and penetration into those countries, later on this concept has found support both in Asia and in Africa. Broadly speaking, the dependency is a process through which peripheral countries have been integrated as well as assimilated into the international capitalist system, and the way the former have experienced structural distortions in their domestic societies because of such assimilation and penetration. According to the ECLA (United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America) tradition, the international system is divided into the centre and the periphery. The traditional international division of labour has resulted in an excessive concentration of production at the centre. To them development and underdevelopment cannot be differentiated from each other; on the contrary they are the two sides of the same coin. This tradition is broadly termed as ‘structural’ dependency theory (Amin, 1974).

The second school of dependency is known as the radical tradition, which is strongly influenced by Marxism and identified with the famous scholar Andre Gunder Frank, Immanuel Wallerstein and Samir Amin.

The basic thesis of this radical tradition is the ‘development of underdevelopment’. According to Frank, capitalism constantly generates underdevelopment in satellite countries through the expropriation of surplus by the advanced metropolitan countries. He visualizes “a whole chain of metropolises and satellites, which runs from the world metropolis down to the hacienda or rural merchants who are satellites of the local commercial metropolitan centre but who, in their turn, have peasants as their satellites. In his centre-periphery model, Frank argued that the entire world is divided into centre and periphery. This centre-periphery model is not only useful to explain the dependence of the developing countries on the developed world but it is an effective tool to understand the phenomena of underdevelopment within a country. Hence, this unit discusses the dependency theory and all its corollaries (Andre Gunder, 1972).

5.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit you will be able to:

- trace the historical context in which dependency theory emerged;
- understand the divergent positions and perspectives among dependency theorists;
- appreciate the contribution of A G Frank to dependency theory and his theory of development of underdevelopment;
- appreciate Immanuel Wallerstein’s World-system with critical appraisal and Samir Amin’s theory of unequal development.

5.3 Theories of Dependency and Comparative Politics

5.3.1 Historical Evolution of Dependency Theories

In the early 1950s, a group of economists stationed at the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) in Santiago, Chile, launched a rigorous research program around one pressing question: What accounts for the growing divergence in living standards and gross domestic product (GDP) between the wealthy countries of the industrialized North and the poorer developing countries of the South? In 1850, for example, Argentina was among the richest nations of the world and GDP per capita in Latin America was $245, compared to $239 in North America. A century later, Argentina was mired in debt and poverty, and GDP per capita in Canada and the United States had quickly outpaced that of Latin America as both had firmly joined the ranks of the developed-country bloc. According to neoclassical economic theory, strong trade and investment linkages between North and South should lead to a positive-sum outcome for all participants. However, by the 1950s it was difficult to ignore the widening global cleavages between North and South, as well as the growing gap between rich and poor within the developing countries. This latter trend, characterized by an uneasy coexistence between a modern urbanized sector of the economy with strong global ties and a largely rural traditional sector where production modes sorely lagged, was increasingly referred to as dualism. Both dualism and the North-South divide became the focus of conceptual debates and practical policy prescriptions for a new generation of dependency school theorists that emerged during the 1960s and 1970s.

5.3.2 Perspectives on Dependency Theory

An initial wave of dependency thinking was triggered by the work of the Argentine economist Raúl Prebisch (1901–1986), director of his country's first central bank from 1935 to 1943 and subsequently the executive secretary of United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) between 1949 and 1963. In Prebisch's classic 1949 treatise, ***The Economic Development of Latin America and Its Principal Problems,*** he introduced the idea of an industrial, hegemonic centre and an agrarian, dependent periphery as a framework for understanding the emerging international division of labour between North and South. Prebisch argued that the wealth of poor nations tended to decrease when that of rich nations increased due to an unequal exchange of industrial versus agricultural goods in the North-South trading relationship. For the early dependency theorists, industrialization was considered a necessary step toward rectifying this pattern of unequal exchange and thus the most important objective in a development program.

From here, dependency theory quickly divided into diverse strands. The following aspects differentiate these two positions.

i. They are rooted in divergent theoretical frameworks: Marxism in one case and structuralism in the other.
ii. The Marxist perspective is far more critical of orthodox economic and sociological theories: neo-classical and modernization theory respectively.
iii. There are political differences. The Marxist dependency writers characterize the local bourgeoisie as non-progressive and unable to overcome 'Underdevelopment' and 'Dependency'. They reject the structuralists' claim that a populist political alliance between the local bourgeoisie and the popular sectors will be able to reform the international

economic system and thereby resolve the problem dependence.

For the Marxists, only a socialist revolution can resolve the problems of dependence and underdevelopment. This, however, is seen as utopian by structuralists. Those dependency theorists who have strongly influenced by Marxism like André Gunder Frank Paul Baran argue that imperialism and the colonial legacy had left Asia, Africa, and Latin America in a highly disadvantageous position. Frank identified a "comprador class" of local southern elites whose interests and profits from this system of exploitation had become closely intertwined with their counterparts in the developed or metropolitan countries. For both Baran and Frank, this third world bourgeoisie was parasitic in nature, leaving it to workers and peasants to break with imperialism and move a given nation toward progress.

While acknowledging the debilitating nature of these dual economies, others such as Ernesto Laclau criticized the Marxists for overlooking important distinctions between capitalist and pre-capitalist modes of production in the South. Given the tenacity of the latter, Laclau argued, it made no sense for dependency analysts to focus solely on capitalist modes of production as the linchpin for change. Another key debate within the dependency school concerned the weight that should be given to domestic or international factors. In contrast to the hardline Marxian viewpoint, which held that southern development could only be grasped by placing this process within its proper global historical context, Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto argued that it is the internal dynamics of the nation-state and not its structural location in the international division of labour that determines a country's fate. Cardoso and Faletto emphasized that external factors had different impacts across the developing world due to the diverse internal conditions (history, factors of endowment, social structures) inherent in each country. In contrast to Frank or Baran, they regarded the national bourgeoisie within dependent peripheral societies as a potentially powerful force for social change and economic progress.

Dependency theorists were most likely to part ways when it came to the practical political and economic policy prescriptions that flowed from this worldview. One main difference arose between those advocating that the development of the periphery could still be achieved by working within the confines of the capitalist system and those who saw the need for a complete rupture with the advanced capitalist powers and the pursuit of a state-planned socialist model. The former stance embraced a more dynamic and evolutionary view of economic development and the possibilities to achieve upward mobility within the capitalist framework; the latter saw the future of the underdeveloped periphery as locked into a static world economic system that had determined its fate since the sixteenth century and could only be rectified via outright revolution and the installation of a socialist economy.

Self-Assessment Exercises 1

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minutes:

1. Describe briefly the dependency theory.

2. Mention two scholars of the dependency theory.

5.3.3 Dependency theory's Points of Convergence

Although there are different streams within dependency theory, they share a common view on the meaning of dependency. For example, Sunkel's structuralist definition of dependency is very similar to Dos Santos' Marxist definition, as both emphasize 'interdependence' and the absence of autonomous development in dependent countries:

Development and underdevelopment can therefore be understood as partial structures, but interdependent, which form a single system. A principal characteristic which differentiate both structures is that the developed one to a large extent by virtue of its endogenous capacity of growth, is the dominant, and the underdeveloped, due in part to the induced character of its dynamic, is dependent (SUNKEL).

Dependence is a *conditioning situation* in which the economies of one group of countries are conditioned by the development and expansion of others. A relationship of interdependence between two or more economies or between such economies and the world trading system becomes a dependent relationship when some countries can expand through self-impulsion while others, being in a dependent postion, can only expand as a reflection of the expansion of the dominant countries, which may have positive or negative effects on their immediate development. In either case, the basic situation of dependence causes these countries to be both backward and exploited (Dos Santos).

Both dependency positions also share the view that underdevelopment, or the pattern of development of dependent countries, is the particular form which capitalist development takes in these countries. They also agree that dependency originated when these countries were forcefully incorporated into the world capitalist system by the dominant countries.

They concur that, in order to understand the internal dynamics of Third World countries, it is necessary to examine their relationships with the world capitalist system. Thus, underdevelopment is not an historical stage through which developed countries passed, as argued by stage and modernization theorists like W.W. Rustow. As Sunkel puts it, “Development and underdevelopment… are simultaneous processes: the two faces of the historical evolution of capitalism”.

5.3.4 Core Propositions of the Dependency Theory

Some of the propositions where one can see a general consensus among all shades of dependency perspective are as follow:

i. Third World countries do not exist in isolation. They can only be understood in the context of the world economic and political system. Political events in Third World countries are directly related to events in First World countries.
ii. Within the world political and economic system there is a tremendous amount of interaction among core countries and peoples, and between the core and the periphery. There is very little interaction just among periphery countries. The consequences of this are great, resulting in an isolated and weak periphery country having an unequal relationship with the united and strong core.
iii. Politics and economics are related. They cannot be understood apart from each other. Economic ties and relationships between core and periphery countries are particularly important. These are advantageous for the core, and disadvantageous for the periphery. Core-periphery trading patterns result in continuous growth of political and economic power for the core at the expense of the periphery.
iv. It follows that underdevelopment is not a natural state, but rather a condition that is caused. The fact is that developed nations are actively underdeveloping Third World countries as a result of the systems of interactions between them.
v. Put another way, the underdevelopment of weak Third World countries is directly related to, and makes possible, the “development” of the powerful countriesof the industrialized core. Both the centre and the periphery are part of the world political-economic system, and neither would exist without the other.
vi. Furthermore, so long as capitalism remains the dominant world economic system, there is no reason for the situation of developed and underdeveloped countries to change. Underdevelopment is not a temporary condition, as had been thought in the past, but is a permanent condition. In fact, if the

present world system does not change we can expect the core to become more powerful and the periphery weaker in the future.

vii. The worldwide system of relationships is duplicated within individual Third World countries. There is a core area (usually the capital) which dominates and exploits the periphery (interior) of the country. The nation's centres of economic, political, cultural, and military power are found in the national core, and the core's power and wealth grows more rapidly than that of the interior as a result of contacts and interactions between the two areas.

Self-Assessment Exercises 2

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minutes:

1. What is the main point of convergence for all dependency theorists?

2. Mention two core propositions of the dependency theory?

5.3.5 Various Perspectives of Dependency theory

We shall consider briefly a few perspective on dependency theory.

5.3.6 Development of Underdevelopment by Andre Gunder Frank

Andre Gunder Frank is considered to be one of the most important Dependency Theorist who attempt to apply Marxist perspective to analyze situation in most of Third World countries. In his writing regarding underdevelopment of development, Andrew Gunder Frank has tried to illustrate the history of the development, underdevelopment, and the evolution of dependency to a world system theory. Finally he has come up with some alternatives and has tried to elaborate the new dualism and the recent movements in the world. Frank argues that the mainstream history that we have been subjected to – namely modernization theory – does not at all explain the underdevelopment of countries, and that an alternative historical viewpoint is necessary. Using Latin America as an example for the model, he begins his analysis by dubbing the urban centres (what Frank calls 'metropoles') of these countries as the centres of exploitation. The exploitation comes from the "interdependence" that the metropolis has with the satellite region. What it means is that the productive (and natural) resources from the outside regions are forced to these centres of exploitation so that they can trade their resources for ones in the metropolis. In doing so, however, these satellites become caught in a relationship of pseudo-servitude.

5.3.7 Immanuel Wallerstein's World-System Theory

Immanuel Wallerstein is the sociologist who invented world-systems analysis. Though a sociologist by profession, Wallerstein's work is inherently political and he does not recognize the possibility of social writing not being political. In his book, *The Modern World System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World Economy in the Sixteenth Century***,** Immanuel Wallerstein develops a theoretical framework to understand the historical changes involved in the rise of the modern world.

World-System Theory

World-system theory is in many ways an adaptation of dependency theory. Wallenstein draws heavily from dependency theory, a neo-Marxist explanation of development processes, popular in the developing world. His World-system theory inherently adopted the Dependency theory logic of core and periphery. For Wallerstein, "a world-system is a social system, one that has boundaries, structures, member groups, rules of legitimation, and coherence. Its life is made up of the conflicting forces which hold it together by tension and tear it apart as each group seeks eternally to remould it to its advantage. It has the characteristics of an organism, in that is has a lifespan over which its characteristics change in some respects and remain stable in others… Life within it is largely self-contained, and the dynamics of its development are largely internal". A world-system is what Wallerstein terms a "world-economy", integrated through the market rather than a political centre, in which two or more regions are interdependent with respect to necessities like food, fuel, and protection, and two or more polities compete for domination without the emergence of one single centre forever.

In his own first definition, Wallerstein said that a world-system is a "multicultural territorial division of labour in which the production and exchange of basic goods and raw materials is necessary for the everyday life of its inhabitants". This division of labour refers to the forces and relations of production of the world economy as a whole and it leads to the existence of two interdependent regions: ***core*** and ***periphery.***

5.3.8 Samir Amin' Concept of Unequal Development

Samir Amin, the Third World Forum President, is well-known for his "dependency theory" and the study of capitalism and the Third World development issues. He discusses the problems of underdevelopment in the Third World macroscopically and criticizes the traditional bourgeois economics and development theory, emphasizing that the Third World underdevelopment results mainly from the control and exploitation by the United States and other Western powers. Dependency theory is the notion that resources flow from a "periphery" of poor and underdeveloped states to a "core" of wealthy states, enriching the latter at the expense of the former. It is a central contention of dependency theory that poor states are impoverished and rich ones enriched by the way poor states are integrated into the "world system". So, in Samir Amin's opinion, if the Third World countries can't depart from the world capitalist system and move towards socialism, namely "delinking", it is impossible for them to get rid of their dependent status and get real independence.

According to Samir Amin, at present all societies form part of the capitalist world system which has expanded gradually over the last few centuries. It resulted in concomitant subjection of previously autonomous countries to the rule of the capitalist system. It implies that a theory of 'accumulation on the world scale' has to be used to explain the present-day relationship between developed and developing countries. The integration of the periphery into the capitalist world system would have as its main objective the countering of this negative tendency.

5.3.9 The Delinking Theory

Apart from analysing the fundamental structures and processes characterizing the capitalist world system, Samir Amin has also developed a theory of development for the underdeveloped countries of the periphery. It might be called the 'theory of delinking'. In discussing "delinking", Amin emphasizes the need for underdeveloped countries to adopt new market strategies and values different from northern developed countries. Delinking, he explains, does not mean "autarky but refusal to bow to the dominant logic of the world capitalist system". Delinking implies a transfer of political hegemony to new "centres". Delinking is a form of cutting oneself off, "a kind of active anti-globalization which is in dialectical relationship with globalization itself". Amin has four propositions in justifying delinking.

First, the necessity of delinking is the logical political outcome of the unequal character of the development of capitalism. Unequal development, in this sense, is the origin of essential social, political and ideological evolutions. Second, delinking is a necessary condition of any socialist advance, in the North and in the South. Third, the potential advances that become available through delinking will not "guarantee" certainty of further evolution towards a pre-defined "socialism". Socialism is a future that must be built. Fourth, the option for delinking must be discussed in political terms. This proposition derives from a reading according to which economic constraints are absolute only for those who accept the commodity alienation intrinsic to capitalism, and turn it into an historical system of eternal validity.

Self-Assessment Exercises 3

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minutes:

3. What is the main point of convergence for all dependency theorists?

4. Mention two core propositions of the dependency theory?

5. Explain the world-system theory as propounded by Wallenstein.

5.4 Summary

Dependency theory became popular in the 1960's as a response to research by Raul Prebisch who was active in ECLA. Prebisch found that increases in the wealth of the richer nations appeared to be at the expense of the poorer ones. Known as structural Dependency theory, this tradition of theory advocates an inward looking approach to development and an increased role for the state in terms of imposing barriers to trade, making inward investment difficult and promoting nationalisation of key industries. In its extreme form, dependency theory is based on a Marxist view of the world, which sees globalisation in terms of the spread of market capitalism, and the exploitation of cheap labour and resources in return for the obsolete technologies of the West. This view of dependency theory is that there is a dominant world capitalist system that relies on a division of labour between the rich 'core' countries and poor 'peripheral' countries. Over time, the core countries will exploit their dominance over an increasingly marginalised periphery. While few of the dependency school's theoretical assertions have stood the test of time, this perspective continues to offer a powerful description of the political and economic plight of the majority of countries that remain on the periphery of the world economy. A full understanding of the causal mechanisms and policy solutions for remedying underdevelopment may still be a long way off; however, the dependency school's specification of concrete problems like dualism, inequality, diminishing returns to trade, and the North-South divide have enriched debates about development and helped them to move forward.

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5.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answers to SAEs 1

1. Dependency theory emphasize a process through which peripheral countries have been integrated as well as assimilated into the international capitalist system, and the way the former have experienced structural distortions in their domestic societies because of such assimilation and penetration.
2. André Gunder Frank and Samir Amin

Answers to SAEs 2

1. (1)Third World countries do not exist in isolation. They can only be understood in the context of the world economic and political system. (2) Politics and economics are related. They cannot be understood apart from each other.
2. Interdependence, absence of autonomous development in dependent countries, and that the development of one led to the underdevelopment of another

Answer to SAEs 3

1. Delinking is a form of cutting oneself off from the global market vagaries.
2. “A world-system is a social system, one that has boundaries, structures, member groups, rules of legitimation, and coherence.

MODULE 3 METHODS AND STRATEGIES OF COMPARISON

There are different strategies of comparative research in political science, including comparing many countries, comparing few countries, and single-country studies. All the three strategies of research are subsumed under the broader umbrella of comparative politics which can be unified under one logic of inference. The comparative literature is replete with examples of all these methods, but why have they come about and what are the advantages associated with each? Why do some comparativists use a global sample of countries, while others analyse smaller samples, or single countries? What are the perennial problems of doing comparative research? This module outlines briefly the different types of comparative methods and discusses how each is useful for drawing inferences, where no one method is privileged over another and the discussion shows that each method has its own set of advantages and disadvantages. Unit one placed the comparative method in perspective, unite two is on comparing many countries, unit three dwells on comparing few countries and unit four discusses single country studies, while unit five discusses new and emerging challenges for comparative studies.

Therefore, this module is thematically structured into five units that comprehensively present vital details that will clear your doubt and help you as follows:

Therefore, it is important you study each of the unit carefully as you are expected to answer some questions to evaluate your understanding on the various issues as discussed. Possible answers to the questions are provided under each of the unit accordingly.

Unit 1 The Comparative Methods in Political Science

Unit Structure

1.1 Introduction

The distinction between different comparative methods should be seen as a function of the particular research question, the time and resources of the researcher, the method with which the researcher is comfortable, as well as the epistemological position he or she adopts. Different research questions require different methods. For instance, time and other resources of researchers are often constrained, which limits the number of countries that can be feasibly researched in any one project. Others are comfortable using quantitative methods while others prefer qualitative methods. Some enjoy large comparisons while others enjoy researching the fine details of particular countries. Finally, researchers who adhere to deductive theory may use different methods – mixed method to those adhering to inductive theory. Those seeking more universal generalizations may use different methods from those who seek more contextually specific levels of explanation.

1.2 Learning Outcomes

by the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the various comparative methods open to students
- critically examine the quantitative method in comparative politics
- explain the qualitative method in comparative politics

- understand the difference between quantitative and qualitative methods
- elucidate on the mixed method in comparative method

1.3 The Comparative Methods

Comparison is inherent in all science, including the social sciences, where comparative research has historically played a significant role in their development as scientific disciplines. However, there is little agreement in the social sciences on the question whether the comparative method should be considered a distinct subfield (as suggested by terms such as comparative education or comparative politics) or as a methodology. Many comparative methodology texts present at least a brief discussion of this issue (Hantrais 2009; Pennings *et al*.1999). In an influential article on comparative politics, Lijphart (1971) situated the comparative method as a basic method in its own right, alongside the experimental, statistical and case study methods. Sartori (1991) stated that comparative politics is a "field characterized by a method".

However, this did not end the disagreement as to the status of the comparative method. Kelly *et al*. (1982) discussed in some detail the question whether comparative education is a method or an area of content. In their studies, Mabbett and Bolderson (1999) stated that "many of the issues surrounding the theories and methods in comparative work are not exclusive to cross-national studies... There is no distinct social science "cross-national method" although such research highlights some of the issues in making scientific as opposed to impressionistic comparisons.

The idea that comparative social science is no different from any other form of social science and that it does not have any unique methodological issues is attractive from a positivist perspective because it suggests that all social sciences use basically the same methods and because it underlines the "scientific" nature of comparative social science.

However, Ragin (1987) points to significant differences between the orientations of most comparativists and most "non-comparativists". These differences have methodological implications. The distinctive orientation of comparative social science is that it is concerned with what he calls "large macrosocial units", a term he uses to refer to countries, nations and other larger political entities. Although all social scientists claim to study societies or things that happen in society, most do not feel the need to define the macrosocial units within which their research is conducted and they are not much concerned with the properties of these units. They can take their existence for granted. This is different for comparativists, because they compare macrosocial units as such:

At a very general level, comparativists are interested in identifying the similarities and differences among macrosocial units. This knowledge provides the key to understanding, explaining and interpreting diverse historical outcomes and processes and their significance for current institutional arrangements. Cross-societal similarities and differences... constitute the most significant feature of the social landscape, and, consequently, these researchers have an unmistakable preference for explanations that cite macrosocial phenomena... Most comparativists... are interested in the cases themselves, their different historical experiences in particular, not simply in relations between variables characterizing broad categories of cases. (p.6)

Similarly, Pennings *et al*. (1999) argue that comparisons are made across political and social systems that are defined in relation to territorial space. There are advantages and disadvantages to selecting countries as “comparators” (the units being compared). One disadvantage is that sometimes within-country differences are obscured, since in some national units, e.g. post-unification Germany, internal diversity may be greater than the diversity observed when comparing countries with one another, e.g. Germany with other EU countries. Lijphart (1975) has critically discussed the issue of “whole-nation bias” and the arguments for and against the focus on countries.

Self-Assessment Exercises 1

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minutes:

1. Comparison is inherent in all science, including the social sciences…. True or False?
2. Sartori stated that comparative politics is a “field characterized by a method”… True or False?

1.3.1 Quantitative method in comparative politics

In most general social science research methods texts, the majority of chapters are devoted to quantitative methods, with the emphasis on the following:

i. formulation of hypotheses
ii. operationalization of concepts
iii. measurement
iv. the development of instruments
v. the design of experiments or surveys
vi. sampling
vii. the statistical testing of hypotheses.

In such texts quantitative methods are regarded as the standard or default approach. The qualitative methods are subsumed under a positivist methodology. This seems to be the case in the political science texts of Pennings *et al*. (1999) and Landman (2008). Landman considers what he calls "conceptual description" to be the first "objective" (where "objective" refers to a step, activity or procedure) in a process leading to quantitatively conceived hypothesis testing and prediction.

1.4.2 Features of Quantitative Method in Comparative Politics

Simply put, quantitative method seeks to show differences in number between certain objects of analysis and qualitative methods seek to show differences in kind.

Quantitative analysis answers the simple question, 'How many of them are there?' (Miller 1995:154), where the 'them' represents any object of comparison that can either be counted or assigned a numerical value. There are many such objects in political science, such as protest events, social movements, an individual's identification with political parties, democratic transitions, and the degree to which human rights are protected.

Quantitative data can be official aggregate data published by governments on growth rates, revenues and expenditures, levels of agricultural and industrial production, crime rates and prison populations, or the number of hectares of land devoted to agrarian reform.

Quantitative data can also be individual, such as that found in the numerous market research surveys and public opinion polls. Quantitative methods are based on the distributions these data exhibit and the relationships that can be established between numeric variables using simple and advanced statistical methods.

Assessment Exercises - Self 2

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minutes:

1. Quantitative method has to do with numeric….. True or False?
2. The quantitative method is marked by……..?

1.4.3 Qualitative Method in comparative politics

The trend towards more use of qualitative methodology is also visible in other social science disciplines. In their introduction to the *Handbook of qualitative research*, Denzin and Lincoln (1994) offer the following definition of qualitative research:

Qualitative research is an interdisciplinary, trans-disciplinary, and sometimes counter disciplinary field. It crosscuts the humanities and the social and physical sciences. Qualitative research is many things at the same time. It is multi-paradigmatic in focus. Its practitioners are sensitive to the value of the multi-method approach. They are committed to the naturalistic perspective, and to the interpretive understanding of human experience. At the same time the field is inherently political and shaped by multiple ethical and political positions. Qualitative research embraces two tensions at the same time. On the one hand it is drawn to a broad, interpretive, postmodern, feminist, and critical sensibility. On the other hand, it is drawn to more narrowly defined positivist, postpositivist, humanistic, and naturalistic conceptions of human experience and its analysis.

From the overview given by Denzin and Lincoln in their introduction, a picture emerges of an extremely diverse methodology with a confusing array of competing paradigms.

1.4.4 Features of Qualitative Research Method in Comparative Politics

Qualitative methods seek to identify and understand the attributes, characteristics, and traits of the objects of inquiry, and the nature of the method necessarily requires a focus on a small number of countries. In comparative politics, there are three broad types of qualitative methods:

i. macro-historical comparison
ii. in-depth interviews
iii. participant observation

In none of these types of method is there an attempt to give numerical expression to the objects of inquiry, and in all of them, the goal is to provide well-rounded and complete discursive accounts. These more complete accounts are often referred to as ‘ideographic’ or ‘configurative’, since they seek to identify all the elements important in accounting for the outcome. Through focus on a small number of countries, comparative macro-history allows for the ‘parallel demonstration of theory’, the ‘contrast of contexts’, or ‘macrocausal’ explanation.

Over the years a division in political science has developed between those who use quantitative methods and those who use qualitative methods; however, it seems that this division is a false one if both methods adhere to the goal of making inferences from available evidence (Foweraker and Landman, 1997). In other words, this unit is grounded in the belief that the same logic of inference ought to apply equally to quantitative and qualitative methods. Perhaps more importantly, the qualitative distinction made among categories in comparative classification schemes necessarily precedes the process of quantification. It is clear that the field of comparative politics is richly populated with studies that use quantitative and qualitative methods (or both) at all levels of analysis, as well as across all methods of comparison.

Features of quantitative and qualitative methodology

Characteristic	Quantitative	Qualitative
Metatheory	Positivist, Postpositivist	Interpretivist
Nature of reality	Singular, stable, independent of observer; external reality	Multifarious, culturally determined, socially constructed; holistic reality,
Relation of investigator to what is studied	External, observing from outside; in artificial setting	In the study setting, observing from within; in real-life setting
Relation to social Phenomenon	Neutral Empirical	Engaged Normative
Research aim	Nomothetic; hypothesis	Idiographic; hypothesis

	testing; generalizing	generating; contextualizing
	Structured, theory-derived	Unstructured, open-ended,
Strategies	Variables identified beforehand; controls; operationalization & measurement	Theory developed during research; concepts that are rich in meaning
Typical methods	Experiments, surveys	Participant observation, case Studies
Criteria for judging Research	Validity & reliability; objectivity	Credibility, transferability, dependability; authenticity

1.3.5 Mixed method

Hantrais (2009), pointed out that the divide between quantitative/qualitative methods may have been exaggerated and that for many researchers it is no longer so important. In recent years there has been a greater acceptance of "methodological pluralism" in the social sciences generally and in comparative studies specifically. The use of multiple methods or *mixed methods* is now covered in the literature (Mason 1996; Teddlie and Tashakkori 2003) and the topic has also been addressed. Hantrais has dealt specifically with multiple methods in comparative social research, distinguishing between three approaches:

i. Triangulation: two or more different research strategies are used to investigate the same phenomenon so that findings or insights from one strategy can be corroborated by the other(s); specifically quantitative and qualitative approaches are used in parallel.
ii. Facilitation: more than one approach is used, but one of them is dominant and different techniques may be used sequentially (for example a qualitative study to generate hypotheses before a quantitative study is undertaken).
iii. Complementarity: different approaches are integrated rather than used in parallel or sequentially, as when researchers shift repeatedly from the one to the other.

While the quantitative and qualitative methodologies are complementary and while there are advantages to combining them, there is a risk that the results will be irreconcilable. In general it seems that one of the two dominates and the other is secondary and supplements it (Ragin 1987:69-78). Problems can arise when mixed methods are used by researchers who are insufficiently aware of the meta-theoretical implications of the methods they are using. A researcher must think strategically about the integration of multiple methods, rather than piecing them together in an *ad hoc* and eclectic way. This implies that the researcher must be aware of the ontological, epistemological and other assumptions underlying their methodology.

Self-Assessment Exercises 3

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minutes:

1. Briefly describe the qualitative method.
2. How will you describe the mixed method?

1.4 Summary

In this unit we outlined and examined the different methods of comparison that are available to students, all of which can be used to make larger inferences about the political world that we observe.

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1.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answers to SAEs 1

1. True.

2. True.

Answers to SAEs 2

1. True.

2. Statistical testing of hypothesis and measurement

Answers to SAEs 3

1. Qualitative methods seek to identify and understand the attributes, characteristics, and traits of the objects of inquiry, and the nature of the method necessarily requires a focus on a small number of countries without giving numerical expression.

2. The use of multiple methods is known as mixed method

Unit 2 Strategy of Comparison–Comparing Many Countries

Unit Structure

2.1 Introduction

One of the most prominent issues discussed in comparative methodology texts in the social sciences is the question of how many cases (where cases refer mostly to countries) should be studied. In fact, the distinction between studies with many countries (often referred to as large-N studies) and those with few countries (often referred to as small-N studies) has given rise to a major typological division of comparative social science research. For example, Lijphart (1971) distinguished between the statistical, comparative and case study methods. By the latter Lijphart meant single case studies. By the "statistical" method he meant quantitative comparative research using large amounts of data. For Lijphart the crucial difference between the statistical method and the comparative method was that the latter uses fewer cases – too few for the statistical control that can be exercised in the analysis of survey data. His point of departure is essentially positivistic. Similarly, Landman (2008) adopts a three-part division of comparative studies into comparing many countries, comparing few countries, and single-country studies. This unit shall concentrate on comparing many countries.

2.2 Learning Outcomes

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

- explain the meaning of many countries comparison
- critically examine the features of many countries comparison
- explain the core advantages of the many countries comparison
- understand the main disadvantages of the many countries comparison

2.3 Strategy of Comparison–Many Countries Comparison

Comparing many countries most closely approximates the experimental method found in natural science. The large number of countries makes this method of comparison particularly suited to quantitative analysis of aggregate data collected on different measures that vary across many countries (Lijphart 1971). Although there are examples of qualitative comparisons of many countries, such as Huntington's (1996) *The Clash of Civilizations* and Finer's (1997) *History of Government*, the majority of studies that compare many countries simultaneously use quantitative methods. Since this method compares many countries at once, it generally requires a higher level of abstraction in its specification of concepts. This method originated more generally through the emergence of the behaviourist revolution in the social sciences where political scientists and political sociologists working on large questions of political development and political stability sought to uncover empirical generalizations that held across large samples of countries. Since the early work in the 1950s and 1960s, data sets have become increasingly complex where larger and larger numbers of countries have been included and the dimension of time has also been taken into account. It is not uncommon for such data sets today to include between 150 and 194 countries that are compared over time periods ranging from twenty to fifty years. For example, the analysis in *Democracy and Development* (Przeworski *et al*. 2000) includes 150 countries from 1950 to 1990.

Self-Assessment Exercises 1

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minutes:

1. The strategy for comparing many countries is akin to quantitative method…. True or False?
2. Comparing many countries originated with the behavioural approach….True or False?

2.3.1 Features of many countries comparison

- Many-country studies are also referred to in the literature as survey studies, cross-sectional studies, cross-case research or large-N studies.
- The methodology of many countries comparison is usually quantitative and typically involves multivariate analysis, i.e.

simultaneous statistical analysis of data collected on more than one variable.

- The use of qualitative methods in analysis of many-country comparisons is unusual because "a richer level of information" is needed, including "deep history", which would be difficult to collect and analyze if large numbers of countries are involved (Landman 2008).
- Ontological assumptions underlying many-country comparisons are that countries can be seen as units, that the features being compared can be measured, that these features are sufficiently similar, and that variations in features in one country are largely independent of variations of the same features in other countries. The latter assumption is referred to as "unit independence".

The vast differences between countries call into question the assumption that their features are comparable. For example, in 2010 the smallest member of the United Nations, Nauru, had a population of under 10.000, while that of the most populous UN member, China, was estimated at 1,3 billion. The assumption of unit independence can also be questioned (Landman 2008). It is possible that some of the cases are not independent of one another. This is referred to as "Galton's problem": a relationship empirically determined between presumed independent variables P, Q and R and a dependent variable Y within three countries A, B and C may result from the fact that country A influenced countries B and C, rather than from causal relationship between the independent variables P, Q and R and the dependent variable Y. Thus the causal relationship was not within-country but across countries (Lijphart 1975). Globalization further calls into question the assumption of unit independence, particularly in the case of smaller countries which are highly susceptible to outside influences, such as those exercised by western education and media. Nevertheless, many-country comparisons lend themselves to the formal testing of hypotheses. When hypotheses are to be tested, a relationship holds between the number of variables and the number of cases. The more variables that may exert a potential influence on the phenomenon under investigation, the more cases are needed to test all the possible combinations of several variables. As an example, let us assume that we wished to test the hypothesis that the integration of school media centers in the school curriculum is more advanced in English-speaking countries where school media specialists are formally certified and are required to have dual qualifications in library science and education, than in other countries where there is no formal certification and dual qualifications are not required. Here we have one dependent variable (degree of integration of the media center in the curriculum), and three independent variables: language of country, presence or absence of formal certification, and qualification requirement (single or dual).

Self-Assessment Exercises 2

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minutes:

1. Many-country studies are also referred to in the literature as……?
2. Many-country studies deal with higher level of abstraction….. True or False?

2.3.2 Advantages of the many countries comparison

- The main advantages of this method of comparison include its ability to use statistical controls to rule out rival explanations and control for confounding factors.
- Its extensive coverage of countries over time and space.
- Its ability to make strong inferences that hold for more cases than not.
- Its ability to identify so-called 'deviant' countries or 'outliers' that do not have the outcomes expected from the theory that is being tested.

2.3.3 Disadvantages of the many countries comparison

- The main disadvantages of this method of comparison include the limited availability of data for many countries and many times periods.
- The validity of measures that are often crude approximations of social scientific concepts.
- The mathematical and computing skills needed to analyse increasingly complicated data sets whose structure and properties violate many of the assumptions of standard statistical methods of analysis.
- Many see this method of comparison as inappropriate for analysing many topics involving complex causal mechanisms, historical processes, and deeper meanings and understandings that are highly dependent on the contextual specificities of discrete country cases.

Self-Assessment Exercises 3

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minutes:

1. The first advantage for many-country studies is the use of statistics….True or False?
2. One of the limitations of the many-country studies is availability of too much data…..True or False?

2.4 Summary

In this unit we provided a discussion of how scholars compare a large number of countries. While not ruling out the qualitative comparison of many countries altogether, the unit emphasized the natural affinity between this method of comparison and statistical analysis. It outlined the assumptions and main advantages to this method of comparison. The unit has concluded with a discussion of the main limitations of the method of comparison in which it has been made clear that there are numerous significant questions in political science for which the quantitative analysis of a large number of countries is simply inappropriate. Despite these limitations, however, it should be stressed that the quantitative comparison of many countries can deliver useful and parsimonious empirical generalizations about the political world that help shape our understanding of significant phenomena and yield tremendous insights into how to carry forward particular research agendas using the same form of analysis or by adopting other methods of comparative analysis, to which the next two units now turn.

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2.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answers to SAEs 1

1. True
2. True

Answers to SAEs 2

1. Survey studies, or cross-sectional studies or cross-case research or large-N studies.
2. True

Answers to SAEs 3

1. True
2. False

UNIT 3 Strategy of Comparison–Comparing Few Countries

Unit Structure

3.1 Introduction

In the previous unit we provided a discussion of how the comparison of a large number of countries can yield important inferences and empirical generalizations about the political world. It showed that there is a natural affinity between the comparison of many countries and statistical analysis, the techniques of which are grounded in a number of assumptions about units, time, the capacity for measurement, the availability of data, and the distributions in those data. While there are many advantages associated with the comparison of many countries, the unit made clear that such analysis suffers from several weaknesses and may well be inappropriate for a large number of research topics in political science. It is from these various limitations that this unit takes its point of departure. As in the last unit, the discussion in this unit includes the advantages and weakness of this method of analysis, which are illustrated with extant studies from the comparative politics literature. To this end, the unit begins with outlining the assumptions behind the comparison of few countries, and then follows with how this method enhances validity, and finishes with its main limitations.

3.2 Learning Outcomes

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

- explain the meaning of few countries comparison
- critically examine the features of few countries comparison
- explain the core advantages of the few countries comparison

- understand the main disadvantages of the few countries comparison

3.3 Strategy of Comparison–Few Countries Comparison

In terms of the number of cases being compared, few-country comparisons are found on the continuum between single-country studies and many-country comparisons. The countries can be as few as two. Two or three appear to be the most prevalent number in recent comparative studies. The deciding factor, however, is not so much the number of countries, but the methodological approach. Various terms are used for studies comprising a small number of cases. For some authors, like Lijphart 1971, 1975 this is "the comparative method" or the "comparative-cases strategy" (Lijphart 1975:163). Ragin (1987) places it under the rubric of "case-oriented comparative methods". Smelser (1976, quoted in Ragin 1987) refers to it as the "method of systematic comparative illustration", Illustration suggesting that it is an adjunct method, not suited for the serious task of testing hypotheses. Indeed, the terminology often reflects the methodological orientation (quantitative/q ualitative) of the writer. Quantitatively oriented authorities tend to see a few-country comparison as a less desirable or watered-down version of studies using larger numbers of cases, and they emphasize methods of compensating for its perceived weakness by approximating the inferential value of many-country comparisons as far as possible. Lijphart sees them as a method of testing hypothesized relationships among variables, using the same logic as many-country comparisons with the difference that countries are carefully selected to compensate for the inability to sample from a large population.

A critical question in few-country comparisons, as it is in single-country studies, is which countries to select. In few-country studies the countries are not selected by sampling. Instead they are carefully selected for the purpose of the study (Ragin 1987). It is intuitively obvious that there is little point in comparing entities that are so different that hardly any commonality can be found (e.g. Nauru and China). Neither would it be useful to compare entities that are so similar that little difference of interest can be found. When countries are selected for comparison, they should be comparable in respect of the phenomenon or theory that is primary interest in the study. Sartori (1991) has stated that entities to be compared should have both shared and non-shared attributes. They should be at the same time "similar" and "incomparable". A first step in selecting relevant countries may be to narrow the field to countries in particular regions or in particular categories, such as democratically governed countries, francophone countries, Islamic countries or developing countries. This raises the issue of classification and typologies.

3.3.1 Features of few countries comparison

The comparison of few countries shares many of the same assumptions as the comparison of many countries, such as the idea that countries represent units on which comparable data and information can be collected; that in the case of the quantitative comparison of few countries, features of countries that are similar can be measured; and that the events and outcomes in each country are largely independent of events and outcomes in other countries. Despite these similar starting assumptions, the comparison of few countries has a number of differences, including:

- its attention to the deeper context of each case,
- the intensive focus on variation within countries rather than on variation between countries,
- the lower level of conceptual abstraction and the enhancement of validity, and the ability to engage in qualitative analysis using different kinds of social and political information.

These differences and various qualifications relating to them are considered in turn.

- First, the comparison of few countries has been described as 'case-oriented' (Ragin 1987) rather than 'variable-oriented', since the focus of the analysis is much more on the specific unfolding of events and variation in political developments within each country than variation in macro-variables between countries. While there are numerous examples of comparative research in which there is much greater focus on the individual countries that comprise the sample, there are many other examples that maintain their focus on macro- and micro-variables of interest and seek to make larger (in some cases, causal) inferences that apply to countries outside the original sample.
- Second, the comparison of few countries has been described as being more *intensive* than *extensive* since those factors considered do not vary across a wide range of countries, but vary over time and across sub-national units within a smaller sample of countries, which allow the researcher to probe more deeply into each individual case comprising the sample. By intentionally limiting the number of countries under comparison, the method sacrifices in some degree the broad generalizations made possible through the comparison of many countries, but gains a deeper understanding of the countries that feature in the analysis, as well as their similarities and differences.

- Third, while the comparison of few countries sacrifices the ability to make broad empirical generalizations, it means that they may well be located at a lower level of abstraction in which concepts and ideas are operationalized in ways that fit more closely with the contextual specificities of the countries used in the comparison. Operating at a lower level of abstraction means that the concepts do not need to ‘travel’ as much and that establishing equivalence may be easier in some research designs where the countries under comparison share a number of similar features.

Self-Assessment Exercises 1

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minutes:

1. Few countries comparison involves two or three countries….. True or False?
2. Few countries comparison is more intensive than extensive…

3.3.2 Advantages of few countries comparison

There are a number of distinct advantages to the comparison of few countries that in many ways address the limitations of the comparison of many countries outlined in the previous unit.

- Comparing few countries involves the intentional selection of a few countries for comparison.
- This selection may involve anywhere between 2 to more than 20 countries, where the distinction between the comparison of few countries and many countries remains blurred to some degree.
- The method involves the intentional selection of countries from the universe of possible cases.
- Studies using this method are more intensive and less extensive since they encompass more of the nuances specific to each country.
- The political outcomes that feature in this type of comparison are often seen to be ‘configurative’, i.e. the product of multiple causal factors acting together.
- This type of comparison has thus also been referred to as ‘case-oriented’ (Ragin 1994), since the country is often seen as the unit of analysis.
- The focus tends to be on the similarities and differences among countries rather than the analytical relationships between variables.

3.3.3 Disadvantages of few countries comparison

There are a number of limitations to the methods for comparing few countries:

i. Comparative scholars will always face a trade-off between the scope of countries included in any one study and the level of abstraction and strength of the inferences that result from the number of countries that are compared.

ii. Unlike the global comparison of many countries in which sample sizes are maximized for increasing variation in the variables of interest, comparing few countries involves significant and intentional choices, any one of which may limit the inferences made possible.

iii. The problem of selection bias looms large, the choice of most similar and most different cases can appear at times arbitrary (depending on the selection criteria), and the inclusion of negative cases, while laudable, may nonetheless not have exhausted all cases that ought to be considered when analysing particular outcomes of interest.

iv. It appears that the most different systems design (MDSD) remains somewhat weaker than the most similar systems design (MSSD), since its inferences relate only to the confirmation of the importance of the presence of certain explanatory factors and in some cases the identification of necessary conditions for a particular outcome.

Self-Assessment Exercises 2

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minutes:

1. Identify two merits of few countries comparison.
2. Enumerate two demerits of few countries comparison.

3.4 Summary

This unit has examined the different ways in which scholars can and do compare a sample of countries that has been *intentionally* selected. The assumptions that lie behind the methods for comparing few countries include its ability to give greater attention to the deeper context of each country, the intensive focus on variation within countries rather than on variation between countries, its lower level of conceptual abstraction and the consequent enhancement of validity, and the ability to engage in qualitative analysis using different kinds of social and political information. There have been many great contributions to the pool of knowledge about the political world from the comparison of few countries. There is a wealth of well-designed studies with sensible criteria for selecting countries that have given us a richer understanding of particular contexts and processes, while at the same time providing a rich evidence base with which to test propositions, establish empirical relationships, and chart the course for future comparative research that uses a small sample of countries.

3.5 References/Further Reading/Web Resources

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3.9 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answers to SAEs 1

1. True
2. True

Answers to SAEs 2

1. Comparing few countries involves the intentional selection of a few countries for comparison; and studies using this method are more intensive and less extensive since they encompass more of the nuances specific to each country.

2. First, comparative scholars will always face a trade-off between the scope of countries included in any one study and the level of abstraction and strength of the inferences that result from the number of countries that are compared. Second, unlike the global comparison of many countries in which sample sizes are maximized for increasing variation in the variables of interest, comparing few countries involves significant and intentional choices, any one of which may limit the inferences made possible.

Unit 4 Single-Country Studies as Comparison

Unit Structure

4.1 Introduction

The previous units have demonstrated the advantages, disadvantages, and challenges associated with the comparison of many and few countries. This unit turns its attention to the use of single-country studies in comparative politics. By a single-country study, we refer primarily to any study in which a single country forms the basic unit of analysis, but which may also be broken down into smaller units across time and space, by examining sub-national variation across states in federal countries, other administrative units in unitary systems, as well as other appropriate units of analysis, such as individuals. As argued in the other units, it is entirely possible to raise the number of observations and bolster the inferences that one wishes to make even in single-country studies by including analysis across such units. Therefore, we shall examine the main features and advantages as well as disadvantages of the single country studies.

4.2 Learning Outcomes

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

- explain the meaning of single country comparison (case studies)
- critically examine the function and features of the single country comparison
- explain the core advantages of the single country comparison
- understand the main disadvantages of the single country comparison

4.3 Single-Country Studies as Comparison

There has long been controversy about whether single-country studies (case studies proper) should be considered to be comparative studies. This is also reflected in the literature of comparative politics. For instance, in the difference of opinion between Danton (1973) and Krzys and Litton (1983) on the one hand, who reject single-country studies as being comparative, and Collings (1971) and Simsova and Mackee (1975) on the other, who accept them. In political science Sartori (1991) insisted that the single case investigation "cannot be subsumed under the comparative *method* (though it may have comparative merit)". (On the other hand, Landman (2008) states that ...a single-country study is considered comparative if it uses concepts that are applicable to other countries, and/or seeks to make larger inferences that stretch beyond the original country used in the study.

Even if a case study does not itself constitute comparative research, good descriptions of individual cases are useful as raw material for comparisons, or as the first step in a comparative study. Lijphart (1971) described the "scientific status of the case study method (as) somewhat ambiguous", but distinguished six types of case studies on the basis of their potential contributions to theory development in political science. From having been treated with some suspicion, the case study is making a comeback.

Gerring (2007) suggested that there is a growth in interest in case study research design, possibly a movement away from the variable-centered approach due to a number of factors, including growing discontent with "cross-case observational research" (many-country comparisons) and an epistemological shift away from the positivist model of explanation. However, the case study is still viewed "with extreme circumspection".

Paradoxically, Gerring (2007) pointed out that while case studies have taught us a great deal, not much is understood about the case study method. He defines a *case* as a spatially delimited phenomenon (a unit) observed at a single point in time or over some period in time. It comprises the sort of phenomena that an inference attempts to explain. This implies that the case is selected or delimited on account of its potential explanatory value. In comparative politics the nation-state is the dominant type of case, but other social and political units or institutions can also be chosen.

A *case study* is the intensive study of a single case for the purpose of understanding a larger class of cases (a population), while *case study research* may include several cases. The number of cases is limited by the extent to which they can be investigated intensively. At a given point such intensive study is no longer possible, and the emphasis of a study will shift from the individual case to a sample of cases. Gerring refers to such a study as a “cross-case study” and he sees case studies and cross-case studies as lying on a continuum. It should be noted that when Gerring discusses case studies, his discussion is not limited to single cases. A key decision in single-country studies concerns the selection of countries. Countries may be selected simply because the researcher is familiar with them or has access to them, because they have not yet been studied, or, because they are seen as being important in relation to other cases or studies. Thus countries may be chosen because they are considered to be representative of a category or group of countries, exceptional, or counterfactual.

Much depends on whether the country is chosen for purposes of generating or testing hypotheses. If case studies are used as a substitute for experimentation with the intention of testing hypotheses, comparativists may seek *counterfactuals*, situations in which the conditions that supposedly gave rise to the phenomenon or situation being studied are absent. Counterfactuals can be theoretical and imaginary, or real cases, where the required counterfactual situation exists naturally (Landman 2008).

Self-Assessment Exercises 1

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minutes:

1. Single country studies is also known as…..?
2. Single Country study can be referred as comparative study….True or False?

4.3.1 Functions and features of comparing few countries

- Within the framework of this study, single-country studies are necessarily more *intensive* (i.e. have a lower level of abstraction) and less *extensive* (i.e. only examine one country) where it is possible to focus on the particular features of a country while at the same time relating those features to broader sets of research questions in the field of comparative politics.
- As stated earlier, one of the goals of comparison is *contextual description*. This goal has been best achieved by single-country studies. Studies that merely describe or interpret political phenomena have been variously referred to as ‘atheoretical’ and ‘interpretative’ (Lijphart 1971:691), or ‘configurative-

idiographic' (Eckstein 1975:96) in which the main purpose of the study is to provide purely descriptive information. Many have observed that such studies are, strictly speaking, not comparative but nevertheless are useful for comparison purely for the information they provide, which may feed into a study that seeks to provide explanation and understanding that has merit beyond the original country.

- The second goal of comparison is *classification* and there are numerous single-country studies that provide new classifications and 'types' that have become essential for further comparative research across a range of topics. For example, in describing the Franco regime in Spain, Juan Linz (1964) identified a new form of authoritarianism that was different from personalistic dictatorships and totalitarian states. The regime institutionalized representation of the military, the Catholic Church, and the Falange, as well as the Franco loyalists, monarchists, and technocrats. Unlike totalitarian states, the regime relied on passive mass acceptance rather than popular support.
- Single-country studies have numerous other functions, including hypothesis generation and 'plausibility probes', theory-informing and theory-confirming, the analysis of so-called 'deviant' and 'outlier' cases, and process tracing and the elaboration of causal mechanisms.

Using single-country studies in these different ways rests very much on a set of procedures for selecting countries that are related to the analysis of those countries using other methods of comparison. Thus, in the mind of a comparativist there are very few instances of the perfectly *sui generis* case, but one that is selected for its importance in relation to other cases, other findings, and other comparisons that have already been conducted. Single-country studies are thus not plucked from thin air, but are specifically chosen for the merit in contributing to larger sets of questions in the field.

The generation of hypotheses often comes from the analysis of political events, outcomes, and behaviour in single countries that are well known to the scholar, that present new research puzzles for wider debates in the field, and that either explicitly or implicitly suggest that the generated hypothesis be tested in a larger selection of countries (Lijphart 1971). When someone gives a lecture using comparative evidence from many countries, a member of the audience may exclaim, 'But in my country, things are different!' This is undoubtedly true, but more importantly the comment illustrates how single-country studies can be used to confirm and infirm existing theories, or illuminate known deviant countries.

Theory-confirming and theory-infirming studies draw on known findings from existing studies that have been conducted a larger sample of countries (usually global quantitative studies). They are thus grounded within the confines of known generalizations (Lijphart 1971) and in general terms, are often referred to as deviant cases or 'outliers'. As outlined above, comparison of many countries often reveals a host of deviant countries that do not conform to the theoretical expectations of the researcher. This deviance invites further research of the countries to establish which rival explanations had not been considered, and it forces the re-evaluation of how the key variables of the study were originally operationalized. Deviant country studies can weaken existing theories as well as further refine the concepts and measures used in the original comparative analysis (Lijphart 1971).

Finally, single-country studies can be used to trace significant political processes and examine possible causal mechanisms that lie between two or more variables of interest. In both instances, the intensiveness of the single-country study allows for a more detailed look at underlying processes and mechanisms that simply cannot be investigated in studies that compare more countries. In this method of analysis, the scholar examines a variety of qualitative materials (histories, archival documents, interview transcripts, among others) in order to see whether the causal process hypothesized by a particular theory is actually evident or not (George and Bennett 2005). In this way, the single country provides a rich source of material for presenting causal 'stories' that link causal chains together in ways that are relevant and verifiable (George and Bennett 2005:205).

Self-Assessment Exercises 2

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minutes:

1. Single country studies have lower level of abstraction….. True or False?
2. Mention two functions of single-country studies.

4.3.2 Advantages of single country studies

- In surveys of many countries, deviant or 'outlier' countries, which do not fit the general pattern, may be identified. Such countries may be chosen for more intensive study to determine why they do not conform to the theory.
- Thus single country studies can be used to confirm or infirm accepted theory and to provide insights for refining it.

- Countries may also be chosen because particular characteristics are present in them to an extreme degree, because the case appears to it lend itself to the study of causal mechanisms, or because a policy of interest has been implemented there.
- On the other hand, a country may be chosen because it is thought to be representative of a group or category of countries. This raises the question of classifications or typologies of countries.
- Case studies are particularly useful for generating hypotheses, exploring phenomena, determining causal relationships, tracing causal mechanisms or pathways, offering in-depth insights, and dealing with heterogeneous entities.
- Ontologically speaking, “case study researchers tend to have a ‘lumpy’ vision of the world: they see countries, communities and persons as highly individualized phenomena” (Gerring 2007). While this suggests an affinity for interpretivist metatheory, Gerring further points out that case studies may take on many forms and can be used within any paradigm.

4.3.3 Disadvantages of few countries comparison]

Generalizations from single-country studies will always be limited, since the country unit itself is bound by particular characteristics, while the potential for comparing variation in political phenomena across units is bound by time and space. However many sub-national units are compared over however many days, months, and years, the inferences one draws from them will have to be made with care. For instance, Maxwell’s (1995) study of the democratic transition in Portugal stretches all the way back to the colonial period to establish the context in which members of the military exiting Angola in the early 1970s became disillusioned with the Salazar regime and fomented the Movement of the Armed Forces (MFA). While his analysis of this disillusionment and subsequent mobilization to replace the dictatorship with a social democratic regime is well done, the limits of the study are certainly reached when he attempts to link these developments in 1974 to the collapse of the Soviet Union and then end of the Cold War. Even studies as robust as Putnam’s (1993a) on Italy reach their inferential limits and necessarily require complementary analysis that compares that particular case to other cases, or extends the analysis for replication in other cases.

Finally, single-country studies by definition trade their ability to provide in-depth knowledge and understanding of particular contexts against the ability to draw generalizations that have wider applicability.

Self-Assessment Exercises 3

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minutes:

1. Identify two merits of single-country studies.
2. Discuss two demerits of a single-country studies.

4.4 Summary

This unit has shown that single-country studies can play a critical role in comparative politics if they are used in particular ways and selected carefully. They can be used for pure contextual description that may feed into other comparative studies; provide new classifications for observed political phenomena; generate and probe hypotheses that can be tested in different countries; provide a solid strategy to confirm or infirm existing theories of politics; and reveal discrete processes of causal mechanisms that are often left underspecified in studies that compare a larger number of countries. There are natural limits to the use of single-country studies and it is paramount for scholars of such studies, as for other methods of comparison in this course, not to claim too much for a particular study or for the events in a particular country. Rather, students should be open and transparent about the parameters of the country study, its purpose, the criteria for its selection, and the types of inferences that can be made securely from the evidence that has been collected and analysed.

4.5 References/Further Reading/Web Resources

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4.9 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answers to SAEs 3

1. First, outlier countries may be chosen for more intensive study to determine why they do not conform to the theory. Second, single country studies can be used to confirm or infirm accepted theory and to provide insights for refining it.

2. First, generalizations from single-country studies will always be limited. Second, single-country studies by definition trade their ability to provide in-depth knowledge and understanding of particular contexts against the ability to draw generalizations that have wider applicability.

Answers to SAEs 1

1. Case studies
2. True

Answers to SAEs 2

3. True
4. Hypothesis testing and classification

Unit 5 New Challenges for Comparative Politics

Unit Structure

5.1 Introduction

We have consistently argued that the systematic comparison of countries is an effective method for making inferences about the political world we observe. The basic methods of comparative politics (many-, few-, and single-country studies) and its basic unit of analysis (the independent nation state) will not change for the foreseeable future, despite some of the more extreme pronouncements about the disappearance of the state in the new era of globalization. Comparative politics as a field and a method fits squarely in the 'evidence-inference methodological core' of political science (Almond 1996), and the application of comparative methods to real-world problems will continue to play a valuable role in the incremental accumulation of knowledge in this field. Indeed, for many, comparative politics is seen as the central concern of political science, as well as a central feature in helping us to understand current affairs in the world (Pennings *et al.* 1999). This unit addresses these claims and examines the way in which the field has evolved and is likely to evolve, the continuing challenges the field faces, and the ways in which it can adapt to our rapidly changing and increasingly global political environment.

5.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- Examine the ways in which the field has evolved
- Examine the continuing likely challenges of the field

5.3 New Challenges for Comparative Politics

5.3.1 The Full Circle of Comparative Politics

In many respects, comparative politics has come full circle since its early days as a new field in the social sciences (Mair 1996). Rather than simply returning to earlier research questions and methods, however, the field has evolved, effectively retaining key developments, rediscovering problems not addressed thoroughly in the past, and enhancing the robustness of systematic comparative methods. In this way, the field has mirrored the history of political science more generally. Described as an ‘eclectic progressive’ development, the discipline started with formal legal and institutional comparisons, moved to an almost exclusive focus on individuals (the ‘behavioural revolution’), rediscovered the importance of institutions (the advent of the ‘new institutionalism’), while continuously struggling with the question of culture (Almond 1996; Mair 1996).

In response to patterns of globalization, comparative politics has become even more explicit in its attention to international variables, while international relations has paid more attention to the role that domestic variables play in shaping international behaviour. While the substantive foci, inclusion of variables, and theoretical perspectives with which to examine them are more eclectic and open to change than ever before, the importance of systematic comparison and the need for inferential rigour (Almond 1996:89), despite attempts to argue otherwise, has remained constant (Schram and Caterino 2006).

The evolution in method also mirrors the substantive evolution in the field. Earlier ‘legalistic’ and formal institutional comparisons were carried out on a small sample of countries usually isolated to the United States and Western Europe, or to areas such as Latin America (Valenzuela1988). The relegation of formal institutional comparisons in favour of more general comparisons was accompanied by the increase in the number of countries in the sample, aided by the advent of computer technology and a commitment to providing comparable indicators of politics. A certain disillusionment with large-scale comparisons and the ‘rediscovery’ of institutions (particularly the state) led to an increase in few-country studies, and in some corners of the discipline, a definitive call for a conscious return to few-country studies. But significant developments in all three methods of comparison mean that the contemporary era of comparative politics includes many-country studies, few-country studies, and single-country studies, all of which comprise the methodological universe of the field and all of which are devoted to providing explanation and understanding of observed political phenomena in the world.

Evolution of comparative politics: substantive foci and dominant methods

Period	Substantive focus	Comparative method
Public law phase Inter-war period	Institutional design and political order Objects of inquiry: presidential vs parliamentary regimes, federal vs. unitary systems, political party organizations, legal and legislative instruments, democratic, fascist and socialist regimes	Few- and single-country studies Descriptive history Formal and configurative analysis Basic unit of analysis: individual countries (mostly in Europe and North America)
Behavioural revolution 1940s-1960s	Political behaviour Explaining patterns of political development, including democracy, political instability, and political violence Objects of inquiry: interest groups, parties, elections, decision making, rules of the game, the military, peasants, students, and workers	Many-country comparisons Cross-national indicators Quantitative analysis Search for covering laws and universal generalizations Basic unit of analysis: individuals and individual countries (global and regional samples)
Institutional revival 1970s-1080s	Relationship between institutions and political actors Objects of inquiry: democracy and	Few-country comparisons Qualitative and quantitative techniques Inferences

	democratic transition, revolution, economic and political dependency, political protest, public policy mechanisms and outcomes, and the welfare state	limited to similar countries outside scope of comparison Basic unit of analysis: individuals and individual countries (global and regional samples)
New eclecticism 1990s until present	Individual, institutional, and cultural foundations of politics Objects of inquiry: democratic transition, institutional design, social movements, globalization (economic, political, and cultural dimensions), Transnational networks, political and cultural diffusion, terrorism, human rights, international law, environment	Many-, few-, and single-country studies Qualitative and quantitative techniques Universal generalizations, as well as regional and country specific inferences Basic unit of analysis: individuals and individual countries (global and regional samples)

Source: Todd Landman (2008:304) Issues and Methods in Comparative Politics: an Introduction

The above table summarizes the evolution of comparative politics in terms of its substantive foci and dominant comparative methods. There is not a unity of method in comparative politics, but as in more general developments in the philosophy of the social sciences, there is now the practice of ‘cognitive instrumentalism’, which applies the necessary theoretical and methodological tools to a series of important and challenging political puzzles (Grofman 2001). But as new issues emerge and new research questions are posed, the key for comparative politics in providing sound answers to such new puzzles is systematic analysis that follows the general guidelines outlined in this unit.

Self-Assessment Exercises 1

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 3 minutes:

1. The discipline of comparative politics started with formal legal and institutional comparisons….. True or False?

2. Comparative Politics moved to an almost exclusive focus on individuals under the behavioural revolution… True or

5.3.2 New Methods

In addition to the many strengths and weaknesses of the different comparative methods outlined in this course, there are several new developments in the field that will continue to improve its ability to make strong inferences about the political world. These include important issues of data collection and analysis, the transcendence of traditional boundaries in the field, and the development of new analytic software and comparative techniques. Each of these developments relates directly to the concerns raised throughout the course.
At the height of the behavioural revolution, there was a sanguine view about the ability to collect meaningful indicators on global samples of countries in an effort to make universal generalizations about politics and political events.

Many criticized this optimistic view of the 'new' comparative politics (Apter 1996), yet now, more than ever, the global collection of meaningful data is possible. The tremendous advance in information and communication technologies (ICTs), have made the production, collection, and analysis of global data much easier than in the past. On-line data availability has made large-scale comparative analysis so much easier as has the increase in processing power of computers. But the increase in data availability has also led to a new demand for accountability and replicability in the field, since data sets that provide the evidence base for journal articles and research monographs can (and should) be shared between and among scholars. The demand for sharing, replication, and accountability means that scholars need to develop more systematic ways of collecting, documenting, and diffusing data. Scholars need to explain the sources, coding, problems, and potential areas for error in their data collection efforts. These need to be fully documented in the accompanying codebooks. Moreover, the field, and political science more generally, needs to develop an ethos of replication and data-sharing. Once data have been collected, documented, and analysed, scholars should make them available through the direct or indirect means mentioned above. Replicating and performing secondary analysis on published articles and books provides corroboration, incremental advancement in knowledge, and an excellent way to teach future generations of comparativists. Overall, technology now allows to a greater extent than ever before the development of a networked comparative research community.

The benefits of better data collection and diffusion are not isolated to many country comparisons using quantitative analysis. They apply equally to other comparative methods. Global indicators put regional comparisons, other few-country studies, and single-country studies in a broader comparative perspective. Likewise, comparative studies with a smaller sample size can demonstrate the limits of the global data and increase our understanding of political processes and events at the local level. In addition, the term ‘data’ is a broad one that includes all empirical information marshalled for systematic comparative analysis. Thus, in echoing the call articulated by King *et al*. (1994), the improvement in data collection and diffusion practices ought to extend to non-quantitative evidence. Comparative histories and single-country studies using qualitative methods should provide details and documentation of their collection of evidence.

The advent of new analytic techniques and computer software supports this general call for data improvement. New advances in qualitative data software allow new types of analysis that seek to provide structures and clusters of meaning from texts collected through traditionally qualitative means, such as in-depth interviewing, participant observation, or published official statements by political elites and policy makers. In this sense, texts themselves provide the data from which inferences can be drawn. The new computer software can draw connections, perform word counts, develop typologies and classification schemes, and calculate word, phrase, or sentence frequencies for more advanced analysis. In the past, this type of work has often been completed by hand. For example, Ian Budge and his collaborators (Budge *et al*. 1987, 2001; Klingemann *et al*. 1994) have coded political party manifestos published since World War II into thematic categories in an effort to compare policy and ideological positions of political parties in Europe and North America. The entire data set is now available on CD-ROM. In addition, new advances in text and qualitative analysis software packages allow for more systematic comparative studies that adopt discursive approaches to politics more generally (Franzosi 2004).

5.3.3 Maintaining relevance

The preceding discussion on the evolution of the discipline demonstrates that political science, and systematic comparative analysis in particular, continues to address real world problems and provides solutions and policy prescriptions based on the best evidence available. Ironically, at a time when world events call out most for unbiased, systematic, rigorous political science analysis, there continues to be significant disagreement in some quarters of the discipline about how political science can maintain its relevance. The 'Perestroikan' movement primarily based in the United States, criticizes the discipline's over-emphasis on method and mathematical sophistication, leading the profession to lose sight of political puzzles and problems and/or providing answers that are largely unintelligible to policy makers and practitioners (Schram and Caterino 2006). The main charge of the movement is that the discipline has become highly 'technicist' and 'statistical', where method is given greater weight than substance (Bennett 2002; Smith 2002).

The movement argues that more weight should be given to substance over method, effectively loosening the rules of inquiry and the logic of inference, while providing 'distinctive insights into substantive political questions' (Smith 2002). Flyvbjerg (2001, 2006) proposes a way of recapturing the substance of politics and making political science 'matter'. Flyvbjerg challenges fundamentally the desire and attempt within the social sciences to emulate the natural sciences (That is its appeal to observable events and the logic of inference advocated in King *et al*. 1994). He draws on a short passage in Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics* on the 'chief intellectual virtues' to build a framework for conducting more holistic social scientific analysis that pays greater attention to the rich complexity of context, while offering a deeper understanding of politics that moves beyond the narrow techno-rationalism of certain dominant strands in contemporary political science.

Self-Assessment Exercises 2

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minute:

1. Identify three prospective areas that will enhance the discipline of comparative politics.

5.6 Summary

The examples and discussions in this final unit demonstrate that the future for comparative politics is indeed bright. The proliferation of new issues and the examination of old ones continue to provide an ample supply of research topics for systematic comparative analysis. The accretion of comparative methods that has developed over the years provides scholars with a rich 'tool-chest' to examine and explain observed political phenomena in the world. Continued developments in information and communications technology will make the world a smaller place and ought to encourage an ethos of replication, develop a network of shared knowledge, build a stronger comparative-research community, and for certain research areas, promote links with the field of international relations. As in the many other examples detailed throughout this course, careful and systematic comparative analysis as well as dialogue between scholars that conduct studies using different comparative methods is the sensible approach to adopt when addressing such a timely issue as international terrorism. Global analysis can be used to tease out general relationships, while careful few-country and single-country analysis can examine in much greater detail and depth some of the more problematic assertions made on the basis of global analysis. Dialogue, transparency, and intellectual honesty about the links between research questions, methods, and inferences in comparative politics will provide the basis for a thriving and fruitful discipline. It is hoped that this course will make students more careful in their choice of countries, their collection of evidence, and their substantive conclusions about the particular research questions that have motivated them, while not losing sight of the importance of the work that is to be done.

5.9 References/Further Reading/ Web Resources

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5.10 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answers to SAEs 1

1. True
2. True

Answers to SAEs 2

1. These include (1) issues of data collection and analysis, (2) the transcendence of traditional boundaries in the field, (3) and the development of new analytic software and comparative techniques.

MODULE4 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF OBASANJO AND BUHARI FOREIGN POLICY, COMPARATIVE PARTY SYSTEM, COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES ON STATE, DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNMENT

This module discusses some salient aspects of comparative politics. The module started with the theory of political development where various perspectives of political development were examined. The second part of the module looked at party system in comparative perspective. Here scholarly articles on party system were discussed and the types of party system were also outlined. The third aspect of the module examined both in historical and analytical context the theory of democracy and democratic stability. In the fourth unit, government and its types were x-rayed. The final unit considered critically the state theory and its recent debate.

Therefore, this module is thematically structured into five units that comprehensively present vital details that will clear your doubt and help you.

You are advised to study each of the unit carefully as you are expected to answer some questions to evaluate your understanding on the various issues as discussed. Possible answers to the questions are provided under each of the unit accordingly.

Unit 1 Comparative Analysisof Obasanjo and Buhari's Foreign Policy under Democracy

1.1 Introduction

This unit examine comparatively the foreign policy of Obasanjo and Buhari administration in Nigeria. The unit discussed the foreign policy focus of both administrations during their terms as president of the federal republic of Nigeria. The Unit discussed the basic principles of the Nigerian foreign policy, the concepts of foreign policy, and the focus of Nigerian foreign policy in 1999. The unit further compared the idea of shuttle diplomacy, economic diplomacy and domestic diplomacy in both administrations.

1.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the meaning of foreign policy
- Understand the core principles of Nigerian foreign policy
- Explain the Obasanjo and Buhari's ideas of shuttle deplomacy
- Describe the difference between Obasanjo and Buhari's economic diplomacy and domestic diplomacy.

1.3 Comparative Analysis of Obasanjo and Buhari's Foreign Policy under Democracy

1.3.1 Core Principles of Nigeria's Foreign Policy

There are some level of consensus on the basic principles of Nigeria's foreign policy (King, 1998; Fawole, 2003; Saliu, 2007) which can be summarized here as follows:

1. Non alignment with any of the then existing ideological and military power blocs especially NATO and Warsaw Pact during the world war;

2. Respect for the legal equality, political independence sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states;
3. Respect for the doctrine of non-interference in the domestic affairs of all other states;
4. Seeking membership of both continental and global multilateral organizations for their functional importance to Nigeria; and
5. Africa as the centre piece of Nigeria's external relation.

These principles constitute the Nigeria foreign policies with other countries of the world since independence. King (1998) opines that Nigeria foreign policy is rooted in the basic principles that have guided its relations with other countries. They are geared toward protecting and advancing Nigeria's national interest. Every government has accepted their validity, although the style and vigour with which each pursued them have differed significantly. King (1998) further assert that, all of these five principles provide a basis for formulating, executing, and justifying specific foreign policy objectives and the actions taken to achieve them. They constitute guidelines that the interested public may use to evaluate particular foreign policy behaviour.

1.3.2 The Concept of Foreign Policy

To understand the concept of foreign policy, it is important first and foremost to know what 'policy' is all about. Policy can be viewed as a course of action or a reasoned choice emerging from the consideration of competing options (Akinboye and Ottoh, 2005:115). Policy can also be seen as 'a proposed course of action of a person, group, or government within a given environment providing obstacles and opportunities which the policy was proposed to utilize and overcome in an effort to reach a goal or realize the objective or a purpose' (Friedrich, 1963:79) or 'a purposive course of action followed by an actor or set of actors in dealing with a problem or matter of concern, (Anderson, 1975:3).

There are two broad types of policy – public and foreign policy. Public or domestic policy is whatever governments choose to do or not to do' (Dye, 1978:3).Therefore, no government can meet all needs or solve all problems with its public policy. Hence, there is a need to continue public policy with foreign policy which is targeted at the external environment.

The concept of 'foreign' is traceable to the Latin word *'foris'* meaning outside or abroad. Placing this side by side with the aforementioned definition of 'policy', it can be said that foreign policy are the actions and inactions of the government of a state abroad. As Aluko (1981) observed, 'nobody has really formulated a universally acceptable definition of the concept and probably nobody will succeed in doing so'.

This notwithstanding, quite a number of scholars in the discipline, International Relations, have confidently composed a befitting definition which best captures what foreign policy is all about. According to George Modelski, foreign policy 'is the system of activities evolved by communities for changing the behavior of other states and for adjusting their own activities to the international environment' (Modelski, 1962:6). To Joseph Frankel, the concept 'foreign policy refers to those decisions and actions, which involve, to an appreciable extent, relations between one state and others' (Frankel, 1963:1). Concisely, foreign policy is 'an interplay between the outside and the inside' (Northedge 1968:15).

Self-Assessment Exercises 1

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minute:

1. Identify and explain three core principle s of Nigeria's foreign policy.
2. How will you define foreign policy?

1.3.3 The Focus of Nigeria's Foreign Policy under President Obasanjo in 1999

Political leaders in Nigeria since 1999 have prioritize the objectives they pursue through their foreign policies. President Olusegun Obasanjo, a onetime military head of state, democratically elected as civilian President in May 1999, focused on the following on Nigeria foreign policy:

i. To re-integrate Nigeria into the mainstream of the international community
ii. To restore Nigeria image in the international community.
iii. To attract foreign investment to Nigeria.

iv. To recover stolen public funds stashed in foreign bank accounts.
v. To secure debt relief or outright debt cancellation for the country.
vi. To reduce to the barest minimum Nigeria's international financial commitment especially in Africa
vii. To strengthen Nigeria's bilateral and multilateral cooperation with other countries for the purpose of reaping economic benefits (Ighoshemu, 2022).

These directional changes of President Obasanjo's second entry in 1999 in his foreign policy thrust, made him to focus on the triple drive objectives of shuttle, economic and domestic diplomacies. We shall examine briefly these foreign policy focus.

1.4 Shuttle Diplomacy under Obasanjo Administration

Diplomacy is one of the concepts that is best conceptualized through a consideration of its usage rather than attempting to fix an authoritative meaning. Osagie, (2007), noted that, diplomacy in the popular sense means the employment of fact, shrewdness and skill in any negotiation or ransition. He went further to say that it is an application of fact and intelligence in international policies through negotiation, persuasion and compromise. Asobie, (2002), define diplomacy as management of international relations by negotiation. Bajang, (2018), viewed diplomacy as the application of intelligence and tactics to the conduct of official relations between the governments of independent states.

The concept of shuttle Diplomacy emerged from Henry Kissinger's efforts in the Middle East in the early 1970s. He flew back and front between Middle Eastern capitals for months in an effort to bring about peace after the 1973 Arab-Israeli war. Fey and Ramsey (2010) assert that shuttle Diplomacy, 'involves the intermediary meeting with each side in turn and relying in those discussions to progress towards a solution'. Akinterinwa, (2004), perceived shuttle diplomacy of Obasanjo to be a deal of foreign policy for promoting national objectives. Osagie (2007), noted that shuttle diplomacy was embarked upon to enable Nigeria reintegrate in to the comity of nation after being isolate.

The rationale behind shuttle diplomacy is based on the use of a third party to convey information back and front between the parties, serving as a reliable means of communication less susceptible to the grandstanding of Face to Face or media based

Communication (Ighoshemu, 2021). For this course, shuttle diplomacy is the foreign travels of the Fourth Republic presidents, and as a tool only for re-building Nigeria's foreign image and fine tuning the international economic environment of the nation for securing debt relief for Nigeria and for the investment/capital objectives of the Nigeria foreign policy, and the repatriation of looted funds by Nigerians while in public offices.

The shuttle diplomacy of the Obasanjo administration is in line with the foreign policy objectives in the 1999 constitution Chapter 11, Section 19. Obasanjo's civilian administration on assumption of office as democratically elected president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, accepted the task before him as that of bringing Nigeria out of her dead-end by consolidating democracy at home, respecting fundamental human rights and encouraging Liberal economic reforms, good governance and transparency with a view to boosting Nigeria image by reassuring the rest of the world that Nigeria was truly back on track Olasupo (2015). He under took foreign trips on regular basis, there is basically no major country that President Obasanjo did not visit during his tenure. He was bent on taking Nigeria out of the recluse of General Abacha's years. President Olusegun Obasanjo shuttle diplomacy was a vital instrument for foreign bilateral and multilateral collaboration for sustainable development and peaceful co-existence in the West Africa sub-region as well as with other countries of the world (Ighoshemu, 2021).

For instance, before 1999, Nigeria external debt was 27,008 billion dollars which present Nigeria as the highest debted country in Africa (CBN, 2002) and the country was spending 3 billion dollars yearly on debt servicing. Obasanjo shuttle diplomacy, went on the drive for foreign direct investment, campaign for cancellation of the Nation's debt and a cutting edge economic diplomacy to tackle the financial problems of the country.

His foreign trips persuaded prospective investors to Nigeria and established high diplomatic contacts with leaders of Nigeria's creditors. The Olusegun Obasanjo shuttle diplomacy, helped Nigeria to be able to secure debt pardon from Paris and London clubs to the tune of 18 billion dollars and Nigeria foreign reserves that is 2 billion dollars at the point of his entry 1999, rose to 43 billion dollars while leaving office in 2007, it also helped to chart the cause for debt release for the nation by foreign creditors and to repatriate stolen money by public office holders back to the country (Olasupo, 2015).

1.4.1 Obasanjo Economic Diplomacy

On return to democracy in 1999, Obasanjo made diplomatic moves to redeem the scruffy and shattered image of Nigeria which were results of the unending transition to democracy which cumulated to the June 1993 annulment of election, increase in the abuse of human rights and regular killing of innocent citizens, for instance, Ken-Saro-Wiwa and other civil right activists.

Obasanjo made it clear that his administration shall pursue a dynamic foreign policy to promote friendly relations with all nations and will continue to play a constructive role in the United Nations (UN) and Organization of Africa Unity (OAU) now African Union (AU) and other international bodies. He further assured Nigerians that his administration shall continue to honour existing agreement between Nigeria and other countries.

In pursuit of his foreign policy goals, President Olusegun Obasanjo in 1999, was instrumental in gathering Africa leaders to work toward establishing a code of conduct in economic and political reforms that would satisfy the conditions and expectations of Western donors. At the June 2001 G8 Summit in Genoa, Italy, Obasanjo was one of the four leading African Heads of state to unveil an African initiated plan for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) Osagie (2007). President Obasanjo made Nigeria's Presence felt with his several trips abroad to attend sessions of the United Nation (UN); Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC); Group 77 (G77); World Bank, International Monetary fund (IMF); World Economic Forum (WEF); Group 8 (G8); United Nations Educational Scientific and cultural organization (UNESCO); Commonwealth Organization; African Union (AU); Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS); and other organizations to better economic situations already battered by previous administrations (Ighoshemu, 2021).

The administration targeted at investment promotion in which Nigeria was repackaged for Export – to create awareness of investment opportunities, he brought back several investors to Nigeria. China, Germany, Japan, Denmark, France, Canada (Abdulai, 2007:17). Greece, Russia, Norway, Poland, Spain, Italy, Switzerland and Israel also established bilateral investment relation with Nigeria during this period (NIPC Annual Report, 2006; CBN draft annual report). The administration also encouraged Regional Economic Integration, the West African Gas Pipeline project (WAPCO) which is expected when completed to supply Natural Gas to Benin-Republic, Ghana, Togo and Cote d'Ivore in the West Africa sub region were embarked upon.

1.4.2 Obasanjo Domestic Diplomacy

Domestic diplomacy is broadly conceived as the national interest of a nation which is guided by the formulation of foreign policy. It is not an end in itself but a means to an end. It is a method of reaching a goal and in formulating such goals, core values and national ethos must be considered. The Obasanjo Olusegun civilian administration was targeted at economic and shuttle diplomacy as a strategies to redeem Nigeria's image and facilitate National development. Since 1999 Nigeria has been faced with multiple crises resulting from communal and religious-based violence, resource activism which has taken the form of militancy, and fluctuations in global oil prices, thus leading to political and economic instability (Abdul, Ibrahim, 2013). The Obasanjo administration at the beginning promised the nation to improve the electricity sector that has been epileptic, tackle corruption and insecurity that was growing in all regions of the country. In the north the Islamic sect (Boko Haram); The east, the Igbo agitation for secession by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB); and in the south the Niger Delta agitators for resource control due to neglect by the state and the multinational oil companies exploring and exploiting crude oil from the region. All of these were attempted, no significant result were recorded (Ighoshemu, 2021). In order to avert looming nationwide black out, he proposed to connect a total of 2,659mw of space capacity with his team to the National grid through the Oil Mineral Producing Area Development Commission (OMPADEC), Aluminum Smelting Company of Nigeria (ALSCON), Enron, Turbine system, Eagle energy and swede power sources (Olasupo, 2015). In Obasanjo's domestic policy, road construction, industries, citizens interest, employment, tackling of corruption and insecurity, improved health and education of the citizens, infrastructure were all articulated, much was achieved compared to that of Buhari civilian administration whose foreign direct investment on infrastructure is huge on the media andcitizens are yet to feel the impact. Much had not been achieved by the Buhari administration as a result of insecurity facing the nation under his watch.

Self-Assessment Exercises 2

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minute:

1. Describe the focus of Obasanjo's shuttle diplomacy.
2. What are the gains of Obasanjo's economic diplomacy?

1.5 Shuttle Diplomacy under Buhari Administration

President Muhammadu Buhari's administration when compared with Obasanjo's administration, there was no much difference, as both administration embark on debt recovery and image laundry as part of their shuttle diplomacy. On assumption of office in 2015 May, after the general election, President Buhari like President Obasanjo embarked on foreign tour of countries to bring Nigerians to the comity of nations and to improve relations with Nigeria's neighbours in order to jointly fight the menance of Boko Haram terrorist group that had brought bad name to the country. The Buhari administration partnered with United States of America (USA) and other world powers to support the Nigeria government in the fight against Boko Haram terrorist by aiding the Nation with the much needed manpower and intelligence (Ighoshemu, 2021).

President Buhari travelled to the neighbouring countries of Niger Republic, Benin Republic and Cameroon which resulted to the formation of multinational Joint tasks force to tackle the Boko Haram terrorist, and the relocation of the Multinational Joint Task Force headquarters from Nigeria to N'Djamena in Chad and appointing a Nigerian as the Commander of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF). This diplomatic relations between these ECOWAS countries helped to curtail the insurgent activities. Buhari's travels led to the improvement of relations with China in order to foster Economic development through provision of needed infrastructure. President Buhari Shuttle Diplomacy helped Nigeria to foster relations with the

United State of America, China and the ECOWAS Countries, thereby helping Nigeria to fight Corruption which resulted to the US department of Justice (DOP) for the forfeiture of 144 million dollars, which was the proceeds, of corruption by Nigeria's former minister of Petroleum Diezani Alison-Madueke (Bello, Dutse and Othman, 2017). Buhari's foreign travels, his personality and his campaign promises of tackling Boko Haram terrorism and countering violent extremism, fighting corruption and improving the nation's economy were practically demonstrated on his entry to governance in his Shuttle Diplomacy just like the Obasanjo Administration (Ighoshemu, 2021).

1.5.1 Buhari Economic Diplomacy

Unlike Obasanjo, Buhari in his economic diplomacy was able to improve relations between Nigeria and the United States which has led to improving collaboration in the fight against Boko Haram and corruption resulting in the repatriation of stolen money back to the country and multilateral cooperation to fight insurgency of Boko Haram.

The Buhari's campaign promises were on three cardinal points of combating Terrorism, fighting corruption and improving the economy. He improved relations with her neighbours in order to jointly fight Boko Haram which has assumed multinational or transnational dimension, he partnered with America and other world powers to support the government in order to fight terrorism by providing needed manpower and intelligence and more importantly the improvement of the economy and fighting corruption. He also improved relations with china in order to foster economic development through the provision of needed infrastructure. President Buhari administration barely one year after assuming office, visited China to solidify both countries trade, diplomatic and economic relations. This visit led to the signing of a frame work to enhance infrastructural development (Ighoshemu, 2021). Reform Commission of China and the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment of Nigeria, Technology and Scientific cooperation between both countries were entered into. In the visit, a number of loans were granted especially to finance the deficit of 2016 budget, infrastructure loan for trains, among others (Bello, Dutse and Othman 2017).

For instance, the railway project by the Buhari administration was aimed at solving the infrastructural gap in the country, also provides needed jobs for the populace and to stimulate the economy. The trade relations between Nigeria and China in just first half of 2016 has stood at $6.4 billion (Bello, Dutse and Othman 2017).It has provided the Nigeria State with the needed funds to cushion the effect of infrastructural deficit and the nation's needed foreign direct investments.

1.5.2 Buhari Domestic Diplomacy

Buhari promised in his campaign to tackle three major challenges facing the country, which include insecurity, corruption and dwindling economy. It is however, noteworthy that Nigeria's domestic problems are not limited to the ones stated. Some others as indicated by Akinterinwa include 'intermittent polarization and instability, high level of unemployment and poverty, mono-cultural economy and low industrial and agricultural productivity…, the problem of institutional corruption, declining quality of education and ethical standard, as well as infrastructural deficit'. For all of the highlighted sectors, the Buhari administration deed little or nothing, in addressing the issues of insecurity, corruption, unemployment, and educational decline in the country. People leave in fear of been killed or kidnapped, with high rate of insecurity, poverty and unemployment. The economy is of no better with high rate of inflation of goods and services by the day, there by breeding high rate of corruption in the country (Ighoshemu, 2021).

Self-Assessment Exercises 3

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minute:

1. Describe the gains of Buhari's shuttle diplomacy.
2. What are the key issues in Buhari's domestic diplomacy?

1.6 Summary

In this unit, we have compared the foreign policy under President Obasanjo civilian administration and that of President Mohammadu Buhari's administration. For Obasanjo, he was able to transform Nigeria from isolated state of Abacha's regime to a globalized nation; the administration has also attracted foreign development investment in multiple ways especially in the area of oil and telecommunication. On the other hand, Buhari civilian administration maintained good relationship with its neighbours to fight Boko Haram insurgency and also improved bilateral relations with China to cater for countries economic imbalance and also maintained good relations with United States of America.

1.7 References/Further Reading/Web Resources

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1.9 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answers to SAEs 1

1. *Respect for the doctrine of non-interference in the domestic affairs of all other states;*
2. *Seeking membership of both continental and global multilateral organizations for their functional importance to Nigeria; and*
3. *Africa as the centre piece of Nigeria's external relation.*

Concisely, foreign policy is 'an interplay between the outside and the inside'

Answers to SAEs 2

1. Foreign Direct Investment, Debt Cancellation and Repatriation of stolen funds
2. International trade negotiation, Attraction of foreign investors and Regional economic integration

Answers to SAEs 3

1. Formation of Joint Task Force, Reduction in Insurgency Activities and Repatriation of Stolen Money.
2. Insurgency, Corruption, Inflation, Unemployment, Insecurity among others.

Unit 2 Party System: a Comparative Perspective

Unit Structure

2.1 Introduction

Modern democracy has bred the system of political parties and organized interest (pressure) groups as an indispensable factor in its operation. The reason behind it is that the representative system lays stress on the maximization of political participation by enjoining upon the members of the political elites to take the people, in confidence, either for the sake of demonstrating their faith in the myth that 'the voice of the people is the voice of God', or to justify the very legitimacy of their leadership and authority. It also indicates the fact of political modernization by desiring the involvement of more and more people in the political process of the country with a critical and secular outlook. Hence, in this unit an attempt is made to discuss the themes of political parties, organized interest groups and elites which play an important part in the formulation of public policies and whose role determines the working of a democratic system.

2.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit you will be able to:

- know the meaning of political party;
- comprehend the functions of party system;
- understand the various kinds of party system;

- analyse the advantages and disadvantages of party system.

2.3 Party System

The political party system is an essential element in the working of any democratic system. The success of any democracy depends on the existence of organized political parties.

2.3.1 Meaning of Political Party

According to Michael Curtis, it is difficult to define accurately a political party. The reason is that the views of the liberal and Marxist writers differ sharply on this point. Not only this, even the views of the English liberals differ from their American counterparts. The most celebrated view among the English leaders and writers is that of Burke, who holds that a political party is a body of men united for promoting the national interest on some particular principles in which they are all agreed. Reiterating the same view, Disraeli defined political party as a group of men banded together to pursue certain principles. So, according to Benjamin Constant, a party is a group of men professing the same political doctrine. The key point is that all these definitions relates to the issue of 'principles' of public importance on which the members of a party are agreed. But the American view is different in the sense that here a political party is taken as an instrument of catching power. A party is just a platform or machinery for taking part in the struggle for power; it is a device for catching votes; it is an agency to mobilize people's support at the time of elections; it is an instrument for the aggregation of interests that demand their vociferous articulation. As Sigmund Neumann pointed out, generally political party defined as the articulate organization of society's active political agents, those who are concerned with the control of governmental powers and who compete for popular support with another group or group holding divergent views. As such, it is the great intermediary which links social forces and ideologies to official governmental institutions and relates them to political action within the larger political community (Harjit Singh, 2021).

Such a view of political party makes it hardly distinguishable from a pressure or an interest group. A specific interest may constitute the foundation of a political party. Thus, difference between or among political parties may be sought on the basis of specific interests. Schuman observe that political parties have become essentially political institutions to implement the objectives of interest group. A similar meaning be discovered in the interpretation of Crotty who says that a political party is a formally organized group that performs the functions of educating the public, that recruits and promotes individuals for public office, and that provides a comprehensive linkage functions between the public and governmental decision makers. But basically different from the English and American views is the Marxist view on the theme of political party as elaborated by Lenin.

Lenin takes a political party as a ‘vanguard’ of the social class whose task is to create class consciousness and then to prepare the proletariat for a bloody and violent revolution. Every party is a class organization. The ‘bourgeois’ parties of whatever name have their vested interest in the maintenance of the status quo, but the party of the workers (communist party) has its aim at the overthrow of the existing system and its substitution by a new system in which power would be in the hands of the working class and the society under the rule of this party would be given a classless character so as to eventuate into a stateless pattern of life in the final stage of social development.

According to Lenin, The communist party is created by means of selection of the best, most class consciousness, most self-sacrificing and far sighted workers. The communist party is the lever of political organization, with the help of which the more progressive part of the working class directs on the right path the whole of proletariat and the semi-proletariat along the right road. According to Johari, it is true that political parties grew as a faction in the early modern age, but now a distinction between the two is made. Faction is a bad term, because its members take part in disruptive and dangerous activities so as to paralyse the working of a government. Opposed to this, party is a respectable term. Its members take part in the struggle for power on the basis of some definite policies and programmes and they observe the sanctity of constitutional means. So it is said that while a party acts by counting heads, a faction acts by breaking heads. But parties are ‘specialized associations’ and they become more complex, organized and bureaucratic as a society approaches the modern type.

Self-Assessment Exercises 1

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minute:

1. The political party system is an essential element in the working of any democratic system… True or False?
2. According to Benjamin Constant, a party is a group of men professing the same political doctrine….. True or False?

2.3.2 Functions of Political Parties

The political parties perform important functions in modern political system that may be enumerated as under:

i. The parties unite, simplify and stabilize the political process. They bring together sectional interests, overcome geographical disturbances, and provide coherence to sometimes divisive government structures. For instance, the American Democratic Party provides a bridge to bring together the southern conservatives and northern liberals; the German Democratic Party bridges the gulf between the Protestants and the Catholics in Germany. In federal systems all political parties emphasise the uniting of different governmental structures, the extreme case being of South Africa.
ii. Political parties struggle for capturing power and they strive to form order out of chaos. They seek to widen the interests they represent and harmonies these interests with each other. Though interest articulation is performed by pressure groups, the work of interest aggregation is done by the parties. For example, the Conservative Party of Britain, in spite of the nature of its internal organization and distribution of power, depends upon the support of diverse economic, social and geographical sections in English politics. All parties strive to extend the area of their support.
iii. Political parties provide a link between the government and the people. They seek to educate, instruct and activate the electorate. That is, they perform the job of political mobilization, secularization and recruitment. Hening and Pindar states that in a liberal democratic system the parties use means of mass media to give political education to the people. The parties may organize and control some unions or organizations for ‘occupational and social implantation’.
iv. While increasing the scope of political activity and widening the base of popular participation, political parties perform the important function of recruiting political leaders. Men in authority are recruited through some channel. In political systems having weak and ill-organised political parties, power remains in the hands of the elites that are recruited from the traditional groups like hereditary ruling families of military organizations. In totalitarian countries where only one party is in power, political recruitment is made from the ranks of the same party. It is only in countries having a liberal-democratic order that competitive party

system prevails and political recruitment is made from different political parties.

v. Political parties present issues; they set value goals for the society. All parties have philosophical bases, no matter blurred and no matter how divorced from the actual political behaviour of the party they are. Though American political parties have 'ideological similarity and issue conflict', they have no disagreement on the fundamental goals of the society (R.A. Dahl). The two parties of Ireland (Fianna Fail and Fine Gael) are prototypes of two parties of the United States in respect of their 'ideological similarity and issue conflict' nature.

vi. Political parties serve as the broker of ideas by selecting a number of issues and focusing attention on them. In a democratic system revolutionary parties (or those hostile to the established order as such) act not as conciliatory elements in aggregating the largest number of common interest but as focal points of discontent and organized opposition. The compromise needed in democratic political behaviour is never acceptable to them. These parties may adhere to the political left, as the communist parties do, or to the right as done by the fascist party in Italy and Nazi party in Germany (in the period before second World War), or the Poujadists in France, or to revolutionary nationalism as with Aprista in Peru, or the Revolutionary Nationalist Movement as in Bolivia. In a non-democratic system, revolutionary parties may not simply be the mechanism through which the political system operates, they may be the real core of the system itself with power being exercised by party leaders rather than by the government officials.

vii. In newer and developing nations of the world where political habits and traditions are yet to grow up, political parties perform the job of political modernization. That is, they strive to give a particular shape to the government, provide the main link between different social and economic groups, constitute the chief agency for political education and socialization, break down traditional barriers and act as the binding force in communities divided by groups based on tribal affiliations, religious denomination or sectarian origin. The role of the Congress Party in India may be said to be the best example of this kind where the great leaders played a significant role in framing the constitution and then running the administration of the country on the lines of parliamentary democracy so as to have secularization of the pohty.

viii. Political parties also perform social welfare functions that may be termed their 'non-political' activities. The parties work for the alleviation of the sufferings of the people during the days of famine, drought, epidemics, wars etc. They also work for the eradication of social evils like illiteracy, untouchability, ignorance, poverty etc. In Australia citizens may lead their life from cradle to grave within the frame of organizations linked to a party which include not only trade union and welfare groups but also stamp collecting societies, pigeon clubs, and weightlifting associations.

To conclude, we can say that main function of political parties is to offer politics and programmes and translate them into action after being in power.

Self-Assessment Exercises 2

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minute:

1. In a democracy, there is an alternative to political party….. True or False?
2. List two functions of a political party in a democracy.

2.3.3 Varieties of Party Systems

Party system theory aims at predicting strategies of the competitors and preferably identifying equilibria of such strategies. The critical elements are the number of competitors and the 'currency' of competition for voter support, namely the policy issues and issue bundles politicians promise to enact to shore up electoral support. Theories typically assume an indirect exchange between voters and politicians. Citizens surrender their vote at the beginning of the electoral term in exchange for the winning politicians implementing campaign promises during the electoral term. Democratic accountability operates indirectly because of:

i. the time elapsed between election and policy delivery;
ii. the benefits and costs of policy accruing to all voters, regardless of whether they supported winners; and
iii. voters speaking their verdict over the record of governing politicians (and the opposition) retrospectively at the end of the

electoral term and taking that evaluation into account in their prospective assessment of politicians' promises for the subsequent electoral term.

The policy-based "responsible partisan" model, however, is only one special case of principal-agent relations within a broader set of mechanisms expressing democratic accountability. Critics have argued that responsible partisan models home in on a highly constrained view of the currency of competition, namely policy positions rather than a variety of valence goods broadly conceived. Once the special place of positional issue competition has been characterized, we then can turn to numbers of players and dimensions of policy issues as structural properties of party systems. Finally, for all party systems we can distinguish greater or lesser intensity of competition or 'competitiveness'.

2.3.4 Policy-Based Programmatic Party Systems

In addition to numbers of players, spatial-positional theories of programmatic party systems consider the number of dimensions on which parties compete, something that empirical comparative analysis often refers to as 'cleavages'. Because of the variability of language that prevails in this literature, it is important to draw clear terminological distinctions. There are lines of division running through every society generated by social, political, economic, and cultural group interests and sentiments of deprivation. If such divides of traits, affiliations, and opinions are durable we may call them *cleavages* (Rae and Taylor 1970), particularly if they mutually reinforce each other (Bartolini and Mair 1990). They are separate from mere 'divisions' that denote more fleeting group divides typically associated with a single point decision (e.g. to take an example from Europe: driving on the left or the right side of the road). Cleavages tend to have the qualities of social *entrapment and closure*. Individuals face costly barriers to enter and to exit a social or political category and the rewards and deprivations associated with membership. Therefore they tend to organize as that category in order to acquire or defend certain economic, political, or cultural resources, rights, and privileges. Only few of these divides ever translate into collective action to change the allocation of gratifications, let alone the very specific and challenging form of party politics. A *political partisan divide* appears where parties represent different sides of a social divide. Statistically, such partisan mapping of divides can be detected with techniques of factor and discriminant analysis as well as regression analysis, with party choice as the dependent variable, especially multinomial logistic models. The number of social divides that map onto the party system may be larger than the number of partisan divides, if there are several reinforcing divides captured by the same party alternatives. Thus, if all working-class voters are also secular and all non-working-class voters are religious, there will be no separate religious and class partisan political divides, even if parties map both issues onto the party system. Conversely, where group memberships on social divides cross-cut each other *and* are mapped onto parties, they tend to generate multiple partisan divides.

From the perspective of office-seeking strategic politicians, what matters for their strategic moves to win elections may be neither social nor even partisan divides, but only the minimal set of *competitive divides or "competitive dimensions"* in a party system. These are only those divides on which voters display some *elasticity of partisan choices*, responding to modifications of the competing parties' appeals and offers. By contrast many political divides are a matter of political identification rather than competition (Sani and Sartori 1983). In this instance, group membership predicts the propensity to favor a party, but there is no open electoral market in which voters would change their partisan choice, were competing parties to modify their appeals on the given political dimension. In case of a competitive dimension, a critical subset of rational voters is responsive to parties' changing electoral appeals. These elasticities are elusive to measure, as they would require a panel data design. A weak tracer of the competitive status of a dimension is the salience of the underlying issues for voters and parties.

2.3.5 Party Systems in New Democracies of the Developing World

Whereas comparative literature on Western OECD polities worries about the erosion of relations of democratic accountability, students of democracy in developing countries are preoccupied with the reverse question of whether accountability relations and 'institutionalized' party systems will ever emerge in the first place. Particularly students of Latin American and post-communist politics have been impressed by the high volatility of many parties and party systems signaling difficulty in establishing lasting relations between voters and political agents (Rose and Munro 2003). In countries where party systems have developed some staying power, it is not programmatic politics based on indirect exchange, but clientelistic principal-agent relations that appear to dominate the scene and adapt to new constituencies and political challenges, whether in South and South-East Asia (Chandra 2004; Krishna 2002; Wilkinson 2006), in Latin America (Levitsky 2003) or postcommunist Eastern Europe (Hale 2006). The persistence or demise of clientelistic conditions does not simply depend on economic poverty and unequal asset distribution in a polity, but also on the strategic incentives generated within the arena of party competition to switch to a different accountability relationship (Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2006). Also weak performance of public sector enterprises or of publicly regulated companies that are often shot through with clientelistic exchange relations may affect how democratic political accountability relations evolve.

Upon closer inspection, within each region of the developing world the current state of party system consolidation and the practices of principal-agent relations varies widely. Both in post-communist Europe as well as in Latin America a number of party systems have quite clearly structured programmatic political cleavages and rather stable competitive partisan divides, particularly if we focus not on the volatility of individual parties, but on party blocs with roughly similar appeals within a cleavage system. A growing literature has examined the extent and the nature of political cleavages and competitive party divides in the post-communist region (Bielasiak 2002; de Waele 2004; 2000; Lewis 2000; Tavits 2005; Whitefield 2002). Particular attention has been devoted to the insertion of the former communist ruling parties into democratic partisan politicis (Bozoki and Ishiyama 2002; Grzymala-Busse 2002). Controversies surround both the descriptive characterization of the political divides and competitive dimensions as well as the explanation for more or less programmatic structuring. Is it a consequence of political experiences of the past (legacies) in each country, of democratic institutions (such as electoral systems and relations between the executive and the legislature), or of the momentous political-economic reforms that generate new divides between interests? Comparative scholarship on Latin America has asked closely parallel questions. Some authors have ventured to identify the historical origins, profile, and durability of political cleavages in at least some party systems (Coller and Collier 1991; Coppedge 1998). Others have focused on general patterns of stability and change in Latin

American party systems in order to explore the causes of democratic party system institutionalization (Mainwaring and Scully 1995; Geddes 2003). In Latin America, just as in Eastern Europe, those party systems appear more consolidated and structured around mechanisms of programmatic accountability in which there had been other episodes of democratic competition before the current spell of democratic competition beginning in the 1980s. Such episodes of broad political mobilization enabled people to gain political experience and sometimes even to ‘lock in’ certain political economic achievements, such as the beginnings of a welfare state, which provided a focal point to crystallize electorates around programmatic alternatives, particularly in an era of economic reform and market liberalization.

There is a curious asymmetry, however, when comparing Eastern Europe and Latin America. In Latin America party system consolidation and programmatic structuring tend to have undergone the greatest erosion in the 1990s and since 2000 precisely in countries with historically more established party systems. This erosion is greatest in Venezuela, followed by Argentina, but also present to a lesser extent even in Costa Rica, Uruguay, Mexico, and Chile. At the same time, Latin American countries with always inchoate party systems show few signs of changing that state of affairs. In Eastern Europe, by contrast, the polities with the most promising historical priors for party system institutionalization around programmatic accountability are also those that have achieved the comparatively greatest institutionalization. But even many less hospitable places have shown signs of moving toward patterns of programmatic accountability. In Eastern Europe and also in South and South-East Asia sustained economic growth for at least the past decade and often longer has most certainly benefited the gradual establishment of robust structures of representation. In Latin America, by contrast, the demise of import-substituting industrialization strategies in the 1980s and the inability of political elites to embrace a definite new strategy of political-economic development, as evidenced by anemic growth and repeated monetary stabilization crises, may have contributed not only to the region’s continuing economic hardship, but also the fragility of its democratic party systems.

2.4 Evaluating Party Systems: Africa and the Comparative Literature

Some economic, political and social parameters have contributed to the emergence of party systems in Africa that tend to share the following characteristics:

i. A predominant single party, normally either the pre-transition incumbent or the party that won the first transitional elections.
ii. A proliferation of small, weak parties normally centred around a wellknown public figure (often one with regional support) but devoid of organizational extension and structure.
iii. Parties that are not easily ranged along a left-right spectrum; instead party platforms look broadly similar in their economic and other policy outlines. All parties tend to be similarly constrained by the imperatives of aid and structural adjustment.
iv. Parties' links to a 'pluralistically' organized civil society are weak; they may be socially rooted not to liberal, pluralistic interest organizations, but to clientelistic or kinship-based networks.

How do we evaluate the implications of such party systems for the quality and durability of democracy in sub-Saharan Africa? To answer this question, it is worth examining the broader comparative literature on party and party system development. Here, both the literature on parties and political development (which stresses the role parties play in providing order) and the literature on parties in advanced industrial democracies, which focuses more on parties' influence on the quality of democratic participation and contestation were examined.
Works on regime transition, and especially on parties and civil society, draws heavily on assumptions from the literature on the political development and modernization of the 1950s and 1960s. While some of this literature (particularly Huntington) provides an important framework to help us think about the ways in which parties and civil society might contribute to the construction of stable, participatory political orders, in today's late democratizers the prescriptions of this literature are honoured far more in the breach than in practice. In most of these cases, neither parties nor civil society are capable of fulfilling the classic pluralist vision of a strong intermediate structure (consisting) of stable and independent groups which represent diverse and frequently conflicting interests.

Self-Assessment Exercises 3

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 10 minute:

1. Identify three characteristics of party system in Africa.
2. In a party system, democratic accountability operates indirectly because of?
3. In Bi-party system power alternates between two major parties…. True or False?
4. Describe briefly a multi-party system

2.9 Summary

In spite of its weaknesses, the existence of political parties is essential. Therefore, the way out should be the reform of the system so that it may work as satisfactorily as possible. The successful working of party system in some leading democratic countries of the world should be referred to at this stage. The number of political parties should not be unduly large. It is good that a country has four or five big political parties and the alternation of power takes place among them smoothly. Attempts should be made to do away with the trends of 'party bossism'. Those who seek to control party machine for their own ends, should be hounded out the organization. As far as possible, the members should have an atmosphere of intra-party democracy. The organization of the party should be done on democratic lines. All office-bearers should be elected by the members concerned for a specific time. They should be accountable for their acts of commission and omission to those who have elected them. Above all, the people of a country should be vigilant. They should know that the leaders of outstanding and unimpeachable integrity are the life-breath of a party (Harjit Singh, 2021).

2.10 References/Further Reading/Web Resources

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2.11 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answers to SAEs 1

1. True
2. True

Answers to SAEs 2

1. False
2. (1) The parties unite, simplify and stabilize the political process (2) Political parties provide a link between the government and the people.

Answers to SAEs 3

1.
- i. A predominant single party, normally either the pre-transition incumbent or the party that won the first transitional elections.
- ii. A proliferation of small, weak parties normally centred around a well-known public figure.
- iii. Parties that are not easily ranged along a left-right spectrum; instead party platforms look broadly similar in their economic and other policy outlines.
- iv. Parties' links to a 'pluralistically' organized civil society are weak;

2.
- i. the time elapsed between election and policy delivery;
- ii. the benefits and costs of policy accruing to all voters,
- iii. voters speaking their verdict over the record of governing politicians (and the opposition) retrospectively at the end of the electoral term.

3. True

4. Multi-party system signifies the existence of many political parties, big and small, in the country. The alternation of power takes place between parties more than two; it is also possible that coalition governments are formed which work successfully.

Unit 3 Theories of Democracy and Democratic Stability

Unit Structure

3.1 Introduction

With the growing population, it is not possible for the government to consult all people before making a law or taking any action. The extension of the territory and emergence of nation-states has led to development of indirect election. Consequently the practice of electing periodically some representative who would work as trustees of the people came to be developed. Thus, the people of a state are represented by a small group who are elected by the people. In ancient democracies, direct popular participation in public affairs was practiced. Therefore, there was no need for any representation. However, when the Roman Republic expanded, popular participation could not be achieved. The origin of representation could be traced back to the practice of Christian church in calling together representative councils to deal with matters relating to the governance of Christendom. A constituency, nowadays is a defined territory where the voters belonging to different caste, community and economic status live. Constituencies are drawn on the basis of population. Hence, the boundaries of the constituencies are not fixed and permanent. They are redrawn or readjusted wherever there is a sizable increase or decrease in the population. The practice of redrawing or readjusting the boundaries of constituencies gave rise to the modern theory of representation. It is the individual and not the communities, which has representation. In older days, a territory consisted of groups of people who were socially united. But this social unity has undergone changes and now in a territory, people belonging to different colour, caste, religion, language and economic status live. Though they are living together there is no social unity as was found in the past. This transformation from social unity to social diversity has led to the problem in the theory of representation. Now a question arises, whom does a representative represent? In other words, when a representative is elected, whose voice or opinion should he reflect in the parliament? A diversified society definitely consists of diversified opinion, and quiet normally even conflicting opinion. How can the diverse individual opinion be represented? The problem in the theory of representation as whose option a representative should reflect is partly answered by the presence of political parties. A political party is a political group representing and advocating a particular political ideology. In democracies, political parties have become an essential feature. They get support from the people for their ideology and political parties get support cutting across local and personal differences. In a particular given constituency, people who are otherwise divided into several groups on the basis of caste etc., when it comes to supporting a political party or the other, shed all their other differences and lend or extend support to a political party. In other words, political parties help people shed or forget their differences and come together in support of a political party. Though political parties reduce divisions among the people of a constituency, divisions among the people cannot be completely eliminated. Because, political parties themselves are another source or cause for divisions among people, they divide people on political grounds.

Therefore, the representation of the multifarious interest through political parties is not quite satisfactory. Generally, only one member is elected from a constituency. This is called single member constituency; in this case, people elect a candidate of one political party from among the candidates who belong to different political parties. The successful candidate is one who has secured more votes than the other candidates who contested in the elections. It is not necessary that the elected candidate should have secured a majority of votes in the system. The elected candidate represents the opinion of the people who have voted for him only. This unit discusses the various theories of democratic representation – direct, indirect, proportional and functional.

3.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will able to:

- Describe the types of democracy – direct and indirect
- Discuss the characteristics of democracy
- Assess the merits and demerits of proportional representation
- Analyse the merits and demerits of functional representation

3.3 Historical Evolution of the Concept of Political Development

3.3.1 Types of Democratic Political System

In political science literature, no word is more controversial than democracy. There is no individual who does not like it but he may raise its 'question of suitability and efficacy at particular circumstances'. The suitability of democracy is related to the question of the form of government and not to that of principle. Many scholars object to the application of democracy to particular circumstances but they are not opposed to democratic principle. Today, many people ask whether the circumstances or environment will be moulded to make them suitable for democracy or democracy will be changed to mould the environment for its own development (Biswaranjan Mohanty, 2018).

As to the proper meaning of the word, there is also a controversy. As G. C. Field observes, 'In recent years, controversy has arisen about the proper meaning of the word democracy...' In spite of differences of opinion, democracy is regarded as a useful form of government. Where it does not exist, men are fighting for it and where it already exists, men are striving to make it perfect. Sukarno's Indonesia called itself a guided democracy and Ayub's Pakistan called itself a basic democracy. The communist and socialist countries call themselves socialist democracies.

Etymologically, democracy is derived from two Greek words 'demos' and 'kratia'. *Demos* means people and *kratia* means power or rule. Therefore, democracy means the power or rule of the people. Here are some more definitions of democracy. C. D. Burns says, 'Few words have been more loosely and variously defined than democracy. It has literally meant all things to all men.' Laski observes, 'Democracy has a context in every sphere of life; and in each of these spheres it raises it special problems which do not admit of satisfactory or universal generalization.' Burns also remarks, 'Democracy may be found both in social and political organization; and indeed it is possible to speak of democracy in every form of social life, in religion, in industry as well as in politics.' Abraham Lincoln defines democracy as 'the government of the people, by the people and for the people.' Seeley says that 'democracy is a government in which everyone has a share.' MacIver defines democracy as 'not a way of governing whether by majority or otherwise, but primarily a way of determining who shall govern and broadly to what ends'. According to Maxey, 'Democracy is a search for a way of life in which the voluntary free intelligence and activity of man can be harmonized and coordinated with the least possible coercion.' In the words of Giovanni Sartori, 'Democracy denotes a political system characterized by the absence of personal power and more particularly, a system that hinges on the principle that no one can proclaim himself as a ruler, that no one can hold power irrevocably in his own name.' Ivor Brown is right when he says that 'the word has come to mean anything; or rather so much that it means nothing at all.' UNESCO questionnaire speaks of the vagueness of democracy. Robert Dahl says that a responsible democracy can exist only if the following institutional guarantees are present:

- Freedom to form and join associations
- Freedom of expression
- Right to vote
- Right to be elected and hold public offices
- Right of political leaders to compete for support and vote
- Alternative sources of information
- Free and fair election
- Institutions for making government policies depend on votes and other expression of preferences.

Self-Assessment Exercises 1

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minute:

1. ………. defines democracy as 'the government of the people, by the people and for the people?
2. Highlight three Robert Dahl's indices of democracy.

3.3.2 Democratic Government, State and Society Relations

Democracy is not merely a form of government. Some claim it to be a form of state and some regard it as a form of society. A democratic government is one which is based on the accountability of the people; a democratic state is one which is based on popular sovereignty. Democracy, in its wider meaning, is a form of society. A democratic government implies a democratic state, although a democratic state may not imply a democratic government. For example, the United States is a democratic state but does not have daily accountability to the Congress. For a democratic government, there must be a democratic state and democratic society. Besides, democracy is an order of society and a way of life. It has political, social and economic implications. It has faith in the equality of men and the recognition of individuality or human beings. A democratic way of life is characterized by tolerance, mutual respect and fraternity. It implies equitable distribution of wealth. If the majority government suppresses the minority opinion, it is contrary to the democratic ideal. Democracy is of two types, viz., direct democracy and indirect democracy or representative democracy.

3.3.3 Direct Democracy

Direct democracy prevailed in the city states (polis) of ancient Greece. There, the people directly participated in the affairs of the government. All citizens would gather at a particular place and decide matters relating to legislation, taxation and policy making. It was possible because of the small size of the city states. Modern states are quite big in size and population. Hence, direct democracy as was prevalent in Greek city states is not possible in any modern state. But direct democracy can be found in Switzerland. There, direct democracy operates through the instruments of referendum, initiative and recall.

Referendum: It means ‘to refer to the people’. It means that no law passed by the legislature can be effective unless it is referred to the people in a referendum and receives their approval. Similarly, constitutional amendment can be valid when it is approved by a majority of people and the majority of the Cantons in a referendum. It is a remedy against legislative commission.

Initiative: It is a remedy against legislative omission. If the legislature does not pass an act, people can propose legislation through initiative. That law will come into force when approved by the people in a referendum. It may bring the legislators in touch with the people, but it gives the people a power which they cannot utilize properly.

Landsgemeinde: In some Cantons of Switzerland, the institution of landsgemeinde or open assembly prevails. There, like the city states of Greece, people gather at a particular place and decide their own affairs. In this sense, it is similar to direct democracy, which prevailed in the Greek city states.

Recall: It means withdrawing the representatives from the Assembly or legislature if they do not work for the betterment of the people. Recall is advocated in modern democracy to withdraw representatives who do not perform their duties properly. These devices are weapons in the hands of the people to check legislators and to enable them to take part directly in the government.

Self-Assessment Exercises 2

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minute:

1. Is direct democracy feasible in modern democracy?
2. What is a referendum in a democratic system?

3.3.4 Merits of direct democracy

The following are the merits of direct democracy:

- It enables the people to gain experience of administration and the government.
- It makes the government responsible.
- It creates a sense of responsibility and patriotism among people.
- It enhances political consciousness of people.
- It keeps voters in touch with the government.

3.3.5 Demerits of direct democracy

Direct democracy has the following demerits:

- It is not suitable for large states.
- It misleads the people because opportunists take advantage of it.
- All the people are not suitable to give their opinion under this system. They simply say ‘yes’ or ‘no’.
- It cannot take secret decisions on war and emergencies.
- It requires a high sense of responsibility, which the people lack.

3.3.6 Indirect Democracy

In almost all countries of the modern world, except Switzerland, indirect democracy prevails. Switzerland presents a blend of direct and indirect democracy. Due to the large size of the modern state, it is not possible for all people to gather at a particular place and take decisions. Hence, people elect their representatives who sit in the parliament and make laws. This is called indirect democracy (Biswaranjan Mohanty, 2018).

Features of indirect democracy

Indirect democracy has the following features:

i. It is a representative form of government in which people's representatives take decisions.
ii. Sovereignty is vested in the people.
iii. Government works on behalf of the people.
iv. People do not get a chance to participate in the affairs of the state.

3.3.7 Merits of indirect democracy

Indirect democracy has the following merits:

i. It is suitable for big countries only.
ii. Here, political demagogues play an important role. They can mobilize the voters in their favour.
iii. The government runs on behalf of the people.
iv. Secrecy can be maintained where it is required.

3.3.8 Demerits of indirect democracy

The demerits of indirect democracy are as follows:

i. The voters are ignorant. Hence, it is not possible to vest power in their hands.
ii. Direct contact between the voters and representatives cannot be established under this system.
iii. After their election, the representatives seldom work for their constituencies.
iv. It gives rise to corruption. Political parties vitiate the atmosphere of the country.

v. It is very expensive. For example, the holding of an election in a country of Nigeria’s size entails heavy expenditure.

3.4 Characteristics of Democracy

Democracy has certain characteristics. R. M. MacIver says that democracy is not a way of governing, whether, by majority or otherwise, but primarily, a way of determining who shall govern and broadly to what ends. Democracy is not a one way traffic. It implies responsibilities both on the part of the ruler and ruled. It is based on the cooperation of both. The main characteristics of democracy are as follows:

i. **Popular sovereignty:** Democracy is based on the sovereignty of the people. That is to say people exercise supreme power in a democracy. They have the right to elect the government and the government remains responsible to them. If the government does not fulfil the wishes of the people, people have a right to overthrow it and institute a new government.
ii. **Political, social and economic equality:** In a democracy, there is political, social and economic equality. As far as political equality is concerned, all rich or poor, educated or uneducated, have one vote only. In the social sphere, there shall not be any discrimination against any one on the grounds of religion, race, sex, caste or place of birth. In the economic sphere, there shall not be a great gulf between the rich and the poor or haves and the have nots.
iii. **Majority rule:** Democracy is rule of the majority. It is the majority that governs in a democracy. No party can govern unless it has acquired majority of seats in the legislature.
iv. **Respect for the opinion of the minority:** In democracy, no doubt, the majority rules, but it cannot ride rough shod over the minority. The opinion of the minority should be given due consideration.
v. **Rights:** Democracy provides various kinds of rights to individuals. For example, the right to freedom of speech and expression, right to form unions or associations, religious freedom, right to free movement and educational and cultural rights are some of the rights that the people enjoy in a democracy. It upholds individual dignity.
vi. **Government by adjustment and compromise:** Democracy is a government by adjustment and compromise. Different opinions are likely to arise in a democracy within the ruling

party itself. Therefore, it has to function with adjustment and compromise with a variety of opinions. Therefore, it allows plurality of ideas.

vii. **Value system:** It is a form of government in which people can realize their best ideals and highest qualities. Therefore, it is a system of values. Three things are important in a democracy – efficiency, realization of best ideals and qualities and self-rule. If democracy lacks efficiency, it will be the worst form of government.

viii. **Democracy is a welfare-oriented concept:** America, which is one of the best democracies used, realized during the Great Depression and afterwards highlights that democracy should be used to promote the needs and welfare of the people. Most of the democratic countries today are welfare countries. They aim at promoting the welfare of the people without destroying individual freedom.

ix. **Rule of law:** In democracy, there is rule of law. It means the supremacy of law as against that of man. It also stands for equality of law. A.V. Dicey is an exponent of the rule of law in Britain.

x. **Independence of judiciary:** Democracy is characterized by independent judiciary with the exception of England. The judiciary acts without fear or favour, affection or ill will. It can declare a law as ultra vires, if it violates the constitution.

xi. **It is opposed to coercive methods:** It is based on persuasion not coercion.

xii. **Democracy is a theory of society as well as government:** A. D. Lindsay has explored this concept of democracy. The purpose of every democratic government is to serve the community. For this purpose, it has to remove disharmonies from the society and provide a congenital atmosphere for democratic values and principles to thrive.

3.4.1 Merits of democracy

The merits of democracy are as follows:

i. **A rational form of government:** It is based upon the premise that no man is infallible. Every man is liable to commit mistakes. As no man is infallible, democracy adopts a process of discussion and criticism in which every man is allowed to take part. The continuous process of discussion and scrutiny acts as a necessary corrective measure of abuse of power.

ii. **It provides rights to the individual:** Democracy provides political, social and economic rights to the individuals. The right to vote, the right to life, the right to religion, the right to education, the right of minorities, the right to work, the right to a reasonable way of life and the right to rest and leisure are some of the rights, which democracy provides. There have been some movements for rights, such as the American War of Independence (1776), the French Revolution (1789) and the Russian Revolution (1917). Without these rights, life will be meaningless.

iii. **Equality:** Democracy not only provides rights but also provides equality. All are equal in the political, social and economic spheres. All enjoy equal rights. There is no discrimination on the grounds of religion, race, sex, caste and place of birth.

iv. **Democracy is an efficient and responsible form of government:** The method of free election at certain intervals and the method of popular control at every stage of administration, either through criticism inside the legislature or outside through public opinion, make it extremely efficient and responsible.

v. **Democracy promotes the welfare of the people:** It is clear from its definition that democracy is the government of the people. It also provides security to the individuals. Welfare is the yardstick of the security of the government.

vi. **It is government by the majority:** In democracy, the majority rules. In other forms of government, it is one man or a few who form the government. Hence, in democracy, majority opinion counts.

vii. **Tolerance:** Though the majority rules, the opinion of the minority is tolerated. There are different shades of opinion in the society. Every shade of opinion is given due consideration.

viii. **Checks in democracy:** MacIver justifies democracy because it is less dependent on the psychology of power. There are many checks on democracy. Hence, it cannot create a consciousness of superiority in the governing class.

ix. **Liberty:** John Stuart Mill’s classic defence of democracy is based on the argument that the rights of the individual are secured in democracy because he is able to stand up for them. Democracy offers every individual the liberty to vindicate his privileges.

x. **Character-building:** Democracy has an ennobling influence on the character of the people. It is an active school for character building. Bryce says that manhood of the individual is dignified by his political enfranchisement and he is raised to a higher level by the sense of duty, which it shows upon him.

3.4.2 Demerits of democracy

Democracy has the following demerits or weaknesses:

i. **Since the time of Plato and Aristotle democracy has been criticized:** Plato criticized democracy because it put his master Socrates to death. Aristotle regarded it as a preventive form of government. It is the government of average men and women. The average men, in the words of Maxey, are sheep-minded, ape-minded and wolf-minded.

ii. **It is said that democracy is based on numbers:** It counts the heads but not the contents in the heads. Hence, it is based on quantity instead of quality.

iii. **Cult of incompetence:** The French writer Emile Faguet describes democracy as the cult of incompetence. Bryce says that it is government by the incompetent. It is the ignorant and inefficient men who come to power. Such men are unintelligent, uninformed, prejudiced, emotional and resentful of the superiority of others. They are the most numerous in society.

iv. **Tyranny of the majority:** The majority may impose their will on the minority. The minority view is either suppressed or ignored. The majority in the legislature walk like a colossus. Hence, it may ignore the view of the minority.

v. **Expensive:** Democracy is very expensive. There are frequent elections in democracy. Besides, much money is spent on propaganda and mobilizing public opinion. There is wastage not only of money, but also of time and opportunity. It is the most extravagant and indifferent system.

vi. **Democracy is an unscientific dogma:** The psychological study of democracy is based on the study of mass psychology. As Graham Wallas says, 'Politics is only in a slight degree the product of unconscious reason.' In a democracy, where masses are supposed to take part in a government, the operation of crowd psychology and, hence, the play of the irrational are much in evidence.

vii. **It is characterized by indecision and instability:** In the words of Maxey, democratic government is 'prone to indecision, feebleness, instability.' Government changes so often that administrative stability is seldom possible. Discussion also results in delay.

viii. **Corruption:** Corruption is another demerit of democracy. It is said that power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. When power remains in the hands of the people, it leads to corruption. Votes are bought and sold.

ix. **Unsuitable for emergency:** It cannot take quick action. Hence, it is unsuitable for emergencies like flood, famine, cyclone, war, etc.

x. The present system of democracy, based on geographical representation, is faulty.

Self-Assessment Exercises 3

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minute:

1. List three characteristic of democracy.
2. Identify three advantages of democracy.

3.5 Democratic Instability and Challenges in the African Countries.

The African political instability and other related crisis is a consequence of its leadership problems. Internally most of the African countries are governed in ways that have been regarded as far from the modern western state systems upon which they are modeled (Tutu, 2004 in Otieno, 2008). Democratic leadership is not a new concept in the African traditions or cultural practices. Though, the forms and context could be different but these nations have their own efficient ways of governance, even before the advent of the so called colonialism.

During the onset of multi-party democracy in the so called third wave of democratization, most regimes in the African Nations did not embrace the changes that accompanied the transition. For instance, most nations accepted multi-party democracy out of western pressure and agitation for change (Huntington, 1991). As a result, the constitutional framework and the state institutions have been tempered with in order to create a non-level playing ground for the oppositions. Some of these practices have witnessed a serious violence during electioneering periods, which inevitably causes political instability. Though the form and context varies from country to country, evident are in the elections in Uganda, Nigeria (2003, 2007, 2011), Kenya (1999), Zimbabwe, Sudan, (2010) Rwanda, DR Congo, among others.

In respect to crises, the African Nations have suffered a lot of setback particularly the situation where both political and social crisis thwart the developmental path of the nations. Instances of skirmishes and full blown wars abound in the continents, prominent among which is the crisis in Sudan (Darfur, Janjawid and Sudan Liberation Army), Rwanda (Tusi and Hutu), Ivory Coast, Chad, Niger (recent coup by the military), Madagascar, Nigeria (Religious and ethnic crisis in Jos, Kaduna, Borno and Yobe states), Somalia (Al-Shabbab and the fragile government backed by the AU), etc. Whereas the earlier generation of African leaders had viewed democracy and development as antithetical, associated democracy with ethnic conflict resulting in wastage of limited resources, new African elites and organizations in civil society have taken to the barricades to demand democracy not only for its own sake but for its instrumental value as well. In contrast to the intellectual consensus and state practice of the earlier era, a strong linkage between democracy and development has been vigorously asserted in the post-Cold War era of superpower disinterest and withdrawal (Ake, 1993; Anyang' Nyong'o, 1987; 1990).

According to Ake (1990) the persistence of underdevelopment is related to lack of democracy in Africa. While democracy is desirable in itself, Africa needs democracy because it would greatly enhance the prospects for development. He attributes the failure of the development project in Africa to political authoritarianism. By engaging in political oppression African leaders turned politics into warfare. They then found themselves besieged by a host of hostile forces they was unleashed by their coercion. This resultant state of siege distracted African leaders from paying attention to development which they relegated to a very low priority. Secondly, African governments became disconnected from their people and governed without accountability. "As a result of this, public policy is completely dissociated from social needs and even from developmental relevance" (Ake, 1990). Furthermore, the trauma of repeated subjection to arbitrary and coercive rule has turned African societies into hostile force to be feared, evaded, cheated and defeated as circumstances permit. They turn their loyalty from the all-embracing level of the state and localize it in community groups, kinship groups, ethnic associations, or even religious organizations.

> What is happening in Africa now is in effect the strengthening of the process of the localization of loyalties. We might say that as a result of political repression, we are witnessing, not nation building, not development, but in fact, the dissolution of society (Ake, 1990).

Ake goes on to argue that subjugation has caused Africa's human resources, the very engine of development, to be squandered. At the level of the community, it has undermined the people's traditional capacity to cope, leaving many of them at different stages of confusion, withdrawal, despair, or silent revolt. The resultant human toll can be seen in the growing multitude of refugees. As many elites have voted with their feet by migrating outside, African countries have lost the bulk of their most capable and talented people. Lamentably, those who have stayed behind have been denied opportunities and room to cultivate their talents for the development of their countries.

The fact that oppression has not led to rapid rates of growth may only have shown that a particular form of tyranny is not sufficient for economic development. In itself, the failure of one form of tyranny does not establish the proposition that democracy might be better. It could be that there are other "structural constraints" that would thwart accumulation in a country regardless of the political regime. Besides, some authoritarian states such as Kenya, Cote d'Ivoire and Malawi (among non-oil producing countries) may have actually produced reasonably stable periods of accumulation since independence, as evidenced by high growth rates almost throughout the 1960s and 1970s (Mkandawire, 1990: 10). However, it is argued that, where there has been more respect for democratic practices (however minimal), higher rates of growth and more successful models of accumulation have been ensured along with better terms of the peasant producers. Anyang' concludes that part of the "foundation of every true humane society" is "democracy"; and the "foundation of social creativity" or the "foundation of development" in the modern world must, of necessity, be found in democracy" (Anyang, 1990: Ake, 1990).

According to Aboubakar, (2003), the extraordinary challenge facing the African continent is how to cross over into the 21st century when it is trapped in the 19th century. He remarked further that while a sizeable part of the world is making the transitions from the industrial era of knowledge, information and computerization, the region is not following suit. Aboubakar noted that economic and political obstacles to ECOWAS ought to be overcome to achieve effective integration. The economic obstacles are problems of recession, the gap between rapid population growth and technological advancement and inability to promote education at all levels. However, this view amount to yielding to the pressures of globalization without overcoming the problems of underdevelopment that is overwhelming the sub-region. In a relatively wider view, Chambas (2002), observed that, challenges to the African nations are multi-dimensional. The challenges in the region include wide spread and increasing poverty, globalization and the marginalization of the region." Other identified issues are the prevalence of HIV/AIDS and other diseases as well as the eruption of conflicts that create the image of political instability in the region.

3.6 Democratic Stability in Botswana, Rwanda and Tanzania

Democratic stability is an essential precursor for any country that struggles for sustained political, social and economic development, because globalisation and democratic stability go hand in hand. Every country faces different levels of democratic challenges. What then are the implications of globalisation for developing countries? Is it making Africa more prosperous, democratic and stable, or more polarised and prone to conflict? Botswana for instance, economic growth was facilitated by good democratic institutional structures, sound fiscal policies, international investments, and improved education, which were made possible due to the forces of globalisation like increase level in FDI, Transport, ICT, and trade among others, has drastically reduced poverty, improved livelihood, and enhanced employment and better opportunities including political participation and the citizens enjoys the international fundamental human rights (Akinkugbe, 2005). Thus, a country where there is economic growth that promotes sustainability, the tendency for migration, conflict violence, poverty and confrontation against the government is minimal, and as such will uphold democratic stability. Furthermore, openness and accountability in government will prevent some form of corruption, violence conflict and ethnic rivalries as this will promote active political participation, as well as reduce the level of migration. With particular reference to Rwanda, the government's openness to its citizens like prevalent of rule of law, regular and periodic elections, and respect for human rights, is preventing the government of Rwanda from undermining basic freedoms hence the absence of citizen's violence confrontation. Also, shared practices in a country made possible by the mass media are influencing decent democratic debates and best practices. Through the mass media, information about the government is shared among its citizens, as this will reduce conflicts and unstable polity. Thus, a country where the people are informed, there is high-quality transformation that will lead to a commendable leadership, successful democratic institutions, as well as a stable democracy as typified by Tanzania.

3.6.1 Democratic sustainability in Botswana, Rwanda and Tanzania

Since independence in 1966, Botswana for instance, has enjoyed much success in democratic stability, especially in comparison to many post-colonial African nations. It has evolved from among the poorest countries in the world to a symbol of democracy and political stability. Due to economic growth influenced by globalisation via international investment, increase FDI and activities of MNCs have reduced migration, and also improved production in the country (Stephen, 2006). Amelia and Jeremy, (2010) further observed that democratic stability was sustained in Botswana as a result of high Gross Domestic Product (GDP), sound fiscal policies, effective in combating corruption, avoids foreign debts, be able to withstand the scourge of HIV/AIDS that threatens its citizens, and opportunity across all sectors (Rhoda, 1983). All this boils down to the forces of globalisation, economic stagnation will induce conflicts, unemployment and poverty, and where these factors prevail, citizens tend to migrate to other countries for better opportunities, as such will affect democratic stability.

Rwanda and Tanzania on the other hand, also shows similar trend of democratic stability. Since independence in 1962, Rwanda experienced de facto authoritarian rule, and was embroided in a civil war, which was rooted in economic and political crisis (Imogen, 2003). However, democratic stability was sustained in Rwanda and Tanzania as a result of the contributions from Donors, AU, UN Peace Keeping Missions, which were deployed to oversee the peace process and the transition to democratic elections. Globalisation which shares these ideas facilitated the flow of external aid, alleviated them from marginalization and also prevented migration. These external factors made possible good trade relationship, affordable transport system and inflow of ICT has in no little way contributed to the sustenance of democratic stability in these countries (Neil, and James, 1998).

3.6.2 Lack of Democratic sustainability in DRC, Somalia and Zimbabwe

Despite the influence of globalisation, which influences democratic stability in some African countries such as Botswana, the case is different in other countries e.g. DRC, Somalia and Zimbabwe. Although, Africa is still haunted by historical injustices and oppressive structures that were bequeathed by post-colonial leaders. Democratic instability in Africa may owe much of its cause to indigenous factors like corruption e.g. Nigeria, tenure elongation e.g. Zimbabwe, civil war e.g. Nigeria, military coups, ethnic and clan conflicts (Antony, 2008). However, the indigenous factors are facilitated by economic stagnation, low FDI, poverty increase, and trade deficits. A country where there is economic stagnation, unemployment and low level of production, citizens will tend to engage in violent conflicts. Somalia, for instance, globalisation induced migration is prevalent. Due to economic stagnation and decrease in FDI, there were civil wars, political instability, poverty and hunger, which has led the citizens, migrated to other countries, and these migrants are the well-educated and the skilled people. Somalia lacks the human capacity to withstand the contemporary challenges of democracy, this is because, the present weak institutions of the state and flawed legislative system is as a result of lack of human capacity (Milanovic, 2002).

Also, in the case of DRC and Zimbabwe, which had similar trajectory independence and democratisation, democratic stability in these countries is also marred by internal factors. Democratic instability in DRC for instance is fuelled by the absence of an effective central government, high intensity of violence, corruption, piracy, militia and radical Islamic extremist movements among others. However, one of the major causes of democratic instability is 'globalisation induced migration' out of these countries or inward disrupting economic and social life. Due to the rise of food security, drought, absence of healthcare services, etc., Globalisation induced migration via American lottery and scholarships. Citizens that cannot withstand the impending challenges of the country rather migrated for better opportunities elsewhere. In addition, the social life of the people has been disrupted because some members of their families have left them to foreign countries. Causing illegal migration that that led a number of African died on their way to European countries.

All these point to the fact, that democratic stability can be sustained through the spread of globalisation and its forces. While the spread and increase in the level of trade, FDI, ICT, Transport and MNCs fosters democratic stability in the most stable countries, economic stagnation and globalisation induced migration influence democratic instability in the least stable countries (Fidelis and Chakunda, 2014). Also, indigenous factors like tenure elongation in Zimbabwe, refusal to accept defeat in Zambia, corruption in Nigeria, civil wars in Somalia, military coups in Nigeria, and ethnic rivalries continues to endanger any form of democratic stability in the least stable countries (Michael and Gyimah-Boadi, 2013). Consequently, in the absence of the basic indicators and forces of globalisation like increase FDI, ICT and trade, which will promote economic growth, the tendency for democratic stability to be sustained is minimal, this is because, economic stagnation as well as internal factors will hamper on the level of democratic stability in any nation.

3.6.3 Democratic Development across the Sub-regions

West Africa remains the most democratic sub-region, with 50 per cent of the continent's democracies. The Sub-region experienced a mix of progress and decline, with transitions to democracy over the past five years, as elaborated in the report. However, by 2020, the region also witnessed significant democratic declines, which included democratic breakdown in Mali with a military coup, and the extension of constitutional term limits in Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea. This dynamic highlights the fluidity of the political context and the weakness of the democratic institutions in the sub-region. The security situation in this

sub-region remains challenging as violent extremist groups, such as Boko Haram and Islamic
State (IS), continue to operate across the Sahel.

Southern Africa is the next most democratic sub-region, with almost 39 per cent of the democracies in the continent and only 2 of the region's 19 authoritarian regimes (Eswatini and Zimbabwe). The sub-region saw Zambia transition from a democracy to a hybrid regime because of the declines in some core attributes of democracy. The peaceful democratic transition in Zambia, through the conduct of the 12 August 2021 elections, could change the country's regime type classification in the next reporting period. Of particular concern is the decline in Civil Liberties in the sub-region, as seen in Zambia during the reporting period, especially before the 2021 elections. The political transition in Malawi also accounts for the democratic progress recorded in the sub-region East Africa has Kenya as the only democratic regime in the sub-region. There is one hybrid regime in the sub-region (Tanzania), while the remaining countries are authoritarian. This sub-region remains an area of concern because of: the ongoing war in the Tigray region of Ethiopia, which is developing cross-border implications; the prolonged instability in Somalia; the resilience of the authoritarian regime in Eritrea, which is also involved in the war in the Tigray region; and the growing tensions between Ethiopia and other neighbouring states, particularly Egypt and Sudan, over the building of mega-dams in the Nile. Tanzania under President John Magufuli, who was elected in 2015 and re-elected in 2020, also recorded significant declines in Civil Liberties. However, the peaceful succession of President Samia Suluhu Hassan after President Magufuli's death in March 2021 – as the country's first female president (and the first one in East Africa) – is a welcome development for women's political participation. Nevertheless, Tanzania's civil rights record remains concerning, especially the arrests of opposition figures under President Samia Suluhu Hassan's watch. Uganda remains an authoritarian regime, as President Yoweri Museveni won his sixth consecutive term in January 2021, amid allegations of vote-rigging, suppression of political freedom and crackdown on opposition leaders, while the human rights situation in the country continues to deteriorate. The 2020 elections in Burundi saw the departure of President Pierre Nkurunziza after his controversial third term in office, but the country remains classified as authoritarian. Rwanda also remains an authoritarian regime under President Paul

Kagame who amended the Constitution in 2015 to legitimize his extended stay in office.

North Africa has Tunisia as the only democratic regime in the subregion. There is one hybrid regime (Morocco) and five authoritarian regimes (Algeria, Egypt, Libya, South Sudan and Sudan). The sub-region saw two significant changes that give the possibility of democratic progress in the coming years. The resignation of President Abdelaziz Bouteflika in 2019 after 20 years in power opened the space for a transition in Algeria. The 2019 ousting of President Omar al-Bashir in a coup d'état after 26 years in power had placed Sudan on the path to a potential democratic transition, but the October 2021 subsequent coup now threatens hope for the future of that transition.

Central Africa is the least democratic sub-region, with no democracies. The outlook in the sub-region remains bleak, with the military coup in Chad and armed conflicts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and the Central African Republic (CAR). Cameroon and Chad continue to struggle with the transborder activities of violent extremist groups, especially Boko Haram.

3.7 Summary

We have noted that with the growing population, it is not possible for the government to consult all the people before making a law or taking any action. The extension of the territory and emergence of nation-state has all led to development of indirect democracy. Consequently the practice of electing periodically some representative who would work as trustees of the people came to be developed According to Maxey, 'Democracy is a search for a way of life in which the voluntary free intelligence and activity of man can be harmonized and coordinated with the least possible coercion. Democracy is not merely a form of government. Some claim it to be a form of state and some regard it as a form of society. A democratic government is one which is based on the accountability of the people; a democratic state is one which is based on popular sovereignty. Democracy, in its wider meaning, is a form of society. Democracy is of two types, viz., direct democracy and indirect democracy or representative democracy. We have also identified some characteristic of democracy. The fundamental principle of proportional representation is, every section of the society will get representation in the parliament, in proportion to their population. Advocates of functional representation argue that in the legislature, it is not the territorial communities that are to be represented but only various interests in the society that are to be represented. By way of conclusion, it can be said that democracy lives by integration and not by disintegration. As functional representation encourages disruptive forces, it is against the spirit of democracy. At the same time we should also admit that various interests in the society need to be represented in some way. An alternate to this is creation of several advisory bodies representing several occupational or other interests and when a legislation is considered with a specific group, these advisory bodies can be consulted from time to time.

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3.9 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answers to SAEs 1

1. Abraham Lincoln
2. Freedom to form and join associations, Freedom of expression, Right to vote, Right to be elected and hold public offices, Right of political leaders to compete for support and vote

Answers to SAEs 2

1. No
2. Referendum: It means 'to refer to the people'. It means that no law passed by the legislature can be effective unless it is referred to the people in a referendum and receives their approval.

Answers to SAEs 3

1. Popular sovereignty; Political, social and economic equality; Majority rule.
2. A rational form of government; It provides rights to the individual; Equality

Unit 4 Types of Government in Comparative Perspective

Unit Structure

4.1 Introduction

The government and the political systems in the world basically takes either of the two forms – parliamentary or presidential. Furthermore, the political structure could be unitary or federal. For instance, Nigeria has adopted the presidential system of government. The president in Nigeria, like in U.S combines both the executive and ceremonial function of government. On the other hand, India has adopted the parliamentary system of government, like the British. The president in India is only a symbolic head as the president has no function to discharge authority. Parliamentary system in the UK is the oldest system of democratic government in modern times. Parliament in the UK is the most powerful political institution. The British Parliament consists of two Houses – the House of Lords (Upper House) and the House of Commons (Lower House); the former being essentially hereditary and the latter being the representative of the people. The president of the United States of America is one of the greatest political offices of the world. The president is the chief executive head of the state as well as the head of the administration. In this unit, therefore, you will study the parliamentary and presidential, and the unitary and federal forms of government.

4.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the parliamentary and presidential forms of government
- Assess the powers and functions of the US president
- Compare the power of the US president and the British prime minister
- Compare the functioning of the American cabinet and the British cabinet
- Discuss the powers and functions of the US Senate
- Describe the unitary and federal forms of government

4.3 Types of Government in Comparative Perspective

4.3.1 Parliamentary Government

In a parliamentary form of government, the tenure of office of the virtual executive is dependent on the will of the legislature; in a presidential form of government the tenure of office of the executive is independent on the will of the legislature (Leacock…). Thus, in the presidential form, of which the model is the United States, the president is the real head of the executive who is elected by the people for a fixed term. The president is independent of the legislature as regards his tenure and is not responsible to the legislature for his/her acts. He, of course, acts with the advice of ministers, but they are appointed by him as his counsellors and are responsible to him and not to the legislature for his/her acts. Under the parliamentary system represented by England, on the other hand, the head of the executive (the crown) is a mere titular head, and the virtual executive power is wielded by the cabinet, a body formed of the members of the legislature, which is responsible to the popular house of the legislature for its office and actions. Being a republic, India could not have a hereditary monarch. So, an elected president is at the head of the executive power in India. The tenure of his office is for a fixed term of years as of the American president. He also resembles the American president in as much as he is removable by the legislature under the special quasi-judicial procedure of impeachment. But, on the other hand, he is more akin to the English king than the American president in so far as he has no ‘functions’ to discharge, on his own authority. All the powers and ‘functions’ [Article 74 (1)] that are vested by the constitution in the president are to be exercised on the advice of the ministers responsible to the legislature as in England. While the so-called cabinet of the American president is responsible to himself and not to the Congress, the council of ministers of the Indian president is responsible to the Parliament (Biswaranjan Mohanty, 2018).

Under the American system, conflicts are bound to occur between the executive, the legislature and the judiciary. On the other hand, according to many modern American writers, the absence of coordination between the legislature and the executive is a source of weakness of the American political system. What was wanted in India on her attaining freedom from one and a half century of bondage is a smooth form of government which would be conducive to the manifold development of the country without the least friction. To this end, the cabinet or parliamentary system of government was considered to be more suitable than the presidential.

4.3.2 Presidential Government

The president of the United States of America is decidedly the most powerful elected executive in the world. The constitution had declared that, 'the executive power shall be vested in a president of the United States of America.' The framers of the constitution intended to make the president the constitution ruler. But, in due course of time, the office has gathered around itself such a plentitude of powers that the American president has become 'the greatest ruler of the world'. He has vast powers. According to Munro, he exercises 'the largest amount of authority ever wielded by any man in a democracy.' It is difficult to believe that the modern presidency was deliberately created by the founding fathers in their form. They did not want to do anything that would directly or indirectly lead to concentration rather than separation of powers. Their main decision was to have a single executive head – a part of honour and leadership rather than that of 'commanding authority'. But the modern presidency is the product of practical political experience. Three powers of the president have been supplemented not only by amendments including twenty-second amendment, twenty-third amendment and twenty-fifth amendment; but also by customs, usages, judicial interpretations and enlargement of authority by various president's themselves (Biswaranjan Mohanty, 2018).

Self-Assessment Exercises 1

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minute:

1. What is a parliamentary government?
2. Describe a presidential government.

Process of Election

The presidency of the United States of America is one of the greatest political offices of the world. He is the chief executive head of the state as well as the head of the administration. The makers of the constitution were very much agitated over the nature of the executive. In their anxiety to establish a free, yet limited government, they devised a system of government which came to be known as the presidential system; their original contribution was to constitutional law. All executive authority is, therefore, vested in the president. The constitution provides that a candidate for the office of the president must be:

i. A natural born citizen of the US
ii. Not less than thirty-five years in age
iii. A resident of the United States for at least fourteen years

The president is elected for four years. Originally, the constitution was silent about presidential re-election. US President George Washington, refused a third term on the ground that this would make the United States too much of a monarchical rule. So, a convention grew that a president should not seek election for the third time. The convention was followed till 1940, when Roosevelt offered himself for the third term election and he succeeded. He was elected even for the fourth time. In 1951, the US constitution was amended. According to this amendment of the constitution, the tenure of the office of the president was fixed for two terms. Thus, Franklin D. Roosevelt continues to remain the only president to be elected for more than twice in American history.

Further the constitution provides that in case a vice-president assures the presidency consequent upon death, resignation, etc., of the president, he will be allowed to seek only one election provided that he has held the office for more than two years of a term to which some other person was elected. If someone has held office to which someone else had been elected, for less than two years, he can be elected for two full terms by his own right. The constitution provides for the removal of the president earlier than the completion of his term of four years. He may be removed by impeachment. He can be impeached for treason, bribery or other high crimes. The impeachment proceedings against a president may be initiated by the House of Representatives only. The changes are framed by representatives by a simple majority. The changes thus prepared are submitted to the senate, and a copy of the charge sheet is sent to the president. Now the senate sits as a court and the chief-justice of the Supreme Court presides over its sittings. The president may either appear personally or engage councils for his defence. After the arguments of both sides are over, the senate may decide by two-third majority to impeach the president (Biswaranjan Mohanty, 2018).

Election of the President

One of the most difficult problems faced by the framers at Philadelphia was that of choosing the president. Having decided that the head of the state must be elected, the problem before them was to decide how he would be elected. Ultimately, it was decided that the president would be indirectly elected by the people. But the growth of political parties and political practices has set up the method of presidential election. First we shall see the constitutional provisions and then examine how the election is actually held.

The plan of election as provided in the constitution is rather simple. The president is elected by an electoral college consisting of the representatives of the states. The people of each state elect presidential electors (members of Electoral College) equal to the number of representative the state has in Congress. No member of the Congress is allowed to be a presidential elector. The presidential electors meet in each state on fixed dates and vote for the president. All the votes are sealed and sent to the capital of the US. The president of the senate counts the votes in the presence of members of both the Houses of Congress. The candidate who secures majority of the electoral votes cast for the president is declared elected. If no candidate receives a clear majority of the electoral for the president, the members of the House of Representatives choose a president from among the three candidates who have received the highest number of electoral votes and the new president assumes office.

Election in Practice

According to the constitution, the American president is elected indirectly; but in practice his election has become direct. Although the language of the constitution of presidential election remains unchanged, whether that be the party system or the means of communication and transportation, all make his election direct. The developments have reduced the importance of the Electoral College. The following are the various stages of his election.

i. **National convention:** The first step in the election of the president is taken by the political parties who proceed to nominate their candidates early in the year in which the election is due to take place. Both the major political parties convene a 'national convention'. The convention may be held sometime in June or July. Delegates to the national convention are chosen according to certain rules framed by the parties. About a thousand delegates take part in the Convention, and all of them are leading and active party workers in their states. The convention selects the presidential nominee and issues a manifesto which in the US is known as the 'platform'.

ii. **The campaign:** The campaign generally begins in the month of July and continues till the Election Day in November. The parties have their campaign managers and a very effective machinery to conduct the nationwide propaganda. The presidential candidate visits all the states and addresses as many meetings as he can, delivers a number of nationally televised speeches. His supporters use various media of mass contact.

iii. **Election of the Electoral College:** The election of the members of the Electoral College is held in November. Technically voters go to polls to elect members of the Electoral College; but as we have seen above, this in practice means direct vote for a particular candidate. Due to the rise in party system, the electors are to vote for their party nominee for the presidential office. They do not have a free hand in the choice of the president. They are rubber stamps. As it is known beforehand for which candidate each elector will vote, the result of the presidential election is known when the results of the election of the presidential electors are announced. Thus, the election of the president has become direct. It is no longer indirect. The American voters personally participate in the election of the president. Hence, the president election in the month of December merely becomes a formality. Thus, theoretically, the president is elected indirectly, but in practice he is elected directly.

Self-Assessment Exercises 2

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minute:

1. Mention two requirements of the American constitution for the office of the presidency.
2. Mention the three stages involved in the American presidential system.

The US president is not only the head of the state but also the head of administration.

The constitution clearly lays down that all executive authority belongs to him. The constitution enumerates the powers of the president. In fact, they are much beyond those contained in the constitution. Many factors are responsible for the growth of the presidential powers and today many view the extent of these powers as a dangerous trend. In addition, lot of powers are enumerated in the constitution, the president has acquired a list of authority by statues. 'Congress has lifted the president to a status again to that of constitutional dictator'. The decisions of the Supreme Court usages have also considerably strengthened the position of presidency. The powers of the president may be studied under the following heads:

Executive powers

The executive powers of the American president include the following:

i. He is the chief executive and it is his duty to see that the laws and treaties are enforced throughout the country.
ii. He has the power to make all important appointments but all such appointments are to be approved by the senate. For instance, appointments such as secretaries, ambassadors and other diplomats, judges of the Supreme Court etc.
iii. The president has control of foreign relations which he conducts with the assistance of the secretary of state. He appoints all ambassadors, consultants and other diplomatic representatives in foreign countries, with the approval of the senate.
iv. He has the sole power to recognize or refuse to recognize new states. In fact, he is the chief spokesman of the US in international affairs and is directly responsible for the foreign policy of his country and its results.
v. The president is the commander-in-chief of all the three forces. He is responsible for the defence of the country. He appoints officers of the army, navy and air force with the consent of the senate and anybody's approval during a war. He cannot, however, declare war. This power has been entrusted to the Congress but as the supreme commander of the defence war.

Legislative powers

The US Constitution is based on the theory of separation of powers. The executive and legislative organs of the government are made independent of each other. Hence, the Congress legislates and the president executives. But, in practice, the president has become a very important legislator. His legislative powers are as follows:

i. The president is required by the constitution to send messages to Congress giving it information regarding the state of the Union. It is a duty rather than the power of the president. The time, place and manner of sending the message to the Congress depends upon the discretion of the president.
ii. In the US, the president is not authorized to summon or prorogue the Congress or to dissolve the House of Representatives. However, the president can call special sessions of both Houses of the Congress, or any one of them, on extraordinary occasions. These extra sessions are convened, the agenda is also fixed by the president and the Congress does not transact any other business during that session only of the senate.
iii. The president can also issue certain executive orders having the force of law. This is known as the 'ordinance power' of the president. Some of the ordinances are issued in pursuance of authority conferred upon him by the Congress; others are issued to fill the details of laws passed by the Congress. The number of such executive orders is very large. As a result of this, the president has been able to increase his legislative influence tremendously.
iv. In recent times, the presidents of America have used the device of taking the Congressional leaders into confidence by holding personal conferences with them. By this the president is able to secure their support for legislative measures.
v. If president's party is in majority in the Congress, then he does not face much difficulty in getting certain laws of his choice passed.
vi. President can appeal to people at large. It means the president can win public opinion for his policies and measures. He tries to win public opinion through speeches on the radio, television, weekly press conferences that in practice the election of President is direct; therefore, it is easier for the president to gather opinion on his side. When Congress knows that the public is with the president, it has to pass the laws wanted by him.

vii. We have seen the president's position in law making which is equally important and his influence is exercised by him through his veto power. Veto power means the authority of the president to refuse his signature on a bill or resolution passed by the Congress. All bills passed by the Congress are presented to the president for his assent. The president may refuse to sign a bill and send it back to the House in which it originated within ten days of the receipt of the bill.

Financial powers

In theory, it is the Congress which controls the public purse in practice, the budget is prepared under the guidance and supervision of the president. Of course, Congress is at liberty to change the budget proposals, but it seldom makes any changes.

Judicial powers

The president has the power to grant pardon and reprieve to all offenders against federal laws, except those who have impeached or those who have offended against the state. He also appoints (with the consent of the senate) judges of the Supreme Court which is the highest practical organ in the US.

Leader of the party

The makers of the US constitution had rejected the parliamentary system of government because it could not function without parties and political parties which according to them were not the need of the time. It means they were against the political parties. However, today, organized political parties and the president is the leader of his party.

4.4 Comparison between the US Presidential System and the British's

Parliamentary System

The American presidency is considered the most powerful executive office in the world. E. S. Griffith has described it as the 'most dramatic of all the institution of the American Government.' According to Munro, the American president exercises the largest amount of authority ever wielded by any man in a democracy!' Due to his increasing powers and importance he has become 'the focus of federal authority and the symbol of national unity.' Laski has very correctly said that the American president is both more or less than a King; he is also both more or less than a prime minister. In a sense, he is a king who is his own prime minister (Mohanty, 2018).

The US president is both head of the state and head of the government. Both the queen of Great Britain and the president of the US are heads of state and mighty figures in their respective countries. Both have supreme command of defence forces in their hands. Being heads of the state, they receive foreign chief executives. They receive diplomats accredited to them and appoint foreign ambassadors for foreign countries.

This similarity is superficial. The British king is the constitutional head of the state and as such he has practically no hand in the administration of the country. The British king reigns but does not govern, while the American president governs but does not reign. The British sovereign being nothing more than a constitutional or titular head of the state, and government, the ceremonial functions are merely the decorative penumbra of office and forms a very small part of his work.

American president is more than a British king

The US president has vast powers. Article II of the constitution reads, 'The executive power shall be vested in the president of the United States of America.' He is the head of the state and government and runs the whole administration but the British monarch is only the head of the state and not of the government. In all his official functions, he acts on the advice of his ministers. It means the king has to do what ministers tell him to do. He is held, no doubt, in great esteem and still exercises in Bagehot's wordings the right 'to be informed, to encourage and to warn the ministers.'

Position of the US president in relation to the cabinet

The position of the US president is superior to the British king in relation to his cabinet. In the US, there is a cabinet; but its members are not equal to the president, they are not his colleagues. In fact, ministers are his subordinates. He is their boss. They are nominees of the president and they work during his pleasure. He is not bound to act according to their advice or even to consult them. On the other hand, the British king is bound to act according to the advice of his ministers, who form *de facto* executive. There was a time when ministers used to advice and king used to decide but now the case is just the reverse. He has no hand in the selection of his ministers. Nor can he dismiss them. He can advise them but cannot override the decisions of the cabinet. The king is outside the cabinet and cannot participate in its proceedings. It is the prime minister who leads the cabinet (Mohanty, 2018).

Executive powers

The US president exercises vast executive powers. He has the power of appointing a large number of officers with the consent of the senate but he enjoys absolute power in the removal of the officers. But the British king has to exercise all his executive powers with the advice and consent of his ministers.

Legislative powers

The US president has an important role to play in the field of legislation. He can send messages to either house or both, in extraordinary session. He has suspensory and pocket veto powers. On the other hand, the British king has no legislative powers. In reality, it is the cabinet which exercises his power to summon, prorogue and adjourn the legislature. His speech is prepared by the cabinet. As a convention, his absolute veto power has not been used since the time of Queen Anne.

Judicial powers

The US president exercises judicial powers given to him by the constitution. He has an important role to play in the appointment of judges. While the British king exercises his judicial powers on the advice of his ministries.

Foreign affairs

The US president plays a leading role in the formation of his country's foreign policy by virtue of his being the commander-in-chief and the chief manager of his country' relation.

American president is also less than the British king

It is also true that the president is less than the king in certain respects.
Appointments: The American president is elected directly by the people. He is eligible for re-election for only one extra term. The British king, on the other hand, is a hereditary monarch born and brought up in the royal family.

Term of office: The American president is elected for a term of four years. He is eligible for re-election for only one extra term. As a president, he can remain in office for 10 years at the most. On the other hand, once the British king or queen becomes a monarch, he or she remains on the throne for the rest of his/her life.

Party relations: The British monarch has no party affiliation and renders significant impartial advice to his ministers. He can view problems from a national angle, much above the narrow partisan viewpoint. He gains experience, while acting as an umpire in the game of politics being played by leaders of the ruling party and the opposition party. As for the American president, he is elected on party lines. He does not reign, though he has been called 'the crowned king for four years.' He occupies the White House for a short duration and after his term of tenure, he becomes an ordinary citizen. The monarch is head of the church as he is regarded as the 'Defender of Faith' and commands respect of all the subjects, but it is not so in the case of the President.

Impeachment: Lastly, the president of America can be impeached by the Congress on the ground of 'Violation of the Constitution' and can be removed even before the expiry of his term. But the British monarch is immune to such sort of impeachment.

From the above points of comparison, it can be concluded that there is truth in Laski's saying that 'the president of America is both more or less than the British king.' He rules but does not reign and the American president combines in his person the office of the king and prime minister. But on the whole, he enjoys vast and real powers than the British king.

4.5 Unitary Form of Government

As the name suggests, a unitary form of government is a single unit state where the central government is supreme. All the power rests with the central government and any divisions in governance, for instance, in the form of administrative or sub-national units, have only those powers that the central government gives them. While democratic systems have become popular over the world, a number of states still have a unitary system of government among several other archetypes that are found in different countries. Some of the examples of a unitary form of government are dictatorships, monarchies and parliamentary governments. Some countries that follow the unitary system of government are France, Italy, Japan and the United Kingdom (Mohanty, 2018).

Since the power is vested in the Centre, a unitary system of government is based on the principles of centralization of power. Within such a system, a fair amount of hegemony is found between different regions in the same country. Thus, local governments follow instructions of the Centre and have only those powers which are delegated by the central government. Yet, there are no fixed rules to this system and not all countries use the same principles of centralization and decentralization of powers. One of the major advantages of such a system is the fact that the government at the centre can make quick decision since it has all the powers of rule-making. A significant disadvantage is that there are no ways to keep a check on the activities of the central government. Moreover, most unitary governments have large bureaucracies where the members are not appointed on the basis of popular voting.

The opposite of unitary government will be a federal government where governance powers are not centralized or where central government is a weak one. Political powers are actively decentralized and individual states have more sovereignty compared to those in a unitary state. Principally, a federal government holds some middle ground between the unitary and the federal system because powers are distributed between the central and local governments. The political system of the United States of America is an example of a federal system. One needs to also explore the nature of the state when the analysis of the form of government is being made. For instance, not every state will encourage social and political integration and some will monopolize force in their hands, thus encouraging one form of governance compared to the other. Nonetheless, monopolization of power is also a central idea to a unitary government. Popularly in such a system, local governments will exist but they will not be independent of the central government. They are subordinate to the central government in all respects and often act as mere agents of such a government. Thus, the whole state is governed with full might of the central government. Such a system is useful in those states which do not have strong nationalities, are at risk of outside forces or are very small states.

Salient Features of Unitary Government

As stated above, a unitary system of government widely differs from one that is federal in its organization. Federal governments, by their very nature, constitutionally divide powers between the centre and the state. No such power division occurs in a unitary system even though the central government, by its own accord, delegate some superficial powers to various states. Moreover, in a federal system, the constitution is supreme and determines the powers between the centre and the states. Both exist as equal before a federal constitution. In contrast, centre is supreme authority in a unitary government.

States function independent of the centre in a federal system whereas in the unitary system, states are subordinate to the centre. In short, Unitarianism can be referred to as: 'The concentration of the strength of the state in the hands of one visible sovereign power, be that power parliament are czar.' Federalism, on the other hand, is distribution of force. As has been cited: 'The sovereign in a federal state is not like the English parliament an ever wakeful legislator, but like a monarch who slumbers and sleeps. And a monarch who slumbers for years is like a monarch who does not exist.' A unitary government can have an unwritten yet flexible constitution but federal government cannot go about its daily chores unless it has in its possession a written constitution. Judiciary also plays a very important role in a federal government and also decides on disputes that may crop up among the central and state governments or between other units. These are some of the key differences between federal and state governments (Mohanty, 2018).

This brings us to the characteristics and features of unitary form of government:

- **Centralization of power:** The centre is the reservoir of all powers in unitary system. There exist no province or provincial governments in such a system and the central government has the constitutional powers to legislate, execute and adjudicate with full might. There is no other institution with this kind of state to share the powers of the central government.
- **Single and simple government:** The unitary system of government is a simple system. There exist no provincial assemblies, executives or upper chambers in the Centre. One exception to this is Britain. Yet, most unitary systems are defined by single central government where the popular voting is held for unicameral legislature.
- **Uniformity of laws:** Laws in unitary system are uniform laws unlike the ones in the federal state. This is one crucial characteristic of a unitary government. Laws are made and executed by the central government for the entire state. They are enforced without any distinction being made for any state. In contrast, in a federal system, the nature of a law can vary from state to state.
- **No distribution of powers:** As stated, within a federation powers are distributed among the federal and the state. In contrast, in the unitary system, no such distribution of powers is made. All powers rest with the centre. One of the advantages of this lack of distribution of power is that the government does not have to bother about delegating powers and instead concentrate on more welfare issues and development of the state and citizens.

- **Flexible constitutions:** Flexibility is what defines the constitutions of unitary states. It is within federal systems that a rigid constitution is required so as to clearly define and maintain the relationship between the centre and the state. One of the advantages of a flexible constitution is that it can be altered as be the needs of the state amid the continuously changing circumstances.
- **Despotism attributes a Unitary State:** A unitary state can turn totalitarian or despotic when its rulers do not follow rules or move away from the path of patriotism. Since powers are with the Centre and there is no check on the activities of the government, there are higher chances of misuse. Such a government can become absolute and abuse its powers mainly due to the absence of an internal check system.
- **Responsibility:** In contrast to a federation, a unitary system is more responsible. Certain defined institutions have fixed responsibility and this is a significant characteristic of a unitary system. The central government is responsible for legislation, executive for implementation and judiciary for adjudication. Thus, it is these institutions that are responsible for their activities and therefore they try to operate within the law of the land.
- **Local government institutions:** Usually in a unitary form of government, the powers lie in the hands of urban bureaucracy. Such a government has also been found to be limited in the city areas and have no influence in remote towns and villages. Therefore, to maintain its influence in rural areas, the central governments manipulate their affairs through municipalities and other such local institutions.

Advantages of Unitary Form of Government

Some advantages of unitary system include:

i. Throughout the state, uniform policies, laws, political, enforcement, administration system is maintained.
ii. There are fewer issues of contention between national and local governments and less duplication of services.
iii. Unitary systems have greater unity and stability.

Disadvantages of Unitary Form of Government

Disadvantages of such a form of government include:

i. Local concerns are usually not the prerogative of the central government.
ii. Thus, the centre is often at a lax in responding to local problems.

iii. In case the centre gets involved in local problems, it can easily miss out on the needs of a large section of other people.

4.6 Federal Government

A federal government is the national government of a federation. It is defined by different structures of power; in a federal government, there may exist various departments or levels of government which are delegated to them by its member states. However, the structures of federal governments differ. Going by a broad definition of basic federalism, it comprises at least two or more levels of government within a given territory. All of them govern through some common institutions and their powers often overlap and are even shared between them. All this is defined in the constitution of the said state. Therefore, simply put, a federal government is one wherein the powers are delegated between the centre and many other local governments. An authority which is superior to both the central and the state governments can divide these powers on geographical basis, and it cannot be altered by either of the government levels by themselves. Thus a federation, also called a federal state, is characterized by self-governing states which are in turn united by a central government. At the same time, both the tiers of government rule on the basis of their own laws, officials and other such institutions. Within a federal state, the federal departments can be the various government ministries and such agencies where ministers of the government are assigned.

For instance, in the US, the national government has some powers which are different from those of other 50 states which are part of the country. This division of powers has been elaborated in the constitution of the US. Thus, a federal government works at the level of a sovereign state. At this level, the government is concerned with maintaining national security and exercising international diplomacy, including the right to sign binding treaties. Therefore, as per the guidelines of the constitution, the federal government has the power to make laws for the entire country and not the state governments. For instance, the US Constitution initially was did not empower the federal government to exercise undue powers over the states but with time, certain amendments were introduced to give it some substantial authority over states. The states that are part of a federation have, in some sense, sovereignty because certain powers are reserved for them that cannot be exercised by the central government. But this does not mean that a federation is a loose alliance of independent states. Most likely, the states that are part of a federation have no powers to make, for instance, foreign policy; thus, under international law they have no independent status. It is the constitutional structure in the federation that is referred to as federalism. This is in contrast to the unitary government. With 16 *Länder*, Germany is an example of a federation while its neighbour Austria was a former unitary state that later became a federation. France, in contrast, has always had a unitary system of government. As mentioned earlier, federation set-ups are different in different countries. For instance, the German *Lander* have some independent powers which they have started to exercise on the European level.

While this is not the case with all federations, such a system is usually multicultural and multi-ethnic and covers a large area of territory. An example is India. Due to large geographical differences, agreements are drawn initially when a federation is being made. This reduces the chances of conflict, differences between the disparate territories, and gives a common binding to all. The Forum of Federations is an international council for federal countries which is based in Ottawa, Ontario. This council brings together different federal countries and gives them a platform to share their practices. At present, it includes nine countries as partner governments. Where states have more autonomy than others, such federations are called asymmetric. Malaysia is an example of one such federation wherein states of Sarawak and Sabah joined the federation on their own terms and conditions. Thus, a federation often appears after states reach an agreement about it. There can be many factors that could bring in states together. For instance, they might want to solve mutual problems, provide for mutual defense or to create a nation state for an ethnicity spread over several states. The former happened in the case of the United States and Switzerland and the latter with Germany. Just like the fact that the history of different countries may vary, similarly their federal system can also differ on several counts. One unique system is that of Australia's where it came into being after citizens of different states voted in the affirmative to a referendum to adopt the Australian Constitution. Brazil has experienced with both federal and unitary system in the past. Till date, some of the states in Brazil maintain the borders they had during Portuguese colonization. Its newest state, Tocantins, was created mainly for administrative reasons in the 1988 Constitution.

History of Federalism

In the New World order, several colonies and dominions joined as autonomous provinces but later transformed into federal states after independence. The United States of America is the oldest federation and has served as a role model for many federations that followed. While some federations in the New World order failed, even the former Federal Republic of Central America split into several independent states 20 years after it was formed. States like Argentina and Mexico have in fact shifted from being federal, confederal, and unitary systems before finally settling with being federalists. Germany is another example of the same shifting since its foundation in 1815. After its monarchy fell, Brazil became a federation and it was after the Federal War that Venezuela followed suit. Many ancient chiefdoms and kingdoms can be described as federations or confederations, like the 4th century BC League of Corinth, Noricum in Central Europe, and the Iroquois in pre-Columbian North America. An early example of formal non-unitary statehood is found in the Old Swiss Confederacy. Many colonies of the British that became independent after the Second World War also adopted federalism; these include Nigeria, Pakistan, India and Malaysia.

Many states can be federalists yet unitary. For instance, the Soviet Union, which was formed in 1922, was formally a federation of Soviet Republics or autonomous republics of the Soviet Union and other federal subjects but in practice remained highly centralized under the government of the Soviet Union. Therefore, the Russian Federation has inherited its present system. Australia and Canada are independent federations, yet Commonwealth realms. In present times, many federations have been made to handle internal ethnic conflict; examples are Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Iraq since 2005 (Mohanty, 2018).

Advantages of Federal Form of Government

Some advantages of a federal form of government are:

i. There is larger federal unity though local governments may handle their own problems.
ii. The government at the Centre is more committed towards national and international issues.
iii. It is a participatory system and there are more opportunities to make decisions. For instance, what goes into school curriculums and ways in which highways and other projects are to be carried out, can be decided through participation of local populace.
iv. Local government/officials are more responsive towards people who elect them.

Disadvantages of Federal Form of Government

Disadvantages of federal form of government include:

i. Since laws are different in different states, people living in one country can be treated differently. This can happen not only in spending that each state makes of welfare programmes but even in legal systems, where different punishment can be meted out in similar offences or right laws are differentially enforced.
ii. Duplication of services.

iii. States can pass laws that counter national policy and this can influence international relations.
iv. Conflict can arise over power/national supremacy vs. state’s rights.

Self-Assessment Exercises 3

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minute:

1. What is a federal system of government?
2. Describe a unitary system of government.

4.7 Summary

We observed in this unit that in a Parliamentary form of government, the tenure of office of the virtual executive is dependent on the will of the Legislature; in a Presidential government the tenure of office of the executive is independent of the will of the Legislature (Leacock). The presidency of the United States of America is one of the greatest political offices of the world. He is the chief executive head of the state as well as the head of the administration. We have also examined the unitary system with its major drawback being lack of checks and balances of power. The federal system was also considered, noting that the federal government is the mutual or national government of a federation. A federal government may have different powers at various levels authorized or delegated to it by its member states. The structures of federal governments differ depending on states.

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4.9 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answers to SAEs 1

1. In a parliamentary form of government, the tenure of office of the virtual executive is dependent on the will of the legislature.
2. In a presidential government, the main decision is taken by a single executive head – a part of honour and leadership rather than that of 'commanding authority'.

Answers to SAEs 2

1. (1) A natural born citizen of the US (2) Not less than thirty-five years in age (3) A resident of the United States for at least fourteen years.
2. (1) National convention (2) The campaign (3) Election of electoral college

Answers to SAEs 3

3. A federal government is the national government of a federation. It is defined by different structures of power; in a federal government, there may exist various departments or levels of government which are delegated to them by its member states.
4. As the name suggests, a unitary form of government is a single unit state where the central government is supreme. All the power rests with the central government and any divisions in governance, for instance, in the form of administrative or sub-national units, have only those powers that the central government gives them.

Unit 5 State in Comparative Perspective

Unit Structure

5.1 Introduction

The state has been and continues to be one of the classic concerns of political science. Political theory has consequently being somewhat inundated by deliberations on the state. Political theorists, with their great sensitivity to power, concentrate on the state because they recognize that the state is the condensate of power. It has the capacity to shape and control the lives of individuals in a way no other institution can. And therefore, it structures almost every phenomena in society. It is almost impossible to theorize any phenomena – whether it is gender, family, religion, ecology, law, rights, culture or literary text without reference to state as the codified power of the social formulation, the state both contextualizes the phenomena and orders them. Yet, despite the wealth of details on the state, and despite the passionate and intense debates that surrounds it, the nature of the state has proved almost impossible to grasp. The problems that face any theorists seeking to define the state are numerous. Hence, this unit has been devoted to the understanding of the state and all of its attributes.

5.2 Learning Outcomes

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

- identify the features of the modern-state
- contextualize the formation of the state in europe
- describe the foundations of the modern-state
- describe the importance of sovereignty

- explain the evolution of the state from an absolutist state to a liberal democracy

5.3 State in Comparative Perspective

5.3.1 Theorizing the State

The state is the formal incorporation of the community into an entity which can formulate policy and make decisions – the government, and carry out its decisions by means of compulsory measures – the law. The state differs from all other associations in that membership in it is mandatory. It follows that the rules formulated by the government for the community are binding on all persons, whether they consented to these rules or not. The consequence of disobeying the bylaws of an interest group is expulsion or resignation.

The state plays a paradoxical role in the life of individuals and collectivities. On the one hand it is a coercive institution; on the other it provides certain benefits and protections to its members such as access to citizenship rights, social service, and items of collective consumption which no other institution is able to or willing to do. Though it represents the interest of the dominant classes, it is also the site where the general interest of the community can be formulated. Further, it establishes the legal, political and coercive framework within which society exists; it also establishes a sense of belonging to the wider community. And, if it is an instrument which maintains law and order, it is equally an institution which dispenses Justice (Nagendra Rao, 2021).
Due to this multi-dimensional and contradictory roles played by the state, it's become extremely difficult to conceptualize it. Theorists differ on the question of which aspect is primary and definite and which is secondary and contingent. This to a large extend explains the disputes that surrounds the discussion on the state. David Easton for instance suggests that any conceptualizing of the state should be abandoned, as it leads to rapid debates and a conceptual morass. On the other hand, John Hoffman has argued that it is the state which has to be at the centre of any theory of politics. Despite all this confusion, there is almost universal acceptance that some kind of state is needed. Critics of the state launching the most devastating attack on it, admit simultaneously the need for some kind of regulatory power which will be able to maintain a certainty to life itself.

Libertarians such as Hayek, argues against the welfare state as inimical to freedom, but also accepts the need for a minimal state which can provide property and enforcing of contracts. Scholars concerning the oppression of the subordinate class also held the same view. For instance the writing from the feminist perspective, Harrington asserts that despite the suspicion that the anti-liberal feminists and liberal internationalists have of the state, ‘the very fact that the state creates, condenses and focuses political power may make it the best friend, not enemy of feminists, because the availability of the real power is essential to real democratic control.’ The need for a state is almost universally accepted by the majority of political theorists; the problem arises when we seek to conceptualize the kind of state that not only exists, but more importantly should exist. Conceptualizations of the state are almost always the critiques of the existing states. Political theorists, deeply conscious of the capacity and the power of the state to inscribe social relations, have been profoundly wary of existing states. Therefore the liberals have insisted that the state should be limited and circumscribed and Marxists argued that the state should be transformed through political action.

At the same time, political theory has been constantly preoccupied with thinking about the desired state, a state which would be capable of realizing conditions conducive to human nature. The state is the contentious concept in political theory, because any inquiry into the state is value laden. It is worth remembering that the only time the state was sought to be taken out of political science was when political science tried to be value free in its bid to approximate the natural sciences, during the behavioural phase. There are accordingly two points that need to be made before any conceptualization of the state is attempted. *First,* any conceptualization is ‘normative’ enterprise. There can be no objective theory of the state. Secondly, since the state play such a contradictory role in the lives of individuals and collectivities, no conceptualization can adequately capture the state in its entirety.

The state is simply a social relation, in as much as it is the codified power of the social formation. This carries the corresponding formulation, that any attempt to think of state without society can be both problematic and inadequate. This point needs elaboration and this elaboration is carried through in a discussions of the two very influential perspectives on the state in recent times. The first perspective is that of the “Statist School” and the second is inspired by the works of the Michael Foucault. The first focus is on the state, the later on is on society and both are insufficient and incomplete as the subsequent section argues.

5.3.2 The Features of the State

The state appears to be everywhere, regulating the conditions of our lives from birth registration to death certification (Held 1989). In between birth and death, we are bound with the processes of the state on multiple occasions. For a lot of people, education is given through government schools and colleges, health services provided at government hospitals when ill and if required, and essential food supplies are met through public distribution system. Once one is a citizen of any country, s/he is bound by the rules and regulations of that state. This is true for both our conduct in public sphere, as well as our conduct in some aspects of our personal sphere. To travel to another state, one has to be granted a passport and visa. Our fundamental and human rights are guaranteed by the Constitution of the state and ought to be implemented by its institutions. These examples go on to show the pervasiveness and omnipresence of the state in our lives (Das, 2008).

A state has to possess four features: first, a permanent population; second, a defined territory; third, government and fourth, capacity to enter into relations with the other states (sovereignty). These features were set out in the 'Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States' signed in 1933. Although this convention was specifically signed among countries belonging to North and South America, the convention is considered to be part of 'customary international law'. This means that the norms and principles set out in this convention apply not only to signatories but to all other similar subjects of international law.

5.3.3 Foundation of Modern Nation State

The challenge to the 'international Christian society' that was trying to provide an overarching unity to the fragmentary nature of political authority in Europe came in the form of Reformation in the beginning of the Sixteenth century. Also known as the Protestant Reformation, this movement challenged the religious power of the Pope and the Catholic Church. One of its main leaders was Martin Luther who with the publication of a list titled *Ninety-five Theses* in the year1517 exposed what he regarded as the abusive practices of the Church. These discriminatory practices included the selling or commercialising indulgences to people promising them to rid them of their sins and guilt. Due to the challenge posed by Reformation, the religious power and political hold of the papacy was greatly reduced. This directly led to the development of space for new forms of political power to rise. With this, "ground was created for the development of a new form of political identity- national identity" (Held, 1989:34). This can be called the first stage in the rise of the modern nation state.

Two different forms of political regimes started developing from the Fifteenth to the Eighteenth century in Europe. These were "the 'absolute' monarchies in France, Prussia, Austria, Spain and Russia, among other places, and the 'constitutional' monarchies and republics found in England and Holland" (Held, 1989). Absolutism basically meant the development of an all-powerful bigger state created by engulfing or absorbing the smaller and weaker territories into its larger structural ambit. This ensured that there was a bigger unified territory with a common system of law and order. This was to be led by a single unitary sovereign head which came to be known as the absolutist monarch (Held, 1989).

Political authority hence became completely centralised in the monarch based on the theory of the 'divine right of the king'. This means that the absolutist powers of the monarch/king were justified on the ground that he derived his power directly from God and therefore could not be questioned. The increased power of the monarch led to the development of a new centralized administrative system involving a permanent bureaucracy and an army. Hence absolutism of the monarch led to a process of uniformity in terms of administration, law and order, economy and society/culture across the territory.

Therefore, within these territories, such variations were decreasing but at the same time, these variations/differences were increasing among the territories controlled by different monarchs. David Held (1989:36) writes that "six ensuing developments were of great significance in the history of the state's system:

i. The growing coincidence of territorial boundaries with a uniform system of rule;
ii. The creation of new mechanism of law making and enforcement;
iii. The centralization of administrative power;
iv. The alteration and extension of fiscal management;
v. The formalization of relations among states through the development of diplomacy and diplomatic institutions; and
vi. The introduction of a standing army.

Hence, the formation of absolute monarchies became the basis for the further development of the state system in Western Europe. The countless wars that were fought to consolidate the power of the monarch in his territory ultimately led to the re-drawing of the map of Europe several times. However, this ensured that the territorial consolidation became a prime motive, thereby establishing the principle of sovereignty among the various monarchs. Hence "absolutism and the inter-state system it initiated were the proximate sources of the modern state" (Held, 1989:36).

Self-Assessment Exercises 1

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minute:

1. The state differs from all other associations in that membership in it is mandatory-----True or False?

2. The state is a coercive institution….. True or False?

1. How will you define the state?

5.3.4 The Rise of the Modern Sate and Sovereignty

Before the formation of the modern state in Europe, common people owed their political allegiance either to the local ruler, the church, the monarch or to other religious/political head. Depending on the shift of power among these parties due to constant strife, the political allegiance of the people also shifted accordingly. This intricate relationship between common people and the religious/political ruler had to break for the notion of the modern state to arise. This is because the foundation of the modern state is based on the concept of an impersonal political authority/order. Impersonal meaning not related/connected to any particular person. In terms of authority, an impersonal order is deemed to be fairer than a personalised order where favouritism or nepotism is likely to be more rampant.

Similarly, it was only when human beings were no longer thought of as merely dutiful subjects of God, an emperor or a monarch that the notion could begin to take hold that they, as 'individuals', 'persons' or 'a people', were capable of being active citizens of a new political order-citizens of their state" (Held, 1989:37). The modern state is deeply linked to the concept of sovereignty. Sovereignty basically means supreme legitimate power/authority over a polity. The concept of sovereignty mainly developed in the Sixteenth century as a major theme of political thought (Held 1989:38). The major philosophers associated with this concept are Jean Bodin, Thomas Hobbes, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, John Locke and others.

State Sovereignty

Jean Bodin is said to have provided the “first statement of the modern theory of sovereignty: that there must be within every political community or state a determinate sovereign body whose powers are recognized by the community as the rightful or legitimate basis of authority” (Held, 1989:39). Bodin published his treatise titled *Six Books of the Republic* in 1576 within the backdrop of the religious and civil wars in France. He argued for the establishment of a supreme power/central authority in the form of an absolute monarch for bringing about order and stability. More importantly, Bodin outlined that the sovereign has undivided power to impose laws over its subjects regardless of their consent. For Bodin, law was “nothing else than the command of the sovereign in the exercise of his sovereign power” (Held, 1989:40). Hence his theory of sovereignty clearly gave absolute powers to the sovereign over and above the consent of the subjects. However, he also emphasized that this power of the sovereign had to be exercised keeping in account certain rules based on divine law and fundamental customary laws of the political community. Sovereignty may be unlimited, but the sovereign is bound in morals and religion to respect the laws of God, nature and custom (Held 1989:40). Essentially, he was of the view that “while the sovereign is the rightful head of the state, he is so by virtue of his office not his person.” Bodin outlined that sovereignty is a constitutive characteristic of the state and his clear preference was for a monarchical form of government.

Thomas Hobbes further strengthened the notion of state sovereignty in his book titled *Leviathan* (1651). He did so by using the mechanism of the ‘social contract’ theory which posits that people have consented (either explicitly or implicitly) to giving up some of their powers to a ruler in return for provision of security and stability. Hobbes argued his case by providing a hypothetical situation of the ‘state of nature’ which is a state of people before the existence of a state. According to Hobbes, such a condition resulted in a ‘war of every one against every one’ and hence life of every person became ‘solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short’. In order to avoid such a state of war, Hobbes posited that “individuals ought willingly to surrender their rights of self-government to a powerful single authority – thereafter authorized to act on their behalf – because, if all individuals do this simultaneously, the condition would be created for effective political rule, and for security and peace in the long term” (Held, 1989:41). This powerful single authority would be the state which would possess absolute and undivided sovereignty. Most importantly, Hobbes outlined that the sovereign was not a party to this contract among individuals and hence an agent in its own right. It was “an ‘Artificial Man’, defined by permanence and sovereignty, ‘giving life and motion’ to society and body politics” (Held, 1989:40).

Only such a framework would be able to guarantee the life of life and security of the citizens inside the state. Hobbes has provided one of the most comprehensive justifications for the absolute power conferred on the state.

Self-Assessment Exercises 2

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minute:

1. Thomas Hobbes wrote the Leviathan….True or False?
2. How did Thomas Hobbes described the state of nature ?

5.3.5 The Modern-nation State and the Rise of Democracy

It took a long time for national states – relatively centralized, differentiated, and autonomous organizations successfully claiming priority in the use of force with large, contiguous, and clearly bounded territories – to dominate the European map (Tilly, 1990). In 990 A D, the European landmass was politically fragmented with divided and overlapping authority. However, by "…1490 the future remained open; despite the frequent use of the word 'kingdom', empires of one sort or another claimed most of the European landscape, and federations remained viable in some parts of the continent. Sometime after 1490, Europeans foreclosed those alternative opportunities, and set off decisively toward the creation of a system consisting almost entirely of relatively autonomous national states (Tilly, 1990). There was increasing centralisation of power in Europe under the rule of the absolutist rulers. Such moves in the practical life of politics were backed in the ideational domain by the theories of sovereignty, especially state sovereignty at this point of time. In due course, with the rise of the notion of popular sovereignty, there was a push for accountability from the rulers and democratic governance. Importantly, the concept of sovereignty underlined the foundation of the modern nation state which was an impersonal structure of governance.

David Held (1989) has outlined the most 'prominent innovations' of the modern state:

- **Territoriality:** While all states have made claims to territories, it is only with the modern state system that exact borders have been fixed.
- **Control of the means of violence:** The claim to hold a monopoly on force and the means of coercion (sustained by a standing army

and the police) became possible only with the ‘pacification’ of people- the breaking down of rival centres of power and authority- in the nation state. This element of the modern state was not attained until the nineteenth century, and remained a fragile achievement in many countries.

- **Impersonal structure of power:** The idea of an impersonal and sovereign political order- that is, a legally circumscribed structure of power with supreme jurisdiction over a territory could not prevail while political rights, obligations and duties were conceived as closely tied to religion and the claims of traditional privileged groups.
- **Legitimacy:** It was only when claims to ‘divine right’ or ‘state right’ were challenged and eroded that it became possible for human beings as ‘individuals’ and as ‘peoples’ to win a place as ‘active citizens’ in the political order. The loyalty of citizens became something that had to be won by modern states: invariably this involved a claim by the state to be legitimate because it reflected and/or represented the views and interests of its citizens.” (Held, 1989).

It is argued that the development of modern state and its evolution into a representative liberal democracy in Western Europe was a result of many factors and processes. David Held (1989) has outlined three ‘macro patterns’: war and militarism, the emergence of capitalism, and the struggle for citizenship. Held posits that the nation states went on to become the dominant form of political existence on an international level because of these three temporally long drawn out and complex processes. First, with regard to the role of war and militarism, Gianfranco Poggi (2001) has asserted that the modern state was initially intended for purposes of ‘war making’ in order to establish and maintain its might. This ‘war making’ in return played a role in further strengthening the structures and processes of the modern state itself. Charles Tilly (1985) has written that the agents of the state carry on four different activities of first, “war making: eliminating or neutralizing their own rivals outside the territories in which they have clear and continuous priority as wielders of force”; second, “state making: eliminating or neutralizing their rivals inside those territories”; third, “protection: eliminating or neutralizing the enemies of their clients”; and fourth, “extraction: acquiring the means to carry out the first three activities – war making, state making, and protection” (Tilly 1985:181). Hence, many “state makers were locked into an open-ended and ruthless competition in which as Tilly put it, ‘most contenders lost’.

The successful cases of state-making such as Britain, France and Spain were the ‘survivors’ (Held, 1989). Secondly, with regard to relationship between capitalism and the formation of the modern state, David Held

(1989) has posited that modern states "were economically successful because of the rapid growth of their markets from the late Sixteenth century, and particularly after the mid-Eighteenth century…" The sustained process of capital accumulation led to the economic basis of the centralized state to expand. This in turn reduced the war making capacities of other smaller states with fragmented political structures or ones that relied on more traditional forms of coercive power (Held, 1989). Held (1989:60) also underlined that after the decline of the Muslim world which had dominated world-wide trade relations around AD 1000, it was Europe that burst forth outward towards the world. "The growth of interconnections between states and societies – that is, of globalization – became progressively shaped by the expansion of Europe. Globalization initially meant 'European globalization' (Held, 1989:60). The states of Europe were helped in the endeavour by their military and strong naval forces. These developments furthered the process of colonising the rest of the world. The Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, British and French scrambled for colonies in Asia and Africa. The increases in the resources of Europe by draining the wealth of the colonies further strengthen its own system. "In particular, European expansion became a major source of development of state activity and efficiency" (Held, 1989:61).

Third, concerning the struggle for citizenship and the rise of liberal democracy, Held (1989:69) highlights three reasons as to why "citizenship crystallize in many Western polities in the form of civil and political rights" ultimately leading to the rise of the liberal democratic modern nation state. These are, first, the "reciprocity of power" where national governments came to be dependent on the cooperation of the population especially in times of emergency like wars. Second, the weakening of the traditional forms of legitimacy based particularly on religion and property rights. This led to alternative notions of legitimacy of the political authority which was based on a reciprocal relationship between the governors and the governed. Third, the liberal representative democracy did not threaten the growing autonomy of the civil and economic society. These three reasons collaborated to the ultimate development of the liberal democratic state.

However, the path was long drawn and many battles had to be won by different groups of people. Women have had to struggle in a major way for their basic rights in almost all parts of the world, be it in the east or the west. Women were granted voting rights in France in 1944 and in Britain in 1928. From the pursuit of 'no taxation without representation' in the Seventeenth-century England to the diverse struggles to achieve a genuinely universal franchise in the Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries, advocates of greater accountability in government have sought to establish satisfactory means of choosing, authorizing and controlling political decisions" (Held, 1989:70).

Self-Assessment Exercises 3

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 5 minute:

3. Identify the three macro patterns outlined by David Held that led to the
development of liberal representative democratic state.

4. Outline 3 David Held's (1989) most 'prominent innovations' of the modern.

5.4 Summary

Possibly the most important single theoretical current to have shaped the second revival of interest in the state as such was the movement (especially popular in the USA) to 'bring the state back in' as a critical explanatory variable in social analysis. But this movement did not go unchallenged. For, besides the continuing influence of Gramsci and the variable impact of other neo-Marxist currents, serious competition came from several other approaches. Among these are, first, the work of Foucault and his followers on the disciplinary organization of society, the micro-physics of power, and changing forms of governmentality – an approach that ran counter to statism in tending to remove the state from theoretical view once again. However, neither statist theories nor Foucauldian perspective with exclusive focus single dimension – either state or society – analyse the state comprehensively.

5.5 References/Further Reading/Web Resources

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5.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answers to SAEs 1

1. True
2. True
3. The state is simply a social relation, in as much as it is the codified power of the social formation

Answers to SAEs 2

1. True
2. Nasty, brutish, solitary, poor and short.

Answers to SAEs 3

1. Your answer should elaborate the following points: i) War and militarism; ii) The emergence of capitalism; and, iii) The struggle for citizenship.

2. Answer should include:

i. Territories
ii. Control of the means of violence
iii. Interpersonal structure of power
iv. Legitimacy