

# **COURSE GUIDE**

## **POL 214 INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL ANALYSIS**

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## INTRODUCTION

POL 214, *Introduction to Political Analysis* is a one-semester course in the second year of B.Sc. (Hons.) degree in Political Science. It is a three-unit credit course conceived to enable you to have a bird's eye view of the background and significant issues in the course. Structurally, there are four modules in the course with each having a brief introduction to it. The reason for this brief introduction is to ensure that the students [you] have a competent preliminary grasp of what each module entails, and of course, the entire modules and the subject thereto. Some of these subjects include the conception of political analysis to theoretical approaches required for a competent comprehension of political systems, political processes and political action, and, sure enough, the typologies of political systems where organs of government, distribution of power are understood including the globalising tendency of the international political system. Except for module one with four units, each module is structured into 5 units. A unit guide comprises of instructional material, providing you with a brief of the course content, course guidelines and suggestions and steps to take while studying as well as self-assessment exercises for your study.

## COURSE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The primary aim of this course is to provide students of *Introduction to Political Analysis* the requisite knowledge, theories, tools, and skills towards an adequate and coherent understanding of the entire gamut of the nature of the state and the kind of political systems it creates and in whose interest. What is more, the course in specific has the following objectives:

- i. Possess the conceptual and operational knowledge of Introduction to Political Analysis by comprehending the objects and subjects of political analysis and their integral dynamics.
- ii. Familiarise you with a good understanding of politics which takes place within the state arena, including analysis of political behaviour, action, processes, and systems.
- iii. Provide you with the institutional structures and the nature of the distribution of powers both at the domestic and international political system.

Notwithstanding the preceding, each unit has its own specific objectives which can be found at the beginning of the each to which you are expected to make references to while studying. If you are diligently consistent with your study, you should be able to check at the end of every unit to usefully answer the self-assessment exercises and thus achieve the overall course objectives.

## WORKING THROUGH THIS COURSE

To complete the course, you are required to read the study units and other related but relevant literature to grasp the concepts. You will undertake practical exercises for which you need writing materials listed in this guide and required for use in your written assignment expected to be submitted at the end of every unit for assessment purposes. Expectedly, at the end of the course, you will be expected to write a semester examination that will bring the course to a close.

## COURSE MATERIALS

In this course, as in other courses, the major components you will find are as follows:

- i. Course Guide
- ii. Study Units
- iii. Textbooks
- iv. Assignments

## STUDY UNITS

There are 19 study units in this course divided into four modules. They are:

### **MODULE 1            What Is Political Analysis: An Introductory Conception**

- |        |   |
|--------|---|
| Unit 1 | Conception of Political and Analysis: What is Political Analysis?   |
| Unit 2 | Why Study Political Analysis: Reason, Nature, Types, and Importance |
| Unit 3 | Concept and Tools of Political Science Analysis                     |
| Unit 4 | Scope and Limits of Political Analysis                              |

### **MODULE 2            Approaches to Political Analysis**

- |        |  |
|--------|--|
| Unit 1 | Traditional Approaches   |
| Unit 2 | The Behavioural Approach   |
| Unit 3 | Approaches to the Study of Political Systems: Systems Approach and Structural – Functionalist Approach |
| Unit 4 | Political Processes Approaches: Class Approach, Pluralism (Groups Approach), and Elite Approach        |
| Unit 5 | Rational Choice Approach   |

### **MODULE 3                      Political Systems, Political Processes and Political Action**

Unit 1	Political Systems' Legitimacy: Power, Authority and Legitimacy
Unit 2	Political Culture
Unit 3	Political Socialisation
Unit 4	Political Participation and Representation
Unit 5	Political Party and Pressure Group

### **MODULE 4                      Typologies of Political System**

<b>Unit 1</b>	Form of Rule or Political Regimes
<b>Unit 2</b>	Political Systems and Organs of Government
<b>Unit 3</b>	Political System and Distribution of Power
<b>Unit 4</b>	The Federal System of Government in Nigeria
<b>Unit 5</b>	International Political System and Globalisation

From the preceding, it is evident that the course begins with the fundamentals and develops into a more detailed and multifaceted form. What is expected of you is to follow the instructions as provided in each unit. Moreover, 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. Tutor-marked assignments have also been provided to aid your study, and purposely to assist you to fully grasp what Introduction to Political Analysis entails.

### **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. As you will find out, an effort was made to provide you with the most important information you need to pass this course. However, as a formative student in your second year, do cultivate the habit of consulting as many relevant materials as possible. In particular, be sure to consult whatever material you are advised to consult before attempting any exercise.

### **TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

At the end of each unit, you will find tutor-marked assignments with an average of two tutor-marked assignments per unit. This will allow you to engage the course as robustly as possible. You need to submit at least four assignments of which the three with the highest marks will be recorded as part of your total course grade. This will account for 10 per cent each, making a total of 30 per cent. When you complete your assignments, send

them including your form to your tutor for formal assessment on or before the deadline.

## FINAL EXAMINATION AND GRADING

There will be a final examination at the end of the course, an examination that carries a total of 70 per cent of the total course grade. Expectedly, the examination will reflect the contents of what you have learnt including the self-assessment and tutor-marked assignments. Thus, you are to comprehensively and brilliantly revise your course materials ahead of time.

## COURSE MARKING SCHEME

Below is a table setting out the actual course marking:

S/N	ASSESSMENT	MARKS
1.	Four assignments (the best four of all the assignments submitted for marking)	Four assignments, each marked out of 10%, but highest scoring three selected, thus, a total 30%
2.	Final Examination	70% of overall course score
3.	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100% of course score</b>

## COURSE OVERVIEW/PRESENTATION SCHEME

Units	Title of Work	Week Activity	Assignment End-of-Unit
<b>Course Guide</b>	<b>Introduction to Political Analysis</b>		
<b>Module 1</b>	<b>What is Political Analysis: An Introductory Conception</b>		
Unit 1	Conception of Political and Analysis: What is Political Analysis?	Week 1	Assignment 1
Unit 2	Why Study Political Analysis: Reason, Nature, Types, and Importance	Week 2	Assignment 1
Unit 3	Concept and Tools of Political Science Analysis	Week 3	Assignment 1
Unit 4	Scope and Limits of Political Analysis	Week 4	Assignment 1
<b>Module 2</b>	<b>Approaches to Political Analysis</b>		

Unit 1	Traditional Approaches	Week 5	Assignment 1
Unit 2	The Behavioural Approach	Week 6	Assignment 1
Unit 3	Approaches to the Study of Political Systems: Systems Approach and Structural-Functionalist Approach	Week 7	Assignment 1
Unit 4	Political Processes Approaches: Class Approach, Pluralism (Groups Approach), and Elite Approach	Week 8	Assignment 1
Unit 5	Rational Choice Approach	Week 9	Assignment 1
<b>Module 3</b>	<b>Political Systems, Political Processes &amp; Political Action</b>		
Unit 1	Political Systems' Legitimacy: Power, Authority and Legitimacy	Week 10	Assignment 1
Unit 2	Political Culture	Week 11	Assignment 1
Unit 3	Political Socialisation	Week 12	Assignment 1
Unit 4	Political Participation and Representation	Week 13	Assignment 1
Unit 5	Political Party and Pressure Group	Week 14	Assignment 1
<b>Module 4</b>	<b>Typologies of Political System</b>		
Unit 1	Form of Rule or Political Regimes	Week 15	Assignment 1
Unit 2	Political Systems and Organs of Government	Week 16	Assignment 1
Unit 3	Political System and Distribution of Power	Week 17	Assignment 1
Unit 4	The Federal System of Government in Nigeria	Week 18	Assignment 1
Unit 5	International Political System and Globalisation	Week 19	Assignment 1

## WHAT YOU WILL NEED FOR THE COURSE

This course builds on what you have learnt in your 100 Level and will be of immense help to you if you make effort to studiously review what you learnt earlier. Second, you may need to purchase one or two texts



recommended as important for your mastery of the course content. You need quality time in an educationally conducive environment to study every week. If you are computer-literate (expectedly you should be), you should be prepared to visit recommended websites including making it a practice of visiting reputable physical libraries accessible to you.

## **TUTORS AND TUTORIALS**

There are 15 hours of tutorials provided in support of the course. You will be notified of the dates and location 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 while keeping a close watch on your progress. Be sure to send in your tutor-marked assignments promptly, and feel free to contact your tutor in case of any difficulty with your self-assessment exercise, tutor-marked assignment or the grading of assignments. In any case, you are advised to attend the tutorials regularly and punctually with prepared questions to the tutorials, while urging you to participate actively in the discussions.

## **ASSESSMENT EXERCISES**

There are two aspects to the assessment of this course. 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; therefore, 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.

## **HOW TO GET THE MOST FROM THIS COURSE**

1. There are 19 units in this course of which you are to spend one week in each unit. In distance learning, the study units replace the university lecture; so consider this as one of the advantages. So, you can read and work through designed study materials at your own pace, time and place as is best for you while also expecting your lecturers to give you some readings to do. Similarly, your study units will tell you when to read, including which are your text materials or recommended books. Meanwhile, 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 to let you know what you should be able to do at the end of the unit. These learning objectives are meant to guide your study to which you must ensure they are achieved at the end of a unit. 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. As a practical strategy for working through the course, telephone your tutor or visit the study centre nearest to you if you encounter any challenge as your tutor's job is to help you when you need assistance; hence, do not hesitate to call and ask your tutor to be of help.
  5. Your first assignment is to read this course guide thoroughly.
  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).

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## CONCLUSION

*Introduction to Political Analysis* is essentially theoretical, but you will get the best out of it if you cultivate the habit of relating theory to the practical realities of political issues in domestic and international arenas.

## SUMMARY

POL 214 introduces you to the general understanding of what political analysis is all about, the current approaches and tools to political analysis

towards comprehending the state, political systems, processes, and actions, among others. All the basic course materials that you need to complete the course are provided. In the end, you will be able to:

- Ñ explain the concept of political analysis, the reason for studying it, and the tools
- Ñ discuss the various approaches and tools of political analysis
- Ñ have a good understanding of the scope and limit of the course
- Ñ be able to use the various approaches and tools to analyse political conditions.

**MAIN  
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## **MODULE 1            WHAT IS POLITICAL ANALYSIS: AN INTRODUCTORY CONCEPTION? INTRODUCTION**

This module examines the exploratory understanding of political analysis by first of all providing a clear understanding of the concept of political and analysis and what political analysis entails. The fundamental subject matter in this module is to avoid the assumption that students already know the kernel of the course. This is why students were made to know the relationship between political science and political analysis including the objects and subjects of political analysis. This effort becomes necessary because what is to follow will become easy to comprehend when the essence of the course is known. To know the reason for studying a course, its nature, types, importance, tools, and the scope and limits help to provide students with a good knowledge of the course and the subsequent modules that follow. Finally, this unit as we shall find out comprises of four units, viz:

- Unit 1            Conception of Political and Analysis: What is Political Analysis?
- Unit 2            Why Study Political Analysis: Reason, Nature, Types, and Importance
- Unit 3            Concept and Tools of Political Science Analysis
- Unit 4            Scope and Limits of Political Analysis

## **UNIT 1            CONCEPTION            OF            POLITICAL            AND ANALYSIS: WHAT IS POLITICAL ANALYSIS?**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0    Introduction
- 2.0    Objectives
- 3.0    Main Content
  - 3.1    Conception of Political and Analysis
  - 3.2    What is Political Analysis?
  - 3.3    What makes Political Analysis Political
  - 3.4    Political Science and Political Analysis
  - 3.5    Objects and Subjects of Political Analysis
- 4.0    Conclusion
- 5.0    Summary
- 6.0    Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0    References/Further Reading

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Notwithstanding your belief, genealogically, when you cast your mind back to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, both were confronted with the shared responsibility to abide by the blissful instruction from Almighty God, to paraphrase, do not touch this, but all other. However, an interloper, Satan, against the divine command gave a devious counter order. In between these two directives, decision and consequently choice was made by the first human beings, a decision that was to be favourable to the latter, and a consequential choice that was predictably disciplinary (Abba, Abdullahi, Hamisu, & Alao; 2016). From this origination and first encounter, some terms that later formed the concept political, include the following: power, directives, counter command, interest, decision, choice, conflicting choice, mutual decision, relationship, disciplinary action, etc. It is thus not surprising that Aristotle, a Greek philosopher was perceptive enough to provide the enduring aphorism that “Man is by nature a political animal” (Aristotle; 1999). What this aphoristic assertion implies is that it is in the character of man that while he inevitably lives to associate with others in the making of healthy society and civilisation, there must be leadership, politics, social organisation, interest, conflict, and policies making that make up the entire complexity of social existence. Away from Garden of Eden that was at the outset politicized and as a foundation stone for politics, it is not farther from the political reality of today as man has engaged in politics with a dialectical manifestation of corruption and anticorruption and civilisation and stasis, etc.

Today, the world has become more political in practical politics with diverse complexities far beyond what transpired in the Garden of Eden, yet the diverse goal of man to enact healthy socio-economic and political existence as a political animal hasn't changed expectedly. However, since political reality or reality that is inexorably political is not given but socially constructed as a political act, and considering the inherent diversity of individuals and societies, there emerged conflicting and competing interest and conflicting and competing agenda setters with underlying contradictory personal motivations, biases, perceptions, and expectations. Owing to the centrality of administration as it were in simple societies in the making of human existence, the complicated nature of modern development of political and social organisation requires that structures, institutions, policies, processes, and promises of both the public and private realms and the interest they serve must be properly articulated, evaluated, and adequately comprehended by students and political actors (Usman; 2006). Therefore, since politics like political science is effortlessly dynamic with changing character, content, course, causes, and challenges there is the predictable need to examine and evaluate human conditions to know whether political, bureaucratic,



technocratic, academic, and other social forces in society and government are problem-solving or not, either conceptually or empirically or both.

From this backdrop, it should be evident enough to students that man, both as a student of political analysis and political actors are characteristically political, in other words, man is a preconceived being; however, students of political analysis are expected to be broadminded, critical, and perceptive else they lose the groundwork of political analysis.

The foregoing background is expected to assist students to appreciate the subject matter, *Introduction to Political Analysis*. This is because, as a very determined academic activity it should naturally begin with what the subject matter is all about towards curiously provoking the question: what is political analysis? An inquisitive question like this does not lend themselves easily like the numerous definitions of politics because of the diversity of individual background, experiences, and perspectives. Notwithstanding, to define and explain what a subject is will provide students what they are to expect, what to study, and the questions to ask, for instance, why political analysis. Thus, in this unit, students will be introduced to the separate conceptions of political and analysis from which they are provided lucid comprehension of the conception of Political Analysis. Bearing in mind that political analysis is integral to the discipline of Political Science students should be able to know the extent to which political analysis is political. Students' knowledge of POL 111 will be of immense advantage to them in comprehending introduction to political analysis, perhaps, a brush up on what is politics is imperative.

Accordingly, the relationship between political science and political analysis will be explored to help provide students with the importance of political analysis. Lastly, and this is significant to students because they need to know the objects and subjects that constitute variables for political analysis which students are expected to do based on substantive and measurable facts or realities.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

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

- Ñ explain the concept of political analysis including the two main concepts
- Ñ discuss the relationship between political science and political analysis
- Ñ examine the dynamic role of the objects and subjects of political analysis.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Concept of Political Analysis**

Allusion was made in the introduction to this unit about the political characteristics of the Garden of Eden. The concept of political is traced to this genealogy as a point of departure for the succeeding political pursuits, interest, occupation, actions, events, and or accomplishments. Without appearing repetitive, it is also important for students to be reminded of power, directives, counter command, interest, decision, choice, consensus, conflicting choice and interest, competing agendas, mutual decision and suspicion, relationship, disciplinary action, etc. all these described the concept political. However, before providing the definition of the concept of political, it is of the essence for students to know that definitions and meaning could be impressionistic if it is done based on the narrow experience, knowledge or conceptualization of the defining authority. This means that definition can either be purely theoretical or empirical or both. This may be due to individual idiosyncrasies, ideological bias, weak knowledge system, etc. But one fact students should know is that the mental and cognitive capability to define concepts is not exclusive to any person or group, authority, race, gender, etc. This is usually the reason for the diversity of definitions and meanings of concepts because of the diversity of thoughts and understanding. Thus, to be broad, the concept political according to Miller (1980) is pervasive and imperative because it relates to issues or discourse that has to do with the public real, that is, concerns that affects the generality of the people including the relationship between states and governments and between government and the people or between institutions. This could mean that the actions and behaviours of government and in relation to the citizens express the concept of political.

From this conceptualisation, you are expected to know that the concept political simply and largely refers to administration or organisation of men and materials to achieve set goals. This usually involves decision making and dealing with the consequences of those decisions expectedly in the best interest of the society or stakeholders. Based on this, you should know that the concept political expresses power relationship between and among persons, groups, institutions, and states.

Elementarily, political implies those persons or groups or institutions that are enthusiastically involved in practical politics from which various strategies are employed and deployed to acquire power. For Abba, Abdullahi, Hamisu, & Alao (2016), even though the concept of political is not different in meaning from that of politics, the former precedes the latter. From this clarification, they defined political as the act of carrying out an action which helps to remarkably function to bring about

anticipated output and outcome that serves the public interest. This action according to them should not be misconstrued as done because it is ethically sanctioned, but because it is done based on the material imperativeness of it. What students should note here is that, whatever is pragmatically achieved, that is, any action that relates to public affairs and is problem-solving without any let or hindrance is conceptualised as political. Basically, all politics is political and whatever is political has some elements of politics. Thus, a good understanding of politics will enable students to know the nature and concept of the political; however, it should be noted that the multiplicity of the meanings of politics may not apply to the concept of the political, except perhaps what constitutes the boundary of the political.

The boundary of politics or what constitute the political cannot be farther from politics as collective decision and action. Miller (2002) states that “politics is the process whereby a group of people, whose opinions or interests are initially divergent, reach collective decisions which are generally regarded as binding on the group and enforced as common policy”. Also, Pitkin (1981) states that “politics is the activity through which relatively large and permanent groups of people determine what they will collectively do, settle how they will live together, and decide their future, to whatever extent that is within their power.” There are two assumptions from this conception of politics as the process by which groups representing divergent interests and values make collective decisions. The first is that all societies must contain diversity, the implication being that people will always have different interests and values, and therefore there will always be a need for a mechanism whereby these different interests and values are reconciled. The second assumption is that scarcity is also an inevitable characteristic of all societies considering that what people seek are not enough; hence, a mechanism whereby these goods can be distributed. Politics would seem, then, in the words of the American political scientist Harold Lasswell (Lasswell, 1951), to be about ‘Who Gets What, When and How?’ However, the issue of value becomes very important as it relates to decisions in terms of what value should be served. Plato and Aristotle, two famous Greek philosophers, were of the opinion that the moral purposes that the decision-makers ought to pursue to realise the public or common good was to ensure the happiness of all men. This happiness was not however defined as the attainment of mere pleasure, but as the conformity of ideas and actions with “perfect goodness”. Thus, Aristotle (1953) wrote that “what the statesmen are most anxious to produce is a moral character in their fellow citizens, namely a disposition of virtue and the performance of virtuous action”.

In the process of collective decision and action comes the need for peaceful resolution; hence, politics as the art of finding peaceful

resolutions to general societal conflicts through compromise and the building of consensus. Bernard Crick (2004) would argue that politics is 'only one possible solution to the problem of order' as a 'great and civilising human activity' associated with admirable values of toleration and respect and fortitude (1962:5). Crick argues that appeasement is most likely to occur when power is widely spread in society so that no one small group can impose its will on others. Politics is a form of rule whereby people act together through institutionalised procedures to resolve differences, to make peace with diverse interests and values and to make public policies in the pursuit of common purposes.

Unfortunately, as he recognises, politics is a rare activity that is too often rejected in favour of violence and suppression. A similar argument was put forward by Gerry Stoker. Stoker (2006:7) argues that politics not only expresses the reality of disagreement and conflict in society but is also 'one of the ways we know of how to address and potentially patch up the disagreements that characterise our societies without recourse to illegitimate coercion or violence.' It might be best to describe the arguments put forward by Crick and Stoker as representing a particular kind of politics, rather than politics *per se*. It is true that conflicts and differences are at the heart of politics, but if we can only talk about politics when agreements are reached and compromises made then it would seem to be very limited activity. In this sense, it is probably sensible to talk of the resort to force and violence and military conflict as politics by another means, as in the famous dictum by the nineteenth-century Prussian military strategist, Carl von Clausewitz (Echevarria, 2007). But, as Stoker himself noted, 'not all politics results in compromise and consensus, and sometimes the conflict is so sharp that violence, civil wars and revolution become political instruments. This is in relation to the circumstances when the relatively orderly pursuit of politics gives way to more chaotic and brutal forms. In effect, therefore, when studying everyday politics, its latent potential to take more violent and dramatic forms should not be forgotten (Stoker, 1995:6-7).

Politics or that which is political has to do the operations of the state where interests, values, and scarcity are managed. However, this explanation of political or politics does not address the problem of the arena of politics let alone the controversy surrounding politics especially as it relates to boundary problems. To this end, it becomes pertinent to ask: Where does politics take place? What is the boundary of political activities? Where does it begin and end? For Leftwich (1984:10), this is the 'single most important factor involved in influencing the way people implicitly or explicitly conceive of politics' or the political. Accordingly, politics is associated with the activities of the state and the public realm where institutions play a fundamental role. The state has traditionally been the centre of much political analysis because it has been regarded as the

highest form of authority in a society. Put in another way, in the words of Max Weber, the state has a 'monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force in enforcing its order within a given territorial area' (Gerth & Mills, 1946:77–8) and such authority, according to Bodin (1955) is tantamount to sovereignty, but not absolutely because the state no longer possesses the monopoly of violence because the people's power has really manifested in challenging the power of the state, for instance, as presently being experienced in the state-wide protest by the American citizens against perceived injustices, inequalities, police brutalities, and racial discriminations in the USA. However, the state is sovereign in the sense that it is the supreme law-making body within a particular territory. In other words, sovereignty means that the state has a general power of lawmaking and of the enforcement of laws.

Without a doubt, it is apparent that the activities of the state are necessary for the study of politics. This is especially so as 'politics encompasses the entire sphere of collective social activity, formal (the legislative, executive, and judicial functions) and informal (within the private realm, especially the realm of the civil society which consists of those nongovernmental institutions such as pressure groups, business organisations, and trade unions which provide linkages between the individual and the state' (Hay: 2002: 3; Leftwich: 1984). Also, the term governance often preferred now to government, reflects this reality by drawing the boundaries of the governmental process much wider to include not just the traditional institutions of government but also the other inputs into decisions affecting society such as the workings of the market and the role of interest groups. This indeed aligns with everyday discourse about politics taking place in business Organizations, town unions, universities, churches, entertainment industry, and even in the family. Secondly, the conception of politics includes the fundamental question with regard to the degree to which politics now exists beyond the state at a higher supranational or international level such as the African Union, European Union, etc. In fact, more than ever before, the focus of politics has begun to shift because in a practical sense we are living in a world which is becoming increasingly interdependent, where the forces of globalisation are placing increasing constraints on what individual 'sovereign' states can do on their own. But let it be said that the distinctiveness of politics lies not in the arena within which it takes place but in 'the emphasis it places on the political aspect (the 'distribution, exercise and consequences of power) of social relations' with institutions and structures which are implicated in the activities of production and reproduction in the life of societies... it is about power; about the forces which influence and reflect its distribution and use; and about the effect of this on resource use and distribution' (Held & Leftwich; 1984).

As a pair off of the concept of political, analysis presupposes that there is a structural or systemic whole which can only be properly comprehended by identifying to understand the parts in relation to the whole at different levels of social formation. Classical philosophers like Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle provided the basis for today's concept of analysis where a given text or concept is sufficiently interrogated by question and answer sessions- in what initially came to be known as the Socratic Dialogue. For Plato, he made effort to distinguish between what is theoretical and practical, abstract and concrete, form and essence, or between appearance and substance, potentiality and actuality, etc. towards a better understanding of political reality (Plato; 1989). Aristotle also takes seriously the concept of analysis when he identified 114 constitutions of the city-states of Athens to arrive at six forms of government- three good and perverted forms each (Aristotle; 1999). These efforts did enable them to delve into complex ideas and issues with the proper articulation of thoughts, unearthing assumptions and clarifying concepts to enable them to get to what they considered as the truth of things towards hard-headed perspective. This is one of the reasons why Aristotle was very much interested in the problems and methods of inquiry through a profound form of reasoning. You therefore should be able to read classical political philosophers to enable you have a good grasp of deductive and inductive analysis because it will expose you to understand cause-effect relationship which is a logical step to policymaking leading to problem-solving including making accurate political forecast and trends.

Following from the preceding, analysis is simply in context the evaluation of a system, project, processes, institutions, structures, etc. to help bring about a realistic, open, and improved understanding of a given state of affairs. The purpose of analysis is primarily to have a logical, coherent, perceptible, and detailed comprehension of political, economic and social realities. In this task, for students to be able to provide a competent and satisfactory review, account of or justification of political conditions and happenings they are expected to have the attitude and aptitude to be fastidiously questioning and importantly to be problem-solving (Abba, Hamisu, & Abdullahi; 2019). The idea behind the need for students to come up with coherent and plausibly constructed analysis is because reality is neither given nor perfect, and this is more so that the Aristotelian Man [political animal] and his thoughts are not free from partisanship. To be exact, what is and what is not are not exactly what they appear to be; secondly, what is claimed to have been done and what exactly was done may be incongruent; and thirdly, sometimes intentions are pass as existential fact. Perhaps, it is because of the befuddled character of political, economic, and socio-cultural existence that it became necessary for students of political analysis to be carefully prudent, forward-looking, imaginative, and of course, investigative in their consideration and conclusions. Thus, in the final analysis, analysis suggests the need for

students of political analysis to go beyond the ordinary, ask questions by digging up, digging around, digging further, and dig in your heels, that is remain persistent but purposeful.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Your own conception of political analysis is it different from the one you just read? Justify.

### **3.2 What is Political Analysis?**

Following from the two separate conceptualisation and understanding of political analysis, it is time to bring the concepts together and make meaning out of it in order to know what it is and why students should take it very seriously. Starting from the simple definition, political analysis is in effect preoccupied with the inquiry or examination of the political processes, including the praxis of politics. One question from this that should be taken seriously is: what is a political process and what constitutes the praxis of politics, and this includes the need to know politics as scenery and as a course of action. Political analysis according to Smith (2009) is an objective and close examination of the political dynamics of a situation or challenge, politicians and other social forces, chemistry of the relations between organs of government and between and among government institutions, and the philosophy of government in existence. Although there are no exhaustive definitions of concepts, considering the fluidity [variability] of political existence, Smith was able to be comprehensive in a generic sense. Taking it in another denotation, political analysis is a process of disaggregation of political actors, the issues they create, and the general policy ecology towards ascertaining and categorising them and how they impact on progress in relation to defined goals including how strategies are developed to realise such purpose (Frederica; 1987). This perspective is necessary because the prevailing environment in context influences the way and manner people perceive, observe, and evaluate politics generally and in specific terms.

For Cornice (1994), political analysis is an organised and professional attempt to comprehend, observe, and evaluate, including explaining all forms of political facts or trend by first breaking them down into conceptual parts to make meaning of the interaction between related variables in order to grasp full knowledge of political elements and their objectives.

Hay (2002) on his part explains that political analysis is not inevitably purposed to proceed on a preferred perspective; in other words, political analysis should not be carried out based on the preconceived thought process that will make analysis to be contradictory to political facts. So,

for him, the analysis of political structures, institutions, ideas, behaviours, and processes, including the underlying forces of change constitute the objects and subjects of political analysis (Hay; 2002). For students to avoid predetermined analysis, a fact-based understanding of empirical political processes including the actions of political actors in the very political processes should be acknowledged as very important. To be precise, political context and political conduct have come to be very useful variables to political analysis because they both provide the exact experience or circumstance for analysis. However, students of political analysis should note that a good and factual analysis of the political or politics requires a good understanding of philosophy, psychology, sociology, economics, history, geography, and culture (Tilley & Goodin; 2011) because of the interconnected nature of political reality and its changing aspects of concepts, ideas, intentions, actions, environment, and trends, after all, they all belong to the social science family tree.

When the German Otto von Bismarck in 1867 defined “politics as the art of the possible”, he was not merely saying that politicians should do what is only possible or to avoid the impossible, he also explained that political analysis is the practical art of the possible. What students should know is that political analysis should not be limited to studying what is possible and what is not possible in politics. Following this, political analysis can be said to mean the study of or investigation into how leaders and or institutions competently and resourcefully plan, bargain, reform, etc. context and conduct towards getting things done (Leftwich; 1984). This means that political analysis should be interested in what is necessary to be done, by which individual or agency, and importantly how to find the resources to make development inclusively measurable and impactful.

### **3.3 What Makes Political Analysis Political?**

Students’ adequate understanding of the concepts and subject matter of political analysis will enable them to know what makes it political. Like political science, one phenomenon that makes political analysis political is the concept and reality of power (Hay; 2002). The political expression of social, economic, cultural, and including political relations is power. Thus, students should bear in mind that a good political analysis emphasises and call to mind the power relations as connected to and in social relation of production, distribution, exchange and consumption. Another political aspect of political analysis is the focus in the making and distribution and exercise of political power, the structures it creates, decisions it makes, the policies it formulates, the laws it enacts, conflicts resolved, consensus reached, reforms carried out, etc. and their broader implications on inequality, unemployment, poverty, underdevelopment, etc. and their associated and opposite realities including the capability to invent new liberating civilisations. Again, what makes political analysis



political is its focus on problem-solving in the final analysis, and this is why it takes seriously effective definition and understanding of problems before relating solutions to them [problems of social life].

Thus, for students that may want to know what makes political analysis political, they should seek to know what constitutes the subject matter of politics, and they will find the answer. This is because, aside politics being the subject of political analysis, the practical nature of politics is political, and for Aristotle, politics is not only political, it is also scientific because it is practical, unlike mathematics; in other words, what is political according to Aristotle is also scientific. Besides, politics as collective decision and action (Weale, 2004; Miller, 2002; Pitkin, 1981; Lasswell, 1951); politics as the peaceful resolution of national, societal or organisational struggles and conflict; politics as functioning and controlling of organised activities of the state; and politics as the inexorable conflict between and among classes and groups, etc. are not only political, they are also the focus of political analysis. Following this, one question students should have in mind is: why did this person or agency or institution do this, and if given promising condition would he have done differently?

### **3.4 Political Science and Political Analysis**

Students are by now very much familiar with the fact that political science is an academic study and an activity much as they have also understood the conceptual definition. Be that as it may, political science is simply the study of how the human community is governed using both normative and scientific principles. As a social science discipline, political science is structurally concerned with the state, government, and politics. As an academic discipline, it is the systematic formulation of theory to explain, describe, analyse and make predictions of political phenomena at the local, state, national, and global levels.

Eason (1965) describe politics science as the study of the authoritative allocation of values. Although, the reality of the state, government, and politics revolve around who gets what, when, and how (Lasswell; 1951), students should be reasoned enough to conceptually know that without production there cannot be allocation let alone the authority to do so or who gets what. Analytically, the allocation cannot precede production, because it is when something tangibly exists that it can be distributed even if the authority to do is there. Thus, production of value which is primarily at the heart of state and government makes it to be important in political science, the more reason it is subject to political analysis. Following this, it is clear to students that political analysis is the evaluation of the subject matter that political science studies; in other words, the latter is incomplete without the former. For instance, how the human community

is governed involves systems, structures, institutions, agencies, policies, context, practices, conduct, etc. and understanding all these requires political inquiry based on facts. Finally, political analysis investigates into public life including power relations which are the subject matter of political science. Students by now should be aware that political science deals with the formulation of theory to explain political condition including making predictions of political behaviour and changes.

### **3.5 Objects and Subjects of Political Analysis**

Political analysis is neither done in a void nor does it investigate emptiness; rather it analyses political subjects and objects. The objects and subjects of political analysis are too numerous to mention them here; however, not to worry, the main ones will be mentioned in this unit. The reason for this is to enable students to know the variables for political analysis of which students are very much familiar with. In all state systems, there are political structures, institutions, systems, processes, behaviour, activities, practices, philosophies, policies, regulations, conditions, legislations, and traditions. There are also dynamic forces as underlying forces, political context and conduct, ideologies, power, power relations, authority, agency, politics, values, traditions, theories, constitution, regimes, governments, etc.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

What is political analysis?

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In this unit, the subject matter of political analysis as an academic discipline and as an activity was discussed within the backdrop of political science. Although no definition is impeccable, an effort was made to ensure that the concept of political analysis is understood by the students. In doing this, the two basic concepts of political and analysis were separately conceptualised to help simplify the subject matter considering that concepts are the building blocks of every academic activity. An effort was also made to provide students with the political nature of political analysis which is no less scientific if Aristotle's position that politics or political is scientific is competent enough to be relied upon, it may be consistent for students to know that political analysis very systematic.

However, it is conclusively suggested here that a preconceived and dogmatic mindset is not good for political analysis in order not to lose sight of adequate comprehension and problem-solving which are some of the goals of political analysis. Students therefore should be creative

enough to be able to know the basics of political systems, including the role of structure, agency, and power in bringing about development.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt the concept of political analysis as conceptualised from various perspectives; however, there is no serious departure from the various conceptions. It points to the fact political analysis is what it is; however, it requires imaginativeness and extra personal effort. The unit also examined the nature of political analysis and the relationship between political science and political analysis. Lastly, the objects and subjects of political analysis were identified.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What is political analysis and how it is different from political science?
2. The State is the major focus of political analysis. Discuss.
3. A preconceived mindset is inconsistent with political analysis. Explain.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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## **UNIT 2 WHY STUDY POLITICAL ANALYSIS: REASON, NATURE, IMPORTANCE, AND TYPES**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Nature and Reasons for Studying Political Analysis
  - 3.2 Importance of Political Analysis
  - 3.3 Types of Political Analysis
    - 3.3.1 Normative Analysis
    - 3.3.2 Empirical Analysis
    - 3.3.3 Conceptual Analysis
    - 3.3.4 Policy Analysis
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In the preceding unit, we examined what political analysis entails by illustrating various conceptions of scholars. Students were also made to know that like politics, political analysis is “the practical art of the possible” if we must make use of Otto von Bismarck’s definition of politics. Therefore, political analysis is not just to study what is feasible and what is assumed to be impracticable, or to study order and disorder, but to know what is responsible for them and how they change over time. It is but to investigate creative ingenuity and resourcefulness of leaders and institutions to be able to know what works and how it works and how they navigate through challenges in times of unusual turbulence. It is against this backdrop that students are made to know the reason, nature, types, and importance of political analysis.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

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

- Ñ examine the nature of and reasons for studying political analysis
- Ñ develop the importance of studying political analysis
- Ñ identify the types and levels of analysis.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Nature and Reasons for Studying Political Analysis**

The nature of politics or the political largely determines the nature of political analysis considering that the latter exists because of the former. However, the former can only be meaningful and properly comprehended and made useful because of the latter. If truly politics or all that are political are inescapable, it presupposes that political analysis must also be an actuality that is constant and inexorable. At no time has anyone actually confessed in the open that he has not been affected- positively or negatively or both by politics irrespective of his participation in the political process; in other words, no political animal except beast and gods as Aristotle would identify, is outside any known political system. If this is a profound fact, it further buttresses the reality that if man truly cannot disregard politics, then he must know what he cannot do without it in a manner that helps to make things clear towards problem-solving. It consequently implies that the ubiquity of politics, the contradictory, competitive, and consensual nature of the relationship between state and citizens, and most especially the tendentious nature of human beings and their ambitions, the taking of decisions for everyone, and the whole gamut of managing disparate interests or the political chemistry between connected variables would have to be adequately comprehended. Following from this, that is, if it guides and useful enough for students, it is sure to say the reasons for studying political analysis according to Osaghae (1988) are as follows:

- i. To know what is important in politics, i.e. those things that influence or determine the outcome of events.
- ii. To know what is valuable, i.e. the difference every political outcome makes to our desires, both individually and collectively; and
- iii. To know what is real or true by systematically subjecting our guesses, impressions, popular belief, even rumours, to verification.

#### **3.2 Importance of Political Analysis**

The nature of the state or any state and the underlying forces which are usually not what they seemingly are fundamental to any form of political analysis. Reality or political reality is not fortuitous, but in most cases develop from the political relationship of concomitant changing circumstances. Political analysis, if anything, contribute immensely to political science as a dynamic discipline because through constant inquiry, the subject matter, theories, and methods, etc. are changing to keep pace with realities and other expressions of developments. Political analysis makes possible the broader and scholarly understanding of the

political world that was hitherto remote, for instance, political boundaries, constituents units, political context (terrain of inquiry or structure) and political conduct (agency) including the relationship between the two and the influence they have on each other (Hay; 2002). Through political analysis students and practitioners have been able to know the ideas that are being held by political actors, the goal of these ideas, and how the ideas influence the political world. In other words, political explanations being provided have been made easier because of the emerging role of behavioural and institutional analysis in terms of changing interpretations of state and society at a time of rapid and continual change.

The study of political analysis is important as an academic study because it enables students and teachers to become more systematic rather than the lazy, random, and convenient approach that allows for a conclusion without verifiable facts. According to Hudson (2018), political analysis is greatly effective because it helps in comprehending the resourceful ingenuity and or manoeuvrings of politicians and other social forces engaging the state or traversing institutions. Consequently, political analysis cannot be less important when it apprehends and diagnose political, economic, and social constraints against what is to be achieved.

Political analysis does not tolerate mental and cognitive lethargy most especially from students of political science because of the need to avoid ideological obsession which confuses reality. The role of power and ideology in public life and in the study of power relations cannot be overemphasised as it forms part of the focus of political analysis. Lastly, Dahl (1991:65) explained that the “pattern of political disagreement, conflict, and coalition have different causes in different political systems” which is plausibly correct, but this is due to the role of political analysis.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Pragmatism takes precedence over ideological dogmatism. Explain the falsity or otherwise of this assertion.

### **3.3 Types of Political Analysis**

Available political science literature informed us that Plato and Aristotle were the founders of the political normative theory and analysis. Plato’s normative theory and analysis were largely contained in his *Plato’s Republic* and *The Laws*. Aristotle’s normative theory and analysis were contained in his *Aristotle’s Politics*; however, he had to combine both the prescriptive and descriptive or classificatory in his later day analysis of political conditions of 148 Constitutions of Athens. However, since this time, not unusual, various philosophers and scholars and writers have expressed their preferences to really confirm the inherent law of diversity

that typifies human and political existence. There are two major types of political analysis, namely, normative and empirical; however, students are expected to know that Political Science began as a normative academic discipline up until when the positivist or empirical social science came up with the idea of making the discipline scientific; hence, the empirical analysis. There are political analyses that provide facts as they are for certain political conditions and of course give reasons for political actions.

Political analysis explains how things are, why they are the way they are, and how they should be to help explain the various types of political analysis. That is to say, there are deductive and inductive logic and descriptive and prescriptive political analysis. In other words, there are descriptive or empirical arguments as well as normative or evaluative arguments by Political Scientists. Certain analyses are done using each of these types, and there are others done with a combination of two or more in a given analysis because no one theory or method of analysis is sufficient for problem-solving analysis. To conclude before we begin, what ought to be or ought not to be and what is or what is not are arguably but certainly joined at the hip.

From the preceding, students need to appreciate the fact that Political Science is not a narrow-minded discipline but one that is broad in perspective, in understanding, and in goal realization. One of the goals of Political Science is to ensure persistent development and safeguarding of the standard of life of the people in a given society or state. But before this, thoughts and beliefs must run through the proponents of normative and empirical types of analysis. As it is said, concepts which are broad principles help to determine perception and behaviour; hence, the need to understand ideas and how they relate to problems- whether philosophical or empirical, and this expectedly gave birth to conceptual analysis to help gain a better understanding. Students may want to know that conceptual analysis arguably preceded normative and empirical analysis or was instantaneously used to arrive at the true meaning of words or ideas in order to arrive at true knowledge and or to ensure that injustice is not done according to the ancient political philosophers- Socrates, etc. This makes the third form of analysis. The goal of Political Science as stated in the preceding is primarily to make human existence powerfully profound and beneficial. To do this entails taking a decision which leads to policymaking, and consequently having a policy as a principled course of action, hitherto proposed and adopted. Since problem-solving with a positive impact is the human life and society is the goal of policy, it becomes necessary that it is properly examined in-depth in this regard; hence, policy analysis as the fourth in this unit.



### 3.3.1 Normative Analysis

As stated in the preceding, the very groundwork of Political Science is first and foremost normative in character and content. This type of political analysis is deeply concerned about value, that is, principles, importance, substance, quality or standard. So, it is concerned with questions like- what is the good life that politics or political activity or leadership can offer? What is best for people that the State can do and the form of government that could make this possible were variously the focus of Plato and Aristotle in the city-state of Athens down to Thomas Hobbes in the 17th century Britain in his *The Leviathan*, and then John Rawls in his 20th-century work in political philosophy- *A Theory of Justice* (see Rawls, 1971). They have all sought to set out what constitutes the 'good life', the kind of society and polity within which it would be desirable for us to live. The normative analysis, therefore, is the mental activity employ to evaluate political phenomena or political condition and subsequently providing reasons as to what is right and wrong, just and unjust, good and bad, desirable and undesirable, and appropriate and inappropriate, etc. This form of analysis investigates and discovers the nature of values and what should be done based on these values. Consistent with this, Pietrzyk-Keeves explained that "values can be seen as the substance of all political systems and political structures. This is largely because values play mediating roles in both prescriptive and descriptive analysis of politics" (2017:175). What this says is that the very foundation of political science as an academic field of study is normative theory. And secondly, the human beings that create conditions for analysis are also normative or value-driven; thus, arguments were provided that based on this inexorable actuality it may be very difficult to separate man from normative judgment no matter the facts before him. What this says really is that, in so far that man is and remain political, whatever he seeks to achieve makes it a normative effort and what is achieved is also normative in character and content because it has goals in sight for realization. Students may want to know if the setting of goals and its pursuit are normative efforts or not.

However, dissatisfied with this perspective, arguments began to emerge that value and fact are independent of each other. This school of thought first in the academia talked so much of 'empirical' political science and 'analytical' political philosophy in which the meaning of concepts and the relation between them were considered of prime importance. In these academic climates, judgment on the kind of society and polity which is the basis of normative analysis was regarded, at best, as unnecessary and at worst, meaningless. A variety of intellectual and practical political reasons were put forward to explain what Peter Lasslett (1956: vii) described as the 'death of political philosophy'. According to Hurka (2009), "the course of normative ethics in the 20th century was a roller-

coaster ride, from a period of skilled and confident theorising in the first third of the century, through a virtual disappearance in the face of various forms of scepticism in the middle third, to a partial revival, though shadowed by remnants of that scepticism, in the final third.” From the growth of what they considered as secularism (Dahl, 1991: 120) leading to the emergence of the positivist theory in the West of which the fundamental principles became widespread, a consensus in the western academia emerged. With the role given to imperialism of knowledge through social science to promote western capitalism, there was much less decline in the use of normative analysis which became evident with the rising profile of positivism- an approach that seeks to apply the scientific methods of the natural sciences to social phenomena (see the language of politics in the preceding unit).

A raging debate which students must take seriously ensued as to the veracity of the claim of the ‘positivist’ political science, which in making a scientific political science what is required is science and not value because there cannot be value in science or science in value. This argument probably to say the least went to the extreme or acted in ignorance of the make-up of human beings. What these schools probably failed to realize which student need to find out for themselves is that man-whether as a scientist or not, is first and foremost normative in nature. Like Ake (1979) said, and which students of political analysis should consider seriously is his proposition that science and the scientist have values, else both would not be problem-solving because solving problem and the problem itself are not detached from value. What the positivists’ political scientist or social scientist argued for is a value-free social science, that is, social science that is neutral, and that anything less, is certainly not science but apologia. For Ake (1979) one of Africa’s foremost Political Economist in one of his masterpieces, *Social Science as Imperialism: A Theory of Political Development*, said that any social science (political science inclusive) without value is neither possible nor desirable. There was also the emergence of new and innovative works of political philosophers, most notably *John Rawls’s A Theory of Justice*, including the role of the decline in consensus politics. With these great works and including other development like the decline of consensus politics, normative political philosophy and analysis began to make a comeback in the 1960s and 1970s. However, as we shall see below, empirical facts can play a part in the resolution of normative questions just as some empirical questions can be resolved by some normative values because empirical science is cannot be devoid of standard.

One argument that has been used against the normative analysis is its assumed inability to predict as claimed by the empirical analysts. However, proponents of normative analysis have argued that there are sets of criterion to qualitatively evaluate normative analysis, for instance, what

is good, best, right, desirable or appropriate, etc. are standards of value for measurement known to responsible minds. According to Osaghae (1988), the standpoints which provide the criteria for evaluating the quality of normative analysis include naturalism, intuition, and non-cognitivism. To take them in turn, the main argument of *naturalism* is that anything that is good (value judgment) which is expected as the true property of man is factual because it has been observed to be true thereby unifying both value and fact. When a reduction in youth unemployment leads to the happiness of the people, it is demonstrably and concretely both value and fact. This was the view of philosophers such as Jeremy Bentham who argued that the reason for the existence of the state is for it (the state) to fulfil “the greatest happiness of the greatest number” as the touchstone to judge states’ performance as a living experience of the people. For *intuition*, the argument is that man is endowed with the capacity to know what is good to which St. Augustine said is possible through the knowledge of Almighty God. The Kantian Moral Law extended this argument by saying that what is good is a categorical moral law (categorical imperative) that all sensible beings which are free from all personal desire and motivation. However, for Plato and Rousseau, to which St. Thomas Aquinas alluded to, goodness is not necessarily known from Almighty God but discoverable through knowledge of the structure of the universe. May be students need to ask: who created the universe including finding out if right and wrong are immanent in man not excluding political animal. Disagreeing with the innate theory, the Non-cognitivist School argued that what is right or wrong, good or bad, and true or false is a function of belief (Dahl, 1976, cf. Osaghae, 1988).

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE:**

Normative analysis is the groundwork of political analysis. Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer.

### **3.3.2 Empirical Analysis**

The second type of analysis common to politics is the empirical analysis like the empirical political theory imported from the natural sciences. The natural sciences seek to identify observable phenomena and provide an explanation by formulating and testing of hypothesis through experimentation towards establishing what is, rather than what ought to be. For the so-called positivist political scientists and analysts, analysis of political phenomena should be done in a manner that is neutral and value-free as it were in the natural sciences. The theory of empiricism is that knowledge is primarily received through experience by means of using the five senses. This was known as the ‘behavioural’ revolution in which quantification, particularly in relation to the study of electoral behaviour, ironically became the standard or norm as propagated by the Princeton

and the Chicago schools in the United States of America in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. The major argument of the empirical political analysis is that fact and not value is the basis not only for knowledge but also for analysis as explained in the preceding. It is on this strength of conviction that the comparative method of analysis of political institutions and processes became very popular as an element of the empirical approach. To be clear, the approach is a not new one because it was used by Aristotle in his comparative analysis of various constitutions in the city-state of Athens. However, the difference is that, while Aristotle honestly acknowledged that both normative and empirical analysis [value and fact] are important for understanding political phenomena, the Behaviouralists rather insisted that value has no place in this regard. Thus, what the empirical political scientists ended up doing is exactly what Aristotle did-comparative politics and this marked the study of political institutions and processes using the comparative method.

When political scientists seek to develop testable generalisations by examining political phenomena across different political systems or historically within the same political system, they are carrying out comparative political analysis which aids in understanding and identifying those characteristics which may be universal to the political process, regardless of time or place. The proposition that democracy requires free market and private ownership, or electoral systems, using a form of proportional representation tending towards producing political and economic instability can be tested by comparing different regimes and the use of alternatives to first-past-the-post system respectively. By adopting the comparative approach, new fields of research are developed, like the comparative studies of political elites, political violence, political corruption, political parties, political culture, etc. in two countries or more. By and large, the quality of the empirical analysis depends on its explanatory and predictive power and the quality will be determined by how true the predictions prove to be. To this extent, “empirical analysis falls short of what we want from it if it leads to expectations about the future that are falsified by events” (Dahl, 1976 cf. Osaghae, 1988).

However, we need to recognize the unpredictable nature of man and society because oftentimes, predictions which will otherwise be correct may turn out to be false because human conditions and dispositions have changed. Because of this, much of the predictive knowledge used in making political decisions is in the absence of total information, probabilistic statements or at a low level of reliability. Nevertheless, the quality of empirical analysis continues to be important because, as much as possible we seek to capture the real world as it exists (Osaghae, 1988).

Students should note that the empirical analysis of politics is divided into deductive reasoning and inductive reasoning- general to particular and vice versa respectively.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Empirical analysis cannot be done without a normative analyst. Discuss.

### **3.3.3 Conceptual Analysis**

The third type of analysis commonly used in political science and in politics is called conceptual analysis, a form of analysis concerned with the clarification of concepts. Concepts, as we know, are fundamental building blocks of thoughts and beliefs, and to effectively relate them to problems require a good understanding of their supposed [nominal] and contextual [circumstantial] meanings. Conceptual analysis is the dissection of concepts into their different structural parts or configurations to get hold of knowledge or to better comprehend given issue, perspective, ideology, or problem. Conceptual analysis plays an important function in political studies because when events occur or actions take place various concepts are used to convey ideas, programmes, projects, policies. These concepts may not convey one meaning owing to the diversity of human-created knowledge, context, interest, persuasion, perspective, prospect, feelings, consciousness, impression, problem, etc. For this purpose, an understanding should be generated to expand knowledge in and of the subject area including distinguishing terms in order to adequately relate the concept to philosophical problems. For instance, many of the concepts used in politics like power, influence, legitimacy, democracy, freedom, development, underdevelopment, corruption, anti-corruption, including politics and what is political itself, have no commonly accepted definitions and, indeed, have been described as 'essentially contested concepts' (Gallie; 1956). In effect, providing definition and conceptualising meanings are therefore crucial starting point in any political analysis, after all, and students are expected to know, the social science of which political science is a genre is a minefield of purposeful debate.

Osaghae (1988) made effort to simplify the two ways of carrying out conceptual/semantic analysis. First, a term or concept can be defined by appealing to an Authority whose definition is purported to be widely accepted, or by relying on definitions offered in Standard English or Technical Dictionaries called nominal definition. Second, in the case of concepts like democracy, freedom, or equality which are often coloured by ideological considerations, we can devise certain "objective" indices according to which they can be defined, and insist that they mean exactly what we want them to mean, and is called "operationalisation" of

concepts. For instance, freedom may be defined to mean a very low degree of government intervention in the lives of individuals ascertained by indices like guaranteed human right or not, suppression of opposition or not, or prevalence of rule of law or not, etc. The major advantage in this kind of definition is that even if people do not agree with your definition, they can at least see things from your point of view. In essence, either of the two ways of semantic analysis one may choose, would obviously depend on the nature of what one intends to analyse, be it what is already known or the particular elements one wishes to emphasise. Having said this, students must understand that anything conceptual is an intellectual or theoretical task where the differences between meanings have to be comprehended, and importantly, concepts used in a given condition must be made to relate to the reality or truth of that moment. As students of political analysis with the responsibility to analyse events, conditions, and or policies as they unfold in the polity, a conclusion drawn should be consistently clear. Thus, require conceptual skills and intelligence in order to know that certain definitions can be impressionistic, that is, ill-defined or undetailed and certain conceptualization or operationalisation could be ideologically narrow-minded which may not be problem-solving. On the whole, students of political analysis need not imprison their minds or become unsuspecting when it comes to conceptual analysis.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Impressionable minds may not make a good conceptual analysis. Do you agree? Discursively explain.

#### **3.3.4 Policy Analysis**

Policy analysis is a process of recognising conceivable policy choices that could help to deal with existing problems and probably evaluate the choices so made in relation to the most effectual and practicable ones. It can also mean the evaluation of already formulated, adopted, and implemented a course of action envisioned to solve given socio-economic and political problems. From these two explanations of policy analysis, students may wish to know that one major purpose of policy analysis is to painstakingly identify and solve societal, governmental, or organisational challenges by way of scrutinising or deliberating on the arguments for and against, if any, related to the policy at hand including the implementation. Thus, students should note that good policy analysis should be able to provide concrete and detailed facts with specific data that are accurate and straightforward about the extent of the impact in order to help predict the consequences of alternative policies. Again, such analysis should also be able to state how policies or course of action will take society or government from the present state to that which is

desirable because expectedly policies are solutions. It should be noted that whenever there is a crisis, there may not be one possible solution, and if so, there will more than one policy choice. For example, if final effort must be made to end Boko Haram insurgency, there may be many policy options, namely, the Military option, social justice option, inclusive but accelerated development of the region, and anti-corruption and good governance, etc. How each of these options will help bring an end to the insurgency would depend on many considerations: the perception and definition of the problem, how the goal is defined, the relative costs and benefits of each option, the relation of the problem to the solution, and the practicability of each option, etc. For instance, if the insurgency is largely perceived as a national security problem, the military option will be handy while also taking note of the cost implications and civilian casualties; if as a developmental problem, then accelerating the development of the region will be the material option; if the problem is perceived as social injustice and corruption issue, then the pursuit of social justice, anti-corruption and good governance will be high priority.

Students should be conscious of the fact that decision-making always involves the choice of alternative from a series of competing alternatives. Some decisions which affect public policy actions are basic while others are largely routines and are made by officials in the day-to-day application of public policy. From the foregoing, students should note that policymaking is a complex activity involving a pattern of action, extending over time and involving many decisions. A policy is not synonymous with a single decision but a course of action involving series of distinct stages which has been referred to as the policy cycle (Sambo; 1999), otherwise called the policy process. The policy process is characterized by distinct stages which include agenda setting, formulation, adoption, implementation and evaluation. What follows is the policy agenda which is the list of subjects or problems to which government officials and people outside of government closely associated with those officials pay serious attention at any given time. Agenda setting refers to the stage in the policy process when officials attempt to narrow the number of subjects which come to their attention. The policy formulation stage is the stage at which the alternatives for dealing with a public problem are developed. The policy adoption stage is the stage when an authoritative choice among specified alternatives is made by governmental officials. At the implementation stage, administrators carry out policies that have been adopted by formal political office-holders. Finally, during the evaluation stage of the policy process, the concern is with the estimation and appraisal of policy, including its content and implementation. Policy outcomes which complete the policy cycle are the consequences for society-intended or unintended, that flow from action or inaction of the government, and this tells a lot the impact of public policies, whether they meet the original goals that led to the enactment.

On the whole, in policy analysis, students should be able to identify the various actors in the policy process, namely, elected and appointed officials, academics, consultants, investors, businessmen, pressure groups, etc., and the various roles they play.

Following from the preceding, students should be mindful of the fact that normative, empirical, conceptual, and policy analyses are practically interdependent, in other words, they are or can be mutually functional and beneficial in a given analysis. As Wolff (1996:3) succinctly points out, 'studying how things help to explain how things can be, and studying how they can be is indispensable for assessing how they ought to be'. Studying how things ought to be in turn is important in their actual applicability or implementation. Thus, in the first place, normative claims are, at least partly, based on empirical knowledge. In other words, the normative analysis itself requires prior empirical knowledge: to know what ought to be, we require knowing what is. Conversely, a great deal of empirical analysis presupposes some normative assumptions and can be seen in the particular choice of investigation. Policy analysis makes use of both empirical and normative analysis because, in a sense, it attempts to bridge the gap between what is and what ought to be. Furthermore, normative assumptions provide the starting point and criteria for evaluating policies. Further, underlying all analysis is, of course, semantic analysis, without which few analyses cannot be made (Osaghae, 1988).

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

The different types of political analysis are not mutually exclusive. Discuss how interconnected they are to competent political analysis.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In this unit, we examined the reasons for studying political analysis, among which are to know what is significant and what is true or factual, and subsequently resolved that this has come to stay because of its importance. Students were also made to know that the nature of political analysis is determined by the nature of politics or the political. Following this, four types of political analysis were identified and examined with the conclusion that, while each of them can be independently used for analysis, a robust political analysis will require a combination of two or more, if not all, in a given analysis. Decisively, it means that the four types of political analysis identified and explained are usefully interactive, that is, not mutually exclusive in analysis. In summative, values, facts, policies, and intellectual clarity are interweaved for competent political analysis as each is dependent on the other as explained in the preceding section.



## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt the reasons for studying political analysis, including nature, importance of political analysis. You have also learnt the four different types of political analysis, including how they are discrete but mutually reinforcing.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Political analysis is a necessary desideratum because of the inescapable need to know what interminably goes on around you. Discuss.
2. The types of political analysis reciprocally strengthen one another. Explain.
3. What is empirical or scientific can be partly determined by value because the scientist or the positivist is a normative being. Discuss.

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## **UNIT 3      CONCEPT AND TOOLS FOR POLITICAL ANALYSIS**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 What is Concept
  - 3.2 Concepts in Political Science for Political Analysis
  - 3.3 Conceptual Framework and Political Analysis
  - 3.4 Tools for Political Analysis
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this unit you are expected to know the broad meaning of concept and the specific because many concepts will be used in the course of political analysis; hence, the need to know what concept itself entails because it weighs heavily on language. As an introductory course, it is necessary for you to know what a concept is and why its understanding is necessary in political analysis so as not to confuse it with term, word, or phrase. You should note that in the course of political analysis within and outside classrooms you will meet or be confronted with so many concepts which, of course, you are expected to know their nominal and contextual meanings and how to usefully apply them in political analysis. Although concepts are dynamic like political analysis itself, you will be introduced to concepts that are long-established in political science while also making effort not to take concepts for granted. you will also be introduced to the conceptual framework and its useful relation to political analysis including the tools for political analysis.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

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

- Ñ explain the meaning of concept and the relevance to political analysis
- Ñ discuss the meaning and purpose of conceptual framework in relation to political analysis
- Ñ identify and apply the tools for political analysis
- Ñ develop a conceptual framework for political inquiry.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 What is Concept

Concept alluded to in the preceding are necessary building blocks of thoughts, beliefs, knowledge or action, and to effectively relate them to reality, condition, problems, solution, or analysis, etc. require a good understanding of their supposed and contextual meanings. Concepts function as an intellectual construct or generalisation used as representative of the category of objects, preoccupation, idea, phenomenon, occurrences, etc. In other words, concepts are the founding purpose, plan, belief, impression or idea behind a given reality like a decision, policy, etc. As a perceptual illustration or exemplification, students are expected to know that concepts provide a preliminary or exploratory idea of how reality is or should be. As explained by Deleuze and Guattari (2017), concept is not given but created or emerges during the process of conceptualization; that is, the process of arriving at generalisation based on what has been perceived, experienced, and or believed. For Ophir (1999), “a concept is a unit of mental representation, a linguistic-perceptual capacity”; and for Margolis and Laurence (1999), concept is an “objective sense”. One thing students may wish to appreciate from these perspectives is that concepts may be defined, but the functions of definition and concept are very well different because concept is broader than definition or even definition of terms. However, in specific, the endeavour to define or provide a definition like the definition of concept is a feature of the nature of the conceptual inquiry, yet conceptual inquiry including its understanding is very significant to political analysis.

Following from the preceding, concepts are not to be taken for granted by students in the process of political analysis because of the responsibility it places on them to create or reconceptualise where and when necessary rather than perceiving it as given. For instance, when concept is treated or used as theoretically given in the process of political analysis, there is the higher possibility that the concept may not be a manifestation of practical reality probably because a concept has been made equivalent to a term whose meaning is very limited. Immanuel Kant (2002) grasped this succinctly well when he said that a concept is a precedent or configuration that allows for the recognition of what appears before us as-what-it-is when it appears. It is important therefore for students of political analysis to know the distinction between a term and a concept. For sure, a term can become or graduate into a concept but a term is specific while concept has a broader view of reality. In this regard, a concept like democracy or people’s sovereignty is likely to become empty when separated from the way it is used daily by most people through a process of apprehending it, reflecting on and deliberating about its exact meaning in relation to

reality, and making it clearer from the point of material facts of what they have done or has been done with them. In this 21<sup>st</sup> century, so many talks of democracy, rule of law, separation of power, accountability, change, etc. as if they know what they are saying or they have already happened. Based on this, concept no doubt is a feature or component of the cognitive system; however, concepts become very important to political analysis when what precisely happened is known. Before students read more, they need to know as Foucault (1972) said that a concept is a standard of discursive, broad, or conversational endeavour, activity or action. As you [students] read more of the importance of concepts to political analysis you will get to know that space, context, circumstance, condition, etc. in relation to places, objects, subjects, and methods are significant to understanding the meaning and role of concepts. Like politics, concepts could be political. Concepts are both abstract and concrete and they both assist in the clear assessment and explanation of the political world.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Explain the meaning of concept in relation to the concept of state and democracy in Nigeria.

## **3.2 Concepts in Political Science for Political Analysis**

Many concepts in political science are relevant for political analysis, among these as identified by Apter (1977) includes generalisation, hypothesis, theories, variables [independent and dependent], categorisation, validation, models, deduction, induction, method paradigm, prediction, falsification, etc. Meanwhile, students are expected to know that they have come across these concepts in their POL 101 when they dealt with “Is Political Science a science”. Furthermore, other concepts in political science inexorably feature in political analysis. These include state, nation, government, citizen, power, authority, progress, development, growth, rule of law, democracy, representation, rule, order, separation of power, constitution, legitimacy, accountability and transparency, good governance, conflict, consensus, compromise, legal and political sovereignty, political conduct, political context, ideology, idea, reality, etc. Thus, students need to know the conceptual and practical or concrete meaning of concepts to help understand the prevailing reality, its existence or otherwise to help them to make meaning of social existence. You should know therefore that analysis in this context cannot be profoundly done without adequate and informed comprehension of concepts in their relatedness and relevance.

## **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Identify some concepts that are important in the course of research in political analysis.

### **3.3 Conceptual Framework and Political Analysis**

There is a great deal of relationship between conceptual framework and political analysis which you are expected to know and work with in the course of your conceptual and experiential efforts at political analysis. To begin with, a conceptual framework is, first of all, a methodical tool that is concerned with more than a few ideas, contexts, disparities [distinctions], adaptations, etc. Essentially, the conceptual framework provides distinguishing features that help in the organization and synthesis of ideas in relation to a given reality, and by so doing help to suitably explain as to why a given political analysis is very significant. Owing to this, you [students] are expected to know that in the course of political analysis, a conceptual framework will help to make possible adequate comprehension of the system of ideas in simple terms. With this, students will not only grasp the fundamental principles of a conceptual framework but will also be assisted in developing a framework of analysis based on a given hypothesis, model or theory. For instance, when you are prepared to carry out a political analysis an action plan is required to work out the basic steps or activity during your attempt at political research or analysis. However, this may not be effectively achieved without a clearly defined conceptual framework that takes seriously a good understanding and identification of the dependent, independent, and intervening variables in a given reality. Moreover, this effort will help you to effectively relate cause and effect and problem to solution and of course arriving at generalisation based on the tangible and intangible phenomenon seen, experienced and or believed. Without a good conceptual framework, it may be difficult for you [future political analyst] to make accurate projections and comprehend political development or trends.

## **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

A conceptual framework is at the heart of political analysis. Discuss.

### **3.4 Tools for Political Analysis**

Students may want to ask of the reason for tools for political analysis. First, the conceptual framework discussed above is a tool for political analysis, but it is broader in scope because it is an action plan or a blueprint for political analysis. In other words, the specific tools for political analysis that are required for in-depth and accurate political

inquiries are many, among them are as follows: power analysis, stakeholder analysis, force-field analysis, political mapping, network analysis, and drivers of change analysis (Brinkerhoff; 2009:1183-4). Respectively, and based on these tools, students are expected to know how power determine formulation of rules, setting of policy agenda, structure, distribution of resources, access to welfare and justice, whose interest and values dominates policy, the role of formal and informal forces, etc.; know whose interest should be taken care of when formulating and implementing policies or programs based on data collected and analyzed; know the factors and underlying forces that makes goal realization possible and difficult; know the governmental borderline of a nation, region, city, state, LGA, etc. for purpose of proper differentiation and ease of location for governmental activities, collection of data, etc.; know the drive and interest that determines political influences among political actors- individuals, groups, and institutions; and to know the open and underlying social forces- internal and external that brings about change to a nation, organization, etc. like the role of regulation, technology, reforms, etc. Students should note that all these tools are part of the conceptual framework that enables a good understanding of ideas and context before political analysis is undertaken.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

How interrelated are the tools for political analysis and are they mutually exclusive in a given political analysis?

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The unit discusses concept and tools for political analysis. Various meanings of concept and its importance to political analysis were highlighted. The aggregate perception is that concept like politics and political analysis is not static, but dynamic in time and space. There is a tendency for students to conflate concepts with terms; however, there is a huge difference between the two, although the term can graduate into concept as the former is broader in scope and meaning than the latter. Aside, concept has a broader view of reality because of its conversational endeavour to understand reality. It is suggested that concepts should not be taken for granted because concepts may not be the reality that it is intended to manifest- that is, what you see may not be exactly what it claims. In other words, concepts can be made to remain abstract or concrete in any political system based on the political context, circumstance, condition, etc. in relation to places, objects, subjects, and methods. As variables for political analysis, various concepts were identified- from the abstract to those that are required for competent political analysis. However, to achieve this, conceptual framework and tools for political analysis would have to be employed to help in the

organization and synthesis of ideas in relation to reality. But this requires an action plan call conceptual framework in a broader sense, and of course, specific tools for political analysis.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, concept and tools for political analysis were discussed. You were made to understand the meaning of concept and how it is important to political analysis. Consequently, students were introduced to some concepts that they were already familiar with right from their first year in POL 101. To make a good political analysis, students were also made to know that conceptual framework and tools of analysis must be taken seriously because the former constitute the action plan and while the latter help to bring out the specific guidance and facts for political analysis.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. The significance of understanding the role of concepts in political analysis cannot be ignored. Discuss.
2. Without a good knowledge of conceptual framework and tools, political analysis will be found wanting. Do you agree?
3. Concept like politics and political analysis can be very dynamic. Discuss this in relation to the abstract and concrete nature of democracy.

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## **UNIT 4      SCOPE      AND      LIMITS      OF      POLITICAL ANALYSIS**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0    Introduction
- 2.0    Objectives
- 3.0    Main Content
  - 3.1    Scope of Political Analysis
  - 3.2    Limits of Political Analysis
  - 3.3    The Role of Interdisciplinary Perspective to Political Analysis
- 4.0    Conclusion
- 5.0    Summary
- 6.0    Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0    References/Further Reading

### **1.0    INTRODUCTION**

Every subject has scope and limits, that is, the area of coverage and the boundary, so too is political analysis, a sub-discipline of political science. It is obviously elementary to say that the nature and character of a subject are most likely to determine its purview or range. Considering the ubiquity of politics and political life including its interconnectedness to social and economic realities, it is expected that analysis of the political would, of course, be broader than expected. Thus, with the scope of political science being very broad- encompassing political theory, public administration, political economy, international relations and politics, comparative politics, and public law, it may be expected that the scope of political analysis is indeed expansive. This by no means implies that political analysis has no limits; after all, political science itself has limits, and secondly, anything or subject that has a scope is routinely limited. These are the first thing you are expected to be familiar with in this unit.

### **2.0    OBJECTIVES**

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

- Ñ    explain the scope and limits of political analysis
- Ñ    discuss the interconnected nature and relevance of other disciplines to political analysis.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Scope of Political Analysis**

Everybody, political animal as Aristotle would call it, is bounded within a political system; in other words, no person is outside the scope of a state, society, or any given political system- a system where decisions are made, whether at the micro or macro, rural or urban, local or international, etc. or by government, association- small or big, corporation, etc. or not. At the heart of any given political system is the power to make decisions to ensure the progress of people and society. The scope of political analysis is indeed broad because of the inexorable nature of politics and its consequences (Dahl; 1997) on mankind, the more reason why it must be analysed- that is, breaking down into parts towards studying and comprehending the complexities not just of the parts but of the whole (Wilmot; 1985) to making reality palpable in relation to making better choices. Students are expected to know that the broad nature of politics and political science consequently determine the scope of political analysis. Political analysis like political science is descriptive and prescriptive, and in the process defines and illustrates and evaluates the nature of political power, the character of power holders, the relationship between political conduct and political context, and the outcome of the use of power. It also investigates into political ideas/ideologies, interest, behaviour, economic and social activities, constitution, policies, laws, conflicts, war, peace, developments, etc. On a general perspective, like political science, students of political analysis are expected to analyse political theories, public administrations, public policy, comparative politics, international relations and politics, and public law.

#### **3.2 Limits of Political Analysis: Political Power**

As stated in the introduction, the very boundary of political analysis is first of all its limits. Following the nature of political analysis, it is not more than to adequately comprehend political reality- the consequences of political power towards ideas and actions that are problem-solving on a dynamic but consistent basis. As students are already familiar with the fact that the subject matter of political analysis is political power, it is significant that it is not enough to know the nature of political power, but very importantly its dynamics and progression through time and ages. Another limit of political analysis that students should take seriously is that, it is regulated to carry out analyses that are politically feasible and politically desirable, and not to follow these two principles is to go against the goal of political analysis- that is, provide a problem-solving framework, advance political methodology, and exploration of fact. For instance, it is not feasible to analyze how well a government performs without some yardstick for performance evaluation and baseline for

comparison in relation to another government. Furthermore, the nature of political analysis is in most cases determined by the nature and character of politics, and this is more so because political analysis cannot take place outside of politics. Last but certainly not the least, political analysis is expected not to cross into the terrain of dogmatism as both are diametrically opposed. In simple terms, it is very true that values, as explained by Pietrzyk-reeves (2016), is one of the constituents of political systems and structures because of the intervening role it plays in both prescriptive and descriptive analysis of politics; however, political analysis, if it must be developmental, would have to be subjectively objective or objectively subjective.

### **3.3 The Role of Interdisciplinary Perspectives to Political Analysis**

Political analysis as students are getting to be at home with is like politics, if anything, at least within the context of development, politics- the leadership and management of the critical affairs of both state and society is a strong factor in the determination of many things social, economic, legal, cultural, etc. Considering the multidisciplinary nature and character of reality students are expected to be in touch with history, sociology, economics, law, etc. as necessary incentives for political analysis. Thus, within the scope and limits of political analysis, students are expected to have some grasp of analysis of political history, political sociology analysis, political economy analysis, political discourse analysis, public policy analysis, etc. to help enrich their understanding of political analysis. For instance, political discourse analysis focuses on political budgets, debates, speeches, hearings, panels, campaigns, promises, etc. (Fairclough and Fairclough; 2012). Political economy analysis on its own emphasizes how politics and economics interact and strengthen each other to bring about the expected development. Thus, how political power is used within the national political processes including the competition between and among various interest groups, factions, etc., for economic resources are significant to how public goods needed for development are acquired. The significance of both formal and informal institutions and many other underlying social forces are the perspective of the political economy analysis that students of political analysis are expected to know.

In other words, the struggle for power and resources between state and society actors help to provide an analytical explanation of how society ensures order and progress. For instance, without political economy analysis, it may be difficult to comprehend the intricate client-patron social relations, rent-seeking, political settlement, or moral hazard, and the interests that manipulate the actors in the relationship and its impact on development including those of politicians and investors. Thus,

historical processes, structural forces and how political institutions shape economic consequences.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Political analysis is enriched with multidisciplinary approaches. Discuss.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In an introductory course like this, it is significant for students to know the scope and limits of the course to enable them to know what it entails and prepares their minds towards it. There is no doubt that political science is broad and since political analysis is ancillary to it, it follows that its scope is also broad because it is expected to provide analysis of both theories and practice. This unit is very important because it provides the areas that students are expected to explore including the parameters of the study, the depth, breadth, etc. In this respect, political theory, public administration, public policy, political economy, international relation and politics, etc. from within the scope of the course. Considering the multidisciplinary nature of reality, an interdisciplinary perspective is included to help enrich students understanding of introductory political analysis.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

The unit briefly but perceptively examined the scope and limits of political analysis to enable introductory you know the depth and boundary of the course. Thus, the scope and limits of political analysis were explained, including the interdisciplinary nature of the course. Importantly, students are made to know and take seriously that political analysis is diametrically opposed to dogmatism; hence, the need for them to be subjectively objective or objectively subjective.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. Exploration of fact and problem-solving framework are important elements within the scope of political analysis. Provide a succinct explanation.
2. The interdisciplinary perspective will help to enrich your knowledge and hone your skills of political analysis. Discuss.
3. Dogmatism has no place within the scope and limits of political analysis. Discursively agree or disagree.

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## **MODULE 2      APPROACHES      TO      POLITICAL ANALYSIS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This Module 2 examines approaches to political analysis towards helping to comprehend, examine, evaluate, and explain political reality in order to make sense of out of them. That is, political analysis is practically done by using theoretical approaches and perspectives to analyse structures, institutions, processes, and political action. This is important because political realities are too diverse; hence they require theories to examine and analyse state and economy more competently. This effort covers five units.

Unit 1	Traditional Approaches
Unit 2	The Behavioural Approach
Unit 3	Approaches to the Study of Political Systems: systems Approach and Structural – Functionalist Approach
Unit 4	Political Processes Approaches: Class Approach, pluralism (Groups Approach), and Elite Approach
Unit 5	Rational Choice Approach

### **UNIT 1      TRADITIONAL APPROACHES**

#### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Normative Approach
  - 3.2 The Institutional Approaches
  - 3.3 Features of the Classical Institutional Approach
  - 3.4 Varieties of Institutionalism
  - 3.5 Criticism of the Traditional Approaches
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In Unit 1 of Module 1, we learnt that political analysis as a sub-discipline is as broad and as diverse as its parent political science. The diversity of a social science discipline like political science shouldn't be of a surprise because man and power which are the subject matter of political science

and analysis are even more diverse. In politics as well as other human endeavours, there are diversities of individual backgrounds, experiences, challenges, expectations, and ideological biases. There are also differing knowledge systems, understanding and thoughts characterising political dynamics and fluidity of political, social, cultural, and economic existence. Thus, it is not surprising that Gerry Stoker and David Marsh (2002:3) reiterated about the 'many distinct approaches and ways of undertaking political science' that is already a minefield of organizing systems or approaches. Following this, it is also expected that Political Scientists display deep conflicts over appropriate assumptions, foci and methods of analysis, and they offer hypotheses and theories that directly contradict one another with different analyses even when they describe the same phenomenon; in other words, they observe the world in different ways (Zuckerman, 1991:13). However, let it be said that irrespective of the diversity of approaches which is not inconsistent, the purpose of political analysis like political science is clear; hence, students should lose sight of this.

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

By the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- Ñ discuss the normative approach to the study of politics
- Ñ examine the institutional approaches to the study of politics, its features, and the varieties of institutionalism or the institutional approach
- Ñ state the criticism of the traditional approaches.

## **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

### **3.1 Normative Approach**

Let us begin by saying that the foundation of Political Science let alone Political Analysis is normative. Normative political approach is concerned with the discovery and application of moral notions in the sphere of political relations and practice (Stoker, 1995) as it deals with the inquiry into the problems of man and society. For Leo Strauss, "it is the attempt to know both the nature of political things and the right or the good political conduct (through) critical and coherent analysis" (Strauss, 1969). This has been the preoccupation of early political philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle and modern political philosophers such as Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mills. The subject matter of the normative approach has principally remained the state- its evolution, organisation and purpose.



Accordingly, normative political thinkers seek answers to questions such as: What is the state and who should preside over the affairs of the state? What is political obligation and why should the state be obeyed? What ends should the state serve and how can it be structured to achieve these ends? What are the proper limits on state authority and when citizens refuse to obey it? How should the state relate to other organisations in society? What is justice and how best can it be guaranteed? What is the essence of liberty and equity? Where is sovereignty to be located? What makes political power and its exercise legitimate? What is a political representation and who has the right to present others? What is political participation and to what extent should ordinary citizens be entitled to participate in the decision-making processes of government? Answers to these and similar questions are based on ethical and political values that are regarded as essential for the good citizen and a just state and not necessarily on empirical analysis. Consequently, the normative political approach has been described as the least scientific sub-discipline of political science. However, it is important for students of political analysis to know that any human endeavour has a goal and irrespective of how the goal is achieved- empirical or otherwise, cannot deny its normative character and content, namely, value, principles, rules, importance, substance, quality, standard, and goal as fact.

### **3.2 Institutional Approach**

The institutional approach to the study of the political process is concerned with the rules, procedures and formal organisations of the political system and their impact on political practice (Stoker, 1995). Historically, the strength of the institutional approach in political science reflects the influence of law, philosophy and historical studies in its development as an autonomous field of study. The study of political institutions is central to the identity of the discipline of political science. Eckstein (1963:10-11) points out that “political science emerged . . . as a separate autonomous field of study divorced from philosophy, political economy, and even sociology [which] may have created a tendency to emphasise the study of formal-legal arrangements”. If there is any subject matter at all that political scientists can claim exclusively to be their own, that is, a subject matter that does not require the acquisition of the analytical tools of sister fields and can sustain their claim of autonomous existence, it is, of course, formal-legal political structure- institution. One major argument of the institutional approach is that the deductive approach which the normative approach value much is unscientific. What this perspective has actually led to and encouraged is the much emphasis or premium place on institutions at the expense of the individuals. Another consequence in the use of the institutional approach is that it has encouraged the practice where it is institutions that fail and individuals

that occupy them, a reality that has not encouraged individual accountability.

### **3.3 Features of the Classical Institutional Approach**

According to Stoker (1995: 43), the traditional or classical institutional approach has the following features: descriptive–inductive, formal–legal, historical–comparative, and political values. The position of the descriptive-inductive is what Easton (1971) would call “hyper-factualism” or “reverence for facts”. According to Landau (1979:133), “fact stood paramount” in the institutional approach; hence, it underscores the primary characteristic of the institutional approach. Stoker (1995), in corroboration, said that the great virtue of institutions was that they “seem to be factual, concrete, pointed to, observed, touched, and examined for their operations. Institutions, as he said, could also be “more logical, more natural than to turn to the concreteness of institutions, the facts of their existence, the character of their actions and the exercise of their power (Landau; 1979:181 cf. Stoker, 1995).

This fact which is so much talked about according to the classical institutionalists comes only from the practice of induction. Induction is the practice of inferring generalisations from past occurrences which then shape expectations for the future. Induction has been defined as “the process by which the scientist forms a theory to explain the observed facts” (Kemeny; 1959:53). It is an extrapolation from the past to the future in the expectation that the future will continue to behave in the same manner as in the past. Induction starts with an empirical observation from which explanatory generalisation of institutions, the facts of their existence, the character of their actions and the exercise of their power (Landau, 1979:181 cf. Stoker, 1995). The key points are that the study of political institutions displays a preference for “letting the facts speak for themselves matched by its distaste for theory, especially modern social and political, which was seen as secondary - even dangerous” (Landau, 1979, cf. Stoker, 1995).

Another feature of the classical institutional approach is the formal legal inquiry which involves the study of public law and of formal government. While the first involves rule of law and its principles as propounded by A.V. Dicey, there is also the legal protection as contained in the Constitution, legal remedies, and the study of constitutional structure. In all of these, normative questions like how are constitutions made? The Constitutional structure seeks to ask the questions: How are constitutions made? What type of constitution should a country adopt? Should it be written or unwritten? Should it be federal, unitary, or confederal? What is the procedure for the amendment of the constitution? Should it be rigid or flexible? How are conflicts between the various branches of government–

legislature, executive, and judicial—resolved? What are the sources of the constitution? What sources should be given preeminent consideration in framing the constitution? How do constitutions affect the operation of government, and how do the operations of government affect the development of the constitution? What are the rights of citizens under the law?

A key element of the institutional approach is the historical-comparative method. Here, political analyst seeks to develop testable generalisations by examining political phenomena across different political systems or historically within the same political system. Thus, in carrying out a comparative analysis, political scientists examine the history, especially the evolution of the institutions they are studying. The origins of the comparative approach can be traced to Aristotle's classification of governments based on the governments of 158 Greek city-states. Aristotle distinguished governments by one, few and the many. In each category, rulers could govern in the common interest (the genuine form) or their own interest (the perverted form). Aristotle's scheme yields six types of government—kingship, aristocracy, polity, tyranny, oligarchy, and democracy.

Building on this scheme, Aristotle identified the social character of rulers in the four types with more than one leader. Oligarchy is ruled by the rich, an aristocracy by the virtuous, democracy is government by the poor. Aristotle's ideal form of government is broadly equated with middle-class rule (Aristotle, 1962). It is worth to mention that the comparative method has the following advantage. First, it enables us to test hypotheses about politics, it enables us to make meaning of the diversity or differences within political systems, it helps us to improve our classifications of political processes and institutions, and it gives us some potential for prediction (Almond, G., Powell, B., Strom, K. and Dalton, R., 2007). For instance, to attempt an answer to the hypothesis posed- that democracy requires the free market and private ownership- it is necessary to engage in a comparative examination of different regimes so that the relationship between political and economic variables can be better understood.

Furthermore, if we find that the hypotheses are true, we can then predict that wherever free market and private ownership exists, democracy is likely to thrive. Although, the institutional approach talk so much about its 'hyper-factualism' or 'reverence for facts', it is a fact to say that, paramount in the study of political institutions is political value- that is, political institutions have strong normative characteristics which of course underpins the discipline of Political Science. The normative elements, or values, most commonly espoused by this approach are those of liberal democracy, especially the American and British models of representative democracy. Consequently, the study of political

institutions was biased in favour of the institutions of these countries including federalism, such as the USA which falsely laid claim to objectivity against subjectivity.

### 3.4 Varieties of Institutionalism

Constitutional studies is one of the varieties of institutionalism, and as stated above, earlier works on constitutional studies were devoted to issues relating to the basic duties of the country's leaders and citizens, the types and characteristics of government, and the limits of, as well as relationships between, various institutions and organs of government. In recent times, Constitutional studies remain a prime example of formal legal methods in the study of political institutions and its adoption in emerging democracies or post-conflict countries such as Iraq, and reforms of existing defects in the constitution to enhance good governance including the accountability of government, its effectiveness and the status of citizenship. For example, in Nigeria, there is an ongoing attempt to reform the 1999 constitution which many believed was bequeathed with defects by the departing military government. Aspects of the constitution considered for reforms include electoral reforms, the reform of the federal system, and state creation.

Public Administration as a variety of institutionalism is a major sub-field within Political Science. Definitions invariably include such phrases as the study of the institutional arrangements for the provision of public services or study of public bureaucracies (cf. Stoker, 1995). It concentrated attention on the authorities engaged in public administration, analyzed their history, structure, powers and relationships, including enquiring into how they worked and the degree of effectiveness achieved. Organisational theory is a firmly-established part of the intellectual history of public administration and, from the 1950s onwards, it developed many schools of thought. The classics include Max Weber and the study of bureaucracy, and Frederick Taylor and scientific management. However, this stress on the structure was criticised strongly by proponents of the **human relations approach** who emphasised the importance of informal organisation especially group behaviour in the workplace. After WW II the emphasis shifted to the study of organisational decision-making to organisations as systems interacting with a larger environment. During the 1960s, there was great international optimism concerning the future of organisational theory. There were competing voices, but the rational-instrumental conception of formal organisations had a strong position of the organisation as instruments for making and implementing rational decisions – a conception celebrating the will, understanding and control of organisational actors, or rather, of organisational leaders.

Portrayed as a special type of organised context different from other forms of social organisation such as families, neighbourhoods, social groups and classes, more often than not, 'organisation' meant a Weberian bureaucracy and a key concern was to improve the understanding of how organisational structures and processes contributed to performance. Two ideas were of special importance: the conception of leaders as (means-end) rational actors and formal organisations as instruments generating purposeful, coherent, consistent, and efficient action had much in common with the 1960s' view of policymaking as a strategic activity and planning and social engineering as a key process in improving society and building a welfare state. Both planning theory and organisation theory embraced deliberate organisational and institutional design and reform. Actors were assumed to know what they wanted because of the further assumption that actors were assumed to have clear, consistent and stable objectives or normative criteria that were supposed to define tasks, performance failure, improvement, and progress; understand what it takes to achieve their objectives; and have the authority, power and resources needed to achieve desired results through choices made by organisational/political actors.

Meanwhile, you should know that it is beyond the scope of this lecture to summarise how different elements and theories of public administration have developed and what their main insights have been. However, different approaches make different assumptions about human actors – their will, understanding and capacity for social control - and about the nature of 'living' administrative-political institutions and how they function and evolve certainly differ but interestingly and certainly converge.

### **3.5 Criticisms of the Traditional Approach**

Not unusual as an academic tradition, the traditional approaches have been criticised as static and oversimplified assumptions about today's reality of the political process. Much of the work of traditional institutional studies has rightly been the subject of criticism for the weakness of its methods, the anti-theoretical and descriptive nature of its product, and an underlying prescriptive perspective based on an idealised conception of the virtues of liberal democratic government. Specifically, it has been argued that the traditional approach's concern for 'hyper-factualism' or 'reference for facts' meant that political scientists suffered from 'theoretical malnutrition' and in the process neglected 'the general framework within which these facts could acquire meaning' (Easton, 1971). This approach has also been accused of formalism or focusing on rules and procedures to the neglect of the actual political behaviour. In spite of these criticisms, the traditional approaches have remained very significant in and to political analysis in this 21<sup>st</sup> century. Irrespective of these criticisms, it is a well-established fact in Political Science and, of

course, in Social Sciences that man whose behaviour should form the kernel of political analysis as argued is very well normative and rule dependent for orderliness and goal achievement.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Norms and institution as structures and rules have become too important to be neglected in political analysis in the age of behaviouralism. Discuss with illustrations.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The traditional approach is one of the central pillars of the discipline of Political Science; indeed, it is foundational to it. The approach focuses on the normative values and norms that should underpin politics as well as the rules, procedures and forms organisations of governments. Today, it remains a defining characteristic of the discipline and it has found renewed vigour within the new-institutionalism framework. The inexorable reality is that norms, values and facts are the three inextricably enduring phenomena that must be taken seriously and into context in political analysis.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit, you have learnt the key essence of the traditional approach including its concern for values and the rules and organisation of government. You have also learnt the various features of the institutional approach (one of the two aspects of the traditional approach) including its predilection for description, and the three key varieties including constitutional studies, public administration and new institutionalism. You have also learnt about the criticisms of the traditional approach.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. State and explain the varieties of the institutional approach.
2. Discuss the attributes of the rule of law according to Professor A.V. Dicey.
3. The formal legal- approach covers the study of written constitutional documents.
4. Discuss the current debates about the reform of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution.

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## UNIT 2 BEHAVIOURAL APPROACHES

### CONTENTS

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- 2.0 Objectives
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  - 3.1 The Behavioural Approach
  - 3.2 Features of the Behavioural Approach
  - 3.3 Criticisms of the Behavioural Approach
  - 3.4 Post-Behaviouralism
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

In Unit 1, we examined the traditional approach to the study of politics. In this unit, you are introduced to the behavioural approach which arose as a reaction to the presumed deficiencies in the traditional approach. For this, the Behaviouralists school would argue that normativism of the traditional approach should be replaced with empiricism.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

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

- Ñ discuss the major reason for the emergence of the behavioural approach
- Ñ define and state the features of the behavioural approach
- Ñ critique the criticisms of the behavioural approach
- Ñ explain the meaning of post-behaviouralism.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 What is the Behavioural Approach

The behavioural approach or behaviouralism as often called is best viewed as a broad-based effort to impose standards of scientific rigour by relying on empirical evidence, theory building in contrast to the legalistic and formal approach of the 1940s and 1950s. Harold Lasswell, Gabriel Almond, David Truman, Robert Dahl, Herbert Simon, and David Easton were the movement's leading figures; each contributed their unique views of how this goal could be achieved. *The Political System* (1953) by Easton and *Political Behavior* (1956) by Heinz Eulau and others exemplified the

movement's new approach to a theory-guided empirical science of politics (US History Encyclopedia, 2009). Behaviouralism represents a post-World War II revolution and disaffection of Political Science over-reliance on the traditional approaches which we discussed in the last lecture which were believed to have little analytical strength. For instance, Leeds (1981:2), criticized the “old institutionalism” for its preoccupation with the formal structures of government and for having quite spectacularly failed “to anticipate the collapse of inter-war German democracy and the emergence of fascism.” The behavioural approach is also a creature of the quantitatively oriented political scientists who were opposed to or dissatisfied with the tenets of traditional political scientists due to their emphasis on the prescriptive nature of political science and lack of adherence to scientism. To achieve its scientific status, behaviouralism prescribes a closer application and affiliation with theories, methods, findings and outlooks in modern psychology, sociology, anthropology and economics, which in the words of Robert Dahl aims at improving “our understanding of politics by seeking to explain the empirical aspects of political life by means of methods, theories, and criteria of proof that are acceptable according to the canon, conventions, and assumptions of modern empirical science” (Dahl, 1969).

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

How does the behavioural approach or behaviouralism contrast to the legalistic and formal approach, and can it be a stand-alone approach?

#### **Features of the Behavioral Approach**

The advocates of the Behaviouralism saw themselves as spokesmen for a very broad and deep conviction that the political science discipline should; (a) abandon certain traditional kinds of research; (b) execute a more modern sort of inquiry instead, and (c) teach new truths based on the findings of this new inquiry (Ricci, 1984:140). The Behaviouralists contended that new methods could be developed to help political science formulate empirical propositions and theories of a systematic sort, vested by more direct and more rigorously controlled observations of political events (Dahl, 1969; Varma, 1975). And as Truman (1951) said, behavioural political science demands that research must be systematic and must place primary emphasis on empirical methods (See also Varma, 1975; 81). By combining several accounts, (Easton, 1953, 1965; Somit and Tanenhaus, 1982), it is possible to identify eight main claims made for behaviouralism. Specifically, the main features of the behavioural approach are as follows:

**Methodological Individualism:** The behavioural approach emphasizes the centrality of the individual as a unit of analysis. In other words, the individual is a reality while groups are merely a derivation.

- i. **Verification and Falsification:** All generalisations made about the political process must in principle be tested by reference to relevant behaviour or actual political context. This process of empirical verification is the key criterion for assessing the validity or utility of such generalisations.
- ii. **Techniques:** The acquisition and interpretation of data must be carried out via the use of techniques (sample surveys, statistical measurement and mathematical models) that have been rigorously examined, refined and validated. In other words, systematic analysis and accuracy must be developed for observing, recording and analysing empirical political behaviour.
- iii. **Quantification:** Precision and accuracy of data and statement of findings require measurement, quantification and mathematisation not for their own sake but only possible relevant and meaningful in the light of other objectives. This explains why David Truman (1951), posits that the political scientist should perform his research in quantitative terms if he can, and in qualitative terms if he must.
- iv. **Value-Facts Dichotomy:** Ethical evaluation and empirical explanations involve two different kinds of propositions that for the sake of clarity should be kept analytically distinct. However, a student of political behaviour is not prohibited from asserting propositions of either kind whether separately or in combination as long as he does not mistake one for the other. In short, empirical political research must be distinguished from ethical or moral philosophy.
- v. **Systematisation:** Empirical research ought to be systematic i.e. research should be theory-oriented and theory-directed. Indeed, theory and research should develop as closely interconnected art of an orderly body of knowledge. This explains why Easton (1967) posited that “empirical research untutored by theory may prove trivial and theory unsupported by empirical data futile.” In effect, the major pattern of Behaviouralists was to develop a general theory/paradigm of political behaviour in which disparate aspects/parts could be integrated.
- vi. **Pure Science:** According to Behaviouralists, applied research is much an art of scientific enterprise as theoretical understanding. However, the scientific understanding of political behaviour logically proceeds and provides the basis for an effort to utilise political knowledge to the solution of urgent practical problems of society. Greater importance should therefore be attached to a scientific understanding over policy formation of problematic ventures. In essence, the pursuit of knowledge is an end in itself. The student of political behaviour even if he/she were dubious about the practical utilities of his/her work/findings would require not more than the prospects of science to justify his/her findings.

- vii. Integration:** The approach has as its goal the unity of social science. It expresses the hope that someday the walls that separate political science from the other social sciences will crumble. According to them, because the social sciences deal with the totality of the human situation, political science can ignore the findings of other social sciences only at the risk of undermining the validity and generality of its results.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Explain how the features of the behavioural approach conform to empirical research and how problem-solving is it in political analysis?

### 3.2 Criticisms of the Behavioural Approach

Generally, it is possible to identify four types of criticisms of behaviouralism viz: fundamental or philosophical objections against the behavioural approach, its methods, assumptions and techniques especially the use of quantification or surveys. There are also sociological criticisms about the allegedly conservative assumptions and values of the behavioural approach. More elaborately, the following criticisms of political behaviour have been particularly prominent (see Bay, 1965; Kim, 1965; Somit and Tanenhaus, 1920):

- a)** The rigorous scientific approach to the study of political phenomena has been questioned with the argument that political phenomena by their very nature are not amenable to rigorous scientific enquiry. This is because there are far too many uncontrollable factors, historical contingencies and unique and changing variables to permit anything about very soft/trivial statements of regularities. Furthermore, such generalisations formulated can be falsified or invalidated by sheer human volition and ingenuity. This is largely because, unlike in the natural sciences where the observation of the investigator does not mean anything to the molecules and atoms therein; in the social world, the research of the Behaviouralists has a specific meaning for the individual or group living, acting and thinking therein. Thus, the fact that the theorist would produce and the affairs that are theorized about are related not only as subject and object but also cause and effect ensures that even their most innocent ideas of generalizations can contribute to their own verification or falsification.
- b)** The Behaviouralists over-enthusiastic pursuit of quantitative and scientific techniques has fostered a sterile Methodism that has impeded rather than advanced political knowledge.

Behaviouralists have tended to neglect and ignore vital areas of Political Science which are not directly amenable to scientific treatment and quantification. Instead, they have concentrated on the more quantitative and empirically verifiable but trivial topics of political life. This is largely because the phenomena which are observed measured and occur with regularity are often the most insignificant aspects of politics. In essence, the Behaviouralists have become prisoners of their own methodology since they fail to address themselves to non-quantifiable questions of great political significance to their students and the public at large such as injustice, racism and imperialism. The result is that much of their research is not only trivial but also narrow and apolitical.

- c) The value-fact dichotomy or dualism in Behaviouralists' research is untenable going by the very selection of subjects for investigation which is shaped by values and which are by no means scientific but reflect the researcher's personal or ideological biases and judgments. In other words, the behavioural researcher is himself guided in his work by a whole framework of value judgments and assumptions which determine his research priorities and modalities but which cannot be isolated, analysed or justified in scientific or behavioural terms (Webb, 1995).
- d) The commitment of the Behaviouralists to a nebulous prejudice of value neutrality has led to political science that is morally impotent and politically conservative. Critics of behaviouralism have raised the question whether an empirical science which can only study "what is" and not "what ought" must not be inherently conservative. They argue that underlying the Behaviouralists aversion for 'ought' questions is a belief that what ought to be already is, and that the traditional role of the intellectual as a social critic is no longer possible. But Bay (1965), has argued that the study of politics is essentially normative and that the purpose of politics is to satisfy human needs and facilitate human development. He contended that politics exist to progressively remove the most oppressive obstacles to human development with priority to those individuals or groups that are most severely oppressed and the least articulate and likely to achieve redress by way of the ordinary political process. The best hope for more scientific political research Bay further argues is to study how the various functions of government affect the satisfaction of basic needs and wants of the people.
- e. More trenchant criticism of the Behaviouralists promotion of value-free political science was offered by Michael Parenti (1983, cf. Parenti, 2006) who asserted that the Behaviouralists did not

practice what they preach. Although the Behaviouralists claimed a value-free scientific posture, there were all sorts of value judgments hidden in their research. For instance, their eagerness to place their science at the service of the government, military, and business rested on the unexamined value assumption that the overall politico-economic system was essentially a benign one.

- f. The inadequacy of the behavioural approach in policymaking and forecasting has also been evident where the approach divorced itself from issues of 'good' and 'bad'; maintaining a value-neutral stand cannot contribute to the formulation and elaboration of the value hierarchy or priority which characterise the moral phase of policymaking which involve the moral, the empirical and the legislative. While the Behaviouralists' contribution to policymaking is acknowledged in the area of empirical analysis of the likely implications of specific policy options, they still remain inadequate in the legislative aspect since this phase involves complex circumstances and unpredictable situations which probably will be considerably different from those laid down by pure behaviouristic theorists. Thus, contrary to the claim of behaviouralists, behaviouralism cannot provide the basis for a general forecast of the future as distinct from tentative or probabilistic predictions. The behaviouralist can therefore not make an unconditional statement of future possibility which is an important element of scientific research.
- g. The behaviouralists are limited in their ability to generalize their findings, for instance, how accurate are aggregate individual political behaviour reflective of group behaviour? The traditionalists have therefore criticised the behaviouralists for allegedly being too confident of the ability to generalise, to convert problematic statements into causal propositions, and use these propositions to predict behaviour in an area in which things are not predictable; of attributing to abstract models a congruence with the reality that they do not have; of avoiding the substantive issues of politics because, in the zeal for scientific methods, the behaviouralists have perhaps never mastered those issues in all their complexity of succumbing to a 'fetish measurement' which ignores critically important qualitative differences among the quantities being measured (Bull, 1966:361).

### 3.4 Post-Behaviouralism

As discussed above, numbers of political scientists began complaining that important happenings were being ignored by the discipline. The critics were labelled (sympathetically) by then-APSA president David Easton as "post-behaviouralists." These post-behaviouralists organised themselves into the Caucus for a New Political Science under the

leadership of Christian Bay and Mark Roelofs. Among the political scientists of note who proffered a critical post-behavioural viewpoint were Charles McCoy, Peter Bachrach, James Petras, Sheldon Wolin, and Michael Parenti (Parenti, 2006). These scholars not only complained that most of the discipline's scholarship was removed from the imperatives of political life but inaccurate in its depiction of a benevolent democratic pluralism. They also questioned the existence of rigorous determinist laws and the possibility of scientific objectivity in the study of politics. They were concerned with the propriety of the participation of behavioural political science in citizenship education and public affairs, endeavours that made objectivity difficult. The behaviouralists responded by urging, in principle, that research become more important than civic education. However, the Great Depression and World War II made it difficult to contest the significance of civic responsibility. Thus, when the APSA President William Anderson pronounced in 1943 that the preservation of democracy and "direct service to government" was the foremost obligations of Political Science, he was representing the prevailing view of American political scientists (US History Encyclopedia, 2009). As well, the social unrest over the war in Vietnam raised consciousness among political scientists including some of the leading lights of the behavioural revolution, that "behaviourism could be perceived as amoral and irrelevant to the normative concerns governing human lives" (US History Encyclopedia, *ibid*). For instance, in 1967, the caucus for a New Political Science set up within American Political Science Association (APSA) attacked the complacency, conservatism and lack of relevance of American political science, rejecting the behaviouralist paradigm. Research, according to the post-behaviouralist, was to be related to urgent social problems and was to be purposive. It was the duty of the political scientist to find out solutions to contemporary problems; thus, his objective could not be mere stability or the maintenance of the status quo. Political science in its tools of research should no longer remain subservient in the task laid down for its conservative politicians, for instance, in preserving the existing order as the political scientists must play the leading role in acting for the desired social change (Varma, 1975:101).

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The unit examined how the behaviouralist approach to the study of politics is riddled with many limitations as well as how the behaviouralist attempt to separate value judgments from empirical research became a futile effort. This is glaringly obvious in their regularities and generalisations as the only proper objects of scientific political inquiry as an unnecessary delimitation of discipline's subject matter. In sum, it highlighted the fact that in spite of its shortcoming, the tenets of behaviouralism probably enjoys the acceptance of most political scientists

who subscribe to the notion that the study of politics should be theory-oriented and directed; that it should be self-conscious about its methodology; and that it should be interdisciplinary.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, students have learnt the origin of the behavioural approach, the key tenets of the approach and its criticisms including the rise of post-behaviouralism. The lecture in this unit brought the fore the crucial need to acknowledge the fundamental purpose of Political Science of which value and fact cannot be separated.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Can political science be problem-solving without norms and values? Discuss this within the context of the behavioural Approach.
2. Attempt a critique of the behavioural approach within the context of addressing the weakness of the traditional approach bearing in mind the features of the behavioural approach.
3. Based on the arguments against the behavioural approach, do you think it should still enjoy its acceptance by most political scientists?

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## **UNIT 3      APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF POLITICAL SYSTEMS:   SYSTEMS APPROACH AND STRUCTURAL-FUNCTIONALIST APPROACH**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0    Introduction
- 2.0    Objectives
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  - 3.2    Merits of the Systems Approach
  - 3.3    Criticisms of the Systems Approach
  - 3.4    Structural Functionalist Approach (SFA)
    - 3.4.1 Merits of the Structural Functionalist Approach
    - 3.4.2 Criticisms of the Structural Functionalist Approach
- 4.0    Conclusion
- 5.0    Summary
- 6.0    Tutor-Marked Assignment
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### **1.0    INTRODUCTION**

In the last unit, we considered the behavioural approach, and as explained, the approach was a response to the shortcomings of the traditional approach. In this unit, we shall consider two approaches or framework of analysis developed for the study of political systems, namely, systems approach and structural-functionalist approach. These approaches developed at the same time with the behavioural approach and some of its proponents (Princeton and Chicago Scholars, USA) were the same advocates of the behavioural approach. As you will find out in subsequent units, a political system refers to any stable pattern of interactions which involves power and authority (Dahl, 1976) including all the factors which influence collective decisions, that is, even if those factors are not formally part of the government. In other words, politics is embedded within an overall system whose parts directly or indirectly influence the nature of politics (cf. Osaghae, 1988). Thus, parties, voters, and interest groups, etc. all form part of the system of politics even though they are not part of the government or the state.

Politics is a collective activity and it occurs throughout society: from family groups to the state, and from the voluntary association to the multinational corporation. Politics means planning and organizing common projects, setting rules and standards that define the relations of people to one another, and allocating resources among rival human needs and purposes' (cf. Stoker, 1995). The broadening of the definition of politics from the study of government and public affairs (activities of the

state) to a focus on what Leftwich (1984) calls ‘politics of everyday life’ has brought a ‘large mass of what is, at first, unorganised data’ that made it very important for the analysis of the data to draw relationship among them. In this context, the meaning of political systems is restricted to countries and states.

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

By the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- Ñ define and describe the systems approach and the structural-functional approach
- Ñ state the merits of the systems approach and structural-functional approach
- Ñ explain some criticisms of both approaches.

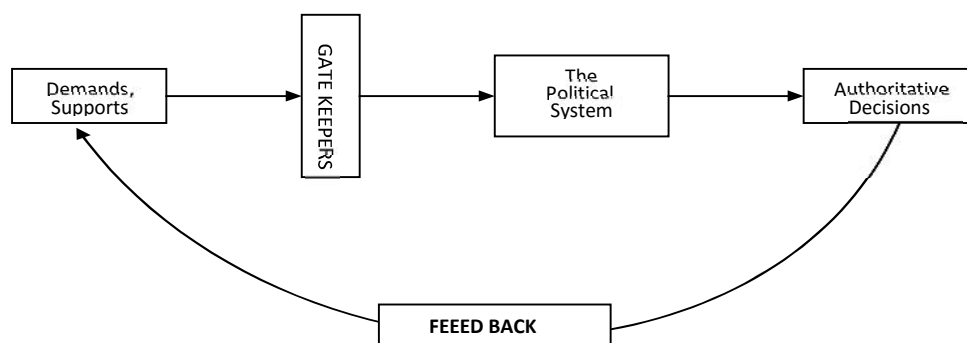
## **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

### **3.1 Systems Approach**

David Easton, the exponent of system analysis made attempt to apply general systems theories to political science. In this effort, Easton (1953) insisted that the political system “is that system of interactions in any society through which binding or authoritative allocations are made.” Easton explained that from the environment demands are made on the political system in the form of input (demands and support) and these demands are subsequently processed into outputs as authoritative decisions (Legislations or Acts). Through a feedback loop changes brought about by those outcomes after conversion, are channelled back into the system in form of increased, intensified or modified demands and supports. Although the model is largely abstract, it is useful as a general framework for political analysis. Easton (1953) analyses political activity by employing the paradigm of the biological system “where life processes interact with each other and with the environment to produce a changing but nonetheless stable bodily state.” Viewed in this context, therefore, politics is the response of the political system to forces brought to bear on it from the environment, and this makes politics to be an output of the political system according to Easton. Following this, certain key concepts are central to the understanding of public policy from the systems theoretic framework.

First, is the concept of a system which “implies an identifiable set of institutions and activities in a society that functions to transform demands into authoritative decisions requiring the support of the whole society.” A crucial property of a system is the interrelatedness of its parts or elements. Furthermore, it is assumed that a system will respond to its environment

and will seek to preserve itself. Second, is the concept of inputs, that is, the forces generated in the environment that affect the political system. Inputs can take the form of demand and support. Demands involve actions by individuals and groups seeking authoritative allocations of values from the authorities, while support comprises of actions rendered in favour of government such as obedience to the law and payment of taxes. Inputs on the other hand, are generated from the environment defined by Easton as “any condition or circumstance defined as external to the boundaries of the political system”. To him, inputs are fed into the black box of decision making, otherwise called the conversion box to produce outputs, where outputs are the decisions and policies of the authorities. Within the framework of the system, allowance is made for feedback as a mechanism through which the outputs of the political system influence future inputs into the system. According to Anderson (1975), “the concept of feedback indicates that public policies (or outputs) may subsequently alter the environment and the demands generated therein, as well as the character of the political system itself.” Below is a diagram:



**Fig. 1: David Easton's Input-Output Model**

**Source: Easton, 1965a**

From the society come the inputs which consist of demands and supports. Demands refer to actions people want those in authority to undertake or reject. These demands may be articulated peacefully. The voting, writing to officials or lobbying them; or in violent ways through riots, strikes, even civil war. The important demands are those that are articulated (or expressed). However, in this model, demands are viewed as sources of societal stress which can largely be managed or abated by supports given to those in authority. Supports which consist of an implicit or explicit agreement with government policies or encouragement to follow certain courses of action could be given to the political system as a whole. Generally, if support is lacking, the political system cannot survive for long. The inputs are transmitted to the decision-making centres where they are processed and converted into authoritative-allocation of values in the form of outputs. Basically, outputs are the policies formulated by the decision-makers namely, rule-making by the legislature, rule application by the executive, and rule-adjudication by the judiciary. The

feedback loop in essence represents the process by which the political system informs itself about the consequences of its outputs. However, the pertinent questions are: do the outputs meet the demands? Or create- new problems? Most importantly, the extent to which the political system can meet the demands made determines the level of supports it is likely to get.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

With the aim of a diagram, explain Easton's input-output model using Nigeria as your political system. How realistic is it?

### **3.2 Merits of the Systems Approach**

- a. It provides a framework that helped to move political science away from an exclusive concern with the nation-state (and its institutions such as the government) to the study of all groups and institutions in a social context.
- b. Following from the above, it provides a standardized set of concepts such as inputs and outputs to describe activities which take place in all political systems, and hence providing the framework for comparing political systems.
- c. By drawing attention to the external environment of every political system, it is a useful approach for analysing the international political, system, especially the linkage between the domestic and the international environments.
- d. It enables us to selectively identify and organise what is political when you look at the whole society. It also enables us to identify the interrelationships of political phenomena -cabinet office, political parties, ethnicity, and so on- and between these and other phenomena which are politically relevant but belong to other realms of society -family, economic relations, industrial relations, educational system, etc.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

List and explain the merits of the systems approach.

### **3.3 Criticisms of the Systems Approach**

In drawing out its framework of analysis which focused attention on all 'those institutions and processes involved in the authoritative allocation of values for society', Easton reduced the state to nothing more than a 'black box' that simply receives and shuns out input and output indifferently. However, more than the other institutions such as political parties and interest groups, which Easton believes regulates inputs, the state, given the particular form of extensive and compulsory authority

embodied within its activities, is central to the authoritative allocation of values and its activities can create winners and losers in the society. As Heywood (1994) would say, the state is a specific type of political organisation with sovereign jurisdiction within a defined territorial area with the capacity to make laws and enforce compliance. Thus, the systems approach underestimates the complexity of governance by creating the impression that demands are claims made on the political system by individuals and groups in the environment of the political system. By this, he neglected the view that government through its own deliberate actions and inactions can instigate and generates demands which form the basis of policy decisions.

The most popular criticism is that the approach is conservative and ideologically oriented towards maintaining the *status quo*. By emphasising equilibrium and system maintenance, the approach places much value on the imperative of order and predictability. This characterisation implies that stability becomes a goal which is pursued at all cost even if it means suppressing legitimate demands. The utility of systems theory is even more worrisome in situations where stability is a problem and the policymaking machinery is in dire need of revolutionary changes. It is in this sense that some authors have argued that the approach seeks, from a Western ideological standpoint, to be an alternative approach to Marxism which suggests that only revolutionary changes can bring about desired changes in society (Osaghae, 1988). Further to the above, Abba, Abdullahi, Hamisu, and Alao (2016) pointed out another major flaw in the Eastonian systems approach. To them, the entire gamut of politics cannot be reduced to the authoritative allocation of value because the allocation of value cannot take place in emptiness. In other words, there has to be the production of value before the allocation of value can take place. To Abba, et al, (2016), the definition of politics by David Easton as the authoritative allocation of value was ideologically prejudiced and incompetent, and there is no doubt this prejudiced definition has been swallowed by African scholars and leaders. In this third decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, most African countries have become so dependent to have allowed UK, EU, US, and China, etc. to engage in the production of value while Africa imports these values and merely subsequently allocate. Therefore, what this says is that the political system according to Abba, et al, (2016) must engage in both production and allocation values to escape the trap of imperialism of knowledge that the Princeton Scholars were commissioned to propagate.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Explain the criticism that the system approach is conservative and ideologically oriented towards retaining the *status quo* in relation to other demerits.

### 3.4 Structural Functionalist Approach

This approach is an offshoot of systems approach which focuses largely on explaining the functions a political system must perform to survive and defines structures or organizations which can most efficiently perform the functions. The structures may be political parties, pressure groups, or formal government institutions performing system-maintenance functions such as informing the electorate on important issues and allowing for wider participation in the political system. Although the approach cannot provide a general theory for all aspects of political science, nevertheless, it provides standard categories for a different political system and therefore useful in comparative government/ politics. The structural-functionalist approach pioneered by Gabriel Almond represented a vast improvement over the systems approach of David Easton. Almond's innovation was to outline an approach to understanding political systems that took into account not only its structural components — its institutions — but also their functions within the system as a whole. Prior to structural functionalism, scholars had no way of systematically comparing different political systems beyond a rudimentary, and oftentimes inconclusive, analysis of their institutions. At its most basic level, the approach, just like the systems approach, proceeded from the understanding that a political system is made up of institutions (structures), such as interest groups, political parties, the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government, and bureaucratic machinery. However, unlike the systems approach, the structural-functionalist approach believes that information is not sufficient to make a meaningful comparison between two political systems. Two countries may share many of the same political institutions, but what distinguishes the two systems are how these institutions function.

Further, Almond postulates that political systems have universal characteristics and that these characteristics can be conceptualized into a schematic approach to the comparative study of politics. In effect, of the many identified by him, four distinctly stand out. They are that: political systems have political structures; the same functions are performed in all political systems; all political structures... are multi-functional; and that all political systems are mixed in the cultural sense. Almond claims that his characteristics form the basis for the comparative study of the developed and the less developed nation-states. He recognizes that similar structures are found from polity to polity; he, however, suggested that in order to fully locate them, the correct functional questions must be made since this is the only pragmatic way to appreciate the dynamic process. While borrowing from Easton's framework with particular reference to the input, output, feedback functions within the political system, he discusses his functional equivalents in a political system by emphasizing the context of input and output dimensions. Four sub-themes are



recognized amongst the input functions to include: political socialisation, interest articulation, interest aggregation, and political communication. For the output functions, there are three sub-themes: rule-making, rule-application and, rule-adjudication. These functions are performed in order to ensure the equilibrium of the system.

**Table 1: Almond and Powell's Functions of Political Systems**

Political recruitment	People must be recruited to fill political roles from voters to government leaders
Political socialization	Their attitudes to the political system must be formed and sustained
Political communication	Politically relevant information must be transmitted
Interest articulation	Demands for particular policies must be expressed
Interest aggregation	Demands must be selected and combined into a manageable number of major alternatives
Policy-making	Demands must be converted into authoritative decisions and policies
Policy implementation	These decisions must be put into effect

**Source: Almond, G., and Powell, G. (1978).**

The Functionalists argued that a check-list of this kind provided an objective, standardised, and culture-free approach to comparative politics. Take the function of political recruitment as an example; all political systems have to persuade people to fill political roles, varying in scope from chief executive to the voter. However, this function is performed by different institutions in different countries where in some countries elections are the major recruiting agent, in others such as Communist China, the ruling party is the key vehicle in recruitment. Once the party had approved a nomination for office, election (if it takes place) becomes a mere formality. In some other countries such as Saudi Arabia, blood relationship with the ruling dynasty is the key criterion to political recruitment while in others such as Nigeria people are persuaded as it is done in the US, etc. to go out to vote and or be voted for as the keyway of electing or becoming a President, etc. Today in a democracy, money, and connection to a godfather are sometimes more significant in political recruitment. In all these examples, the institutions vary but the underlying functions must be performed by every political system if it must survive and operate effectively. Thus for Almond and Powell, a fuller understanding emerges only when one begins to examine how institutions act within the political process. As he described it, interest groups serve to articulate political issues; parties then aggregate and express them in a coherent and meaningful way; the government, in turn, enacts public

policies to address them, and bureaucracies finally regulate and adjudicate them.

While this model neatly accounts for what happens within a political system, systems are never entirely self-contained. They exist in a dynamic relationship to other political systems and must continuously adapt to changing conditions in the larger socio-political context, and for this reason, all political systems require efficient feedback mechanisms. Also, according to the structural-functionalist approach, political culture plays a crucial role in determining the unique characteristics of a political system. These systems' functions include political socialisation, recruitment, and communication. Without understanding these elements of a society, it is difficult, if not impossible, to make an adequate assessment and comparison between two political systems (Almond and Gabriel, 1978). By political socialisation, Almond and Powell mean the process by which a culture passes down civic values, beliefs, and habits of mind to succeeding generations. It refers to the largely unconscious process by which families, schools, communities, political parties, and other agents of socialisation inculcate the culture's dominant political values. Recruitment refers to the ways by which citizens become active participants in the political system, where communication represents the way a political system to disseminate information essential to its proper functioning. For example, the news media plays a vital role not only in distributing public information to citizens upon which they then make important political decisions but also in shaping political attitudes and values concerning the political process.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

System maintenance is enough to develop the African economy. Discuss this using the structural-functionalist approach of Almond and Powell.

#### **3.4.1 Merits of the Structural Functionalist Approach**

- a. The structural-functionalist approach facilitates comparison among political systems- whether village or industrialised - it only requires the basic functions to survive and can be compared if these functions are identified, and the structures which perform them are also identified.
- b. Although the approach emphasises the structures in a system, it is more interested in the behaviour of these structures. Specifically, it focuses on what structures do rather than on what their characteristics are. In other words, it wants to find out what the behaviour is and why it is important, and by so doing, we know that some structures perform other functions apart from the manifest ones.

### 3.4.2 Criticisms of the Structural Functionalist Approach

- a. Like the systems approach, its emphasis on system-maintenance makes it ideologically opposed to revolutionary change. To be sure, functionalists acknowledge that change is sometimes necessary to correct social dysfunctions (the opposite of functions), but that it must occur slowly so that people and institutions can adapt without the rapid disorder. Thus, it is by its very nature conservative: it recognises that a political system's first objective is to ensure its own survival. For this reason, it is not especially responsive to innovations and movements aimed at political change — that is, beyond those that strengthen its adaptability and resilience.
- b. The approach relies heavily on national political systems thereby suggesting that politics does not take place outside of the state realm. In addition, it does not actually specify what political activities are.
- c. By placing a lot of emphasis on functions and functional behaviour, the approach diverts attention away from the institutions and structures themselves which perform these functions. These structures and institutions are seen as merely existing to perform certain functions. In other words, the laudable abstract analysis of functions has not been matched by an equal concern with or linkage to the concrete structures. For instance, by insisting that societies must perform certain functions in order to be societies and that these general categories can be used to order the material reality, the approach creates a spurious generalization. This is because while it may be true that all societies have to perform these functions, the variability in the manner in which they are performed is so great that it may be difficult to consider them as the 'same' (Webb, 1995). For example, an election in Nigeria would be the 'same' physical event like an election in the United Kingdom, but its meaning may be different- where the Nigerian type of election which is often characterised by thuggery and vote-rigging will not have the equivalent meaning in the UK, even though they refer to the 'same' physical event.
- d. It also has a democratic and participatory bias insofar as it views citizens' input and involvement in the political process as the surest route to political stability and responsiveness. Yet, in many political systems, citizens' input is nothing but mere window dressing to legitimate decisions made by the ruling elites, as is the case even under democracies.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Explain the merits and demerits of the structural-functionalist approach.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

In spite of their differences, the systems and structural-functionalist approaches have three major similar features. First, they are concerned with how the order is maintained. Second, they recognize that change is inevitable as it is interested in how political stems can meet the challenges posed by change. However, the approaches do not envisage the revolutionary or violent change that characterizes many political systems of the world. Third, the approaches draw attention to the importance of goal-realisation as a central aspect of the political system because they assume that no political system can survive for long without articulating and pursuing identifiable goals.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you learnt about the important contributions of the systems approach and structural-functionalist approach for political analysis. The approaches draw attention to the fact that every political system is made up of total environment, inputs, outputs, and feedback processes as parts of a system are interdependent. The structural-functionalist approach draws our attention to the universal characteristics or functions of all political systems and is especially useful for comparing political systems. However, you learnt that both approaches do not provide a useful framework for analyzing not just revolutionary changes but productive changes that do not need to be revolutionary in the traditional sense.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. List and explain four criticisms of the structural-functionalist approach.
2. Explain the input-output mechanism of a political system.
3. Has the structural-functionalist approach been justified in the functions in political parties, pressure groups, or formal government institutions?
4. The Eastonian allocation of value and systems maintenance which most African leaders internalised have played a major role in the debilitating unemployment and poverty condition in Africa. Discuss.

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## **UNIT 4      POLITICAL PROCESS APPROACHES: CLASS, ELITE, AND PLURALISM**

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### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In Unit 3, the systems approach and structural-functionalist approaches specifically designed for the study of political systems were examined. In this unit, three different approaches that are particularly relevant for the analysis of political processes, namely, class approach or Marxism, pluralist or group approach, and elite approach will be examined.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

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

- Ñ define and describe the class analysis or Marxism, pluralist, and elite approaches
- Ñ state the contributions of the class approach, pluralist, and elite approaches
- Ñ state the criticisms of the class approach, pluralist, elites approaches and their modifications.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 Class Analysis Approach or Marxism

Class approach is an important tool in Political Science that focuses on the division of society into classes and how this social stratification determines social conflict and social change. The class analysis approach is often referred to as Marxism even though the latter encompasses more than the former because it derives from the writings of Karl Marx and his associate, Friedrich Engels. It is a critique of the capitalist system where Marx posits a materialist interpretation of human history. By this, it assumes that the mode of production of goods and services and the manner of exchange of these goods and services constitute the bases of all social processes and institutions. Marx insists that it is the economy that serves as the foundation upon which the superstructure of culture, law, and the government is erected because it is those who own the means of production that not only determines the economic fortunes of the society but politically sets its social values. Structurally, according to Marx, every society is divided into classes based on ownership or non-ownership of the means of production. Those who own property constitute a class and those who do not constitute another class. He argues that it is the clash between classes that provides the motive force of history, a class struggle that is, in turn, a reflection of the contradiction between the forces of production, that is, the instrument of labour and the people producing the material wealth on the one hand and the relations of production, that is, the relations among people in the process of production exchange, distribution and consumption of material wealth on the other hand. Since the social relations develop at a slower pace than the forces of production they soon constitute a hindrance to the latter, thereby making social revolution inevitable.

From the preceding, Karl Marx has postulated that the relationship between these two classes is characterised by antagonism because the bourgeoisie exploits and subjugates the proletariat to maximise profit. He proposed further that people relate to the mode of production either as owners or non-owners of the means of production. The state, in the Marxist thesis, is an instrument of domination by the bourgeoisie, “a product and manifestation of the irreconcilability of class antagonism” (Lenin, 1914). This view is encapsulated in Marx's oft-quoted saying that “the executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the bourgeoisie” (cf. Avineri, 1970). Far from being a neutral actor in which some other approaches such as the systems and structural-functionalist approaches promoted, the state, in class approach is viewed as partisan in favour of the interests of the dominant class. Ralph Miliband has offered three reasons why the state is an instrument of bourgeois domination in capitalist society. First is the similarity in the

social background of the bourgeoisie and the state officials located in government, the civil service bureaucracy, the military, judiciary, etc. Second, is the power of the bourgeoisie to pressurize for political action through a network of personal contacts and associations with those in business and industry. Third, is the constraint placed on the state by the objective power of capital, that is to say, the limits placed on the freedom of state officials by their need to assist the process of capital accumulation, a need which stems from the requirements of a strong economy based for political survival (Miliband, 1989).

At the core of class analysis is the concept of dialectical materialism which presumes the primacy of economic determinants of history. Through dialectical materialism, the fundamental Marxist premise that the history of society is inexorably the “history of class struggle” was developed. According to this premise, a specific class could rule so long as it best represented the economically productive forces of society; when it became outmoded it would be destroyed and replaced, and from this continuing dynamic process, a classless society would eventually emerge.

In modern capitalist society, the bourgeois (capitalist) class had destroyed and replaced the unproductive feudal nobility and had performed the economically creative task of establishing the new industrial order. The stage was thus set for the final struggle between the bourgeoisie which had completed its historic role and the proletariat composed of the industrial workers, or makers of goods, which had become the true productive class (see Wood, 1981). Marx envisages that as the contradictions of the capitalist system become more acute, a revolutionary situation will arise during which the proletariat (the oppressed class) will overthrow the capitalists and the dictatorship of the proletariat will be established. The proletariat, after becoming the ruling class would “centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the state” and to increase productive forces at a rapid rate, and a society without division will be established since the means of production would not be owned by any group. The coercive state, formerly a weapon of class oppression, would be replaced by a rational structure of economic and social cooperation and integration. Such bourgeois institutions as the family and religion, which had served to perpetuate bourgeois dominance, would vanish, and each individual would find true fulfilment. The final aim of the revolution is to establish communism, a classless society which would have no need for the state and which would be organised on the principle of, “from each according to his ability and to each according to his needs” (Carver; 1991).



## **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

The economic infrastructure is a determinant of the political and social infrastructure according to Marx and Engels. To what extent is this true with illustrations from Nigeria?

### **3.1.1 Contributions of the Class Approach**

- a. The class approach provides a radically different approach to the understanding of the political process, especially the role of the state and the crucial role of the ruling class in determining what the state does and what the state chooses not to do in the value production and allocation process.
- b. Contrary to the systems and structural-functionalist approaches that favour orderly change; the class approach draws our attention to the possibility of violent revolutionary changes in political systems.

### **3.1.2 Criticisms of the Class Approach and its Subsequent Modification**

- a. The class approach has been criticised for its economic determinism. In other words, the approach gives a determining significance to economic and property relations that other institutions –political, legal, cultural, and ideological – are merely a reflection of them and merely explained by their dependence on prevailing economic relations.
- b. A major criticism of class analysis is that even in communist states where attempts were made to implement Marxism, the states did not disappear as Karl Marx foretold, but rather, these communists' regimes led to the re-erection of huge, monolithic state structures. Also, the demise of the Communist bloc in Eastern Europe such as Poland, Czechoslovakia, etc. and Central Asia has tended to discredit Marx's dire and deterministic economic predictions.
- c. A related criticism of the class approach is Karl Marx's failure to comprehend the fact that the relationship between the ruling class and the working class is not always antagonistic. Arguing from this perspective, critics have pointed out that the evolution of varied forms of welfare capitalism has improved the condition of workers in industrial societies rather than worsen as Marx projected and that the proletarian revolution did not occur as he anticipated. This point itself has been acknowledged by some scholars within the class approach such as Miliband who has argued that the room for autonomous action by the state in capitalist society is not a remote possibility since the state sometimes carries out reforms favourable

to the underclass (Miliband, 1989). Also in the light of the criticism, particularly the failure of the workers' revolution to occur, Marx's successors introduced important revisions to his theory. One of them V.I. Lenin for instance, argues that there has been a new development in capitalism, that is, imperialism which has resulted in the acquisition of colonies. According to him, imperialism has provided advanced capitalist countries with ready markets, sources of cheap raw materials and labour, and havens for investing surplus profits and thereby eased the contradictions of the system. The conditions of the proletariat have also been improved but only through the exploitation of the international working class (Lenin, 1914).

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Attempt a review of the contributions and critique of the class approach.

### **3.2 Pluralism or Group Approach**

Pluralism in its classical form believes that politics and decision making are located mostly in the governmental framework, but many nongovernmental groups are using their resources to exert influence. The central question for classical pluralism is how power is distributed in western democracies. Groups of individuals try to maximise their interests because lines of conflict are multiple and shifting. There may be inequalities but they tend to be distributed and evened out. Any change under this view will be slow and incremental, as groups have different interests and may act as "veto groups" to destroy legislation that they do not agree with. The existence of diverse and competing interests represented by groups is the basis for a democratic equilibrium and is crucial for the realization of goals by individuals. The job of political scientists with this kind of concern is the analysis of the organization and behaviour of these groups. From the standpoint of the pluralist approach, a law passed by the legislature, for instance, expresses mainly the prevailing distribution of influence among competing groups, each of them seeking to advance its own particular interest. The pluralist approach to politics argues essentially that power in western industrialised societies is widely distributed among different groups.

According to this approach, no group is without power to influence decision-making and equally no group is dominant. It is a major premise of pluralism that any group can ensure that its political preferences and wishes are adopted and reflected in governmental action with sufficient determination and the deployment of appropriate resources. Thus, pluralism is a theory of representation in a democracy that gives pride of place to pressure groups and the representation of specific interests by

these groups as a hallmark of liberal democracy. In another sense, the theory legitimises the role which these groups play in conducting government business by emphasising the mutuality of obligation which exists between these groups and government. Pluralists emphasize that power is not a physical entity that individuals either have or do not have, but flows from a variety of different sources because people are powerful because they control various resources- resources as assets that can be used to force others to do what one wants. They argued that politicians become powerful because they command resources that people want or fear or respect. The list of possibilities is virtually endless: legal authority, money, prestige, skill, knowledge, charisma, legitimacy, free time, experience, celebrity, and public support.

Pluralists also stress the differences between potential and actual power as it stands. To them, actual power means the ability to compel someone to do something while potential power refers to the possibility of turning resources into actual power. To illustrate, Cash is one of the many resources that are only a stack of bills until it is put to work. Martin Luther King Jr., for example, was certainly not a rich person, but by using resources such as his forceful personality, organisational skills, and especially the legitimacy of his cause, he had a greater impact on American politics than most wealthy people. A particular resource like money cannot automatically be equated with power because the resource can be used skillfully or clumsily, fully or partially, or not at all. The pluralist approach to the study of power states that nothing categorical about power can be assumed in any community. The question then is not who runs a community, but if any group in fact does. To determine this, pluralists study specific outcomes by trying to know from their belief that human behaviour is governed in large part by inaction. To them, actual involvement in an overt activity is a more valid marker of leadership than simply a reputation; hence, they believe that there is no one particular issue or point in time at which any group must assert itself to stay true to its own expressed values, but rather that there are a variety of issues and points at which this is possible. There are also costs involved in taking action at all—not only losing, but the expenditure of time and effort. While the Marxist may argue that power distributions have a rather permanent nature, pluralism says that power may in fact be tied to issues, which vary widely in duration. Also, instead of focusing on actors within a system; the emphasis is on the leadership roles itself. By studying these, it can be determined to what extent there is a power structure present in a society. Following the preceding, there are three major tenets of the pluralist school, namely:

- a.** Resources and potential power are widely scattered throughout society.
- b.** At least some resources are available nearly to everyone.

- C.** At any time the amount of potential power can exceed the amount of actual power.

Finally, and perhaps most important, the pluralists believe that no one is all-powerful in a given political system because an individual or group that is influential in one realm may be weak in another. For instance, large military contractors certainly throw their weight around on defense matters, but they may not have much say on agricultural or health policies. A measure of power, therefore, is its scope, or the range of areas where it is successfully applied. Pluralists believe that with few exceptions power holders usually have a relatively limited scope of influence, the reason why power cannot be taken for granted. As students of political analysis fidelity to reality through critical observation would enable us to empirically know who truly power-holders are and who governs. The best way to do this, pluralists believe, is to examine a wide range of specific decisions, noting who took which side and who ultimately won and lost. Only by keeping score on a variety of controversies can one begin to know actual power holders. Crucial to the pluralist approach is the concept of partisan mutual adjustment. According to this concept, the policy takes place in a crowded arena, and no group or political factions are powerful enough to dominate the others because policy emerges as a compromise between the various interest groups. This brings along a specific rationale: each group adjusts its stance to take into consideration the others to promote stability because even if a group loses out this time, this means it still retains the ability to fight another day. The major modern proponents of the pluralist approach are Robert Dahl, David Truman, and Seymour Martin Lipset.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Principles, character, consistency, and commitment to developmental values are important in politics and to the policymaking process. Situate this within the concept, content, and context of partisan mutual adjustment.

#### **3.2.1 Contribution of the Pluralist Approach**

Pluralism maintains that the political system is hierarchically structured, in other words, few are deciding for many. Despite this fact, pluralism maintains that democracy is possible because the many can make the few responsive, accountable, and accessible because of the belief that no one group in society has a monopoly of power; the role of pragmatic coalitions working out compromises in the making of government policies; crafting out legitimate means of resolving group conflict without resulting in violence; widespread agreement on a mechanism for making decisions;

eventual losers always willing to comply with the decision of the winners; and winners permitting losers to criticise and challenge winners' decision.

### **3.2.2 Criticism of the Pluralist Approach and Its Modification**

While pluralism as an approach gained its most footing during the 1950s and 1960s in America, some scholars argued that the theory was too simplistic (Connolly, 1969). However, Sambo (1999: 293) has offered the following criticisms of the pluralist or group approach:

- a. The obvious causal explanation of politics and public policy from the perspective of group struggle alone is an exaggerated claim which overlooks the independent role of individual actors in the policy process.
- b. Is the empirical question whether, indeed, power is as widely distributed in society as group theory claims and more importantly, whether the voice of the least powerful is ever audible as to make it significant in the decision making process.
- c. That the market place paradigm on which the pluralist approach is anchored raises the significant question about parity in the process of competition since we are told that the sources of power available to groups may not be equal. The advantage, which some groups enjoy on account of superior resource endowment, might be a factor in the dominance of their interests in public policy. This is more so as they can deploy their advantaged position to secure their interests through, for example, the manipulation of the rules of competition/game/market.
- d. The assumed neutrality of government in the clash of partisan groups in the value allocation process is questionable if not doubtful. The underlying assumption about government in pluralism is that government is an impartial mediator of conflict in society and by implication a preserver of the social order. However, experience all over the world shows that sometimes, the government is not a neutral actor in policymaking: the government is not necessarily a disinterested party in the conflict of interests of partisan groups in society. Indeed, the government sometimes pursues its own preferences which may conflict with the interests of other groups in the society.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT**

What are the crucial features of the pluralist approach as well as its criticisms?

### 3.2.3 Neo-Pluralism

Faced with the above criticism, attempts have been made to modify pluralism, an attempt that led to the formulation of neo-pluralism and corporatism. Essentially, although neo-pluralism sees multiple pressure groups competing over political influence, the political agenda is biased towards corporate power. Neo-Pluralism no longer sees the state as an umpire mediating and adjudicating between the demands of different interest groups, but as a relatively autonomous actor (with different departments) that forges and looks after its own (sectional) interests.

Constitutional rules, which in pluralism are embedded in a supportive political culture, should be seen in the context of a diverse and not necessarily supportive political culture or a system of radically uneven economic sources. This diverse culture exists because of an uneven distribution of socioeconomic power. This reality creates possibilities for some groups - while limiting others - in their political options. In the international realm, the order is distorted by powerful multinational interests and dominant states, while in classical pluralism emphasis is put on stability by a framework of pluralist rules and the free market.

Corporatism was an attempt to apply the classical pluralism (which was believed by many to be an American model) to Westminster-style democracies or the European context. Corporatism is the idea that a few select interest groups are actually (often formally) involved in the policy formulation process, to the exclusion of the myriad of other 'interest groups'. For example, trade unions and major sectoral business associations are often consulted about (if not the drivers of) specific policies. These policies often concern tripartite relations between workers, employers, and the state, with a coordinating role for the latter.

The state constructs a framework in which it can address the political and economic issues with these organised and centralized groups. In this view, parliament and party politics lose influence in the policy forming process. Other groups that some pluralists believe are more involved and have disproportionate influence in the interest articulation function are the business interests such as Multinational Corporations (MNCs). Besides the objections to the classical model of pluralism and the subsequent reformulations mentioned above, another criticism was that groups need a high level of resources and the support of patrons to contend for influence and the classical pluralist approach did not factor this in their account. This observation formed the basis for **elite pluralism** which is a modified pluralism account for elements of elite theory.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What are the critical features that led to the modification of pluralism into neo-pluralism and corporatism?

### 3.3 Elite Approach

According to Arslan (1995: 3), the concept of “elite” originally derived from the Latin “eligere” which means select, shares a common basis with “electa” that means elected or the best. However, it was not widely used in social and political studies until the late nineteenth century (Cf. Arslan, 2006). Historical research has already established that the elite is not an immutable entity, rather its formation is determined by the structural composition of society and especially by the characteristics of the political and economic systems. Hence, there are different types of elites to include political elites, business elites, military elites, mass-media elites, trade and labour unions elites, traditional elites, and academic elites. Theoretically, elites can be defined as those people who hold institutionalised power, control the social resources (include not only the wealth, prestige, and status but also the personal resources of charisma, time, motivation, and energy) and have a serious influence (either actively or potentially) on the decision-making process where they can impose their own will and perhaps have their way in spite of opposition.

The elite concept acquired world-wide popularity in social science as a result of the writings of Gaetano Mosca (1939), Wright Mills’ (1956), and especially Vilfredo Pareto (1968) who sought to construct an alternative vocabulary to the emphasis on Marxian “class” and class conflict. With these works, the concept of the elite became the new theoretical and methodological framework for researching the connections between political and economic power in the society. Since then the concept has achieved a wider acceptance within modern sociology, often being seen as a useful way of describing certain systems of political power complementary to the use of the world-class to describe systems of economic power. Elite theory distrusts class analysis and the idea that class struggle would entail the liberation of the working class, and thereby of society as a whole. According to Pareto (1968), the most important of these are the struggles between rising and falling elite groups, which he termed the circulation of the elites. History is not a history of class struggle as maintained by Marx, but the struggles between elites over social domination.

The classical elite theory developed from a general distrust of democracy (Mosca, 1939; Pareto, 1968), and of the possibility to maintain democratic institutions (Michels, 1959). C. Wright Mills (1956) supplemented the

classical elite theory by conceiving public and private elites as convergent into a single ruling group in society. Elite approach also developed as an alternative paradigm to pluralism by rejecting the pluralist view concerning the distribution of power in society. In the alternative, Elite theory points to the concentration of political power in the hands of a minority group which, according to Mosca, “performs all political functions, monopolies power and enjoys the advantages that power brings” (Mosca; 1939). Further to this, the Elite approach investigates power and control and aims to analyze elite and non-elite (mass, public) differentiation. Elite theorists are concerned almost exclusively with inequalities based on power or lack thereof. This distinguishes elite theory from class theory. Power, in turn, is based on other resources (such as economic assets and organizational strength) and for its part, it may give rise to control over other resources as well. But, as Etzioni (1993:19) stressed, elite theory is concerned primarily with the other resources which are related to it.

From the perspective of elite theory, public policy may be viewed as the values and preferences of the governing elite. The assumptions of the elite theory are captured by Thomas Dye and Harmon Zeigle (Cf. Sambo, 1999, p. 294) as follows:

- a Society is divided into the few who have power and the others who do not. Only a small number of persons allocate values for society; the masses do not decide public policy. The few who govern are not typical of the masses being governed. Elites are drawn disproportionately from the upper socioeconomic strata of society.
- b The movement of non-elites to elite positions must be slow and continuous to maintain stability and avoid revolution. Only non-elites who have accepted the basic elite consensus can be admitted to governing circles.
- c Elites share a consensus on the basic values of the social system and the preservation of the system. Public policy does not reflect the demands of the masses but rather the prevailing values of the elite. Changes in public policy will be incremental rather than revolutionary.
- d Active elites are subject to relatively little direct influence from apathetic masses as the Elite influences the masses more than the masses influence the elites.

### **3.3.1 Contributions of the Elite Approach**

What is significant about the contribution of the elite approach is that it draws attention to the fact that it is the elites who make public policies. Consequently, when they do, they tend to reflect their values and preferences and that it is only a matter of coincidence if the policy



decisions of the elite reflect the interests of the masses, as they sometimes do.

### 1.3.2 Criticisms and Modifications of the Elite Approach

- a. The elite approach assumes a conspiratorial character and is to that extent a provocative theory of public policy and the political process. It is conspiratorial because of the underlying premise about elite consensus on fundamental norms of the social system which limits the choice of policy alternatives to only those which fall within the shared consensus. The theory is provocative because of the characterisation of the masses as passive, apathetic and ill-informed and the consequential relegation of their role in policymaking (Sambo, 1999). For instance, Pareto and Mosca (Mosca, 1939; Pareto, 1968) drew a sharp distinction between the elites and the masses and argued that the competence and energy of the elites made it possible for them to rule the unenterprising masses. Marger (1983) also renders the masses passive in their relationship with the elites when she stated that the elites “are able to impose on society as a whole their explanation and justification for the dominant political and economic systems.” However, these views of the elites and the masses are far from reality. For instance, as Key reminded us in his book *The Responsible Electorate*, there is a degree even if relatively low of the correspondence between the voter’s policy preferences and his reported presidential votes and concluded that the voter is not so irrational a fellow after all.
- b. Also, the classical elite theories have been criticized for their distrust for democracy and their insistence that (Mosca, 1939; Pareto, 1968), and of the possibility to maintain democratic institutions (Michels, 1959). However, the attractiveness of the elite approach in this version faded during the second half of the twentieth century as democracy, albeit in its imperfect versions became the dominant mode of governance in most worlds as recent elite studies, therefore, interpret elites within the democratic framework. Seen from these studies, elites and democracy are not incompatible, in fact, elite groups may even be instrumental to the establishment of democracy as they have done in various years (Burton & Higley, 1987; Bratton and van de Walle, 1997; Dogan & Higley, 1998).
- c. It is now becoming real that the replacement of autocratic forms of government by democracy requires that various elite group see it in their interest to relinquish immediate power and elaborate elite compromises. Thus to be preserved in the long run, democracy depends simultaneously on well- functioning elite network and popular support. As a consequence, studies of modern elites are simultaneously studies of social and political tensions between

democratic ideals and top-down decision making, between the various sector of the elites as well as between elites and citizens (Engelstad; 2007). In other words, elites do not disappear in democracy, but they acquire a new meaning. In more recent elite approach, Lijphart (1969); Putnam (1976); Higley and Burton (2006) elites are described as institutionally distinct, socially disparate and politically diverse groups of national leaders where mutual accommodation, compromises and consensus between these elite groups are seen as preconditions for the continuance and stability of democracies.

The significance of the elites in a democracy is that their ability to strike stable compromises depends not only on their internal relationship but also on the relationship between elites and the population at large. If the elites attempt to preserve or change the model independently of the opinions of the citizens, it may create mass level reactions which may curtail or abort the actions of the elites. Relatively open processes of recruitment to the elites may bring the attitudes and opinions of the elites more in line with those of the population. For instance, post-modern Liberalism in the 1980s developed a view that a key to the stability, survival and consolidation of democratic regimes is the establishment of substantial consensus among elites concerning rules of the democratic political game, the worth of democratic institutions, and the consolidation of democracy. Analytically, consolidated democracies can be thought of as encompassing specific elite and mass features.

First, all important elite groups and factions share a consensus about rules and codes of political conduct and the worth of political institutions, and they are unified structurally by extensive formal and informal networks that enable them to influence decision making and thereby defend and promote their factional interests peacefully (Higley and Moor; 1981). Second, there is extensive mass participation in the elections and other institutional processes that constitute procedural democracy. No segment of the mass population is arbitrarily excluded or prevented from mobilizing to express discontents and recourse to various corrupt practices that distort mass participation (Page & Shapiro, 1983). Thus, the concept of consolidated democracies highlights consensus among elites as the most important condition for the stability of the political system.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Does the critique of the Elite Approach really justify its implementation?

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

Many political scientists that have used the class analysis approach to see society in terms of material interests that are often irreconcilable by viewing society in terms of exploitation rather than accommodation between competing interests as the pluralists approach sees it. Thus, the state is not pluralistic in the sense of being a neutral arbiter but is a set of institutions existing independently of social forces and which at different stages in history will be controlled in the interest of a dominant economic class whether it be landed aristocracy in a feudal economy or industrial bourgeoisie of early capitalism or global capitalist in the age of economic globalisation. The pluralist approach plays down the significance of class divisions in society based on the assumption of the liberal democrats and pluralists that society may be disaggregated along occupational, gender, ethnic, or religious lines, but not into classes. The elite theory developed as an alternative paradigm to pluralism by rejecting the pluralist view concerning the distribution of power in society. In spite of their seeming differences, however, all the approaches emphasised the struggle over power in society. Both pluralist and elite theories assign to the government the role of a neutral umpire in the struggle among societal groups to reflect their interests in public policy while just like class analysis acknowledges the view of the state as a factor of cohesion where the state is involved in regulating struggles between antagonistic classes and using both repression and concession.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you learnt of three approaches with contrasting views of politics and the role of the state, including their perceived shortcomings. The approaches, just like some other approaches in political science inexorably came up with modified versions of the classical ones in order to make up for their identified shortcomings.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. According to Roberto Michels, “who says organisation says oligarchy”. Examine this statement within the context of democracy in Nigeria is not incompatible with oligarchy.
2. Critique the major contribution of the elite approach to Nigerian democracy.
3. The pluralist partisan mutual adjustment approach is a devastating blow to the expected proletarian struggle. Specifically, discuss this in relation to Nigerian civil servants and youth?
4. The modification of pluralism into neo-pluralism and corporatism did not change any fundamentals. Do you agree?
5. The History of Nigeria from 1999 till date is the history of the class, group, and elite’s convoluted struggle between the old, the

new, and the newly recruited. Discursively disagree with this with illustrations from Nigeria.

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## UNIT 5 RATIONAL CHOICE INSTITUTIONALISM

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### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

You will recall that in our first lecture on the normative approaches to political analysis, we stated that political science early focuses on institutions. Owing to the weakness of the early institutional approach, the new institutionalism emerged alongside the behavioural approach that was influential during the 1960s and 1970s. The new institutionalism is a disparate set of ideas with diverse disciplinary origins, analytic assumptions, and explanatory claims (Hall and Taylor, 1996; Koelble, 1995). Institutions are generally seen as the rules of the game or the humanly devised constraints to shape human interactions (North, 1990:3) where Actors' preferences and institutions are the raw materials (Van Hees, 1997). According to March and Olsen (1984:734), the need for a refocus on institutions became necessary because modern political science practically needs to explain the increasing complexities; hence, the focus on the *contextual* [emphasizing the social context of political behaviour and downgrading the importance of the state as an independent cause], *reductionist* [explaining politics as the outcome of individual actions], and lastly, it *utilitarian* focus [explaining individual actions as motivated by rational self-interest] (March and Olsen, 1984, pp. 736-7).

To the new institutionalism, political institutions [organs of government] should be more autonomous [separation of powers] with collections of standard operating procedures and structures that shape human interaction, define and defend interests (March and Olsen, 1984: 738) and that without them politics would not be organised- short step to the Hobbesian state of nature without rules and social organisation (North, 1990). To this approach, institutions are simply rules which formed the foundation of all political behaviour – formal and informal (constitutional rules and cultural norms respectively) and the key to understanding historical change. In all of these, with norms and rules, there are

consequently formal and or informal rights and obligations which facilitate exchange by allowing people to form stable and fairly reliable expectations about the actions of others (Hall and Taylor, 1996; Lane, 2000). This is because as institutions structure politics, it defines who can participate in a given political arena, shape the various actors' political strategies, and influences what these actors believe to be both possible and desirable. Following this background introduction, students are expected to know that there are three contending research and theoretical approaches within political science, which identify themselves as New Institutionalism today: Historical Institutionalism, Rational Choice Institutionalism, and Sociological Institutionalism (Hall and Taylor, 1996:936).

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

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

- Ñ highlight the key features of the rational choice institutionalists approach
- Ñ describe the contributions of Barry Weingast to the approach
- Ñ critique the rational choice approach.

## **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

### **3.1 Rational Choice Theory**

Rational choice approaches to politics have become an increasingly important branch of the discipline. They focus on politics being a response to the problem of collective action, which has applications both in the study of political institutions and processes and of international relations. Rational choice approaches start by making certain fundamental assumptions about human behaviour from which hypotheses or theories are deduced before being tested against facts in the real world. The assumptions are that human beings are essentially rational, utility maximisers who follow the path of action most likely to benefit them. This approach has been used in so-called 'game theory' where individual behaviour is applied to particular situations and has revealed how difficult it can be for rational individuals to reach optimal outcomes because of the existence of free-riders—actors who calculate that they can reap the benefits of collective action without paying any of the costs. In Political Science, the best-known application of this approach can be found in the fields of voting and party competition and in interest group politics. For rationalist scholars, the central goal is to uncover the laws of political behaviour and action and still hold the belief that once these laws are discovered, models can be constructed to help us understand and predict political behaviour. In their deductive model, rational choice scholars

look to the real world to see if their model is right (test the model) rather than look to the real world and then search for plausible explanations for the phenomenon they observe.

Rational choice institutionalists apply a deductive model of science where general principles and logics are invoked in terms of games (settlers, prisoner dilemma, tit-for-tat etc.), which may (or may not) be applied to particular historical events. In this regards, institutions are simply the rules of the game(s) where efforts are made to understand what the game is and how it is played (Steinmo; 2001). One of the features noted about institutions - no matter what the analytic perspective - is that institutions do not change easily as rational choice institutionalists view institutional equilibrium as the norm. They argue that the normal state of politics is one in which the rules of the game are stable and actors maximise their utilities (usually self-interest) given these rules. In effect, as actors learn the rules, their strategies adjust and thus an institutional equilibrium sets in. Consequent upon the above, although not everyone may be necessarily happy with the current institutional structure, a significant coalition is - or else it would not, by definition, be stable, and once stabilised it becomes very difficult to change the rules because no one can be certain what the outcomes of the new structure would be. This is because institutions shape strategies as new institutional rules imply new strategies throughout the system. Change thus implies enormous uncertainty especially as it is very difficult to calculate the effects of rule changes. In short, the rate of uncertainty implied by a new institutional structure makes actors unwilling to change the structure (Shepsle, 1986). In other words, people are afraid of changing the rules because it is difficult to know what will happen after the rules are changed.

Following from the preceding, it is significant for students to know that the major principle of the rational choice approach in political science is that, collective political behaviour is developed out of the behaviour of each individual actor where each makes decisions including what determine individual choices. In all of this, the assumption is that political actors' choices and interests are pursued rationally to ensure the greatest benefit with the least of cost. Cesare Beccaria was said to have originated the theory in Political Science in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and subsequently reviewed and developed by Gary Becker, Barry Weingast, among others.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

How true is the assertion by rationalist scholars that once laws are discovered models can be constructed that will help in understanding and predicting political behaviour?



### 3.2 Barry Weingast and Rational Theory

One of the most dominant rational choice institutionalists in recent time is Barry Weingast who took his time to work on rational choice theory. In his article, “Rational Choice Institutionalism”, Barry Weingast argues that the rational choice intuitionism provides an analytical framework for scholars to explore theoretical puzzles and conduct empirical research on a wide range of issues in political science. To Weingast, institutions are the ‘humanly created constraints on actions’- that is, actors interactions based on the “structure of information and beliefs of the actors, and payoffs to individuals and groups (Weingast, 2002: 661). The rational choice approach views institutions as formal and informal rules of the game. Formal rules of the game are official laws and rules, and informal institutions are the norms and conventions accepted by particular groups (North, 1990). In his study, Weingast presents two levels of analysis (exogenous and endogenous) of the rational choice institutionalism. The first level of analysis explores the effects of institutions. It examines the cause and effect mechanism of institutions, treating institutions as exogenous explanatory variable/variables. He argues that institutions shape the policy process as well as outcomes in numerous ways.

To buttress his argument, he uses formal and schematic examples like how various powers and institutional forms shape the legislative and executive balance of power policy and choices. This institutional and constitutional constraint is largely on the credible commitment of one organ to the other; however, the absence of such credible commitments can make one organ to be stronger than the other. The second level of analysis deals with the “endogenous choice of particular institutions”, that deals with the genesis and endurance of institutions. To shed light on the origins of institutions, Weingast argued that society or a group cannot do without institutions because “institutions exist to make cooperation sustainable” (Weingast, 2002: 670) and that in the absence of institutions, individuals may end up in situations where everyone is worse off. The main problem with any social exchange is that the parties to the exchange run into the problem of incentives where some individuals have short-term temptations not to cooperate. Analyzing the limitation of the conventional repeated prisoner’s dilemma, Weingast shows the need for institutions. The standard argument of the repeated prisoner’s dilemma is that although all players have a short run interest to cheat, they have long-run incentives to cooperate. However, dependence on repeated prisoner’s dilemma is not wholesomely useful, as it cannot prevent ‘common breakdowns’ such as wars, ethnic conflict, government and private opportunism, and other systematic failures arising from the attempt by a group to capture gains from cooperation (Weingast; 2002: 672).

But even at that, credible commitments do not emerge simply because institutions are in place to ensure cooperation rather it is only when institutions become self-enforcing that they can sustain cooperation. The democratic consolidation and rule of law example are illustrative. Using a game-theory approach to the problem of political officials' respect for political and economic rights of citizens, Weingast showed that democratic stability depends on a self-enforcing equilibrium: which must be in the interest of political officials to respect democracy's limits on their behaviour. Political officials will avoid violating the legitimate boundaries of the state because doing so risks losing power as "citizens hold these limits in high esteem that they are willing to defend them by withdrawing support from the sovereign when he tries to violate these limits" (Weingast, 1997, p.251). The sovereign's self-interest leads him to respect limits on his behaviour; that is, these limits are self-enforcing. Arguing further, Weingast noted, "one of the central features of limited government is the rule of law, a society of universalistic laws, not of discretionary political power because the law and political limits can be disobeyed or ignored, something beyond laws is necessary to prevent violations. To survive, the rule of law requires that limits on political officials be self-enforcing; but, "self-enforcement of limits depends on the complementary combinations of attitudes and reactions of citizens as well as institutional restrictions" (Ibid, 262). However, Weingast (1997:246) argues that "self-enforcing limits on the state result when members of a society resolve their coordination dilemmas about the appropriate limits on the state".

To buttress and recap the preceding, students are expected to know that the rational choice institutionalism of Barry Weingast is primarily the analysis of state institutions as explanations to supposed collective action problems as the characteristic and guarantee of rational choice institutions. Thus, according to him, "democracies with constitutions that place a constraint on government valued by citizens are more likely to survive because they are less likely to threaten their citizens. This implies that citizens do not resort to extra-constitutional means to defend themselves because constitutional institutions are enough to moderate the stakes of politics by creating self-enforcing limits on politics.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Given that the rational choice approach views institutions as formal and informal rules of the game using Weingast's exogenous and endogenous levels of analysis, examine the cause-effect mechanism of institutions as well as the genesis of institutions.

### 3.3 A Critique of the Rational Approach

There are at least four major criticisms of the rational choice institutionalism (RCI). First, it has been argued that the approach glosses over the impact of existing 'state capacities' and 'policy legacies' on subsequent policy choices (David Collier and Ruth Collier, 1991), that is, the approach gives little consideration to the way political institutions shape or structure political process and ultimately political outcomes (cf. Steinmo, Thelen et al. 1992). The second criticism is that it failed to emphasize the way(s) in which past lines of policy condition and how societal forces are organized along some lines rather than others, to adopt particular identities, or to develop interests in policy that are costly to shift (Hall and Taylor, 1996). For instance, in an analysis of the present development challenges of African States, RCI does downplay the impact of historical exigencies in shaping the development paths of these states. Yet as we have been reminded by Ekeh (1980) and Falola (2005), an analysis of the role of the enduring legacies of colonialism and its epochal consequences is apt if we must properly grasp the present form and depth of Africa's development challenges. One fact that students must consider is that history and culture are largely or completely made unconnected to comprehending political behaviour let alone development challenges. What this means is that better understanding of present and future problems including knowing the contradictions, etc. if any, are not encouraged by this approach.

Seen from this perspective, institutions are not the only important variables for understanding political outcomes. Quite the contrary, institutions are intervening variables (or structuring variables) through which battles over interest, ideas and power are fought. Institutions are important both because they are the focal points of much political activity and because they provide incentives and constraints for political actors that structure activity. In other words, rather than being neutral boxes in which political fights take place as the rational choice institutionalists want us to believe, institutions actually structure the political struggle itself. Institutions can thus also be seen as the points of a critical juncture in a historical path analysis because political battles are fought inside institutions and over the design of future institutions. However, it is important to underscore the fact which the rational choice institutionalists failed to acknowledge, and which is that, institutions- both as structures and as rules, no matter how perfect they may be, political dynamics usually determine when they function or kept in abeyance.

Thirdly, the rational choice institutionalism can be criticised for given scant attention to informal rules of the game such as traditions, culture and other informal ways of interaction which also constraint the behaviour of actors, especially where formal rules of the game are not

credible. By excessively focusing on formal rules, norms and procedures, the rational choice institutionalism gloss over the fact that institutions also include symbol systems, cognitive scripts, and moral templates that provide the 'frames of meaning' guiding human action and that both the concepts of 'institutions' and 'culture' are not poles apart but rather intermesh and shade into each other (Scott, 1995). Further, the rational choice institutionalism discourse of institutional reform is capable of great mystification and obscurantism. It can conceal the values, interests and agenda that are being served. Finally, the RCI has been criticised for its over-reliance on statistical models, its "fixation on quantitative tools" (Gunawardena-Vaughn, 2000,) and "the mathematisation of political science" (Miller, 2001) and that by doing so, it has made political science trivial and disconnected from "great political issues" and the "real world" to researchers' (see Kremer, 2001; Gunawardena-Vaughn, 2000; Parenti, 2006). In spite of all these weaknesses, however, the rational choice institutionalism retains essential strength in its account of strategic behaviour by purposive agents under structural constraints, of the aggregation of interests, of the distribution and exercise of power, and of the social construction of political rationality – and its ability to combine and recombine these elements and mobilize them into theoretically sound causal explanations of a wide range of political phenomena. (Lieberman, 2002, p. 699).

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The rational choice approach uses deductive models of human interactions based on the assumption that individuals are self-interested rational actors. From its humble origins, the rational choice approach has become one of the approaches in the study of politics, most especially in the USA. Briefly, US is one country that lay so much claim that its institutions are rational, neutral, strong, and exemplary, yet today in the 21st century America, institutions because they are controlled by men [politicians] and men have surviving instinct and interest, of course, they subordinate state institutions to serve personal interest as has been the experience under Donald Trump Presidency. On the whole, in spite of its success and attractions the approach has been criticised for glossing over the role of state capacities, history, and culture in politics and political behaviour; and for its over-reliance on statistical models, and quantification.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit, students have learnt the rational choice institutionalist approach as one of the important variants of the broader new institutional approach. We have highlighted the contributions of Barry Weingast, one of the prominent scholars within the rational choice approach. Finally, we

have also examined the criticisms of the rational choice theory using insights, especially, from the two other variants of new institutionalism, namely, the historical institutionalism and sociological institutionalism.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Discuss the contributions of Barry Weingast to rational choice institutionalism within the context of history and culture being irrelevant to understanding political behaviour.
2. Attempt a critique of the rational choice institutionalism within the claim that the US institutions are strong, rational, neutral, and exemplary using the relationship between White House and the Congress under Trump Administration. You may wish to draw illustrations from the impeachment of Donald Trump by the House of Representative and the sacking of officials of the state that testified during the proceedings.
3. The greatest contribution of RCI is its emphasis on individuals as self-interested rational actors. With examples from Nigeria's political history, evaluate the roles of political leaders in shaping political and economic outcomes in Nigeria between 2010 and 2020.

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## **MODULE 3                      POLITICAL SYSTEMS, POLITICAL PROCESSES AND POLITICAL ACTION**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The political system, political process and, sure enough, political action are crucial subjects of study for political science. Government process of decision making, the institution and leadership charged with the responsibility for public policy and attaining the needed purpose cannot be achieved without possessing the power, authority, and legitimacy to so do. This module is an examination of the shared values and normative judgments including internalised perceptions that influences individuals, group and institutions in the political system. The module is made up of five units from which the discussion proceeded.

Unit 1	Political Systems' Legitimacy: Power, Authority and Legitimacy
Unit 2	Political Culture
Unit 3	Political Socialisation
Unit 4	Political Participation and Representation
Unit 5	Political Party and Pressure Group

### **UNIT 1            POLITICAL SYSTEMS' LEGITIMACY: POWER, AUTHORITY AND IDEOLOGY**

#### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 What is Political Power?
  - 3.2 Types of Power
  - 3.3 Authority
    - 3.3.1 Difference between Power and Authority
  - 3.4 Max Weber's Typology of Authority
  - 3.5 Ideology
    - 3.5.1 Functions of Ideology
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment



## 7.0 References/Further Reading

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

All regimes, regardless of the type – democratic, monarchic, oligarchic, dictatorship, and military, etc., all political systems seek legitimacy. Legitimacy is the tacit or explicit support of the regime by its people, usually an emotional identification with the regime. The regime is legitimate when people believe that institutional structures of the government are the most appropriate for society (Kelly, 2008). Beyond Kelly's acceptability theory, students should note that legitimacy is also about its legality, fair-mindedness, and problem-solving. It is of course the combination of these that make up legitimacy. Again, the realisation of political systems legitimacy could largely be dependent on power and authority. Thus, in this unit, we shall discuss some of the key issues related to legitimacy in political systems.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

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

- define the concept of political power, authority, and legitimacy
- identify the types of power
- differentiate between power and influence and power and authority
- identify Max Weber's typology of authority
- define ideology and identify its functions in a political system.

### 1.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 What is Political Power?

Karl Mark conceived power within the context of economic domination by the ruling class against the working class proletariat. For Max Weber, "power is the possibility of imposing one's will upon the behaviour of other persons" (Gerth and Mills; 1946). To him, power involves domination – a reciprocal relationship between the rulers and the ruled in which the actual frequency of compliance is only one aspect of the fact that the power of command exists. Lasswell and Kaplan (1950) define power as a special case of the exercise of influence. It is the process of affecting the policies of others with the help of (actual or threatened) severe deprivations for nonconformity with the policies intended. Herbert Simon considers power as an asymmetrical relation between the behaviour of two persons (Simon, 1965). For Amitai

Etzioni, power is a “capacity to overcome part or all of the resistance to introduce changes in the face of opposition (and this includes sustaining a course of action or preserving a status quo that would otherwise be discontinued or altered)” (Etzioni, 1970). For Robert Dahl, power is the product of human relationships, for instance, where A has power over B to the extent that he (A) can get B to do something that he would not otherwise do. So, a person may be said to have power to the extent he influences the behaviour of others in accordance with his intentions (Dahl, 1957; 1991). What Dahl failed to tell us is whether the behaviour consistent with the intention of the influencer is positive or negative and in whose interest. To Patrick Wilmot (1985:124), “power is central to politics and defined in terms of the probability of decisions being effective and goals being achieved”. The major preceding implication of these definitions as the quality of power is that power is applied in social relation.

Thus, power is primarily exercised over men and not over nature or things (Etzioni, 1970). The other quality is that power is the ability to get things done, to make others do what we want, even if they do not want to do it. Second, in any power situation, there is always some feedback from the influence to the influencer. This is what Carl Friedrich has described as “the rule of anticipated reactions” (Friedrich; 1963). This refers to a situation in which “one actor, B, shapes his/her behaviour to conform to what he believes are the desires of another actor, A, without having received explicit messages about A’s wants or intentions from A or A’s agents” (Friedrich, *ibid.*). Third, a variety of means can be used to persuade people to do things, but power always has as its base the ability to reward or punish. A sanction is a reprisal for disobedience to command with punitive intent. It may be either deprivation of values already possessed or an obstruction to the attainment of values which would have been realised were it not for the punitive intervention of the power-holder. A sanction may be a physical loss- beating, confinement etc. or a nonphysical loss- fining, confiscation, removal from office, ridicule, etc., (Goldhamer and Shills; 1965). Fourth, power is also relative. The main problem is not to determine the existence of power but to make comparisons. To say that the power of A is greater than the power of B, there must be agreement as to the operational definition of the term power and the operational means that are to be used to determine the degree of its presence or absence in any situation (Anifowose; 1999). Fifth, the most powerful people in the community may be those who remain behind the scenes and the issues which are raised, rather than those who openly participate in settling issues. Sixth, power is not something that only exists at a national level; so it does exist at the international level with elements of state power like physical geography, demography, resources, technological prowess, military, and quality of leadership.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

How do the features of power justify a reciprocal relationship between the rulers and the ruled is compliance that the power of command exists?

### 3.2 Types of Power

Three major types of power may be distinguished in terms of the type of influence brought to bear on the subordinated individual. These are force, domination and manipulation. To begin with, **force** is the use of raw might by a power-holder to exercises power when he/she influences behaviour by physical manipulation of the subordinated individual (assault, confinement, etc.). **Domination** – is connected and identical with “authoritarian power of command” (Gerth and Mills, 1946). However, for domination to be present there must be an individual who rules or a group of rulers; an individual who is ruled or a group that is ruled; the will of the rulers to influence the conduct of the ruled and an expression of the will (or a Command); evidence of the influence of the rulers in terms of the objective degree of compliance with the command; direct or indirect evidence of that influence in terms of the objective acceptance with which the ruled obey the command (Goldhamer and Shills, 1965). For **Manipulation**, it is when a power-holder control or influences the behaviour of others in a manner that is secretive and unfair without making explicit the behaviour which he/she wants them to perform. Manipulation may be exercised by utilising symbols of performing acts while propaganda is a major form of manipulation by symbols (Gerth and Mills, 1946). Attempted domination may meet with obedience or disobedience- the motivation for obedience and disobedience is instrumental to the extent that it is based on an anticipation of losses and gains. In effect, if the attempt of a person to exercise power fails, the power act may be followed by a sanction (Goldhamer and Shills, Op.cit).

Power and influence have something in common, and according to Robert Dahl (1957; 1991), influence is “a relation among actors such that the wants, desires, preferences, or intentions of one or more actors affect the actions, or predisposition to act, of one or more other actors. There is often little practical difference between power and influence. One person influences another within a given scope to the extent that the first without resorting to either a tacit or an overt threat of severe deprivations can cause the second to change his/her course of action. Hence, power and influence are very difficult to measure because of the presence of feedback. This suggests that the power of every person is limited in crucial ways, that is, no human power is absolute, in other words, no one possesses unlimited power -even leaders at

the apex of power, whether in democracy, military, monarchy or otherwise. In sum, power and influence are alike in that each has both rational and relational attributes. They differ, however, in that the exercise of power depends upon potential sanctions, while the exercise of influence does not (Anifowose, 1999).

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Based on the rational and relational attributes of power and influence explain the fact that the exercise of power depends upon potential sanctions, while the exercise of influence does.

### 3.3 Authority

Authority is said to be the quality of being able to get people to do things because they think the individual or group has the right to tell them what to do. In effect, those in authority are followed because it is believed that they fulfil a need within the community or political system; hence, should be obeyed. Authority, then, is linked to respect, which creates legitimacy and therefore leads to power. Legitimate power or influence is generally called authority. It is power clothed with legitimacy. It is the authentic form of power based on consent, voluntary obedience and persuasion (Leslie, 1993). Legitimacy is the belief in the rightness of an individual to make authoritative, binding decisions. It is the belief in the right to give commands and the right to be obeyed. All governments need authority for people to accept their right to make decisions in the same way legitimacy is also needed. Mathematically, **Power + Legitimacy = Authority**. According to Patrick Wilmot (1985:124), authority is the probability that exercise of power will accept as right, legitimate, and just. Following from this, there are considerable disadvantages for a government which depends mainly upon the use of force to maintain control. In the long run, all people in positions of power need to recognise the use of their positions as legitimate (rightful) by those over whom they have power. Thus, according to Crick (1978), probably, all governments require some capacity for or the potentiality of force or violence, but probably no government can maintain itself through time as distinct from defence and attack at specific moments, without legitimatizing itself in some way, getting itself loved, respected, even just accepted as inevitable, otherwise it would need constant recourse to open violence which is rarely the case.

### 3.3.1 Difference between Power and Authority

What demarcates authority from power is that the former is power/influence recognised as rightful while authority is a government that all accept as valid. Its exercise is therefore sanctioned by those who approve the particular act or agent and is tolerated by those who disapprove. Confronted with power, the citizens have a choice whether to support or oppose, and confronted with authority, it is their duty to obey. Resistance to power is lawful but resistance to authority is unlawful. Power is naked; authority is power clothed in the garments of legitimacy because it is founded on consent (Lipson, 1993).

Those who oppose the government may have to submit to the decisions of power, that is, governmental decisions; but submission is different from acquiescence; and surely, the imperatives of power may secure compliance; but this is not the same as allegiance. The mood of authority is distinctive because it expresses itself imperatively in a categorical way, in other words, the language of authority is different from the language of power and influence. Individuals, who are in an institutional position to use the language of authority to issue commands, orders, directives etc., to their subordinates, can usually also use the languages of power and influence to threaten a subordinate or promise to recommend him for a promotion (Anifowose; 1999). Thus, underlying their authority is both power and influence. However, not all power is strictly coercive. If positive inducements are combined with severe sanctions to bring about the action desired, the relationship is one of power but not of coercion in the strict sense. Equally important is the fact that the obedience of the ruled is guided to some extent by the idea that the rulers and their commands constitute a legitimate order of an authority. This is what J. J. Rousseau meant when he stated that “the strongest is never strong enough to be always the master unless he transforms strength into right and obedience into duty” (cf. Fasuba; 1978).

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Explain how resistance to power is lawful but resistance to authority is unlawful if an authority is linked to respect, which creates legitimacy and therefore leads to power.

### 3.4 Max Weber's Typology of Authority

A German political sociologist, Max Weber, identified three (3) ideal types of authority to include traditional, legal-rational, and charismatic. These are explained thus: **Traditional:** The belief of this type is that legitimacy of authority has always existed; hence, people support the regime out of habit

and custom. Rulers exercising the power of command are masters who enjoy personal authority by virtue of their inherited status. Their command is legitimate in the sense that they are in accord with custom or tradition but they possess the prerogative of free personal decision so that conformity with custom and personal arbitrariness are both characteristics of such rule. Weber says that this is the type of authority that is typical of simpler, pre-industrial societies. **Legal Rational** is the type of authority based on a system of rules applied judicially and administratively where rulers are superiors, appointed or elected by legally sanctioned procedures oriented toward the maintenance of the legal order. The governments of many countries have authority because they were elected by a legal process and because they work within the law of the land. They are constitutional governments. This type of authority is typical of modern nations. **Charismatic** is the support people give a regime because of emotional identification with the personality of the leader of the regime by virtue of magical power, revelations, heroism, or other extraordinary gifts or personal attributes such as eloquence. The persons who obey such a leader are disciples or followers who believe in his/her extraordinary qualities rather than in stipulated rules or in the dignity of a position sanctioned by tradition. Charisma is very rare and hence, societies with charismatic leaders often have difficulties replacing them. Each of Max Weber's authority type leads to its own peculiar regime legitimacy, and by implication, the type of regime legitimacy influences political stability. However, let it said that in reality, there is usually the combination of the three Weber's authority model in one political system

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Without adequate authority, a state is subject to disorder and weakness in accordance with the existing types of authority.

### 3.5 Ideology

Another legitimating quality in political systems is an ideology - an explicit set of values that orients people in society in terms of what they can expect from government and what government should do for them and society. Ideology as a social belief and meaningful system, it usually forms the basis of social, economic and political programmes. In other words, it not only speaks to human nature but the role of government in society and the relationship between politics and economics. Similarly, each ideology has its sacred documents and programme of action for realizing its agenda for society. It has its beliefs referring specifically to social and/or political structure and requires high affective identification, loyalty, and commitment. While ideology may undergo slow changes in its tenets, it is resistant to

fundamental alterations in its world view (Webb, 1995). There are many other variations of ideologies which have existed or still exist, for example, communism, capitalism, conservatism, liberalism and socialism etc. In societies where democracy has taken root, if any, and become firmly consolidated, political parties are delineated by their ideologies. However, let it be said that there is no distinct ideology anywhere in the world as it were as claimed in the 19th and 20th centuries. Today, in countries like the US, there is no honest ideological distinction between the Democrats and the Republican; in other words, there is a blend of ideologies in the traditional usage all over the world.

In Nigeria, it is often heard that political parties are not delineated ideologically or Nigeria is not an ideological country. However, this may not be correct if the meaning of ideology is linked to what people actually and not what they profess to do. The argument here is that what unites many politicians in Nigeria today is not party ideology so to speak but self-interests that are driven by entrenched corruption. But the question is: can self-interest be an ideology? A question like this has made some scholars argue that what a country or leaders repeatedly do to influence governance and development—whether negatively or positively, is ideology even it is not well crafted into a document. If this is any guide, countries where corruption is a national pastime and a legitimating tool, of course, corruption can be said to be their ideology. For instance, when the majority of a country's political elites are at home with a primitive and greedy accumulation of wealth while still constantly working against anti-corruption, will it be logical to consider corruption as an ideology or reigning ideology the same way anticorruption can also be an ideology? In any case, and whatever is thought of ideology, students should be able to know that ideology can be a cultural system, belief system, a determinant of policy, false consciousness or false class consciousness, and a tool for problem-solving.

### **3.5.1 Functions of Ideology**

In line with the above summations, it is pertinent to note according to Enemuo (1999) that ideology serves as a legitimating tool in a political system. It provides leaders with the legitimacy to govern, promote social coherence, facilitate conflict management, a guide to policy choice and assessment of conduct, and a dynamic tool and framework for making policy choices by the government and the parameters for assessing the conduct of officials and the performance of government, and of course, provides an explanation of reality to its adherents and seeks to motivate them to action.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Corruption is an ideology when it is a legitimation and a reigning legitimating tool. Discuss.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

This unit argued that all regimes seek legitimacy because it makes people believe that institutional structures of the government are the most appropriate for society. You also learnt that authority is the quality of being able to get people to do things because they think the individual or group has the right to tell them what to do, while power is explained as involving domination – without legitimacy. We also argued that ideology is what a country or leaders show commitment to and used as a legitimating tool when it becomes a value system.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, we have examined the concept of political power; types of power, the differentiating features between power, authority and influence as well as the role ideology plays in a political system.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Discuss the mathematical formula: Power + Legitimacy = Authority.
2. Describe how ideology legitimates a political system.
3. Corruption is an ideology in Africa. Discuss.

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## **UNIT 2     POLITICAL CULTURE**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 What is Political Culture and Foundations of Political Culture?
  - 3.2 The Objects of Political Orientation
  - 3.3 Types of Political Culture and Gabriel Almond and Sydney Verba's Civic Culture
  - 3.4 Arend Lijphart Classification of Political Culture and Neopatrimonial Political Culture
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In Unit 1, we looked at power, authority, and ideology as three key activities which have important implications for any political systems' legitimacy. However, these political processes are not all that matter in the understanding of a political system's legitimacy. An understanding of a society's political culture is also important in our understanding of political systems' legitimacy. But political culture is more than a system legitimating instrument. As several scholars have noted, one political system can be distinguished from another not only by its structures but also by the political culture in which the structures are found (See Wiseman, 1966; Almond and Verba; 1963). In other words, the general working of the political system is very much affected by the political culture in which such institutions function. Political cultures create a framework for political change and are unique to states, and other groups. But what exactly do we mean by political culture? In Unit 1, the importance of political culture for regime legitimation was highlighted while this unit will discuss elaborately the concept of political culture, its importance and dynamics in the political system.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

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

- define political culture
- highlight the foundations of political culture

- identify the objects of political orientation
- identify and describe the different types of political culture: the civic culture, consociational culture, and the neo-patrimonial culture.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 What is Political Culture?**

Various definitions of political culture have been offered by many scholars and to begin with, Roy Macridis (1961), political culture is the “commonly shared goals and commonly accepted rules.” Dennis Kavanagh defines it as a shorthand expression to denote the set of values within which the political system operates (Kavanagh, 1993). Lucian Pye describes it as “the sum of the fundamental values, sentiments and knowledge that give form and substance to the political process”. Samuel Beer (1958) says it is one of the four variables crucial to the analysis of political systems. According to him, the components of the culture are values, beliefs and emotional attitudes about how government ought to be conducted and also about what it should do. Almond and Powell defined political culture as “the pattern of individual attitudes and orientations toward politics among the members of a political system,” (Almond and Powell, 1966). The basic distinction developed is that between “secularised” and non-secularized political cultures. The former is characterised by “pragmatic, empirical orientations,” and a “movement from diffuseness to specificity” of orientations. Individuals who are part of a secular political culture deal with others in terms of universalistic criteria as against considerations arising from diffuse societal relationships such as those of tribe caste or family (Almond and Powell, *ibid.*) They are aware that institutions have specific functions and orient themselves to institutions in these terms (Almond and Powell, *ibid.*).

Further, secularised, i.e., modern, political cultures are characterised by bargaining and accommodative patterns of political action which are relatively open, in that values are subject to change in the basis of new experience. Modern states in which “rigid” ideological politics continue to play a substantial role are those in which, for some reason, “the bargaining attitudes associated with full secularization” have failed to develop (Almond and Powell, *ibid.*, 58-59). For Robert Dahl (1966, cf. Babawale, 1999), he singled out political culture as a factor explaining different patterns of political opposition in a political system. The salient elements of the culture for Dahl (cf. Babawale, *ibid.*) are: Orientations of problem-solving- are they pragmatic or rationalistic? Orientations to collective action- are they cooperative or noncooperative? Orientations to the political system- are they

allegiant or alienated? Orientations to other people: are they trustful or mistrustful?

### **3.1.1 Foundations of Political Culture**

According to Johari (2006:224), political culture “is composed of attitudes, beliefs, emotions and values of the society that relates to the political system and political issues”. According to Babawale (1999), a political culture, whether diverse or homogenous, is a product of many factors such as geography, historical development and experiences (coups, civil war, revolutions), diversity of a nation’s population (ethnicity, language and religion) pattern of traditional norms and practices as well as varying levels of socioeconomic development and socialization processes. Sub-cultural variations may hinder the development of national political culture. In order to overcome the problem arising from this, there is need for cultural transformation. This involves changes in the values and attitudes of the people and the emergence of shared orientations. Political culture is not static but will respond to new ideas generated from within the political system, imported or imposed from outside. Japan provides a good illustration of a state subject to such internal and external pressures resulting in rapid changes in the political culture of its people. Among the facilitators of change in the political culture of a nation are the processes of industrialisation, urbanization, massive investment in education, the mass media, mass political mobilisation (through political parties and democratisation processes) as well as the creation of symbolic elements such as national heroes and political leadership, lingua franca, national flags and national anthems, national public events and popular national constitutions. All these can foster the spirit of emotional attachment and loyalty to the nation thereby engendering national pride and unity.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Political culture as a concept explains different patterns of political opposition in a political system. Explain.

### **3.2 The Objects of Political Orientation**

Political culture may also be seen as the overall disposition of the citizens’ orientations to political objects, this is because orientations are predispositions to political action and are determined by such factors as traditions, historical memories, motives, emotions and symbols. These orientations may be broken down into three, namely, Cognitive Orientation (i.e. knowledge of, awareness and beliefs about the political system, its roles,

its inputs and outputs); Affective Orientations (emotions and feelings about political objects); and Evaluative Orientation (judgment about political objects). The objects of these subjective orientations involve three objective dimensions of political life, namely, system, process and policies. Thus, Almond and Verba (1956) identified the objects of political orientation to include the general political system about which members may, for example, feel either patriotism or alienation; that it is large, small, strong, weak, democratic, autocratic, constitutional etc. The second objects are the component parts of the political system – legislature, executive, bureaucracy, judiciary, the political leaders, such as monarchs, presidents, party leaders, public policies, etc. The third objects are the orientation towards the self as a political actor, and this includes a sense of obligation, competence, performance value, anticorruption value, etc.

### **3.3 Types of Political Culture: Gabriel Almond and Sydney Verba's Civic Culture**

In 1963, the “Civic Culture” project of Almond and Verba was considered groundbreaking for social sciences as a first attempt to systematically collect and codify variables measuring citizen's participation across five different states. Those variables, based on cross-sectional surveys, measured the qualities used for assessing the degree of political participation of citizens in the United States, Mexico, Great Britain, Germany and Italy. Through their project, Almond and Verba wanted to create a theory of civic culture - a political culture explaining the political involvement of citizens or lack thereof in democratic states. In their work, the authors discussed the historical origins of the civic culture and the functions of that culture in the process of social change. They compared and contrasted the patterns of political attitudes in the five countries and contended that, across states, a democratic system required a political culture encouraging political participation. The theory employed by Almond and Verba was based on Harold Lasswell's personality characteristics of a ‘democrat’ including the following features: “open ego” (a warm and inclusive attitude toward other human beings; a capacity for sharing values with others; a multivalued rather than a single-valued orientation; trust and confidence in the human environment; and relative freedom from anxiety. The authors used a methodology of experimentation rather than inferring a theory from the institutional systems prevalent in the discussed states in order to make a valid contribution to the scientific theory of democracy.

In their research, Almond and Verba asked if there is such a thing as a political culture: a pattern of political attitudes that fosters democratic stability. They concluded that civic culture is a mixed political culture:

individuals are not always perfectly active or passive as Almond and Verba struggled with the discrepancy between the participants' actual behaviour, their perceptions and political obligations. They also questioned the socialization of the citizenry into the civic culture and asserted that civic culture is not taught in school. Rather, it is transmitted by a complex process that includes training in many social institutions: family, peers, school, work, and the political system itself through which socialization occurs through the direct exposure to the civic culture itself and to the democratic polity. In order to preempt criticism, Almond and Verba stressed that their research did not carry the explanatory power for creation of the civic culture in the newly-created nations; this question was beyond the scope of their research. However, they did not refrain from attempting to speculate on this question based on the cases they studied, thus, the civic culture emerged in the West as a result of a gradual political development (based on history and characteristics of the civic culture). Finally, they developed a fusion of new patterns of attitudes, merged with the old ones and by so doing came up with three types of citizen's orientation. These are:

- a. **Parochial:** Political sleepwalker, not involved, no knowledge or interest in the domestic political system. Here citizens are only remotely aware of the presence of central government and live their lives near enough regardless of the decisions taken by the state. Distant and unaware of political phenomena, citizens with a parochial political culture have neither knowledge nor interest in politics. This type of political culture is in general congruent with a traditional political structure.
- b. **Subject:** Where citizens are aware of the central government and are heavily subjected to its decisions with little scope for dissent. The individual is aware of politics, its actors and institutions. It is affectively oriented towards politics, yet he/she is on the "downward flow" side of the politics. In general, this type of political culture is congruent with a centralized authoritarian structure.
- c. **Participant:** Possessing a strong sense of influence, competence and confidence in understanding the domestic political system. Here citizens can influence the government in various ways and they are affected by it. The individual is oriented toward the system as a whole, to both the political and administrative structures and processes (to both the input and output aspects). The participant political culture is in general congruent with a democratic political structure.

However, Babawale (1999) advised that we should be cautious in taking the above categorization of political culture as mutually exclusive or existing in isolation. According to him, no political culture fits perfectly into any of

these three types. Rather, each is mixed, made up of different proportions of parochial, subject and participant attitudes. The relative prevalence of each type determines the kind of political culture which exists in a nation. Theoretically, in a developed democratic political-system, dominant values may emphasize participation, the idea that common people are rational and intelligent enough to participate, that they can trust other citizens, that interest groups are legitimate and that governors gain their privilege of governing and decision making only from the consent of the governed. These kinds of values set limits to government and spell out relations between the governed and the governors. Also, there may be fragmentation in the political culture of a nation, that is, political culture may not be the same throughout the entire population because no nation has a homogeneous political culture. Even within specific groups within a nation, there are sub-cultures alongside the dominant political culture because most nations' political cultures are heterogeneous. Where differences between one group and others are marked, there is said to exist a political subculture, for instance, in Nigeria, there is no predominant political culture as the various ethnic groups inherently constitute different political sub-cultural groups. They all exhibit cohesive political cultures of their own which are very different from each other and which resist amalgamation into a Nigerian whole (Babawale, 1999).

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

With specific illustrations, explain the mix-up of different proportions of parochial, subject and participant attitudes of the political culture in relation to the Change Agenda of the Buhari Administration.

### **3.3 Arend Lijphart Classification of Political Culture**

Following the conclusion of the civic culture which attracted varied criticisms by some political scientists, foremost among these is Arend Lijphart who analysed politics in the Netherlands and argued that the Netherlands's political system is more stable than the one in the USA. According to Lijphart, there are different classifications of political culture-political culture of masses and the political culture of the elite(s) with further classification based on structure- homogenous and heterogeneous. Based on his research, Lijphart classified the political culture of the elite into coalitional and contradictory while the consociative or consociational model was developed in Lijphart's groundbreaking work: *The Politics of Accommodation: Pluralism and Democracy in the Netherlands* (1968) and elaborated in his later works (1969, 1977, 1985, 1991, 1995, and 1996). The key element in Lijphart's consociational model is elite cooperation. The political stability of consociational democracies is explained by the



cooperation of elites from different groups which transcend cleavages at the masses level (Lijphart, 1977:16). Related to this element are four important defining features of the consociational model. The first is executive power-sharing where each of the main groups shares in executive power in a grand coalition government while the other basic elements of the consociational model are: (1) the application of *proportionality principle* in office distribution and revenue allocation, (2) autonomy or self-government for each group, particularly in matters of cultural concern; and (3) veto rights that would enable each group to prevent changes that adversely affect their vital interests (Lijphart, 1977:25).

The consociational model explains democratic stability in such “culturally fragmented” and “divided” European societies as the Netherlands, Austria, Belgium, and Switzerland. Lijphart argued that democratic stability in these countries is a product of the deliberate efforts by the political elites to “counteract the immobilizing and unstabilizing effects of cultural fragmentation” (Lijphart, 1968:212). However, scholars have contested the classification of some of the European countries as consociational democracies. One of the most systematic critiques was written by Brian Barry in 1975. He insists that Switzerland, for example, is not an example of consociational democracy because, in the first place, the country was never a deeply divided society since political parties cross-cut cleavages and facilitate “consensus rather than a highly structured conflict of goals” (Barry, 1975:501). Again, he argues that the institutions of a referendum and popular initiative in Switzerland contradict the tenets of consociational decision making (Barry 1975:486).

### 3.3.1 Neopatrimonial Political Culture

Following the various classifications done in some European countries, scholars also began to characterise developing countries such as Nigeria as having a neo-patrimonial political culture. These scholars maintain that the distinctive characteristic of the political culture which informs the complexion of the political regimes in countries is a hybrid of the legal-rational and the concept of neo-patrimonialism. It is argued that in countries where neo-patrimonial relationships play out there is a key and structure-forming role both in the determination of the rules of “political games” and in the operation of the political system as a whole. Neo-patrimonial systems are hybrid in that they share the features of both of Weber’s (Weber, 1964 and 1978) rational-legal bureaucratic systems and patrimonial systems (Theobald, 1982; Bratton and van de Walle, 1994; van de Walle, 2001). Erdmann and Engel (2007:104) reiterate this argument thus: “the term clearly is a post-Weberian invention and, as such, creative mix of two Weberian

types of domination: a traditional subtype, patrimonial domination, and rational-legal bureaucratic domination.” Erdmann and Engel went further to state that “under neopatrimonialism, the distinction between the private and the public, at least formally, exists and is accepted, and public reference can be made to this distinction” (Erdmann and Engel, 2007:104). Thus the distinction between what constitutes a public sphere and a private sphere exists in theory. However, this distinction is blurred in practice hence the argument that neo-patrimonial systems are characterised by the privatisation of public affairs (Médard, 1982) with corruption and patron-client relationships being endemic in these societies. Claude Ake (1996) in his book, *Democracy and Development in Africa* did say that “what is public is privatised, and what is private is publicized”.

The concept neo-patrimonial has become a widely accepted concept in the African studies literature and many have argued that the concept encapsulates the nature of political and administrative behaviour in Africa (Médard, 1982; Bratton and van de Walle, 1994; Englebert, 2000; van de Walle, 2001; Erdmann and Engel, 2007). Writers such as Englebert (2000) and van de Walle (2001) have drawn on the concept to explain why Africa has been saddled with economic and political crises with Le Vine (1980) even suggesting that there is a distinct neo-patrimonial system in Africa called ‘Africa patrimonialism’. Boas (2001) attributed conflicts in Africa especially the civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone to the persistency of neo-patrimonial systems. Taylor and Williams (2008:137) argue that in Sub-Saharan Africa “...the dominant political culture can be characterized as neo-patrimonial, that is, systems based on personalized structures of authority where patron-client relationships operate behind a façade of ostensibly rational state bureaucracy”. According to its proponents, the neo-patrimonial culture leads to a particular kind of state in Africa. The neo-patrimonial culture is characterised by among other things patronage, clientelism, and corruption. Erdmann and Engel (2007) argue that clientelism which involves the transfer of public goods and services by the ‘big man’ (patron) to the ‘small man’ (client) for political favours is based on personal relations. Patronage, on the other hand, is “the politically motivated distribution of favours not to individuals but essentially to groups, which in the African context will be mainly ethnic or sub-ethnic groups” (Erdmann and Engel, 2007:107).

In states labelled neo-patrimonial or hybrid, real power and real decision-making lie outside formal institutions. Instead, decisions about resources are made by ‘big men’ and their cronies who are linked by ‘informal’ (private and personal, patronage and clienteles) networks that exist outside (before, beyond and despite) the state structure, and who follow a logic of personal

and particularistic interest rather than national betterment. These networks reach from the very connecting the big man, MPs, chiefs, party officials, and government bureaucrats to villagers. Accordingly, the foundation of neo-patrimonial regimes is the patron-client relationship in the neo-patrimonial system, the individual national leader controls the political and economic life of the country, and the personal clientelistic relationships with the leader play a crucial role in amassing personal wealth or in the rise and decline of members of the political elite. In this kind of political culture, corruption is rampant because private and public funds are co-mingled by those in power. Though there are differences between regimes, their overarching logic is to gain and retain power at all costs. In such circumstances, policy decisions about development and governance are subordinated to that single, overriding goal. The idea of democracy – acceptance of a ‘loyal opposition’, a tolerance of dissent, effective checks and balances, a rotation of parties to power through fair elections, a vocal and organised public – is anathema if these result in the big man and his associates being ousted from office (see Chabal and Daloz, (1999); Bratton and van de Walle (1997).

However, the concept of neopatrimonialism has been criticized by some scholars of the “radical political economy school” who have pointed out the uncritical use of the concept (Mustapha, 2002). Their criticism comes down to the reproach that it is part of the “neo-liberal project” of Western scholars who use it as an ideology to affirm the superiority of Western cultures above that of Africa and that at best, the thesis is as much about the prejudices of the authors than the problem of culture (Mustapha, 2002). Arguing in the same manner, Theobald has stated that “rather than isolating a socio-political phenomenon, the concept of neopatrimonialism tends to gloss over substantial differences ... it has become something of a catch-all concept, in danger of losing its analytical utility” (Theobald; 1982: 554-5). Finally, as (Erdmann and Engel, 2006) have argued, an understanding of politics in Africa which depicts all official relations as privatised or the *modus operandi* as being essentially informal does not reflect African realities.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

In what way(s) can you describe the Nigerian political culture as neo-patrimonial?

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Political culture is the values, beliefs, attitudes and aspirations of the people in the society which orient them politically. For a regime to be legitimate, there has to be widespread agreement in society on certain sets of values.

Although members of a political community never share exactly the same orientations towards their government, yet it is important for the stability of any system that certain basic common assumptions and beliefs are shared, that is, the political culture is relatively homogeneous. A high level of agreement or consensus on norms concerning the basic aspects of the political system is necessary for the political system to endure without disruption. The problem which leaders in such fragmented cultures face is how does a relatively homogenous political culture evolve from such divergent ones? This is a fundamental problem of nation-building in many new nations. The concluding thought is that all political systems- its growth, survival, development, etc. are dependent on political culture.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, students have the concept of political culture, the foundations of political culture, the objects of political orientation, and the types, or classification of political culture.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. How relevant is the approach of neopatrimonialism to understanding Nigerian politics?
2. Describe the key features of Lijphart's consociational model.
3. How does a relatively homogenous political culture evolve from a divergent one?

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## **UNIT 3      POLITICAL SOCIALISATION**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0    Introduction
- 2.0    Objectives
- 3.0    Main Content
  - 3.1    Political Socialisation/Agents of Socialisation
    - 3.1.1 Agents of Socialisation
  - 3.2    Process/Time Span
  - 3.3    The Concept of Change/Methods of Political Socialisation
- 4.0    Conclusion
- 5.0    Summary
- 6.0    Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0    References/Further Reading

### **1.0    INTRODUCTION**

In the previous unit, we examined political culture as a pattern of attribute and orientations of citizens in a political system. This unit will, however, discuss how individuals acquire these basic attitudes and orientations which accounts for their political behaviours. The stability of a political system is underlined by the relative success or failure of the assimilation of new attitudes into the existing value structure. This change is made possible through political socialization which serves not only as a means of effectively transmitting the political culture of a nation from generation to generation but helps in creating or developing new attitudes and values about the political system

### **2.0    OBJECTIVES**

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

- define political socialisation
- identify and describe the agents of political socialisation and the process of political socialisation
- identify and describe the time span of political socialisation •
- describe the concept of change in political socialisation
- explain the methods of political socialisation.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Political Socialisation**

Political scientists have offered various definitions of political socialisation with some general agreement. Political socialisation involves the transmission of the political culture of a group or the society to successive members of that group or society. In other words, political socialisation refers to the process by which the central values of the political culture are transmitted from one generation to the next- that is, inter-generational transmission of political culture. According to Verba (1960), political socialisation is “the process by which the norms associated with the performance of political roles as well as fundamental political values and guiding standards of political behaviour are learnt.” Robert Levine described the political socialisation process as “the acquisition by an individual of behavioural dispositions relevant to political groups, political systems and political processes” (Levine, 1963). Harry Eckstein defines political socialisation as a “process through which operative social norms regarding politics are implanted, political roles institutionalised and political consensus created either effectively or ineffectively” (Eckstein, 1988). Generally, analyses of the concept of socialisation have attempted to distinguish between different patterns of socialisation through the use of four interrelated analytical categories, namely, agencies, process, time span and change.

##### **3.1.1 Agents of Socialisation**

Agents of socialisation refer to the institutions through which the process of political socialisation is accomplished. In other words, a person's political orientation and behaviour patterns are neither born with him nor instinctual but learned. Political learning is a process of interaction between the learner and certain elements of his human environment generally called “socialisation agents.” Numerous socialising agents are exercising different influences and varying in the degree to which they reinforce or contradict each other. Generally speaking, however, you may distinguish between the primary and secondary agencies of political socialisation. The primary agencies refer to the family, whether nuclear or extended. Secondary agencies refer to schools, peer groups, occupation, mass media, political parties, pressure groups, nongovernmental organisations, etc.

##### **a. The Family**

The family is said to be the most important agent of socialisation because of the belief that it is in the family that a citizen first becomes aware of the power and experienced authority, albeit in its non-

political and informal context. Families influence basic personality development and have a great influence on the acquisition of not only non-political but politically relevant values. For instance, children's basic personality orientation such as the capacity for trust and cooperation is developed within the family (Kent and Tedin; 1974). Furthermore, children had been shown to inherit or share the political outputs and party loyalties of their parents including the sharing of politically relevant ideas and values such as proper conduct or orientation to authority, rules, and obedience, are developed at this formative stage within the family. According to West "a man is born into his political party just as he is born into probable future membership in the church of his parents" (cf. Babawale, 1999). Thus, party attachment tends to be passed from parent to child and persists into adult life. Different family structures may encourage different kinds of expectations about the rest of the world. Thus families that encourage child participation in family decisions seem to encourage these children to participate in politics when they become adults; children of politically active parents tend to be more - politically active as adults. This is why the family has a great influence on an individual. For instance, an individual may identify with a particular political party because the family supports it. The attitude of a child to political leaders may be influenced by how the parents respond to them. Thus, the family unit provides personal and emotional ties which mould an individual's personality and affect his/her political behaviour (Babawale, 1999). The family may be losing its power as an agent of socialization; however, as other institutions take over more of child care and parents perform less of it.

**b. The school**

Schools pass on nation's political values through the teaching of social studies, government, citizenship education and history. The school accomplishes political socialisation through its curriculum, classroom rituals and values and attitudes unconsciously transmitted by the teachers. The school's social climate, political and non-political organisations and extracurricular activities also serve to instil political values, such as participation, competitiveness, achievement, and observing the rules of the game (Prewitt, 1968). Children are introduced to elections and voting when they choose class prefects, school prefects, and the more sophisticated elections in high school and college teach the rudiments of campaigning. Political facts are learned through courses in history and government, and schools, at their best, encourage students to critically examine government institutions. Schools themselves are involved in politics of curriculum reform, funding, and government support for private schools which

often spark debates involving students, teachers, parents, and the larger community. Other socializing stimuli are presented by rituals observed in schools, such as the salute to the flag, singing of the national anthem, celebration of national historical events and displays of historical portraits or events on classroom walls. The teacher, through the expression of opinions and display of interest in political events, may have an unconscious impact on the political orientations of students. The effects of being educated about political affairs widen ones political perspectives including learning the norms of political participation. All governments find the schools a useful agent to instil some political attitudes and behaviour patterns in their citizens and shaping an individual's political behaviour, learn about fundamental rights and obligations, moral values, inculcate beliefs and ethics and socialized them into future political leadership, obligation to participate in political activities like voting, and expressing ones opinion and keeping law and order.

**c. Peer groups**

Peer groups are important in the socialisation process. A peer group refers to a group of people sharing a similar status and having intimate ties. In schools, it is very common to find various peer groups. In other words, every individual, as a child or an adult, belongs to a peer group. Examples of peer groups are children playmates, small workgroups, married couples, and friendship cliques, etc. As an important medium of social learning, peer groups can influence the behaviour of its members. In situations where we have weak family ties, an individual may turn to his/her peer group for guidance on political or other social issues. Peer groups are also powerful agents of political socialisation in the sense that in most cases, members seek for approval, acceptance and friendship from them. As such, individuals take to the views held by the peer groups they belong to.

**d. Mass media/Social Media**

The usefulness of the mass media as a socialising agent cannot be overemphasised considering the educative roles of newspaper, radio, television, and magazines, etc. They do not only transmit information and messages but also provide visual pictures of 'government activities as well as shaping public opinion. For instance - television enables the public to see and hear the President of the country when he/she is delivering a speech or during election campaigns and voting. The mass media also publish and transmit news on the activities of other countries. They do not only teach the individual or public the norms and values of the society, they also reinforce them. The present campaign by the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture to instil positive values in citizens through the Change Agenda of government,

for instance, is being actively publicised and promoted by the mass media. The mass media are therefore a useful instrument of socialization because they influence the political beliefs and education of individuals. Much of our political information comes from the mass media: newspapers, magazines, radio, television, social media, and the Internet. Burgeoning Internet communication like social media, namely, Twitter, WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, etc. are some of the digital media used by various actors for the dissemination of news. The digital age has also facilitated the creation of an online community, discussion fora, and blog that present a broad range of political opinion, information, and analysis that transcends countries and linking citizens in their home countries and those in the Diaspora.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Examine the roles of the various agents in political socialisation.

### **3.2 Process/ Time Span**

The socialisation process can be latent or manifest, that is, there is an unconscious aspect of socialisation are usually associated with the primary agencies while the manifest or consciously cognitive aspects of socialisation are often associated with the secondary agencies. Latent political socialisation entails the implicit or informal transmission of political orientations through the essentially non-political agency of the family. Manifest political socialisation, on the other hand, entails the intentional or explicit acquisition of orientation through such manifestly political instructions as the mass media, political parties and trade unions. The related conceptual distinction concerns the perspectives from which the socialisation process is viewed. Do we stress the role of the socialising agent or the role of the learner? While initial studies of socialisation focused on the agent, usually the family is the key initiator and factor in the socialisation process. More recent studies conceive of socialisation as a cognitive and interactive process in which the learner and not just the agency plays a key role.

There is also the time span of socialisation which refers to an individual's formative or mature years. For instance, political socialisation through the family is not only latent and agency-dominated but also tends to occur in the individual's formative or childhood years. Socialisation through the secondary agencies, on the other hand, tends to be manifest to depend on the conscious actions of the learner and to occur during an individual's mature years. The bulk of socialisation literature has concentrated on the formative or childhood years on the assumption that this is the crucial period of political

learning and that what enters the mind first remains there to provide lenses and categories for perceiving and comprehending later experiences. In other words, adult opinions are seen as the end product of youthful socialisation; however, more recent studies now see socialisation as a continuous process going beyond childhood to cover adolescence and adulthood. The time span of socialisation can also refer to the following:

- a. **Life-cycle Effect:** how a person's beliefs and behaviour change over time, like the political views prior to having a family vs. the views after having a family.
- b. **Period Effect:** refers to how one historical event impacts an entire society. An example includes the impact of the current global economic meltdown on the Nigerian economy; and the impact of May 29th 1999 on the history of democratisation in Nigeria.
- c. **Cohort Effect:** refers to how one historical event impacts a specific group of people. Examples include the impact of the Biafran war on the orientation of the Igbos to other groups in the country or to the country itself; and the impact of the annulment of June 12th election on Yoruba's in Nigeria.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Explain the conception that socialisation is conceived as a cognitive and interactive process in which the learner and not just the agency plays a key role

### 3.3 The Concept of Change/ Methods of Political Socialisation

This final analytical category on the study of socialisation seeks to illustrate the structural consequences of political socialisation on the polity as political socialisation may endanger systemic or non-systemic change. Systemic change refers to fundamental alterations in the structural foundation of power relations of a polity while non-systemic or intra-systemic change, on the other hand, refers to incremental adjustments within the framework of the existing political system. Generally, however, socialisation is often seen as a conservative stabilising or system maintaining rather than change producing process. In other words, when secondary socialization agencies inculcate political values different from those of the past or when children are raised with political and social expectations different from those of their forebears, the socialisation process can be a vehicle for social and political change. In effect, political socialisation may serve to preserve traditional political norms and institutions.

**a. Direct Political Socialisation**

This is a formal method of political socialisation in which the individual consciously learns political behaviour. First, direct political socialisation can take place through one's imitation of the behaviour of others. A second way direct political socialisation occurs is through the formal training and education provided by parents, teachers and peer groups. The third type of direct political education occurs through the impact of direct political experiences on the individual.

**b. Indirect Political Socialisation**

This is an informal method of political socialisation in the sense that one is unconsciously learning roles, skills and attitudes without being aware of it. Indirect socialisation involves acquiring values and orientations which are not political but which influence one's political behaviour. One type of indirect political socialisation is an interpersonal transfer from which attitudes towards authority are developed.

**SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

How does the direct and indirect method of political socialisation aid political participation?

**4.0 CONCLUSION**

Political socialisation is the transmission of political culture from one generation to another, an indispensable fact in the survival of political systems and systems changes. It is, therefore, a life-long, continuous, developmental process and as such not completely static. In order to ensure a stable political system, the various agencies of political socialisation should be sufficiently flexible and interdependent to accommodate changes without violent disruptions.

**5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit, students have learnt the meaning of political socialisation, agents of political socialisation, the concept of change and methods of political socialisation.

**6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. Examine how the school as an agent of socialisation has facilitated political participation.

2. How have various types of political socialisation agencies encouraged political participation process in 2015 general elections in Nigeria?
3. What a manner of political socialisation is the role of social media in the Nigerian political process?

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## **UNIT 4      POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0    Introduction
- 2.0    Objectives
- 3.0    Main Content
  - 3.1    What is Political Participation?
  - 3.2    Typologies of Political Participation/Lester Milbrath, Karl Deutsch and Robert Dahl's Typology
  - 3.3    Elections and the Right to Vote/the Development of Suffrage
  - 3.4    Models for Interpreting Electoral and Voting Behaviour
- 4.0    Conclusion
- 5.0    Summary
- 6.0    Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0    References/Further Reading

### **1.0    INTRODUCTION**

Citizens' participation in politics has always been a core issue in political sociology (Pateman; 1970; Milbrath and Goel, 1977; Verba and Norman, 1972) and of course, political analysis. In democratic politics, political power is achieved by persons and groups through a process of participation which eventually leads to various positions at the pinnacle of power. This is in sharp contrast to what obtains in a dictatorship where positions of political power can be attained by aristocratic birth-right or by force. In modern democratic states, there can be no political power without political participation, the latter being the only avenue to the former. Actually, the classical liberal notion of democracy relates to majority participation in the political system, a notion dating back to the Greek city-states in which, because of the small sizes, it was possible for every adult to participate directly in the affairs the state.

However, with the phenomenal expansion of the modern nation-state which has a complex form of government and bureaucracy direct participation by all is no longer possible. In most countries, the majority participate indirectly through their representatives who they elect at regular intervals. While majority participation remains a cardinal principle of democracy and adult suffrage has become almost universal everywhere, numerous studies reveal that majority of the members of society even in countries like the USA, are not interested at all in politics much less vote or know a lot about the political process (Milbrath, 1965; Darlton, 2000). In effect, it has been found that only

a tiny proportion of members of society participate in politics, and even among such participants, only a few are very active. Against this background, this unit shall discuss the complex process of political participation and the actual participants in the political process. We shall also examine the levels of political participation by looking at some of the typologies of political participation that have been developed.

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

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

- define political participation and identify the typologies of political participation
- explain Lester Milbrath, Deutsch, Robert Dahl's typology
- describe the role of elections and suffrage as a key concept in democratic participation
- trace the development of suffrage in Nigeria and USA
- explain the models for interpreting electoral and voting behaviour.

## **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

### **3.1 What is Political Participation?**

Political participation encompasses the various activities that citizens employ in their efforts to influence policymaking and the selection of leaders. According to Orum (1978), political participation refers simply to the "variety of ways in which people try to exercise influence over the political process." In a similar vein, McClosky (1968) sees political participation as "those voluntary activities by which members of a society share in the selection of rulers and directly or indirectly in the formation of public policy." Lawson and Wasburn (1969) on the other hand he describes political participation as "the process by which individuals acting singly or through group origination, attempt to influence decision-making or alter how it may be exercised in a particular society. People participate in politics in many ways "ranging from discussing political issues or events, taking part in a demonstration or riots, voting, writing letters to political parties and seeking political offices" (Osaghae, 1988). In a federal system such as Nigeria, people have many opportunities to participate in democracy at national, state, and local levels as some forms of participation are more common than others just like some citizens participate more than others. According to Agbaje (1999), in modern society, participation tends to take either of three basic forms, namely, the form of elections or selections, when people seek to participate in societal affairs through elected or selected representatives; the

form of routine individual or group involvement in the day to day affairs of the society; and through the shaping of public opinion on issues, events and – personalities of the day.

From the above, it is clear that political participation is not a preserve of only democratic political systems; in other words, political participation takes place in all political systems. Political systems, however, differ with regard to the degree of citizens' participation, type of participation, and the level of their participation. For example, in a single-party system where elections are mere formalities, the degree of citizens' participation in elections cannot be compared to a democracy where competitive party elections take place periodically. Also, it should be noted that political participation encompasses such acts as campaign and voting during elections, riots against government policies, writing of protest letters to one's representatives, etc. However, because of the emergence of liberal democracy or representative democracy as the dominant model of democracy and the salience of election under this system, there is a tendency to associate political participation with elections, especially participation in campaigns and voting. The literature on political participation is therefore so overwhelmingly dominated by writings on elections and electoral behaviour that it will be understandable for political participation to be identified exclusively with the study of voting. In spite of this shortcoming, however, this dominant bias in the extant literature on political participation for elections and voting behaviour in some contexts shall underscore our discussion in this unit. However, wherever necessary, the Nigerian example shall also be highlighted.

### 3.2. Typologies of Political Participation

We shall discuss three typologies of political participation to show the levels of participation to include those of Lester Milbrath, Karl Deutsch and Robert Dahl based on the critical analysis of Osaghae (1988: 66-68).

#### 3.2.1 Lester Milbraith's Typology

To Milbraith (1965), political participants can be classified on the basis of their political activities, namely, spectator activities, transitional activities and gladiatorial activities. The **Spectator participants** are the participants who expose themselves to information, initiate and partake in political discussions, attempt to influence others into voting for a party. In effect, they take part in the basic political activities required of all full members of the society. But they do not become actively involved, but prefer to remain 'spectators' who enjoy seeing active participants. For **Transitional Participants**, they are in the midway between spectator and gladiatorial

participants. Participants in this category typically have begun to take a keener interest than the spectators in politics. The activities they engage in include attending a political meeting or rally, belonging, and making a monetary contribution to a political party or association, and contacting a public officer or political leader over certain issues. **Gladiatorial Participants** are the most active participants who typically have the highest level of political efficacy. Gladiatorial activities include caucus or strategic meeting, soliciting party funds, seeking political office and influence, and actually holding public and party office. Gladiatorial participants then are the top political leaders, and they often constitute a tiny minority (between 5-100%) of the total adult population.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Explain in details how Milbraith (1965) classified political participants.

### 3.2.2 Karl Deutsch's Typology

In this typology (Deutsch; 1974), there are two broad categories of political participants, namely, the politically relevant strata and the elite strata. Each of these categories is further subdivided into narrower categories of participants based on the position method and the level of participation. **The Politically Relevant Strata** comprises of those members of the political system who count or matter and must be taken into consideration by decision-makers. Students, teachers, market women, the “common man”, all count because they are those to be affected by the decisions made. In democratic and nondemocratic political systems alike where voting is a primary political activity, the politically relevant strata would include all those who are eligible to vote. In this sense, most adults belong to the politically relevant strata. Within the politically relevant strata, a further distinction can be made between those who are active (those who actually participate, by for example voting or demanding or opposing a particular policy) and non-activists (those who are relevant but fail to actually participate by not voting or discussing politics). **The Elite Strata** comprises of those who are not only politically relevant but must actively participate in the political process, seeking influence and power, and actually occupy the most important political positions. The elites are ostensibly the most educated and influential members of society, and they constitute the “attentive public” which moulds public opinion and provide leadership and direction for society. The elite strata are further subdivided into the marginal elites, the mid-elite core, the who's who elite, and the top elite, based on the position method. This method uses the positions or roles of elites to classify them. Members of the lower middle-class-Clerks, small-scale businessmen

and intermediate staffers-belong to the marginal elite class. Those in the upper-middle class academicians, senior civil servants, and military officers-belong to the mid-elite group. The who's who elites are the 'notables' captains of industry, Permanent Secretaries, military Generals, President, Ministers, Ambassadors, and Chief-Justice - who actually make authoritative decisions. Again, Deutsch's typology, like Mitbraith's, does not include those who are not interested at all in politics, though he talks of non-active members of the politically relevant strata.

### 3.2.2 Robert Dahl's (Dahl, 1976) Typology

There are four categories in this typology, namely, **the Apolitical stratum** that is apathetic and not interested in politics let alone vote. However, they sometimes take part in politics in unsystematic ways, like violently rioting or participating in a civil war. **Political stratum** takes part in basic political activities like voting and discussing party politics. **The power seekers** are those who have become so highly involved that they decide to seek power and influence by running for political office. Lastly, **The powerful:** these are those that occupy the top political positions, and control the greatest amount of political resources using their political skills. These are the President, leaders of political parties, heads of legislative assemblies and "the powers behind the scene", who are mostly the wealthiest members of society, the underlying political forces.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Compare and contrast Karl Deutsch's and Robert Dahl's typologies

### 3.3 Elections and the Right to Vote (Suffrage or Franchise) and the Development of Suffrage

Election is at the heart of modern participation in politics through votes which send a direct message to the government about how citizens want to be governed. The right to vote is known as suffrage. The critical question here is who has the right to vote? Usually, the qualified electorate in most countries today is the adult citizen – both male and female. This is known as universal adult suffrage. However, universal adult suffrage is a product of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Up till this period, suffrage was based on religion, sex, property and qualification. The adoption of universal suffrage is a product of a century-old bitter war of many separate and hard-fought campaigns against the entrenched oligarchy as property, religion, race and education etc. requirements for voting were eliminated one by one in the face of bitter

opposition from those who were eliminated by such requirements. In many countries, voting rights were not originally extended to all citizens.

In Nigeria, for instance, the right to vote has developed in the colonial period during the Clifford Constitution of 1922 which introduced the elective principle with elections to the Legislative Council. However, elections were restricted to Lagos and Calabar (three members from Lagos and one from Calabar) but still based on property, educational qualifications, gender and social status of citizens. For instance, only adult males could vote under the 1922 Constitution, among other restrictive conditions. Furthermore, while the franchise was extended to women in the southern part of the country, women in the north did not receive the vote until 1976 (Pepple; 1992). In essence, while women were generally denied the suffrage, but with time, the base of the franchise was broadened to accommodate all qualified adult citizens irrespective of gender, class, and status. Presently, all Nigerian citizens who are eighteen years and above can exercise the suffrage. Similarly, in the United States of America for example, originally the Constitution let individual states determine the qualifications for voting, and states varied widely in their laws. The expansion of the right to vote resulted from the constitutional amendment, changing federal statutes, and Supreme Court decisions. Changes in suffrage over American history include lifting of property restrictions, suffrage for Black Americans and former slaves, women's suffrage, and change of minimum voting age, and all of these happened with various amendments to the US Constitution.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Following the analogy so far, what features accords one the right to vote?

### **3.4 Models for Interpreting Electoral and Voting Behaviour**

There are many reasons why some people participate in politics and others do not, and why, even among those who participate, some are more active than others. We shall consider these reasons according to mode and sets of factors that have been identified. According to Dennis Kavanagh on why people vote the way they do, it is possible to identify at least five different theories or analytical models for interpreting the voting decision (Kavanagh, 1993; 1995). These are:

#### **a. Structural Theory/Model**

This model sees the voting decision as being structured or determined by a host of factors over which are external to individual voters and therefore to a great extent outside of their immediate control. Rather

than placing political action, and hence the blame for inaction, on individuals, the structural model draws attention to the powerful ways in which political opportunities and the political process constrain individual behaviour. These factors include national history, the social structure, and its associated cleavages or social class, religion, ethnicity and urban-rural dichotomy, the party system, electoral regulations, etc. The structural theory is the broadest of the analytical frameworks for studying the voting decision and the least vulnerable to partial or trivial explanations. A key issue in the structural model is the political correlates of participation such as the action of the state, the nature of institutions, the nature of a political system and in particular, of the ruling regime. As Verba, Nie and Kim (1978) showed in their study of political participation in seven nations, a fuller explanation of political participation requires us to look at how institutions enable and constrain the activity of different groups in different contexts. Paying attention to institutional factors also helps to better understand the causal mechanism that links attitudes to political activity.

**b. Sociological Theory**

This model analyses the voting decision on the basis of such standard and demographic variables as age, occupation, social status, education, and sex. Generally, studies carried out within this analytical framework tend to conclude that a voter's political preferences are determined by such social characteristics as his/her socio-economic status, education or residence. This framework is however usually criticized for its sociological determinism.

**c. Ecological/Aggregate Statistical Model**

This model relates aggregate votes to general features of an area, be it a constituency, housing estate or region. The analytical model depends on the availability of accurate or demographic data (census). This method is useful for interpreting the political behaviour of groups that are heavily concentrated in particular constituencies e.g. miners, immigrants or students.

**d. Socio-Psychological Theory**

This analytical model interprets the voting decisions as the amount of the voter's psychological predispositions or attitudes. The most famous concept associated with this is that of party identification. This concept refers to the voter's affective attachment or allegiance to a party. Once a voter has acquired an allegiance to a party he is usually never again so open to the possibility of change. So, party



identification has been an essential tool for studying the nature of electoral behaviour in the USA, for instance. However, the theory has also been criticized for its psychological determinism and reductionism.

**e. Rational Choice Model**

This model which is borrowed from economics relies on a few assumptions to make a deduction about the instrumental and cost-effective behaviour of a person whether or not to participate in politics. According to this model, a rational person decides to participate or not in politics based on his/her calculations of gains and losses, to maximise "gains and minimise losses. The point then is that individual who participates in politics does so because he/she gains immensely from doing so- gains that are not necessarily monetary because of the role of prestige, psychological satisfaction, and so on. These assumptions include a voter's calculations about the cost of voting, the probability that his/her vote would not make any difference, or will not change the mind of the party on certain decisions. These calculations determine whether the rational voter should vote at all and if so for which party or candidate? In essence, rational choice theory portrays the voters as utility or benefit maximisers and the parties and candidates as vote maximizers. Thus, whereas the social psychological theory and its associated concept of party identification stresses the affective ties between voters' parties, the economic rational choice model stresses the more instrumental aspects of the interactions between electorates and parties. The criticisms of the model is that it is economically deterministic and overlooks the fact that many voters instead of being informed about parties or policies rely on shortcuts like traditional ideology, ethnicity or party identification in making decisions. In fact, as Osaghae (1988) has noted, voting and attending a rally do not necessarily follow a cost and benefit calculation.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Using any or combination of the above theories, explain the voting behaviour of Nigerians in the 2019 elections.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Political participation encompasses the various activities that citizens employ in their efforts to influence policymaking and the selection of leaders, a reality that is experienced in both democratic and non-democratic states.

Accordingly, a key part of political participation in democratic states is electoral behaviour.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt the meaning of political participation, the typologies of political participation, meaning of suffrage, development of suffrage, and the models of electoral behaviour.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. List and explain four models for explaining electoral behaviour.
2. Explain how Milbraith's classifications of political participants explain the Nigerian political scenario.
3. How true is the notion that majority participation remains a cardinal principle of democracy?
4. What is suffrage? Trace the evolution of suffrage in Nigeria.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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## **UNIT 5      POLITICAL PARTY AND PRESSURE GROUP**

### **CONTENTS**

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### **1.0    INTRODUCTION**

The political system consists of the regime i.e. the aggregate clusters of interlocking institutions: both inputs institutions like political parties, interest groups and mass media and output institutions like the legislature, the executive, bureaucracies and the courts. The political process refers, of course, to actions, conflicts, alliances and behavioural styles of parties, interest groups, movements and individuals. In this unit, we shall discuss political parties and interest groups in a political process.

### **2.0    OBJECTIVES**

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

- state the function and highlight the structure of political party political parties
- evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of political parties
- identify the types, function, and tactics of interest groups
- evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of interest groups.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 Political Parties

A political party is an organised group of persons seeking to take control of the government through elections. According to Agbaje (1999), “a political party is a group of persons bonded in policy and opinion in support of a general political cause, which essentially is the pursuit, capture and retention for as long as democratically feasible, of government and its offices”. Following from the above definition, a political party represents, therefore, at least three things to its members and on-lookers: a *label* in the minds of its members and the wider public, especially the electorate; an **organisation** that recruits and campaigns for candidates seeking election and selection into public political office; and a **set of leaders** who try to organise and control the legislative and executive branches of government (Wilson, 1992 cf. Agbaje, 1999).

In democracies, therefore, a political party is more or less a permanent institution with the goal of aggregating interests, presenting candidates for elections to control governments, and representing such interests in government. It is thus a major vehicle for enhancing participation in governance (Foley and Edwards, 1996, cited in Agbaje, 1999).

##### 3.1.1 The Functions of Political Parties

Political parties provide the connection between politics and society; in this sense, they fulfil at least seven crucial functions as explained thereto.

- a. **Control of government:** Parties are the main vehicles for recruiting and selecting people for government and legislative office. Political parties provide a responsible vehicle to achieve control of the government. Although political parties are very much involved in the operation of government at all levels, they are not the government itself.
- b. **Implementation of policies:** The content side of responsibility of political parties is to develop policies and programmes and ensure that they are implemented. In sum, the manifestos of political parties serve as a ready source from which government policies can be formulated and executed.
- c. **Making policy:** This feature implies that although political parties are not policymaking organisations in themselves; however, they certainly take positions on important policy questions, one of which

especially is to provide alternatives to the position of whichever party is in power. The input into policymaking is through legislation.

- d. **Representing groups of interests:** Irrespective of the party, the elected officials that represent the people called constituents to make their concerns known to their representatives. These elected officials, however, must not only reflect the concerns of their own political party but must also try to attract support from people in their districts or states who belong to the other party.
- e. **Simplifying the policy-making arena:** With demands being numerous and sometimes conflicting, political parties pick up demands from society and bundle them into packages and evaluate them into policy alternatives.
- f. **Political education:** Political parties educate the electorate through campaigns and rallies which stimulate their political awareness.
- g. **Systems maintenance:** Political parties help to ensure political stability through the availability of a pool of their members capable of running the government at any time.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Does the function of political parties justify its goal of enhancing participation in governance?

#### 3.1.2 The Structure of Political Parties

Most parties are organised at the local, state, and national levels with party leaders and activists involved in choosing people to run for office, managing and financing campaigns, and developing positions and policies that appeal to party constituents. The 1999 Nigerian Constitution stipulates that political parties must have a national spread and they must have offices that spread across the whole of the country. This requirement is to prevent the emergence of ethnic or sectional parties at the national level.

- a. **The Caucus**  
This refers to (the meeting of) a group of top party members (Party caucuses) who often meet to plan strategies and take a common position on a piece of legislation. It is members of the caucus that plan for electoral success, and take important decisions on behalf of the party.
- b. **Branches**  
Parties are usually organised into branches spread across the country, to increase their influence and membership. In Nigeria, for example, party branches are organised at the ward, local government and state

levels, with the national headquarters coordinating all the party's activities.

**c. The cell**

A party cell consists of a small group of party members usually working to make it possible for secret decisions to be taken and implemented in the party. This is very effective in today's Communist Party of China and the ruling party in Russia.

**d. The militia**

The militia structure may not be democratic, but parties established them to play assigned roles for the party. It was a well-established practice in most countries but no longer exists in its formal sense. In Nigeria, party thugs play vital roles in rigging elections in favour of their party. They carry out most of the 'dirty' works of political parties including intimidation of opponents, snatching of ballot boxes and the stuffing of same with fake ballot papers in their party's favour, and the outright assassination of political opponents.

### **3.1.3 The Strengths and Weaknesses of Political Parties**

Political parties have unified groups of people and helped them seek and achieve common goals. They have a tradition of participation and encouraging citizens' participation in democratic government. They have also served to integrate people of differing ethnic, religious and other interest groups under one political party, and hence serve as a forum for national unity. However, in many countries, besides the competition between engenders unhealthy rivalry between political parties which may lead to election rigging, clashes between members of opposing parties and general political instability, political parties are also seen to be losing touch with society and moreover evolving into semi-state agencies (Bartolini and Mair 2001; van Biezen, 2004). Consequently, political parties have been in decline for at least four decades and it seems reasonable to conclude that the 'golden age' of mass parties is now part of history (van Biezen *ibid.*). The evidence demonstrates that patterns of extensive party membership and partisanship, and party control of electoral politics evident during the 1960s had largely disappeared (Bartolini and Mair, 2001). In addition, analyses have shown that parties have simultaneously declined as channels for popular demands, thereby losing their legitimacy as representative organizations (Katz, 2002). Although multiparty democracy is widespread in most part of the world, most especially in Africa; however, the quality of political parties in terms of principled ideologies that are problem-solving for the general population of the people has rather taken a flight.

Consequently, researches on political parties in recent times have focused on the extent to which political parties are democratic by particularly looking at parties' organisational strengths/failures, such as structures and functions of party decision-making and executing organs; primary election processes; financing sources and regulatory mechanisms; and women participation in decision-making processes within parties. The following fundamental questions are being asked: Are party members becoming more or less important? How successful are political parties in giving the ordinary members a greater say? Have parties really become more isolated from society? In other words, in recent times, discussions of multiparty politics in many countries are focusing not just on the impact of political party deficiencies on democracy at the national level but also the internal processes of political parties. The reason for this emphasis on the internal processes of political parties is the realization that political parties cannot enhance democracy if they lack democracy, and as the popular saying goes, 'you cannot give what you do not have'. Increasingly, therefore, intra-party democracy is now being recognized as a necessary aspect of a healthy democracy and thereby an important area for discussion in particular for countries with political parties that lack such democratic internal processes. With regards to transitional democracies such as Nigeria, what has tended to occur often is a political environment in which parties are ill organised, insufficiently institutionalised and lack transparent and accountable regulatory mechanisms coupled with non-democratic leadership styles (Adetula (Ed.), 2008). The following internal-party features bring to the fore the existing difficulties/challenges parties experience in nurturing a democratic culture especially in Nigeria: primary elections or candidate selection, internal party organisational structures, political party financing, and policy development (Adetula (Ed.) *ibid*). Unfortunately, political parties often fail to perform these roles adequately or with sufficient credibility.

While formally all political parties have established democratic rules and regulations, "the biggest challenge, however, is the gap between rhetoric and reality. In other words, the problem is not the intention to do so as manifested in the formal requirements that are easily fulfilled, but rather it is the actual practice of walking the talk." Most parties in the country today are fundamentally weak and rely heavily on the personal appeal of party godfathers and thugs to rig their ways into political offices. Hence, political parties are not properly connected to society but have rather become distant from voters and their concern and needs (Ayoade, 2008). The only exception to this is when a governing party in power has a President that is committed to internal democracy and the welfare of the people and development of the nation.



## **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Using the Nigerian political party as your guide, discuss the current worries about political parties' internal democracy.

### **3.2 Interest Groups**

An interest group- advocacy group, lobby group, pressure group or special interest group is an organization that seeks to influence political decisions, typically through the use of financial contributions to politicians to bias political opinion to create incentives for politicians to receive further financial contributions. Public and private corporations work with lobbyists to persuade public officials to act or vote according to group members' interests (Sullivan and Sheffrin, 2003). In the course of representing the interest of their members these groups are often active participants in the political process. They may have both well-defined political agendas and the financial resources necessary to exert broad influence on the political and regulatory process; utilizing direct lobbying, letter-writing campaigns, and voter turnout efforts during elections. However, unlike political parties, pressure groups are not interested in direct governance or in contesting elections. They may, however, support particular candidates or parties they regard of supportive of, or beneficial to their cause. An example of this is the support given to the defunct Action Congress (AC) in Lagos by the Lagos state branch of Market Women Association, or the support given to the Labour Party (LP) in Ondo state and the defunct Action Congress in Edo State by the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC).

#### **3.2.1 Types of Interest Groups**

##### **a. Promotional or single-issue groups**

Some interest groups are formed to promote a particular cause which may not directly benefit their members. Promotional or single-issue interest groups do not usually expect to profit directly from the policy changes they seek. However, the activists who staff these groups may gain financially by attracting donations from individuals and foundations that support their activities. Also, these interest groups enjoy an image of non-partisanship, even though some of them engage, necessarily, in clearly political activities. Promotional or single-issue groups (cause or attitude groups) seek to influence policy in a particular area, such as the environment (Green Peace, or Environmental Rights Action in Nigeria), gun laws (National Rifle Association in the United States) the protection of birds (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds in the USA), or animal rights

(People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals in the USA), human rights groups, and consumer protection (Nigerian Consumer Protection Council). These groups tend to be aligned toward a political ideology or seek influence in specific policy areas.

**b. Economic interest groups**

These interest groups focus on the economic well-being of their members. They include an organisation that represents big business, such as the Nigeria Association of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (NACCIMA), and the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (NMA), as well as big labour- the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) and Trade Union Congress.

**c. Professional or Occupational Interest Groups**

These are interest groups embracing workers of the same occupation or profession who try to protect their work or work interest. The Nigerian Medical Association (NMA), Nigerian Union of Teachers (NTU), Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), the Nigerian Union of Road Transport Workers, Nigerian Union of Textiles Workers and Barbers Association.

**d. Government Interest Groups**

These are interest groups formed from within the governmental framework. In Nigeria for example, there are organizations formed to bring the issues of governance as it concerns specific interests before the public opinion and the administration. Government interest groups include the Governors' Forum, South-South Governors' Forum, Northern State Governors' Forum, and the Association of Local Government of Nigeria (ALGON).

**e. Religious Interest Groups**

These are interest groups of people that belong to the same religion and wish to influence government decisions in favour of their belief or members. Examples are the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (SCIA), Supreme Council for Sharia in Nigeria (SCSN) and Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN). These groups representing the two biggest religions in the country – Islam and Christianity - have been at the forefront of protesting government policies whenever they feel such policies are not favourable to them. For instance, CAN is always vociferous on certain national issues by influencing the decision of the government. In some countries such as the USA, religious interest groups directly lobby to sway public policy in their interests and in

the process they become involved in politics, to some degree. In Nigeria, for instance, the major religious leaders have come together for purposes of conflict resolution and management.

**f. Ethnic Interest Groups**

Ethnic interest groups, as the name implies, represent specific ethnic groups either in their ethnic homeland, in foreign lands, or in the Diaspora. In Nigeria, these include Afenifere (Yoruba), Arewa People's Congress (Hausa), Ohaneze Ndigbo (Igbo). In many instances, these groups have functioned as 'shadow states' for their members. However, in pressing forth their demands and in contestations with other groups for scarce government resources, the activities of these groups have been characterised by violent rhetoric, confrontations, and even physical clashes that have led to fractious controversy, bitter recriminations, and loss of lives and properties.

### **3.2.2 Functions of Interest Groups**

The two principal functions of interest groups are representation and education. The representation function stems from the reason interest groups are created in the first place: Collective action is the most effective way of influencing policymaking and bringing issues to a large audience. Interest groups also serve as a watchdog, monitoring the actions of lawmakers, the courts, and the administration in the interest of their constituents. This work can include keeping track of the voting record of members of Congress and rating them on how well or how poorly they do on a particular issue. For education, on the other hand, interest groups educate both their own constituency and the public. Through their publications or advocacy, the groups keep members (and sometimes the general public) abreast of the latest developments on the issues they care about. Because they have developed an expertise in a particular policy area, interest groups are often in a better position to initiate and contribute to the debate on issues of national importance such as legislation that has to do with Child Rights, anti-tobacco in Nigeria. Shaping opinion by educating the public on issues that are important to the interest group is one of the central features of new-style lobbying. The idea is to shape public opinion and elite opinion in such a way that government officials will be favourably disposed to the views of the interest group.

This attempt to shape public opinion and elite opinion comes in many different forms. When an organisation believes that it has research results that will bolster its position, it may call a press conference to present a summary and mail the research report to influential people in government,

the media, and education. Interest groups may often conduct national and regional advertising campaigns to impress their views on government policy. The smart and well-heeled interest group will regularly prepare materials that are of use to radio, television, newspapers, and magazines. Many produce opinion pieces, magazine articles, television and radio spots, or even stage events to be covered by the news. Examples here are the various TV and radio adverts by NGOs in Nigeria on various issues including the Child Rights Bill, achieving the Sustainable Development Goals [SDGs], etc. Groups may also use targeted mailings to gain support on a particular issue. For instance, business interest groups, particularly trade association, publish data and reports on their sector of the economy that is widely used and that draw attention of government and the public to the growth and challenges facing their sector. For instance, press statements by the Nigerian Manufacturers Association (NMA) on the state of the manufacturing sector are an indispensable source not only on the sector but the economy in general. Also, the Human Rights Watch makes periodic reports available on human rights and its broader ramifications including conflict and governance in different countries. Interest groups were very also active in both supporting and opposing the term debate in the last political dispensation. Finally, groups without substantial resources or ready access to the offices of government officials sometimes turn to the use of public demonstrations to attract attention to their cause. These and other examples of interest groups advocacy help to educate the public on a wider range of issues.

### **3.2.3 Tactics of interest groups**

#### **a. Lobbying**

Lobbying is one of the ways in which interest groups shape legislation and bring the views of their constituents to the attention of decision-makers. The term "lobbying" conjures up images of favours, substantial honoraria paid for brief appearances, and other unsavoury exchanges verging on bribery. In the main, however, such images do not help us fully understand the intricacies of the inside game. This game does not always involve money or favours. It is mostly about the politics of insiders. It is the politics of one-on-one persuasion, in which the skilled lobbyist tries to persuade a strategically placed decision-maker such as well-placed legislators, chairpersons of important committees or subcommittees, or key members of professional staffs - to understand and sympathise with the point of view of the interest group. Lobbying the executive branch is another way in which interest groups attempt to have their views heard. Career civil servants and upper-level appointees in the executive branch have a great deal of discretionary authority because Congress

often writes legislation broadly, leaving it to bureaucratic agencies to fill in the details. Given the broad powers they carry, it behoves interest groups to establish stable and friendly relationships with those agencies of the executive branch that are most relevant to their interests. As with Congress, the key to success in the lobbying game with the executive branch is personal contact and long-term relationships. Once established, interest group representatives can convey technical information, present the results of their research, help public officials deflect criticism, and show how their group's goals are compatible with good public policy and the political needs of the officials.

**b) Strikes and boycotts**

Occupational pressure groups may employ strikes and boycotts to achieve their aims where other means fail. In trying to avoid the great loss that may arise from a long-term strike, the owners of an organisation may agree to what the pressure group demands. If the strike is directed at the government, the government may negotiate with the pressure group in order to ensure industrial peace and political stability.

**c) Publicity campaigns**

Pressure groups organise intensive campaigns through meetings, rallies, house to house campaigns, posters, handbills, stickers and conferences to attract public support and get their aims achieved.

**d) Mass media**

Pressure groups advertise and sponsor programmes on the radio, television and in newspapers to convince the citizenry to embrace their position as the most appropriate one for the whole society.

**e) Letters and petitions**

Pressure groups write letters of information or complaint to officials of the legislative or executive arm of the government to try to convince them of their viewpoint.

**f) Electoral politics**

Pressure groups go out to campaign and vote for candidates who will be sympathetic to their cause. They on the other hand campaign against candidates they believe are not in support of their cause.

In advanced democracies such as America, interest groups have become key players in electoral politics. Many interest groups rate members of Congress on their support for the interest group's position

on a selection of key legislative votes. These ratings are then distributed to members of the interest group and other interested parties in hopes that it will influence their voting behaviour in upcoming elections.

**g) Demonstrations**

Pressure groups also use demonstrations which may be peaceful or violent. In peaceful demonstrations, they march, carrying placards stating their demands. If this fails, violence could be resorted to by pressure groups to achieve their objectives. Examples are tertiary students who abduct school administrators and burn vehicles.

**h) Courts**

Interest groups also go to court to challenge the constitutionality of legislation or event. The case brought by the previously unknown group by the name Association for Better Nigeria (ABN) to advance for the stoppage of the conduct of the June 12, 1993, presidential election, and also for the annulment of the election is among of the queer but decisive cases of interest groups use of the courts in Nigeria. The ABN courts not only granted the two requests, but the court's decision was a key reason the military government of Ibrahim Babangida publicly adduced for cancelling the June 12th election, widely acclaimed to be of good standards and adjudged as one of the freest and fairest in the country. Going to court, however, is a secondary strategy for most groups, because they must have their standing. This means that the group must be a party to the case and be able to demonstrate a direct injury. Going to court, moreover, is very expensive and beyond the means of many groups.

**i) Warfare**

If other means seem ineffective, pressure groups could employ (guerrilla) warfare means to achieve their goals. Examples are the Mau-Mau struggle for independence in Kenya, the independence struggles in Mozambique and Angola, and the ongoing struggles of MEND in Nigeria's Niger Delta.

### **3.2.4 The Strengths and Weaknesses of Interest Groups**

Interest groups are inimical to the democratic process. This is the view offered by Lewis (1996) when he stated that interest group fights against democracy and takes away its authoritativeness, confuses expectations about democratic institutions and corrupts democratic government by treating all values as equivalent interests, renders government impotent by multiplying

the number of plans available, but not addressing implementation, and demoralises government because it can't achieve justice (because without a value-system, justice is not an issue for discussion. Interest groups have also been usually regarded as narrowly self-interested, out for themselves, and without regard for the public good. This theme of selfish interests recurs throughout Nigeria's history. It is also often argued that the politics of interest groups are usually not the province of majorities, but of narrow, particularistic, and privileged interests. This, it is argued, is problematic in two respects.

First, it undermines systems stability, which is vital for a functioning democracy. Second, and relatedly, it makes it difficult for governments to formulate broad and coherent national policies. For instance, the faceoff between ASUU and Federal Government of Nigeria on the issue of IPPIS has further demonstrated the particularistic interest of the Union above the national interests can constrain the smooth operation of the governance process. However, for others including members of the interest groups and political scientists who take a pluralist approach, interest groups do not hurt democracy and the public interest but are an important instrument to attain both. Pluralists believe that elections are essential to a democracy, but they do not readily communicate what the people want in terms of the policy. This is better communicated to political leaders on a day-to-day basis by the many groups and organisations to which people belong.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Discuss the structures of a political party.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Interest groups are inevitable in a free society, in which people have diverse interests ranging from those based on economic circumstances to property ownership. Consequently, factions are innately part of interest groups. However, trying to eliminate factions would require tyranny. The only way to control factions, it has been argued, is to organise a constitutional government in a way that moderates the bad effects of factions and to have a society that would be so large that no single faction could dominate public life.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this lecture, you have learnt about the role of political parties and interest groups in a modern government. You have also learnt about their strategies and characteristic features. Even though they are indispensable to the functioning of the modern states, some of the challenges or weaknesses facing these two groups have also been highlighted.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. With specific Nigerian examples, enumerate the functions of political parties.
2. Examine the weaknesses of interest groups in Nigeria today.
3. What are the functions of interest groups?
4. List and discuss five tactics used by interest groups.

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## **MODULE 4            TYPOLOGIES OF POLITICAL SYSTEMS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The diversity that characterises social and political existence and, of course, human thought has consequently made possible the diversity of political systems. And because the role of political analysis is to study and evaluate the various conceptions and use of power, it becomes easier when the classification of political systems is done in order to adequately comprehend the role of power. For instance, the form of rule has become very important to understand because the sets of institutions and values through which a people and a state are governed should be known. If anything, they form and inform some of the basis and tools for political analysis. It is in this regard this module is examining few forms of rule that are in practice and those that are not so in practice but have left behind so many consequences to grapple with. In any case, there is usually the interplay of most forms of government in a given political regime, and significantly, forms are not just forms but should be problem-solving like federalism should. This module is made up of five units, the structure upon which the discussions are done.

Unit 1	Form of Rule or Political Regimes
Unit 2	Political Systems and Organs of Government
Unit 3	Political System and Distribution of Power
Unit 4	The Federal System of Government in Nigeria
Unit 5	International Political System and Globalisation

## **UNIT 1            FORM OF RULE OR POLITICAL REGIMES**

### **CONTENTS**

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
3.1	Types of Political Systems: Monarchy and Theocracy
3.2	Military and Single Party
3.2.1	Reasons for Military Intervention in Politics
3.2.2	Features of Military Government
3.2.3	One Party
3.3	Transitional
3.4	Democracy
3.4.1	Types of Democracy
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment

## 7.0 References/Further Reading

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

A typology is a proposed way of classifying the subject matter in which we are interested; it is an analytical construct which seeks to present a simplified view of actual situations. In other words, typologies present ways of simplifying complex political situations by presenting abstract standards by which they can be composed (Osaghae, 1988). Typologies of political systems are essential to boosting our understanding of politics and governments as they also facilitate the evaluation of political systems. Attempts to classify political systems have been a fine art for many years, perhaps as old as political science itself. However, the task of classification is not an easy one for the political scientists because the political systems that are present in our world vary.

Worse, for the political scientist, these systems are not governed by laws of nature that are unchanging, but by humans who, by nature, change constantly. Thus, the student of political systems grapples with a subject matter that is today in constant flux but must deal not only with the major processes of growth, decay, and breakdown but also with a ceaseless ferment of adaptation and adjustment. In spite of these challenges, attempts have been made to classify political systems, and the most influential of such classifying schemes is undoubtedly the attempt of Plato and Aristotle to define the basic forms of government in terms of the number of power holders and their use or abuse of power. Although disputing the character of this implacable succession of the forms of government, Aristotle also based his classification scheme on the criteria of rulership - of the relative number of citizens entitled to rule, and whether the rulers rule in their own selfish interests or in the common interest.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

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

- discuss the monarchical political system
- explain theocracy
- discuss military rule and single-party rule
- explain transitional rule and democracy.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 Types of Political Systems

- a. **Monarchy:** This is a system whereby one-person rules for life as the head-of-state and passes on power to their children or family (dynasty or royalty) when they die. Monarchy is often contrasted with the republic. A republic is a system of government which has officials that are elected by the people. The classic political theory distinguishes between two types of monarchies and this includes absolute and constitutional monarchy. The **Absolute (true) Monarchy** An absolute monarch rules by whim and has unlimited powers, although he may not be a tyrant or dictator (as is more common with military or single-party rule). An absolute monarchy may also have cabinet officials or symbolic parliaments, but such institutions can be dissolved or altered at will. It should, however, be emphasised that sometimes, a true monarch may not be the real ruler, as state power might be wielded by ministers, regents, or advisors, with policy determined more by palace intrigue than anything else (O'Connor, 2009).

Examples of former absolute monarchs are late Emperor Haile Sellaisle of Ethiopia and Nicholas II in Tsarist Russia. In contemporary times, absolute monarchies are very few like those of Saudi Arabia, ruled by the House of Saud with over 25,000 family members helping to run the government (DK Publishing, 2006). Others monarchies include Jordan, Oman, Qatar, Brunei, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Nepal, Cambodia and Bhutan. However, some of them have started practising constitutional monarchy like Morocco with a parliamentary democracy. Africa's absolute monarchy is Swaziland, now known as the Kingdom of Eswatini since 2018 where the Head of State is the King. The Eswatini Kingdom is an absolute monarchy that is governed by a mixture of modern constitutional rules and of course Eswatini laws and customs. The present King has been in power since 1986 after the death of his father. However, it is important to underscore the point that no leader or state has absolute power because power by its very nature is limited to the extent of its limitations.

- b. **Constitutional Monarchy:** In the form of monarchy, there are elected representatives who make policy decisions, and a prime minister usually leads the government with the King or Queen as a ceremonial head. However, the Queen of England, for instance, is the Head of the Armed Forces, negotiate and ratify treaties, alliances, and international agreements; hence, has the power to declare war; in other words, the power is not a figurehead so to speak. The constitutional monarch has limited powers which are derived from the constitution and such a monarch is just a ceremonial head of state and a symbol of the nation. The elected representatives in the legislative and executive arms of government exercise real power of governance. Britain is a good example of a constitutional monarchy. Other examples include Holland, Sweden, Austria, and Denmark etc. In Africa, Lesotho and Morocco are the constitutional monarchies (Copal, 2009). The point is, there are monarchies, absolute or constitutional in almost all continents of the world with powers that go beyond being ceremonial. Thus, some common justifications for monarchies include the need to keep the aristocracy and clergy in line, as well as reduce the uncertainty which would occur with continual changes in the head-of-state. It is sometimes argued that monarchies are inexpensive to maintain (because they save the cost of holding elections). However, as O'Connor (2009) has argued, the fact of the matter is that monarchy are very expensive systems. The most common causes of monarchies are a political necessity, tradition, greed, and a desire for conquest and sovereignty.
- c. **Theocracy:** Theocracy is commonly understood as a political regime in which power is wielded by some sort of priestly caste recruited based on the orthodoxy of its members with respect to a religious creed (Bague, 2006). A theocracy is an oligarchy based on religion - the group is ruled by the group's spiritual leaders- or more generally, where there is a claim to divine mandates or divine powers that govern civil affairs. Religion is a powerful human phenomenon, and religious leaders can often exert great influence over the group's actions (O'Connor, 2009). It is only when temporal and spiritual affairs are combined is there a true theocracy (Clarkson, 1997). Contemporary theocracies include Iran the Vatican City, etc. (Wikipedia, 2010). However, one fact is that some of the countries governed by the so-called absolute monarchy are also theocratic, for instance, as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Presently, there are about seven theocratic states in the world (World Population Review; 2020).

## SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Distinguish between the absolute monarchical rule in Eswatini and Iran's theocratic rule.

### 3.2 Military Rule

A system of rule by military strongman It typically occurs as part of the evolution of single-party rule (the populism route) or when some national emergency merits the declaration of martial law and the leader in office happens to have (or assumes) some military rank. A military dictatorship more correctly comes about via a *coup d'état*. Almost every society in known history has or has had a military structure. It is a constant in human history that societies will defend their national interests including the territory and resources within the state. This requires a trained class of persons - soldiers. In some nations, the military is a dictatorship, and the head of government is a military officer. This is in contrast to other dictatorships where the military is completely subservient to the ruler. In Hitler's Germany, for example, the military was a strong tool of the Nazi Party, but Germany was not run by the military; however, there is no doubt that the Hitlerite regime was worse than dictatorship, laid the foundation for the present-day industrialisation of Germany. The same can be said for the United States which, since World War II has maintained a very strong military, but where the military has no actual power in the government which can be physically seen by the people, However, the military institution in the USA like the Pentagon plays a fundamental role as part of the ruling class in determining so many decisions and infrastructure. Militarism can co-exist with democracy, but most military rule is non-democratic and further makes any transition to democracy difficult. For example, some common characteristics of military rule include sacking Parliament (suspending the legislature), controlling the judicial branch (no appeals allowed on verdicts favourable to the military), and proscriptions of political activities especially during the initial period of military rule. However, the military regime of Muammar Ghaddafi in Libya, for instance, can be said to be dictatorially developmental in terms of the welfare of the people including those of Fidel Castro of Cuba that produced some of the best Medical Doctors that are today helping the USA and countries in response to the Covid-19 Pandemic [Coronavirus] that broke out all over the world including the shutting down of the world economy.

#### 3.2.1 Reasons for Military Intervention in Politics

Cyril Obi (Obi, 1999) has offered that since the military is the traditional guards of the state, military intervention has often been justified as a step to arrest political instability, ensuring territorial integrity and eliminating

any threats to national security. Given the nature and role of the military as the only public institution that has the monopoly of the instruments of violence (arms), it becomes very easy for the military to force its way into power as an organised agency without much opposition. Often, the military has justified their intervention as patriotic acts based on national interest. Adopting labels such as "corrective", military regimes often pledge themselves to end what they consider to be civilian misrule consisting of corruption, abuse of powers, disregard of the constitution and of electoral procedures, tribalism, nepotism and economic underdevelopment etc. Military intervention can be caused by a military elite or officer corps under the leadership or control of ambitious and powerful individuals who seek to control the government in order to pursue defined interests: personal, sectional, class, ethnic, religious or imperialistic.

Sometimes the military intervenes to protect their defined corporate interests. For instance, this may be to remove a government that is seen to be hurting the military either through reduced spending, irregular payment of salaries and the embarrassment of the military as an institution. Military interventions are the outcome of factional power struggles, especially in contexts where there is little faith in the sanctity of the ballot box and where the stakes in the control of power are very high. In this context of a zero-sum approach to politics in which the winner takes all and the loser loses everything, the military is inevitably drawn in by the violent turn of politics as war by other means. Foreign powers often instigate and finance a *coup d'état* in another country, where the government of that country may be pursuing policies, they (the foreign powers) consider to be against their own interests.

### 3.2.2 Features of Military Government

- i A military government is highly centralised in structure. It rules by decrees and edicts passed by the ruling council. (There is usually a ruling council which goes by different names – from country to country).
- ii The military head of state in conjunction with the ruling council performs both executive and legislative functions of government.
- iii There is an absence of elections, and coercion is used for policy implementation.
- iv Highhandedness, censorship, etc.

### 3.2.3 One Party

A single party is a system of rule "in which a single political party forms the government and no other parties are permitted" to present candidates for elections most especially at the centre. It is not to be confused with a



dominant party system where opposition parties are simply too weak to win. Sometimes the term *de facto* single-party state is used to describe a dominant-party system where laws or practices prevent the opposition from legally getting to power (Wikipedia, 2018). Currently, the following single party states exist in the world: China, Cuba, Eritrea, North Korea, Laos, Syria, Turkmenistan, and Vietnam. However, it is interesting to note that some single-party state- predominantly at national politics have performed exceedingly well in terms of the competence for social organisation, effective reward and sanction, economic development, poverty reduction, employment generation, etc. One of such countries is China.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

According to Alexander Pope, “for forms of government let fools contend, what is best administered is best”. Discuss this within the context of the Military Regime under Muammar Ghaddafi and the Communist Party rule in China under Xi Jinping

### **3.3 Transitional**

This is said to be a system of temporary or reconstructive rule while a nation is undergoing some crises as a result of war, civil unrest, corruption, disaster, instability, etc. An example in this regard was the Ernest Shonekan Interim National Government instituted in Nigeria following the crisis that ensued after the military government annulled the June 12th 1993 Presidential elections. A transitional government can also function while a nation is forming or in the process of drafting a constitution. Recovery from war often requires a transitional government where the military rule is imposed, and most military rule of the kind here relies heavily upon martial law, which is typically used to suspend civil liberties such as freedom of speech and assembly and/or the carrying of firearms. The doctrines of military necessity and orderly administration of territory (upon which martial law is based) also allow removal of officials, putting in place anti-corruption measures, and the possibility for economic reform. South Sudan is one of the countries in recent times with a transitional government in place including Libya after the brutal murder of Muammar Ghaddafi by the Obama led administration.

### **3.2 Democracy**

A system of rule by the people in which supreme power is vested in them and exercised directly by them or for them via their elected agents under a free electoral system. This is the dictionary definition, and it should be quickly noted that there is no accepted, scholarly definition of democracy (Dahl, 2000). There is sufficient agreement, however, that a democracy is

always a creative work in progress that tries to institutionalise freedom, although the two terms - freedom and democracy - are not synonymous.

Democracy has certain principles which have universal application, first, it is a competitive elective; second is the principle of popular consultation, which means that in a democracy decisions are taken after the citizens have been widely consulted, and thirdly, in a democracy power belongs to the people (electorate). Fourth, there is one man one vote irrespective of social status, wealth, religion, etc. Fifth, majority rule and minority rights respected. Sixth, the fundamental human rights which include the right to life, liberty and property are respected. Seventh, the judiciary is independent to help guarantee the fundamental human rights of citizens; and eighth, separation of powers is guaranteed so that no organ of government will be so strong to dominate the other. It is correct to say that democracy as an experiment is built around time-honoured principles such as these essential elements. It is also correct to distinguish a democracy by what it is not; which is to say that it can be defined by its opposite - an authoritarian or totalitarian regime. Most democracies in the world today are called "republics" because people's power is represented indirectly via elected officials.

### **3.4.1 Types of Democracy**

In the modern day, the most prevalent form of democracy at the nation-state level, given its sheer geographical size, population and complexity, is what has come to be known as indirect or representative democracy. By this, it meant a democracy in which the people participate in making and implementing decisions on the common affairs of the community indirectly through their representatives elected or selected for that purpose. Countries that practice democracy are themselves called democracies to distinguish them from those that do not. Thus, According to Dahl (2000), democracy exists where the principal leaders of a political system are selected by competitive elections in which the bulk of the population has the opportunity to participate. There can be no meaningful democracy without a properly functioning party and (pressure group) process. It is obvious therefore that parties and pressure groups constitute the heart of democracy- the more vigorous and healthier they are the better assured is the health of the democratic process itself, including the quality of political participation (Agbaje; 1999). The growth of modern liberal democracies dates back from the 1970s and 1980s. The 1970s saw quite a number of West European States moving towards democratic rule after many years of authoritarianism. In the 1980s and 1990s, there was a democratic movement in parts of the world, notably, in South America countries of Brazil and Argentina, in Africa and South-East Asia e.g. South Korea, Taiwan. After the collapse of Soviet bloc in 1989, the Soviet satellite countries joined the clubs of democratic States.

## Majoritarian and Consensus Democracy and Parliamentary and Presidential Democracy

Perhaps the simplest typology is provided by Lijphart (1999) who argues that there are two basic types of democracies: majoritarian and consensus. A majoritarian system (also called **the Westminster Model**) has two-party elections, a one-party executive and cabinet, a unicameral legislature, and a weak judiciary (e.g., England and its former colonies) while a consensus system has a power-sharing, multiparty-coalition executive, a consensus-oriented legislature, and strong judicial review (e.g. Switzerland and Germany). Common distinctions are also made between parliamentary democracies and presidential democracies. In a parliamentary democracy, like England, the lowest house of Parliament is venerated or honoured; i.e., the House of Commons. The upper house; i.e., the House of Lords, is just for show and subordinate to the lower house. The House of Commons has a "Question Time" every Wednesday when the Prime Minister (as first among equals) must answer questions regarding the activities of the government. There is seating for the public and debates are broadcast live on the internet.

There are parliamentary commissions which look into public complaints about government maladministration. Cabinet officials also must come from the Parliament. The most distinguishing features of parliamentary democracies, however, are the ongoing reviews, checks and balances by the legislative branch and a cabinet government of the Westminster type which produces a fusion of executive/legislative power. Przeworski *et al.* (1996) have found that parliamentary democracies last longer, are easier to govern, and are arguably "better" than other systems of political rule. It is a fact that the Presidential system first evolved in and became the model of the United States, and is widely copied in Latin America but less widely copied elsewhere (Mainwaring & Shugart, 1997). Hence, it is sometimes (but not often) called the American Model. Presidential democracies usually exist in one of two forms: (1) a presidential system (which strongly separates the executive from the legislative branch by making the president perform combined or multiple roles -- such as the head of state and head of government as well as commander-in-chief - for a fixed term); and (2) a semi-presidential system (where the president and prime minister, or ice-president, can come from different parties - called cohabitation -and the legislature can force the President's cabinet to resign through votes of no confidence). Presidential democracies are often referred to as presidential regimes so as not to confuse them with some parliamentary democracies which happen to call their chief executive a president.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Do you see the merger of four political parties that produced the All Progressive Congress [APC] in 2014 and subsequently won the presidential election as a sign of democratic consensus that Nigeria need to strengthen majoritarian democracy?

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

Confronted by the vast array of political forms, political scientists have attempted to classify and categorise towards developing typologies and models for political analysis, or in some other way to bring analytic order to the bewildering variety of data.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have examined six types of political systems, their main features and examples.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Using the key features of democracy as your guide, examine the practice of democracy in Nigeria between 2011 and 2019.
2. The Military as an institution in the governance of Nigeria did not rule Nigeria alone but in collaboration with the civilians. Discuss this in light of the emergence of Gen. Sani Abacha.
3. Considering the excessive and absorbing struggle for power in Africa, do you think that the purpose of transitional government/power-sharing arrangement can be sustainably achieved?
4. According to Alexander Pope, “for forms of government let fools contend, what is best administered is best”. Discuss this within the context of the Military Regime under Muammar Ghaddafi and the Communist Party rule in China under Xi Jinping

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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## **UNIT 2      POLITICAL SYSTEM AND ORGANS OF GOVERNMENT**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0**    Introduction
- 2.0**    Objectives
- 3.0**    Main Content
  - 3.1    The Executive
    - 3.1.1   Types of Executive: Parliamentary and Presidential Executive
    - 3.1.2   Functions of the Executive
    - 3.1.3   Limitations to the Powers of the Executive President
  - 3.2    The Legislature
    - 3.2.1   Functions and Powers of the Legislature
    - 3.2.2   Types of Legislature: Unicameral and Bicameral
    - 3.2.3   Declining Powers of the Legislature
    - 3.2.4   Bills
  - 3.3    The Judiciary
    - 3.3.1   Functions of the Judiciary
    - 3.3.2   How to Maintain Judicial Independence
  - 3.4    The Theory of Separation of Powers
  - 3.5    The Doctrine of Checks and Balances
- 4**      Conclusion
- 5**      Summary
- 6**      Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7**      References/Further Reading

### **1.0    INTRODUCTION**

Government can be described as a set of institutions performing specified function with the fundamental responsibility of pragmatic production and allocation of values. Indeed, it is a fundamental concept of politics that any governmental action, be the laws passed by legislatures or the rules made and applied by administrators or decisions made by the Courts, have the intent or the effect of creating and “allocating values.” The point, of course, is that governmental actions which seek to create or promote certain values also involve the allocation of values among the diverse groups composing the society and generally entail the unequal (although not necessarily unjust) distribution of values. Government, it is generally believed, ought to promote the public interest and all governments invariably justify their existence to be in the public interest. A venerable notion of politics held by political philosophers from Aristotle to the present is that it is a public activity that involves public purposes, or public interests, or public good, or some distinctly 'public' aspect of human life. This concept of the public interest entails the ideas that governmental

actions ought to create and promote values that are for the good of the general public and that are made with the welfare of most of society in mind. Commenting along this line, Jeremy Bentham has argued that the task of government is to promote the greatest happiness of the greatest number (cf. Baradat, 1997). In this unit, we will look at each structure of government in a general sense and the role performed by the structure.

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

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

- Ñ define and describe the executive, legislature, and judiciary
- Ñ discuss the various types, functions and limitations
- Ñ define the theory of separation of powers and the doctrine of checks and balances.

## **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

### **3.1 The Executive**

Generally speaking, the executive branch of government executes the laws created by the legislative branch. The executive also has the responsibility to formulate policies and carry out certain reforms it deems necessary with the bureaucracy fully under the executive though oversight function by the legislature. While some executive policies may require legislation, others could just be by Executive Order of Mr President, for instance. The executive branch is sometimes divided into two parts, a head of state that performs ceremonial functions and the head of government as chief executive- usually designated as the Prime Minister. The power held by these two positions is not consistent depending on the practice of each individual nation. The Prime Minister is the chief executive and holds a great deal of power. In France, the President is the head-of-state and has a great deal of power over the executive. The Prime Minister has been likened to a junior partner in the executive. The Russian President, Vladimir Putin as of today has executive powers, but hitherto, he was the Russian Prime Minister with executive powers. It was indeed give and take he did with the immediate past Prime Minister of Russia, Dmitry Medvedev who initially was the Russian President, but with assigned executive powers. However, in the case of Nigeria, like the USA, both ceremonial and executive powers are performed by the President, etc. etc. The method for choosing the executive varies greatly. In some cases, such as in Britain, the head-of-state is a hereditary monarch and the chief executive is the Prime Minister chosen from the Parliament. The people, then, have no choice in the head-of-state and only a small segment of the population have a choice of the Prime Minister (the Prime Minister is chosen from all the Members of



Parliament (MP) from the majority party - each MP is elected in a local election). In Israel, the President is chosen by the Knesset and the Prime Minister is a Member of the Knesset. In the United States, the President is elected, indirectly through the Electoral College, by the people, while in Nigeria the President is elected directly by the people in a general election.

### 3.1.1 Types of Executive: Parliamentary and Presidential Executive

The parliamentary executive refers essentially to the prime minister in a cabinet system of government. He emerges as prime minister by virtue of his leadership of the majority party in government. Real executive powers are vested in the cabinet, consisting of the prime minister and a number of ministers. Hence the executive is the head of government but he/she is equal to other ministers. It is in this sense that the executive in a parliament system is referred to as first among equals. The executive holds office as long as he commands the majority in the parliament. A vote of no confidence by parliament forces the prime minister and his cabinet (ministers) to resign *en bloc*. The classical example of a parliamentary executive is Britain. A presidential executive is one who is both the head of state and head of government. He is elected by a majority of eligible voters across the country. Such an executive holds office for a fixed term, and can only be removed from office through a process of impeachment. Nigeria has a presidential

### 3.1.2 Functions of the Executive

- i **Policy formulation:** The executive formulates policies that guide the general administration of the state.
- ii **Implementation of policies:** The executive also executes or implements the laws made in the legislature or policies made by it (the executive) and ensure obedience to them.
- iii **Giving Assent to Bills:** The head of the executive gives assent to bills before they become laws, but the president can veto any bill brought before him for signature which he does not support.
- iv **Initiation of Bills to the Legislature:** The executive sometimes initiates and submits bills to the legislature to pass into law for the good governance of the country.
- v **Military Functions:** It controls the armed forces and declares war against any external or internal aggressors. (The head of the executive arm of government is the commander-in-chief of the armed forces).

- vi     **Maintenance of Law and Order:** The executive uses the police to maintain law and order in a country through the enforcement of law and order.
- vii    **Provision of Welfare Services:** It is the executive that performs the main function of the government which is the provision of welfare services to the citizens.
- viii   **Maintenance of External Relations:** The executive maintains external relations, signs treaties, etc., with other countries especially friendly ones. In carrying out this duty, the executive normally visits other countries, attends world conferences and meetings such as that of the United Nations and also receives visiting heads of state or representatives of other countries such as ambassadors to his/her own country.
- ix     **Making of Budgets:** It is the executive that prepares the total proposed annual financial expenditure.
- x      **Pardoning of Convicts:** The executive, through the powers granted to it by the constitution, may reduce the sentence passed against a convict, or delay the execution of the sentence.
- xi     **Granting of amnesty:** The executive may, from time to time, grant an amnesty to certain categories of state offenders. This applies especially to political offences.
- xii    **Inaugurating and Dissolution and of the Parliament:** The executive has power, in some countries such as Britain and Nigeria, to summon and dissolve parliament.
- xiii   **Appointment of Judicial Officials.** The executive appoints the Chief Justice of the state, judges of the Supreme Court, and other high-ranking officials of the judiciary.
- xiv    **Delegated Legislation:** While the legislature makes the major laws, the executive is delegated the power to make minor laws like statutory orders, edicts, etc. in turn, the executive, in the exercise of delegated power, issues statutory orders and rules for the governance of the country.
- xv     **General Administration:** The executive carries out general administrative functions like recruitment of civil servants and exercising disciplinary control over them, creation of employment opportunities for the citizens, provision of food, shelter and

rendering of other essential services to the people of the country, etc.

### 3.1.3 Limitations to the Powers of the Executive President

- In a presidential system, the president can be impeached by the legislature if he violates or abuses the provisions of the constitution.
- He must present the list of his ministers, judges and ambassadors to the legislature for approval.
- The term of the president is fixed by the constitution for a limited period.
- The constitutional review power of the Supreme Court can declare null and void any unconstitutional action of the president.
- As sometimes happens, the control of the legislature by another party other than that of the president acts as a strong check on the powers of the president.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

List and explain seven functions of the executive.

## 3.2 The Legislature

Generally speaking, the legislative branch makes the laws with the membership consisting of many members chosen by the people of the country. Under a parliamentary system, the legislature remains in power for a fixed term or until a vote of no confidence is taken and the majority loses the vote. In a presidential system like that of the United States and Nigeria, members of the legislature hold their office for a certain fixed term. After elections, a majority party is determined, but there is no such thing as a vote of no confidence. Though parties play a major role in the selection of legislative leaders, individual members of the legislature are free to vote however they wish without fear of bringing down the government as in a parliamentary system.

### 3.2.2 Functions and Powers of the Legislature

- **Lawmaking:** One of the main functions of the legislature is making laws that guide and direct the affairs of a country. The legislature considers and, where necessary, passes into law bills brought before it by its members, and by the executive. The legislature can repeal, amend or add to existing laws.

- **Constitution-making and amendment:** It is the legislature that draws up the constitution, and it plays a major role in the procedures for amending the constitution.
- **Approval of executive appointments:** The legislature has power to consider and, where necessary, approve appointments made by the executive.
- **Power to remove the executive:** In a presidential system of government, the president can be impeached by the legislature if he fails to abide by the tenets of the constitution; while in a parliamentary system, the prime minister and his cabinet can be removed through a vote of no confidence by parliament. The legislature can also remove or recommend to be removed, any judicial officer found wanting in his duties.
- **Budget approval:** The legislature considers and approves the national budget, prepared by the executive.
- **Training of future leaders:** Membership of the legislature affords one the opportunity of having requisite knowledge and experience to use in running the country at the highest level, in the future.
- **Approval of treaties:** International treaties negotiated by the executive must be approved by the legislature before they are ratified by the executive.
- **Judicial functions:** The legislature in some countries serves as the highest judicial authority or the last appeal court. In Britain, for instance, the House of Lords serves this purpose.
- **Political education:** Through its debates and committee hearings, the legislature helps to educate the people on the political situation in the country. Legislatures maintain ties with their constituencies through newspapers, radio and television.
- **Representation and expression of the people's interests:** The legislature is a platform through which members of the public, through their elected representatives, express their opinion. Individual members of the public and groups make known their needs as well as their views on various national issues through their representatives in the legislature.
- **Ratification of international treaties:** The legislature approves treaties entered into with other countries by the president or prime minister.
- **Investigation of citizens' complaints:** In many countries, the legislature is responsible for establishing and/or supervising the 'public complaints' agency-- popularly known as the ombudsman. This department investigates

complaints of members of the public against government departments, agencies and institutions.

### 3.2.2 Types of Legislature: Unicameral and Bicameral

The legislature can be classified into two: The unicameral and the bicameral. The first refers to a situation in a country in which there is only one legislative house or chamber. Examples of countries operating the unicameral legislative system are Kenya, Greece, Israel and Gambia. The second is the type of legislature with two (legislative) houses or bodies. Usually one of the houses is identified as the lower house, while the other is the upper house. The lower house or chamber is often made up of members directly elected on the basis of universal, equal and secret suffrage while the upper house consists of more experienced men and women, some of whom are sometimes appointed to the house. Nigeria and the USA have a bicameral legislature.

### 3.2.3 Declining Powers of the Legislature

In most countries, the power of the legislature has declined over the years, while the powers of the executive continue to wax stronger. There are reasons for the decline in legislative powers include, among which are that limitations are imposed on the powers of the legislature by pressure groups, public opinion and political parties, and the need for the exercise of emergency powers by the executive is another reason for the decline in legislative powers.

### 3.2.4 Bills

A bill is a proposed law to be discussed in parliament in order to become law. For a bill to be turned into law, the head of state or president must sign or assent to the bill. Bills are of various types and the stages and processes of passing the bills. These are:

- a. **Appropriation bill:** An appropriation bill deals with the total estimated revenue and expenditure of the government in a financial year. This bill originates from the executive arm of government.
- b. **Private member's bill:** This is a bill brought to parliament by a member of the legislature (the parliament).
- c. **Public bill:** The bill comes from the executive arm of government, and deals with matters or problems affecting the whole segments of a country.
- d. **Money bill:** It has to do with specific projects involving expenditure, emanating from the executive.

- i. **First reading:** This is the stage at which the draft of a bill is presented to the clerk of the house, a minister or member of parliament—depending on the type of bill. The clerk of the house normally notifies members of parliament about the presence of the bill, and the title is read out before them. It is printed (in leaflets) and circulated to all members for study before the second reading at a future date.
- ii. **Second reading:** At this stage, the purpose of the bill is explained to the house by the person who brought it.
- iii. **Committee stage:** The bill at this stage is referred to a committee which can be a committee of the whole house or a standing committee—depending on the importance of the bill. A committee of the whole house comprises all members, presided over by the speaker of the house or president of the senate. The bill is considered section by section, and amendments proposed and voted for. Less important bills are referred to standing committees of members of parliament.
- iv. **Report stage:** All the findings of the various standing committees are reported to the house (or the bill placed before the house) after all necessary amendments have been made. The chairman then reads the bill in its amended form to the house.
- v. **Third reading:** This is the final stage, at which a thorough look is taken at the bill to correct any errors connected with the drafting or amendment. After this, the vote is taken on the bill before it is taken to the president for his signature. Once the president has signed, the bill automatically becomes law.

### SELF -ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Describe the stages of passing a Bill into law in the Parliament.

### 3.3 The Judiciary

Generally, the judicial branch interprets the laws of the nation. The structure of the judiciary varies greatly from one nation to another, based on the legal tradition. The most familiar may be that of the United States, where there is a Supreme Court that is the final court of appeals in the nation. Below the Supreme Court are a series of inferior courts, starting with the federal court where most cases are heard, and several levels of appeals courts. Britain has a similar setup, but the House of Lords is the court of final appeal. In Nigeria, the judiciary is made up of magistrates, judges and chief judges—who preside over such courts as the Customary courts, Sharia Courts, Magistrate and High Courts, as well as Appeal and

Supreme Courts. They also preside over tribunals and administrative courts. Selection of judges is another point of comparison. Generally, the selection process is divided between appointed and elected. Appointed judges are thought to be free from political pressure, and thus are able to best represent the people and the law. Elected judges are thought to best represent the will of the people. Terms vary from life to several years, in both systems of selection.

### 3.3.1 Functions of the Judiciary

- **Interpretation of Laws:** This is the primary and revenue of the government in every new function of the judiciary in a country.
- **Dispute Adjudication:** The judiciary adjudicates in disputes between the executive and the legislature, between other government departments, between individual citizens, between citizens and governments, and between organisations/groups and themselves or government.
- **Punishment of Law-breakers:** As the watchdog of the law, the judiciary makes sure that laws are obeyed and those who refuse to obey the laws are severely punished.
- **Guardian of the Constitution:** The judiciary interprets the constitution, and protects it against violation. It can declare any action of government unconstitutional, and therefore null and void.
- **Determination of Election Petitions:** The judiciary performs the function of hearing and determining election petitions in order to ascertain true winners. For examples, the final outcome of the three presidential elections in Nigeria in 1999, 2003, and 2007 was decided by the Supreme Court.
- **Protection of Citizens' Rights and Liberties:** It is the function of the judiciary to protect the citizens' fundamental rights as enshrined in the constitution. It is as a result of this function, performed by the judiciary that has made it to be described as the last hope and defender of the oppressed or the hope of the common man.
- **Lawmaking Function:** Judicial officers advise on matters relating to constitutional preparation and amendment.

### 3.3.2 How to Maintain Judicial Independence

The independence of the judiciary essentially refers to the insulation of the judiciary from the control of the executive, the legislature and/ or any other body. This means that judges should have full powers to try cases brought before them without fear or favour. The independence of the judiciary can be enhanced through the following means:

- Judges should be appointed from proven members of the bar. This should be based on the advice of a body of knowledgeable persons. In Nigeria, such a body is the Judiciary Advisory Commission.
- Judges and magistrates should have some level of immunity, as obtains in almost every country, from prosecution for anything they say in the performance of their duties.
- Judicial officers should enjoy the security of tenure, and may only be removed on grounds of ill-health or gross misbehaviour.
- Judicial officers should be well paid, and their remuneration should not be subject to executive or legislative manipulation. Also, funding for the judiciary should not come from the executive but an independent source guaranteed by the constitution.
- Judges must not belong to any political party in order not to be influenced by political considerations in the discharge of their duties.
- Judicial officers must be seen to be persons of high moral standard. In this way, they will gain the confidence of the people.
- Judges must be provided with adequate security for their safety.
- The principle of separation of powers-with its in-built checks and balances should apply especially regarding the judiciary.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

How can the independence of the Judiciary be guaranteed?

### 3.4 The Theory of Separation of Powers

Separation of powers may be defined as the division of governmental political powers that exist in any given state into the three organs of



government. What this principle is saying is that all governmental powers that exist in a given state should not be rested or consolidated in one person or one organ and that if these powers are divided into the three of government – the Legislature, executive, and judiciary, the chances of dictatorship or tyranny will be reduced. Political philosophers like Locke, Bodin, Rousseau, Aristotle, and Plato had earlier expressed their views on the principle of separation of powers. However, it was the French political thinker and jurist Baron de Montesquieu who developed and popularized the principle of separation of powers in his book entitled “*Espirit des Lois*” which means the spirit of the laws published in 1748. According to Montesquieu, if rights, liberty and freedom of citizens are to be maintained and guaranteed, then the three organs of government must be separated and entrusted to different people to administer. That there will be chaos, dictatorship, tyranny and oppression if there is no separation of powers. In other words, the governmental function of law-making, execution and adjudication should be handled by different organs of government without interference.

### **3.5 The Doctrine of Checks and Balances**

According to the principles of checks and balances, separation of powers alone cannot prevent abuse of power, constitutional violation and naked use of power as the different organs of government can each decide to misbehave in its own sphere of influence and powers. Also, important, according to the advocates of checks and balances, is the need to use one organ of government to check the activities of the other organs, this is where the powers of one organ are used to check the powers of other organs. The doctrine of checks and balances does not advocate the fusion of the three organs of government in the performance of their constitutional functions. Rather, it insists that in-as-much as these organs will be mutually independent; they should act as a watchdog of each other to avoid the misuse of power and to avoid the immobilism that will arise in the performance of governmental functions if each of them decides to work on its own without recourse to the others. The doctrine of checks and balances applies in both parliamentary and presidential systems of government. For instance, the executive can veto the legislature’s bills, it can also dissolve parliament, as well as make judicial appointment and promotions. On the other hand, the legislature can check the executive’s power to appoint ministers and declare war using the military; it can set up committees to investigate activities of executives and has the power to impeach the president for gross misconduct. In like manner, the judiciary has the power to review both the executive and judicial actions. It has the power to declare the activities of either executive or the legislature null and void and without effect (Addison; 1986).

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

Regardless of the type of political system used by any nation, there is a very typical and well-used set of divisions in governments. Government is usually divided into different segments, branches, or organs. The main organs of government in any modern political system are the executive, legislature and judiciary.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt about the three main organs of government, their features and processes. You have also learnt that even though these organs have separated powers and hence function independently, they do not function in isolation from one another because they are related by the system of checks and balances.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. “The judiciary is indispensable in any modern government”. Discuss.
2. Examine the principle of checks and balances.
3. “The executive is significant in modern-day government”. Discuss this in relation to the roles of the executive in Nigeria.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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## **UNIT 3      POLITICAL SYSTEMS AND DISTRIBUTION OF POWER**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Unitary System of Government: Features, Merits and Demerit
  - 3.2 Federal/Quasi Federal System of Government or Federalism: Features, Merits and Demerit
  - 3.3 Confederation: Features, Merits and Demerit
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

There are a few other notable differences between political systems that should be mentioned, and which can be used to characterise a country's government. A key issue is the distribution of power. In this unit, we shall elaborate and discuss the key features of unitary, federal, and confederal states.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

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

- define and describe the unitary system of government, its features, merits and demerits
- define and describe the federal system of government or federalism, its characteristics, merits and demerits, and the difference between a federal system and a quasi-federal system of government
- define and describe a confederation, its characteristics, and its merits.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Unitary System of Government**

A unitary system of government is one in which there is a single central government that does not share power with any other body but may delegate power to other subordinate bodies. A unitary government adopts

a unitary constitution. It is desirable in a small state with a low population, but not restricted to these states. Examples of countries with a unitary system of government are Britain, France, Ghana, Italy, Sweden and Gambia.

### **3.1.1 Characteristics of a Unitary Government**

- i Power emanates only from the central government.
- ii There is no constitutional division of powers between the central government and lower units.
- iii The constitution may not be supreme, for the central government may modify it with its powers. As a result, the constitution need not be rigid.
- iv National administrations are usually organised at two levels: central and local where the local authorities are subordinate to the central government.
- v An important feature of the unitary system of government is parliamentary supremacy.
- vi Conflicts between the central government and the subordinate bodies are almost non-existent in a unitary system.
- vii The citizens often owe allegiance only to the central authority.
- viii There is usually no 'final authority' to decide on conflicts of jurisdiction between the centre and the local units.
- ix A unitary government adopts a unitary constitution.

### **3.1.2 Merits of a Unitary System of Government**

- i There is only one source of authority, thereby making it easy for the citizens to identify with the supreme power in a state.
- ii Owing to the absence of competing centres of constitutional powers, conflicts of jurisdiction are eliminated.
- iii A unitary system of government is usually strong and stable.
- iv The loyalty of the citizens in a unitary system of government is shown only to the central authority.
- v The multiplicity of offices and services in a unitary system is reduced. This also reduces administrative costs.
- vi The decisions of government are quick, thereby saving time.
- vii The constitution of a unitary system of government can easily be amended to suit political, social and economic changes in a country.

### **3.1.3 Demerits of a Unitary System of Government**

- i A unitary system of government may promote dictatorship because of the concentration of powers in a single central authority.

- ii In a unitary system of government, the power of the local authorities is drastically reduced.
- iii The central authority in a unitary system is overburdened with power and responsibility.
- iv Minorities are often dominated by the majority group in a unitary system of government.
- v It lowers local initiative as a result of a relative lack of autonomy.
- vi The unitary system of government tends to make the government appear very far from the people, especially those in the remote parts of the country.
- vii As a result of the centralisation of political administration, unitarism does not provide sufficient training ground for wider political participation.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Highlight the key features of a unitary government.

## **3.2 Federalism**

A federal system of government is one in which powers are constitutionally shared between the central government (that represents the whole country) and the component units of government variously called regions, local authorities, states, provinces and cantons-which are constitutionally recognised and largely autonomous. Conditions for the adoption of federalism include cultural and ethnic differences, fears of domination, economic factors, size of the country, nearness of government to the people, preservation of local authority, and security reasons. We shall discuss these factors in the next unit preceding this.

### **3.2.1 Characteristics of Federalism**

According to Wheare (1964), the desire and capacity for federalism entails several prerequisites involving among others 'geographic proximity, hope for economic advantage, wishes for independence, earlier political ties, insecurity and similarities of traditional values'. Following the classical model popularized by K. C. Wheare, Ronald Watts has drawn up a list of structural characteristics distinctive to federations:

- a. Two other levels of government, each in direct contact with its citizens
- b. An official, constitutional sharing of legislative and executive powers and a sharing of revenue sources between the two other levels of government, to ensure that each has certain sectors of true autonomy

- c. Designated representation of distinct regional opinions within federal decision-making institutions, usually guaranteed by the specific structure of the federal Second Chamber
- d. A supreme written constitution that is not unilaterally modifiable but requires the consent of a large proportion of federation members
- e. An arbitration mechanism (in the form of courts or a referendum) to resolve intergovernmental disputes.
- f. Procedures and institutions designed to facilitate intergovernmental collaboration in cases of shared domains or inevitable overlapping of responsibilities (Watts; 2001:8).

Ideally, nations decide to federate due to one or a combination of the following three factors: socio-economic, political, or security considerations. In terms of socio-economic factors, it is assumed that some of the following factors are pertinent, namely the presence of shared values, access to a larger domestic market, access to a seaport, access to higher standards of living and the enhancement of welfare policies. Politically, the considerations include the strengthening of existing relations with the co-federating units and bringing about a stronger voice internationally. Security-wise, it is for the unit in question to be able to protect itself from real or imagined threats to its survival as an entity.

### **3.2.2 Merits of Federalism**

- a. The division of power among the component units fosters rapid development in a federal system of government.
- b. Federalism brings together people of different political, religious, historical, geographical and social backgrounds, thereby promoting unity among them.
- c. Smaller units enjoy their autonomy in a federal system.
- d. Federalism discourages concentration of power in a single authority, thereby preventing the emergence of a dictator.
- e. Federalism helps to bring government nearer to the people as a result of the division of the country into relatively smaller administrative units.
- f. It encourages local political participation.
- g. Federalism encourages the expansion of the local market for enhanced economic development.
- h. Duplication of offices in a federal system fosters the creation of more employment opportunities.

### 3.2.3 Demerits of a Federalism

- a. Federalism leads to unnecessary duplication of organs and levels of government. This makes the running of government very expensive.
- b. Federalism results in a considerable waste of time, as a result of the consultations among the various levels of government before important decisions could be taken.
- c. Federalism makes the coordination of state activities difficult, because of the many component units of government.
- d. Even though powers in a federal system are divided between the central and component units, the fear of some groups dominating the others still exists in many federal states. This fear sometimes results in threats of secession.
- e. Sharing of wealth between the component units, and among the component units themselves, often give rise to conflicts in a federal state. In Nigeria, for instance, the problem of revenue allocation is a very serious one.
- f. There is usually tension in the exercise of constitutional powers between the central authority and the component units.
- g. Federalism tends to lead to dual loyalty-people are sometimes first loyal to their component units before showing allegiance to the central authority.

### 3.2.4 Quasi-Federal System of Government

The term quasi-federal is used to describe the system of government that is somewhat between the federal and unitary systems. It is an incomplete federal system of government. An example is a system introduced by the Macpherson Constitution of 1951 in Nigeria. Many scholars have also described a system that has all the trappings of federalism, or that calls itself as a federal state, but which in essence do not fully practice the tenets of federalism; hence, a quasi-federal system of government. In essence, therefore, a federal system can be described as 'quasi' when power is not well defined, nor fully shared between the various levels of government, and when the federal or central government can override regional powers. Its sole advantage is that it may succeed in keeping together the different peoples that make it up thereby permitting them to reap some of the benefits of actual federalism.

Nigeria under military rule was described as such because the military did not usually abide by the tenets of federalism for example power-sharing between the federal and state governments or the supremacy of constitutional provisions. Even now under a democracy, some people prefer to call Nigeria a quasi-federal state because they feel dissatisfied about the way federalism is practised, especially when compared with



‘ideal’ federal countries like the USA. However, while there are shortcomings in Nigeria’s practice of federal governance, the point needs to be stated that there is no perfect federal system, and that federal institutional arrangement, as Livingstone (1952) reminds us, must be structured to reflect the society it represents. Thus, besides the problem of its actual practice, some of the problems in Nigerian federalism do not stem from federalism *per se*, but from the challenges of elite arrogance and lack of problem-solving mindsets that could make development a living expression of the people.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Is Nigeria a quasi-federal state? Discuss this within the context of the prevailing assumption that there are no ideal federal systems, not even in theory.

### **3.3 Confederation**

Confederation is the type of government in which sovereign states come together as autonomous bodies to form a loose political union, in which the central government is subordinate to the component governments. Each autonomous state is sovereign and has the constitutional right to secede from the confederation. What may be considered as a modern-day illustration of confederation is Switzerland, European Union, Great Britain under the Common Crown, etc.

#### **3.3.1 Characteristics of a Confederation**

- a. The component sovereign states are more powerful than the central government.
- b. Actual powers of government lie with the component units making it difficult for the central authority to enforce its decisions on the autonomous states.
- c. Since the union is a loose one, the component states have constitutional powers to secede.
- d. The allegiance of the citizens is usually more to the component sovereign states than to the centre.
- e. The component states have the constitutional right to have their own army and police.
- f. A confederal state usually possesses little political stability with few exceptions.
- g. The component states retain their sovereignty and identity in a confederation.

### 3.3.2 Merits of a Confederation

- a. A confederation enables the component states to retain their individual identities.
- b. It makes it possible for a union to be forged among people of different cultural backgrounds.
- c. It brings weak component states together to form a strong nation able to defend themselves as one against any external aggression.
- d. A confederation reduces the fear of domination of one state by the other because each autonomous state retains its identity.
- e. Members in a confederal state cannot be compelled to remain in the union because of their constitutional right to secession.
- f. A confederation is economically beneficial to the autonomous states that have come together, as a result of possible economic projects jointly implemented for the benefit of members of the union.
- g. It enables many otherwise sovereign states to speak with one voice on issues relating to foreign policy

### 3.3.3 Demerits of Confederation

- a. The component units' right to secede is a source of serious instability in a confederal system.
- b. Since the component units retain more power than the centre, the authority of the central government to speak and act for the nation is undermined.
- c. The citizens of a confederal state pay more allegiance to their governments than to the central government. This further reduces the power and authority which the state ought to command over its citizens.
- d. It does not encourage political unity, which is vital to the security and development of the nation.
- e. A confederal system does not encourage even the development of the country.
- f. The power of regional governments to retain their police and armed forces fosters the potential of an outbreak of civil hostilities.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

Political systems can be classified according to the distribution of power into unitary, federal and confederal. Students are expected to know that these power configurations systems are intellectual constructs meant specifically for problem-solving consistent with the physical, economic, political, and psychological realities. Thus, students should not be delusional about any of these power distribution arrangements.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have examined the unitary, federal and confederal systems of government, their features, merits and demerits. We have learnt that Nigeria is a federal state, even though there is a predilection by some scholars to describe it as quasi-federal because power is not fully shared between the various levels of government, and because the federal system of government has not been able to satisfactorily meet the needs of the society. Finally, you have learnt that while there are shortcomings in Nigeria's practice of federal governance, there is no perfect federal system, and federal institutional arrangements are structured to reflect the society they represent, and they must always adapt to meet the needs of the federal society.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What is a unitary system of government? What are its key features?
2. Outline the main features of a federal system.
3. What reasons can you adduce for the unattractiveness of the confederal system of government?
4. The Covid-19 lockdown in the USA brought both the Federal and States Government into a frenzied conflict as to who has powers to relax or end the lockdown. If you are familiar with the faceoff, illustrate the argument within the context of USA's federalism is a model.

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## **UNIT 4 THE FEDERAL SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT IN NIGERIA**

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### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Nigeria is a Federal Republic with a US-style presidential system. The Nigerian federalism has been described as “life-blood” of Nigeria’s survival as a multi-ethnic political entity (Onwudiwe & Suberu, 2005). The bicameral National Assembly comprises a 109-member Senate and a 360-member House of Representatives. Each of the 36 states has an elected state governor and a state legislature that is unicameral, ditto for the 774+6 LGAs and FCT Area Councils respectively. In this unit, we will examine elaborately the federal system of government in Nigeria in order to get knowledge of the actual distribution of power in a political system as discussed in the preceding unit. Also, given its importance in the political life of the country, a focus on the federal system will give us a good grasp of the politics and government of Nigeria.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

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

- trace the origin of federalism in Nigeria
- highlight the major constitutional conferences towards federalism in Nigeria
- list the factors that necessitated the adoption of federalism
- describe the structure and features of Nigerian federalism and relevance of the federal idea

- identify the problems of the Nigerian federalism.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Origin of Federalism in Nigeria**

Nigerian federalism started during her colonial experience with the British colonial administration with the amalgamation of Northern and Southern protectorates in 1914, under a governor-general, Frederick Lugard and the experiment continued with the Lyttleton Constitution of 1954. Bernard Bourdillon as governor of Nigeria had in 1939, divided Nigeria into three- the Western, Eastern and Northern provinces. These provinces became regions under Governor Richards whose constitution (1947) created a council for each region. The succeeding Macpherson Constitution (1951) further created the position of a lieutenant governor as well as an executive council 'in the regions. In all these, however, ultimate power still resided in the central government and the regional councils-Legislative and Executive-still remained largely mere advisory bodies to the central administration. It was the Lyttleton Constitution of 1954, which fully introduced a federal system into the administration of Nigeria by devolving considerable power on the regional administrations who could formulate policies and execute programmes of their own. The central government then focused on an exclusive list of nationally important matters like defence, external affairs, customs and currency. The Independence Constitution of 1960 worked on this federal structure with more powers to the regional governments. The military government under General Yakubu Gowon, in 1967 created twelve states shifting the focus on divisions from regions to states. This continued under the 1979 Constitution with 19 states, and the untested 1989 Constitution with thirty states which gave greater autonomy and prominence to local governments. Today, Nigeria has 36 states with 774 LGAs and six Area Councils of the Federal Capital Territory.

#### **3.2 Major Constitutional Conference Decision towards Federalism in Nigeria**

The idea of constitutional conferences started from the time of Sir John Macpherson as governor of Nigeria in 1948. In order to review the 1946 Constitution, a committee was appointed. Members were all unofficial members of the legislative council, three chief commissioners, the attorney-general, financial secretary and the chief secretary as the chairman of the committee. The terms of reference of the committee were to gather public opinion at all levels in order to find solutions to complex issues. From 10 to 21 October 1949, the drafting committee met and recommended a federal system to be adopted in the country; a regional legislature with legislative powers on subjects like local government,

health, education, etc., a central legislature to be called the House of Representatives and a central executive to be called the council of state; demarcate inter-regional boundaries between the provinces of Ilorin, Oyo and Ondo; Kabba, Ondo and Benin; and Benin and Onitsha should be referred to a commission of enquiry which would make recommendations.

Between 9th and 28th January 1950, the conference met in Ibadan to review the constitution. There were 50 members with 25 as unofficial members from the legislative council, and the remaining half drew from the three regions and the colony of Lagos. The recommendations of the drafting committee which were adopted by the committee of the delegates were that the regional governments should be given more autonomy; ministerial responsibilities; and larger and more representative regional legislatures with real legislative power. By 1953 at the London Constitutional Conference, the goal was to correct the defects of the Macpherson Constitution of 1951 with the following decision reached to include the establishment of the federal government with residual powers for regional governments; Lagos should be carved out of the Western Region as a neutral federal capital territory; legislative powers should be shared between the central and regional governments, and Her Royal Majesty should in 1956 grant self-rule to the regions which desired it.

By 1954, there was a Lagos Conference and the purpose to consider the unresolved political problems arising from the 1953 London conference and to consider the advice of the fiscal commission and subsequently resolved that allocation of resources to regional and federal government; the judiciary to be regionalised; the whole public service be regionalised; autonomy to Southern Cameroons. By June 1957 in London, there was another Conference to look at the issues of the minority with the following decisions reached to include creating new region of the existing three Regions of the Federation; establishment of full regional self-government for the East and West regions in 1957 and for the North in 1969; office of the Prime Minister of Nigeria should be established; federal legislature would comprise of two houses, the Senate and House of Representatives; Southern Cameroons to become a region, with its own premier and house representatives; that the house of chiefs should be established in the Eastern Region in addition to the house of assembly, in uniform with the other two regions with bicameral legislatures; that the police should remain under federal control; and adult male suffrage would be used in the north, universal adult suffrage should be used in the East, West, Lagos and Southern Cameroons to elect members of the federal and regional legislatures.

Yet again, there was a conference held between 29 September and 27 October 1958 with the following decisions reached to include Northern

Region to become self-governing in March 1959; procedures for amending the constitution and altering regional boundaries should be entrenched in the constitution; fundamental human rights were to be entrenched in the constitution; and that if a resolution was passed by the new federal parliament early in 1960 asking for independence, Her Majesty's government would introduce a bill to enable the federation to become independent on 1st October 1960.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Enumerate the decisions of the London Conference of 1957.

### 3.3 Factors that Necessitated the Adoption of Federalism

- a. **Cultural Differences:** The country was made up of people of different ethnic groups, religions, customs, traditions and languages. The peoples thus opted for federalism to retain as much as possible of their identity. Similarly, these diversities created problems for the running of a unitary system.
- b. **The Size of Nigeria:** Nigeria with a territory covering 373,000 square miles and with a population today of about 140 million, (according to the 2006 census) is so large that a centralised system of power and administration will inevitably be very far from a large number of the citizens and hence effective administration will be impaired particularly when Nigeria has not developed modern effective transport and communication systems to make communication easy from a centre. As a result governmental powers need to, be decentralised for effective administration. Federalism thus became an administrative convenience.
- c. **Economic Factor:** In Nigeria, natural resources are scattered among contiguous states, the units were encouraged to unite to form a federation in order to pool these resources for greater economic development.
- d. **Fear of Domination:** when Nigeria was about to attain her independence, each major ethnic group felt the notions that by having a Unitary form of government, the strongest ethnic group might politically, dominate the others. There was also the fear that such domination by the strongest ethnic group might continue for a long time to the extent that the disadvantaged ethnic group will continue to suffer from both political and economic marginalisation. This fear, for instance, contributed to the assassination in 1966 of the Head of State Major General J.T.V. Aguiyi Ironsi, soon after his government promulgated decree number 34 which (temporarily) changed Nigeria's federalism to a unitary system. Federalism was therefore chosen so that each



group would have some economic and political freedom that will act as a safeguard against domination.

- e. **The Desire of the British:** Scholars have generally accepted the centrality of British colonial administrators in creating the federal structure. According to a report of the roundtable on “Distribution of Powers and Responsibilities in the Nigerian Federation,” the Nigerian federation “neither emerged through a contract between states nor was it a voluntary union of a number of originally independent states.
- f. **Security:** The need for internal security and protection necessitated the coming together of the component units together as a federation would be stronger and more units.

### 3.4 Structure of Nigerian Federalism

The foundation of federalism was laid in Nigeria by the amalgamation of Northern and Southern Nigeria in 1914. Northern and Southern Nigeria were recognised as near-autonomous entities with some differences in the administration of each. However, it was the Lyttleton Constitution which came into effect on 1st October 1956 that introduced real federalism in Nigeria. The constitution shared powers between the central and regional governments, giving out details on issues which were exclusive to only one level and those on which both could legislate. Regional premiers were also provided for in the constitution. The Independence Constitution of 1960 followed the federal structure introduced by the Lyttleton Constitution with minor modifications. The prime minister was the head of government under the Independence Constitution, with a ceremonial president as head of state. The Republican Constitution of 1963 created the Mid-Western Region thereby increasing the regions from three to four. However, the problem of the unequal size of regions remained, with the Northern Region larger than the three Southern Regions combined.

On 27 May 1967 under the administration of General Gowon, the four existing regions were subdivided into twelve states, with powers and functions similar to those of the regions. The four regions were restructured into 12 states, with the former Northern Region having six, the Eastern Region three, the Mid-West, one, the Western Region, one; and the old Lagos Colony with some part of Western Region making up a state. A military governor headed each state except the East Central State with a civilian administrator. This was an attempt to weaken the administration of Odumegwu Ojukwu, the then governor of Eastern Nigeria from seceding from the federation with the whole region. On 30 May 1967, three days after the creation of states, Ojukwu still proclaimed the former Eastern Region, Republic of Biafran action which eventually resulted in a three-year civil war. The General Murtala Muhammad regime created seven new states on 3 February 1976, with the states

bringing the number of states to nineteen. In 1987, the Babangida Administration created two more states-Akwa Ibom and Katsina. In 1991 under the same administration, nine more states were created, bringing the number of states to thirty, excluding Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory. The Abacha regime created an additional six states on 1 October 1996 to bring the total number of states to 36.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Nigeria is a federal system made up of 36 states presently. Trace the evolution of the structure of Nigerian federation from its foundation until today.

### 3.5 Features of Nigerian Federalism

- a. The constitutions of Nigeria, from the Lyttleton Constitution of 1954 to the 1999 Republican Constitution, have been written and rigid constitutions-the amendment procedures of which would be complicated and rigorous.
- b. The constitutions have been dividing powers between the federal government and the component units, formerly called regions, and new states and local governments. Specifically, political power is usually shared between the central and regional (state) governments as follows: **Federal exclusive list:** Currency, foreign affairs, defence, immigration and emigration, and customs; **State exclusive list:** State civil service commission, the state council of chiefs, state judicial service commission, and local government service commission; **Concurrent list:** This lists the powers shared jointly by the central authority and regional or state governments. Matters on the concurrent list usually include education, health, roads, housing and agriculture; and **Residual list:** This list is made up of powers not listed in either the exclusive or concurrent list. Residual powers are both exercised by the central authority and the state or regional governments. Matters on this list include markets, local governments and chieftaincy.
- c. In all the constitutions, the central government has been supreme with exclusive powers on many subjects, and final authority on some others.
- d. There has been the existence of a multi-party system, except the 1989 constitution that stipulated a two-party system.
- e. There has been a bicameral legislature of one form or another.
- f. The constitution has been supreme, from which all the various levels of government derive their power.
- g. The Supreme Court gives a judicial interpretation of the constitution.

- h.** Constitutional conferences usually take place to consult the people, towards modifying the constitution.
- i.** Secession by any section of the federation is constitutionally forbidden.

### **3.6 The Practical Relevance of the Federal Idea to Nigeria**

In spite of its shaky foundations, many travails and entire shortcoming in the tortuous journey towards nation-building, Nigeria has achieved remarkable success in managing its complex ethnic and national diversity. Federalism has helped to achieve this amazing feat achieved. To reiterate, the federalist foundations were laid by the 1946 constitution which created three regions (East, North and West); 1951 constitution, which combined quasi-federal and confederal features; and the 1954 constitution which introduced a federal constitution into the country. During this colonial period and over four-and-half decades of independent nationhood, including almost 30 years of military rule, federalism has at once provided for the country the “constitutional technology employed to accommodate the heterogeneous but territorially structured and demarcated diversities” as well as the “device for facilitating and strengthening the integrative desire and impulse of the country’s multiethnic communities seeking unity in diversity” (Elaigwu and Akindele, 1996). This genius of Nigerian federalism is poignantly reflected in the instrumentalities it has presented for ‘curbing ethnic domination, dispersing or decentralizing sectional conflicts, promoting inter-regional revenue redistribution, fostering inter-ethnic integration, and generally defusing and subduing the combustible pressures inherent in the country’s ethnolinguistic, regional and religious fragmentation’ such that the country is saved from the tragedy of state collapse or large scale internal insurgency that has recently convulsed other African states like the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, Sudan, Burundi, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Cote d’Ivoire (Suberu, 2005).

Federalism has achieved this enviable feat through the innovative instrumentalities of state creation, strengthening of local government and its elevation to the third tier of the federal government, the federal character principle and adaptive revenue allocation systems, which have all enhanced the accommodative genius of the federal solution in the country (Osaghae, 2005). By exploiting the integrative and accommodative opportunities inherent in Nigeria’s complex ethnic diversity itself, the multi-state framework has functioned relatively well to:

- a.** Provide opportunities for some measure of self-governance to a variety of territorial communities
- b.** Contain some conflicts within the federation’s respective subunits

- c. Fragment and dilute the ethnocentrism of the three major groups
- d. Alleviate ethnic minority insecurity or fears of inter-group domination
- e. Generate potentially crosscutting state-based identities; and
- f. Decentralise and redistribute economic resources (Suberu, 2004a).

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

“Federalism is as relevant for Nigeria today as it is when it was first adopted in 1951.” Discuss.

### **3.7 Problems of Nigerian federalism**

#### **a. Conflicts over Revenue Allocation Formula**

The issue of revenue allocation is one of the most fundamental problems facing Nigeria. It is the method and procedure for sharing the revenue generated by the federation between the federal government and the component units. Dating back to the Colonial regimes, revenue formula like derivation and even development, fiscal autonomy, derivation, need, balanced development and minimum responsibility, regional financial comparability, division, national minimum standards, balanced development, States' Joint Account, and basic need, the national minimum standard for national integration (22%), equality of access to development opportunities (25%), absorptive capacity (20%), fiscal efficiency (15%) and independent revenue effort (18%). Other criteria: 57% to Federal Government, 30% to state governments, 10% to local governments and 3% to a special fund, population (40%), equality (40%), social development (15%) and internal revenue effort (5%). Percentages for governments: Federal (53%), States (30%), Local Governments (10%), special fund (7%), Federal (50%), States (30%), Local Governments (15%), special fund (5%), etc. from various Commissions, etc. Under the current revenue allocation arrangement, states and local governments spend about half of the total government revenues, almost equal to that of the federal government. The federal government is allocated 52.68% per cent of Federation Account revenues (including 4.8% of the Account originally earmarked for “special projects” like the development of the FCT Abuja, development of natural resources, and the amelioration of national ecological emergencies), while the states and the local governments get 26.72% and 20.60%, respectively, bringing the total share of sub-national governments’ revenues from the Federation Account to 47.32% (Babalola; 2008). There is also a constitutional provision for the allocation of 13% as derivation fund to the oil-producing states.

In recent years, conflicts over revenue allocation are poignantly reflected in the violent conflict in the Niger Delta, the main oil-producing region. The complaint of the ethnic minorities of the Niger Delta is that while

derivation- the revenue sharing principle that requires that a certain percentage of revenue from natural resources be returned directly to the states from which the revenue was produced- was as high as 50 per cent under the 1960 and 1963 Constitutions when it benefited the majority ethnic groups, it has been persistently reduced with the discovery and exploitation of oil in the Niger Delta populated by ethnic minorities. As Suberu observed, “the proportion of oil revenues allocated on a derivation basis declined from 50% of mining rents and royalties in 1969, through 2% of the Federation Account in 1981, to only 1% of mineral revenues in the account during the period from 1989 to 1999” (Suberu, 2001). Many in the Niger Delta consider this concession far too little and agitations for a greater share from the oil wealth or outright control of the oil resources have dovetailed into youth militancy and also criminality (such as oil bunkering, and kidnapping of oil and even non-oil workers). This has not only threatened the peace of the region but also disrupted oil supply.

**a. Minorities Issue**

Nigeria is a plural society made up of 354 ethnic groups (Otite; 1990) including three major ethnic groups-Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo in addition to other minority groups. Each of the three major ethnic groups dominated one of the three regions that existed before independence, while they had many other groups with them in the same region. This development according to Crawford Young (1976: 275) “created cultural anxieties for the minority groups whose interests and aspirations were suppressed by the ‘big three’ groups who were the dominant actors in political and economic relations in the region. In the prevalent atmosphere of ethnic consciousness and the struggle for political ascendancy by the major region dominant groups, the minority groups began to agitate for constitutional arrangements which would give them some autonomy or at least ensure the protection of their rights and interest against what Eghosa Osaghae calls “majoritarian nationalism” and the ‘exclusive control of the regions’ by the core ethnic groups (Osaghae, 1999).

**b. Inter-Ethnic Rivalry and Conflict**

Rivalry among the various ethnic groups in Nigeria evolved from the disparity in the social, economic and political development of the component units of the federation. For instance, the early contact of the Yoruba with European missionaries and traders put them in an advantageous position in Nigerian commerce and senior positions in the federal civil service. The southern Igbo and Yoruba are also advanced in western education unlike the northern Hausa-Fulani, which led to the fear of domination of the north. The large size of the northern region and its unity as a single force which made it a domineering force in politics also threatened the southern

elites. As Mustapha has noted, the combination of these systemic educational, economic and political inequalities have engendered the fear of discrimination and domination and a resultant conflict-ridden political system (Mustapha, 2009). High levels of ethno-regional confrontation and conflict over unequal distribution of bureaucratic and political offices up to 1966 contributed in no small measure to the eventual collapse of the First Republic in January 1966, military intervention in politics, the Civil War in 1967, and the failed attempts at democratization.

**c. Threat of Secession**

The threat of secession has been a feature of the politics of Nigerian federalism. Inter-ethnic rivalry in Nigeria delayed the attainment of independence. Chief Anthony Enahoro, an Action Group member of the central legislature had tabled a motion calling on the House to accept as a primary political objective the attainment of self-government for Nigeria in 1956. The motion generated tribal rivalry and a lot of controversies. The AG and NCNC had agreed to support the motion but the NPC, the majority party was against it. So, as a delay tactic, a member of the NPC called for an adjournment which made the AG and NCNC members stage a walkout. On leaving the house later, the Northern members met with a hostile Lagos crowd that greatly insulted and jeered at them. Back to the North, the representatives informed their people of the insult which made the joint Northern House of Assembly and House of Chiefs pass an eight-point programme which, if implemented would have eventually resulted in the North's secession. The points included that there should no longer be a central legislative or executive body for the whole of Nigeria, that the North should have absolute legislative and executive autonomy, that all revenue should be collected by the regional governments, and that each region should have a separate public service.

**d. Citizenship Question**

The citizenship question in Nigeria borders especially on the differentiation of citizens of the country into indigenes and non-indigenes with differing opportunities and privileges. This practice is partly legitimated by the ethnic-distributive principles of federal character under the federal constitution, that discriminates against so-called non-indigenes, that is Nigerians living in states which they have no direct ethnobiological roots, and all these have been spelt out in the 1999 constitution, provided such a person is a citizen of Nigeria.

**e. Economic Underdevelopment**

The structure of Nigerian federalism has actively aggravated the country's economic failure by institutionalizing a regime of guaranteed transfers of oil resources, which systematically prioritizes distribution and patronage politics over considerations of development and wealth creation. In other words, the system violates a cardinal condition for accountability and efficiency in fiscal federalism, namely that the government which enjoys the pleasure of spending money must first experience the pain of extracting the money from taxpayers. By breaking this critical nexus between expenditure authority and revenue-raising responsibility, the Nigerian federal system has fuelled truly monumental levels of corruption, waste and mismanagement at the three tiers of government (Suberu, 2004b). Compounding the travails of Nigeria's federalism was the entrenched structure of a monolithic resource flow based on oil as the nation's economic mainstay. Oil accounted for over 90% of foreign exchange earnings (Program on Ethnic and Federal Studies. 2005). Nigeria, as the *Economist* aptly puts it, "produces almost nothing but crude oil." (*The Economist* (London), August 3, 2002). This warped practice of putting all national fates on oil has proved problematic for the country.

**f. Problem of Democratisation**

According to K. C. Wheare, federalism thrives on open government associated with democracy (1964). However, Nigeria's democratic experience has been tortuous. While Nigerians have found the federal grid a conducive mechanism for managing conflicts arising from their heterogeneity, the record of democratic regimes is poor. Upon Nigeria's attainment of political independence on 1 October 1960, international attention shifted to it as a country that would possibly make steady progress along the paths of sustainable peace, democracy and development in Africa. Such hopes were not misplaced, given the abundance of human and natural resources endowing the country. Contrary to expectations, however, it did not take long before these hopes were dashed (Osaghae, 1998b). Nigeria's ignominious transition from hope to despair began with the failure of the managers of the immediate post-independence Nigeria to fundamentally redress the crises and contradictions bequeathed to the country by the departing colonialists. The opportunity presented by independence to redress the roots of these problems was wasted by the new elite who took over and as Claude Ake (1996), they became absorbed

in the excessive struggle for power that consequently did not put development on the table. They saw independence as an opportunity to further their selfish and parochial interests through the manipulation of the forces of identity, particularly ethnicity and religion, within the country.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The Nigerian federalism is the “life-wire” of Nigeria’s survival as a multi-ethnic political entity. However, in spite of its real achievement in averting national disintegration, and in promoting a relatively benign accommodation of competition amongst ethnic constituencies, the Nigerian multi-state federalism remained in serious jeopardy and has been implicated in the country’s underdevelopment. From all of these, let it be said that federalism has not failed in Nigeria; rather, problem-solving federalism has not been evolved but there is light at the end of the tunnel if the gradual reforms being carried out by the present administration is anything to hold onto.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

This unit has examined government and politics in Nigeria through the prism of the country’s federal system. The Unit has traced the evolution of the federal system, the structure and features of the federal system, the practical relevance of the federal system and some of the problems and challenges facing the federal system today.

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

1. List and explain three problems or challenges facing the Nigerian federal system.
2. With copious examples, describe the challenge of democratization in Nigeria’s federal system.
3. In what way does the militancy in the Niger Delta represent a problem of and for Nigeria’s federalism?

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## **UNIT 5 THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL SYSTEM AND GLOBALISATION**

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### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

States and regimes are not isolated entities because they exist in an international system that undergirds them and exposes them to change. Most social scientists take the nation-state as the prime unit of comparative analysis but frequently discover that explanations of domestic political dynamics require reference to influences emanating from the outside environment. In the preceding lecture, you learnt about the major characteristics of the contemporary Nigerian political system, especially its federal system (including its evolution from colonial to military rule and, of course, 21 years of democratic rule since 1999). However, this transition did not take place in isolation as Nigeria relates with other countries and non-state actors in the international political system. If a political system is defined as any stable pattern of interactions which involves power and authority, then a political system cannot be narrowed down to countries alone. A comprehensive understanding of national political systems therefore requires an understanding of politics at the international arena or in the international political system. This is the focus of this unit, which is the concluding part of this lecture.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

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

- define and describe the nature of the international political system

- explain what globalisation is and identify the forces propelling rapid globalisation
- identify the key actors shaping globalisation
- explain the approaches to globalisation
- evaluate the role of the state in a globalised economy
- examine the impact of globalisation on developing countries.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 The International Political System**

The international system is a social system that has structure and function with patterns of action and interaction between collectivities and between individuals acting on their behalf (Walt; 1979). It is also said that the international system is made up of a disturbance input, a regulator which undergoes change arising from disturbance influences and environmental constraints (Roseau; 2006). The likelihood of this is the transformation of the states' state of disturbance and the state of the regulator into stable or unstable outcomes. The international political system is a replication of the cooperative, collaborative and conflictual process of social interactions within the state at the international level between and amongst different state systems, and other non-state actors that have bearing on the possibilities or otherwise of what happens in terms of who produces what gets what, when and how. Central therefore to the understanding of the international system, is the issue of power, its uses and control between and amongst states and non-state actors.

There have been various international relations theories to help provide a conceptual model upon which politics in the international political system can be analysed with each theory relying on different sets of assumptions respectively. As Ole Holsti describes them, international relations theories act as a pair of coloured sunglasses, allowing the wearer to see only the salient events relevant to the theory (Holsti, 1987). International relations theories can be divided into many conflicting approaches. However, the prevalent broad approaches are realism and liberalism. Realism makes several key assumptions among which are that nation-states are unitary, geographically-based actors in an anarchic international system with no authority above capable of regulating interactions between states as no true authoritative world government exists. Secondly, it assumes that sovereign states, rather than International Governmental Organisations (IGOs), Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs), or Multinational Corporations (MNCs), are the primary actors in international affairs. Thus, states, as the highest order, compete with one another, and as such, a state acts as a rational autonomous actor in pursuit of its self-interest with a primary goal to maintain and ensure its own security—and thus its sovereignty and survival. Realism holds that in

pursuit of their interests, states will attempt to amass resources and that relations between states are determined by their relative levels of power-level of power that is in turn determined by state's military and economic capabilities.

Liberalism holds that state preferences, rather than state capabilities, are the primary determinant of state behaviour. Unlike realism where the state is seen as a unitary actor, liberalism allows for plurality in state actions. Thus, preferences will vary from state to state, depending on factors such as culture, economic system or government type. Liberalism also holds that interaction between states is not limited to the political/security ("high politics"), but also economic/cultural ("low politics") whether through commercial firms, organisations or individuals. Thus, instead of an anarchic international system, there are plenty of opportunities for cooperation and broader notions of power. Another assumption is that absolute gains can be made through cooperation and interdependence - thus peace can be achieved. Meanwhile, what is clear from these perspectives is that both states and non-state actors exercise influence in the international political system. It should be emphasised that the relations between states and non-state actors at the international political system is not static and has undergone major shifts and changes which have coincided more or less with major shifts in the global order. Perhaps, the most important of these changes is the unprecedented impact of globalisation. According to Pagan and Abbott (1999), if 'globalisation' has had one simple effect on development studies and international political economy, it is this — it is now extremely difficult to analyse a national unit in isolation from some concept of global structure and process, even if one wishes to make an argument for the persistence of the nation-state. But what exactly do we mean by the term globalisation? The remaining part of this unit will introduce you to the concepts of and globalisation and its complex dynamics.

### **3.2 Meaning of Globalisation**

Globalisation 'has become the most ubiquitous in the language of international relations' (Ostry, 2001 cf. Kegley and Wittkopt, 2004). Ever since the term was first used to make sense of large-scale changes, scholars have debated its meaning and use, and the term became a popular catchphrase, it served to crystallise disagreements about the direction of change in the world at large. By the end of the 20th century, the meaning and merits of globalisation were contested in the media and on the streets as Intellectual debate blended with political conflict. In recent years, debates and conflicts surrounding globalisation has increasingly taken place during G-7 and G-20 summits by leaders of the developed countries and opposition to these summits by protesting 'anti-globalisation' groups who denounce globalisation as evil and a force promoting global

inequality (Clark, 2003). The contention in the process of globalisation is reflected in the disagreement about its meaning. According to one popular view, globalisation is the “inexorable integration of markets, nation-states and technologies to a degree never witnessed before in a way that is enabling individuals, corporations and nation-states to reach around the world farther, faster, deeper and cheaper than ever before” (see Friedman, 1999). By contrast, some groups of scholars and activists view globalisation not as an inexorable process but as a deliberate, ideological project of economic liberalisation that subject states and individuals to more intense market forces (see, McMichael, 2000; Hirst and Thompson, 1996).

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

What do you understand by the concept of globalisation? Is it inexorable or premeditated?

### **3.3 Forces Propelling Rapid Globalisation**

Several forces are driving much of the globalisation process today and these include international trade, investment, finance and production. Perhaps by far of these influences is an information technology (Kegley and Wittkopt, 2004). All the changes brought about by globalisation - economic, political and cultural - are maintained through the activities of the information technology and mass media, both in terms of its structure and its audiences. The pervasive nature of communication technology is obvious when one looks at its size and impact. For instance, the information contained in 1000 books can travel across the globe each second. One aspect of information technology is the mass media which has become an integral part of everyday life as they play a pervasive role as an agent of socialisation. As agents of socialisation, the communication technologies represent a channel for the distribution of social knowledge and hence a powerful instrument of social control. Much of our knowledge of the world is gained directly through the media especially, about people, places, event, and how to make sense of the world. The impact of the information technology revolution goes beyond information that pervades all the different aspects of globalisation. The power of computer communication technology (the Internet) has changed the nature of finances and trade, putting an end to geography, creating a borderless world.

According to Pickering (2001), developments in communication and transportation technologies have given rise to new forms of cultural production, consumption and exchange. Similarly, Giddens (1999) has claimed the invisible overthrow of the old pattern of living through the expansion of communications systems around the world. To be sure, the



information revolution has increasingly translated into a digital divide with most countries in the developing countries not catching fully on the gains. However, there is also progress made even in these countries. Take Nigeria for instance. It has been reported that the country has in the last ten years been experiencing sustained double-digit growth in excess of 20% per annum in the telecommunications sector. With teledensity of 48 phones per 100 people, the country has attained 67 million active phone subscribers base composed of 59, 194, 972 mobile phones, 7233089 CMDA, and 1, 435, 279 fixed wire/wireless network (Daily Trust, September 11, 2009: 35).

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

“The forces propelling globalisation are diverse and complex”. Discuss.

### **3.4 Actors of Globalisation**

Globalisation entails a multiplicity of agents or actors (Helvacioğlu, 2000), actors and agents that are instrumental or are direct players in the process. These include the state and non-state actors. Traditionally, the essential purpose of international relations is the investigation and study of patterns of actions and reactions among sovereign states as represented by their governing elites (Buzan & Little, 1994). Today, however, besides the traditional role of the state in the international system, other non-sovereign or non-state entities actors are also exercising significant economic, political, or social power and influence at a national, and in some cases international level. According to the USA National Intelligence Council (2007), “a globalisation-fueled diffusion of finance and technology has enabled non-state actors to encroach upon functions traditionally performed by nation-states, facilitating their evolution into forms unheard of even a few years ago.” The NIC, however, cautioned that estimates of the impacts of non-state actors should be made cautiously, “for few non-state actors are completely independent of nation-states, and they do not have uniform freedom of movement”. For instance, although non-state actors have a great deal of latitude in both weak and post-industrial states, modernising states such as China and Russia—home to the bulk of the world’s population—have been highly effective in suppressing them and in creating their own substitutes, some of which have demonstrated their power to counter US objectives and even to challenge global rules of engagement.

While these influential non-state actors are not a new phenomenon, what differentiates and shapes contemporary non-state actors, is an unprecedented operating environment. The end of the Cold War meant that military and security issues no longer automatically dominated the economic and social issues that are the benign non-state actors’ stock-in-

trade; globalisation has made financial, political, and technical resources more widely available (and constrained the developed world's ability to make the rules); and technology and the growth of a global popular culture provide new opportunities for rallying support and getting messages across (US National Intelligence Council, 2007). The burgeoning scholarly literature on globalisation has noted the virtual explosion in the numbers and types of non-state actors populating the international system, many of which are operating on the fringes of state control or under the auspices of states that lack adequate nationally administered control regimes (Reimann, 2006). Multinational corporations, non-governmental and quasi-governmental organisations, and transnational social movements all represent examples of a growing number of organisational structures that operate across borders on a global scale. International nongovernmental organisations (defined as operating in more than three countries) engaged in advocacy or direct action have grown from an estimated 985 in 1956 to more than 21,000 in 2003 (Russell, 2006). According to the Global Policy Forum (2000), non-governmental organizations of all types numbered above 37,000 by the year 2000 represents nearly 20 per cent growth over the previous 10 years. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Disarmament (2004) estimated in 2004 that there were a total of 61,000 transnational corporations with as many as 900,000 foreign affiliates around the world.

Non-state actors operating in the contemporary international system can be roughly categorised into the following: **International Organisations:** International organisations are transnational organisations created by two or more sovereign states (Akindele, 2003) while some international Organisations are universal, others are regional, and pursue strictly the political and socio-economic interests of the member states. Examples of universal international organisations with universal or near-universal membership include the United Nations, the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), and World Trade Organisation (WTO). Examples of regional multilateral organisations include European Union, African Union, New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Southern African Development Commission (SADC). Suffice it to say that in some international organisations, common interests constitute the basis of the associational life of members and hence the rule of geographical contiguity does not hold. This is the case, for instance, with OPEC which is an oil cartel with membership from the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Latin America. Another example is the Group of Eight (G8) which comprises of governments of the eight richest countries in the world industrialised countries of United States, United Kingdom, Germany, France, Italy, Japan, Canada, and Russia.

**Multinational Corporations:** these are enterprises that manage production or deliver services in at least two countries. The traditional

multinational is a private company headquartered in one country and with subsidiaries in others, all operating in accordance with a coordinated global strategy to win market share and achieve cost efficiencies. The popular multinationals include those linked to America and European countries such as Shell, Chevron and Agip. However, in recent times, multinationals from China, India, Russia and other emerging-market states are offering some developing countries an alternative source of investment. For example, Indian energy firms are investing in Burma and Cuba, and have growing ties with Venezuela, while Chinese state-owned enterprises are investing in Iran, Sudan, Burma, and Zimbabwe. Today, the German energy giant, Siemens AG is in partnership with Nigeria to help find a lasting solution to the premeditated power project crisis. For **Non-governmental Organisations**, these are organisations that are private, self-governing, voluntary, non-profit, and task- or interest-oriented advocacy organisations. Within those broad parameters there is a huge degree of diversity in terms of unifying principles; independence from government, big business, and other outside influences; operating procedures; sources of funding; international reach; and size. They can implement projects, provide services, defend or promote specific causes, or seek to influence policy. NGOs have prospered from both the growing (but primarily Western) emphasis on human rights, environmental protection, security— which raises the stock of the social and humanitarian issues in which many NGOs have unique expertise— and the involvement by billionaires in social issues.

Since 2001, advocacy NGOs that work on transnational issues such as the environment, public health, migration and displacement, and social and economic justice have received greater visibility and influence thanks to increased public demands for action in such areas. With national governments frequently ceding the handling of these issues to NGOs, they have been allowed to encroach upon areas that had traditionally belonged to states. Traditional NGO networking, information exchange, and initiation of global campaigns have been exponentially enhanced by the use of the Internet. Examples of NGOs include Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, Doctors without Borders, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, World Wildlife Fund, Action Aid, and many others. A key variety of NGOs acting as non-state actors is the philanthropic foundations or charities. Philanthropic foundations are unique actors, guided by a very strong culture of independence, innovation and risk-taking. In their insightful study on American philanthropic foundations, Chervalier and Zimet (2006) revealed the following findings:

- a. American philanthropic foundations devote a growing portion of their financing to international cooperation for development activities. Although the number of philanthropic foundations in the United States has doubled in ten years, their international

contributions have been increasing at a constant rate since the end of the '90s. American philanthropic foundations have become influential actors at the international level, especially in the area of providing aid for developing countries.

- b. The number of philanthropic foundations in the United States doubled between 1995 and 2005, growing from 38, 807 foundations to 75, 953. The global volume of financing allocated each year by foundations in the United States and abroad has logically reflected this net increase, rising from 11.3 billion dollars in 1994 to 32.4 billion dollars in 2004. For instance, since its creation in 1998, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has donated some ten billion dollars, including 5.8 billion for the Global Health Program. (Chevalier and Zimet; 2006).
- c. International activity by American foundations is mainly undertaken by a group of 12 major foundations, which are very active in the area of international cooperation. These are Ford, Hewlett, Packard, Rockefeller, Gates, Mellon, Kellogg, Mott Foundations, Open Society Institute, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Carnegie Corporation of New York, MacArthur.

**Super-Empowered Individuals**—these are persons who have overcome constraints, conventions, and rules to wield unique political, economic, intellectual, or cultural influence throughout human events—generated the most wide-ranging discussion. “Archetypes” include industrialists, criminals, financiers, media moguls, celebrity activists, religious leaders, and terrorists. How they exert their influence (money, moral authority, expertise) are as varied as their fields of endeavour. This category excludes political office holders (although some super-empowered individuals eventually attain political office), those with hereditary power, or the merely rich or famous. Globalised media have allowed **entertainers** to replace artists and intellectuals as leaders in shaping global public opinion. A good example of this is the rock star Bono, who has raised global consciousness about the plight of Africa, while Mia Farrow has been instrumental in pressuring China over its relations with Sudan by drawing linkages between Darfur and the 2008 Beijing Olympics (US National Intelligence Council, 2007). **Terrorists and Organised Crime Syndicates:** This is the group that Pollard (2002) describes as “illegitimate non-state actors” as a result of their propensity to carry out covert operations and operate outside International Law or norms of etiquette in international relations. While the phenomenon of terrorists is not new, the ability to transmit information via the internet and other global media has exponentially increased the speed with which terrorists work in contemporary modern. Technological advances also have put ever more powerful weapons into the hands of individuals and small groups (US National Intelligence Council, 2007). Transnational criminal organizations support illicit markets in nuclear and other

Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) materials due to the perceived value of the assets - a perception that WMD materials have intrinsic value stimulates this demand.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Who are super-empowered individuals and how important are they as forces of globalisation?

### **3.5 Approaches to Globalisation**

There are different approaches to globalisation and economics is said to be the dominant approach. Rajaei (2000:24) notes that the economists approach to globalisation is “in terms of increased economic interdependence and the integration of all national economies into one global economy within the framework of a capitalist market”. Similarly, Bairoch (2000:197) refers to globalisation as a “situation wherein industrial and commercial companies as well as financial institutions increasingly operate transnationally, in other words, beyond national borders”. What are the features of the global economy? Helvacioğlu (2000) provides us with some of its characteristics. According to him, the globalisation of the economy can be characterised by first, the growing structural power and mobility of capital in production and financial markets, articulated with neoliberal policies of privatisation, deregulation and structural changes in national governments, welfare programme and public services. The second feature is the liberalisation of trade and monetary policies, the growth of transnational networks of investment, finance, advertising and consumption markets. And the third is the changes in the foundations and structures of the world economy. The most important aspect of the change as argued by Rajaei (2000), is the shift in commodities and mode of production from the capital to knowledge, and from industry to information technology respectively. Production becomes decentralised and scattered across the globe through the process of production sharing with little control from the nation-states. For instance, production sharing based on the principle of comparative advantage has made Singapore the biggest producer of computer hardware and Bangladesh the biggest producer of clothing. Globalisation of the economy involves such issues as flexible and fluid global labour, global production and capital, global market, and of competition etc., (McMichael, 1996 and Bilton, 1997).

Despite the dominance of economics in the globalisation discourse, there are several scholars (Bilton, 1997 and McMichael, 1996) who warn us about the danger of putting too much faith on the market and other economic forces. More importantly, economic is not the only prime mover of the globalisation process. The globalisation of culture is another

area of discourse. It is argued that one of the consequences of globalisation is the end of cultural diversity, and the triumph of exclusively Western interests and control, especially the imperialism of the United States which leads to the global spread of American symbols and popular culture (cf. H. Schiller, 1969; Hamelink, 1994). Hence the world drinks Coca-Cola, watches American movies and eats tinned food, whilst traditional cultural values and practices decline in importance. The implication of this is not only in terms of its consequences on the economy, but equally important is that such global commodities imply the emergence of global culture. The issue here is not just the sale of global goods, but also the ideas and statements that imply modernity, which means westernisation. The discussion about the cultural undertone of globalisation normally takes moral and religious tone. Mr Wolfgang Thierse, the 11<sup>th</sup> President of the German Bundestag, writes in the April/May of 2002 issue of the periodical, *Deutschland* that “what we refer to today as globalization is a Western-dominated form of economic power which is breaking into all the world’s cultures, and which endeavours to reduce people to their economic functions as consumers and producers.... If people believe that their own cultures are being marginalised, their religion disdained, their ties and bonds undermined, and then their reactions are predictable.”

One can easily establish the linkages- global production led to the global market, which in turn led to global consumption and global ideas and ideology. Thus, globalisation is seen as a new form of cultural imperialism. The counter-argument to this stresses new heterogeneity that results from globalisation: interaction is likely to lead to new mixtures of cultures and integration is likely to provoke a defence of tradition; global norms or practices are necessarily interpreted differently according to local tradition, and one such norm stresses the value of cultural difference itself; cultural flows now originate in many places, and America has no hegemonic grasp on a world that must passively accept whatever it has to sell. In other words, as Rajae (2000) notes, globalisation is not harmonisation of community. The diverse identities may not allow that. Nobody can lay claim to globalisation - it is complex and vast - beyond the control of anybody or nation.

### **3.6 The Role of the State in a Globalised International System**

Another dimension to the globalisation debate is the political- that those that adopt political approach tend to emphasise the near impotence of the state in the era of globalisation. According to one line of argument, globalisation constrains states- free trade limits the ability of states to set policy and protect domestic companies; capital mobility makes generous welfare states less competitive; global problems exceed the grasp of any individual state, and global norms and institutions become more powerful.

States, argues this perspective, are increasingly losing their capacity to govern and to regulate in an increasingly borderless world. Increasingly, the government's activities are defined by international frameworks, such as World Trade Organisations (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the OECD, as well as influenced by regional blocks like the European Union, African Union. No longer bound by the artificial limitations of territoriality, many public issues are seen as requiring the collective actions of numerous stakeholders, in order to protect or advance the interests of individual nations.

Furthermore, the universalisation of the western form of democracy has increasingly become the final form of government across the globe. In addition, and related to the above, is that the rise in importance of such supranational bodies as World Bank, IMF, UN, and AU introduces new agents into decision-making processes of which the nation-states have to negotiate and contend with. As such the locus of political power is no longer the national government. Consequently, diverse forces and agencies at national and international levels share power. Thus, the incursions of international organizations upon national sovereignty and the effects of large-scale migration on social cohesion are restricting the ability of the state to uphold its own fundamental values and determine its collective identity.

While the central argument so far presented is the continued decline in the role of the state, some question such view (Therborn, 2000; Held, 2000; Rajaei, 2000, and Pickering, 2001). Pickering (2001) argues that to see these changes in the function of the state as signs of the inevitable death of the nation-state and national identity is misguided. The complex interdependencies between international trade and international organisations on the one hand, and the nation-state on the other, suggest that global processes may change the role of the nation-state, but they are not making it irrelevant. In fact, globalisation may lead to the revival of the nation-state. In a more integrated world, nation-states may even become more important: they have a special role in creating conditions for growth and compensating for the effects of economic competition; they are key players in organizations and treaties that address global problems, and they are themselves global models charged with great authority by global norms. As Griffin would say- globalization affects government capability to intervene but no matter what states would, in the final analysis, continue to determine what happened to and in their boundaries (2004)

### **3.7 Impact of Globalisation on Developing Countries**

Debate on the participation of developing countries in the globalisation process has given rise to two positions leading to what are now pro-

globalisation and anti-globalisation groups. The first position calls for critical and positive engagement with the forces of globalisation to harness the opportunities they provide and minimise their consequences. This position rejects the description of globalisation as westernisation. Rajae (2000) was arguing along this line when he stated that globalisation is not a project manipulated by a specific group or state. No player can establish a monopoly on information. No imposition of will, views, interests as indicated in the revolt of the masses against globalisation. In other words, globalisation is rooted in an expanding consciousness of living together on one planet, a consciousness that takes the concrete form of models for global interaction and institutional development that constrain the interests of even powerful players and relate any particular place to a larger global whole (R. Robertson, 1992; Meyer *et al.*, 1997). According to an extreme view of this position, all countries are essentially the same, so that even if they appear to be very different (in size, sectoral profile, resource endowment etc.), they are not different in any sense that they might not benefit from liberalisation (cf. Harrison, In other words, their difference does not make a difference. In a nutshell, 'global economic integration will lift all boats' (Nederveen Pieterse, 2002: 1027). What is needed, according to this view, to steer globalisation to positive ends is a more democratic architecture of global public authority (Griffin, 2003). This is what is now referred to as both Washington (WC) and Post Washington Consensus (PWC): liberalisation is socially progressive (WC); liberalisation is only socially progressive when institutional factors are taken into account (PWC) (Fine *et al.*, 2001).

The second position tends to be critical about the consequences of the globalisation process and dismisses it as another phase of imperialism, the end result of which the rich get richer and the poor poorer. Many authors attribute the dynamics of globalisation to the pursuit of material interests by dominant states and multinational companies that exploit new technologies to shape a world in which they can flourish according to rules they set (Frank, 2004). Other proponents of this view have argued that the idea of globalization as happiness for all people and countries in the world takes too much for granted, as it leaves out the issues of power relations in international politics. For example, there is the fact that African countries joined the present international system as peripheral states and junior partner, a fact that has since placed them in a disadvantageous position with the world powers.

According to this position, the argument that globalisation will 'make everybody happy' is untenable as the global economy is still highly unequal in its spatial patterning, whether one looks at trade or investment (Dicken, 2001; Harrison, 2004), and that this historically constituted or constructed structures of inequality within and between economies make



liberalisation advantageous for some, acceptable to others, and damaging to the rest (Kaplinsky, 2001). But not only are some developing countries, especially African countries, disadvantaged from the beginning in the international political system as a result of their forceful insertion into the global capitalist system through colonialism, their peripheral location within the system, and “the unequal exchange that characterises its relations with the dominant centres of those systems (the industrialised or developed countries who belong to the twenty-nine member OECD, and the G-8)” (Osaghae, 1999); they also experience routine and pervasive economic and political intervention from the IMF, the WB, the WTO, UN, and Western official aid departments, the reason why Munck (2003) called it dependent development.

Whatever the direction of the debate, it is evident that participation in the globalisation process by the developing countries in general and Nigeria, in particular, is a must. It is unavoidable as was noted by Giddens (1999). He argues that “European, North or South American, African or Asian - wherever we live, whatever our upbringing, we are all children of a revolution. It's not been a bloody uprising, nor an entirely peaceful, 'velvet' revolution, such revolution is globalisation. Thus for countries all over the world, the fundamental issue is not to oppose globalisation or accept it but rather, how to manage globalisation so that its positive aspects can be maximised and the negative ones minimised. If the reality thus far is that nations have no choice but to participate in the globalisation process and are indeed participating, then the key challenge, besides democratisation of global governance to ‘steer globalisation towards greater human security, social equality and democracy’ (Scholte, 2005: 383), is the crucial question of what individual nations should do to take up the opportunities provided by globalisation and harness them with their local capabilities as well as have programmes that would cushion the negative effect of the globalisation.

### **SELF- ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

“The impact of globalisation on developing countries is mixed. On one hand, globalisation empowers these countries; while on the other hand, it disempowers them.” Discuss.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Globalisation has affected social, political, economic and cultural relations, particularly, several important conclusions about the nature of the changes caused by globalisation which are the increased commodification of services. The organisation of capitalism has changed with the increasing integration of production and services through value chains.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt that the globalisation process is inevitable. You have also learnt that while globalisation can be a negative force engendering inequality and underdevelopment at both the national and global levels, the fact that globalisation has some negative impact should not imply a wholesale rejection of all signs of globalisation.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What are the Approaches to the understanding of globalisation?
2. Evaluate the Impact of globalisation on developing countries.
3. In what ways does globalisation erode states sovereignty?
4. Is globalisation a sophistication of western civilisation? Discuss this within the context of the Covid-19 Pandemic that has killed over a hundred thousand Americans including the economic consequences.

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