

Introduction to AP Comparative GOVERNMENT/POLITICS

AP Comparative Government and Politics is the study and analysis of the structures of the political and policy systems of different governments.

Comparative Methods

The purpose of comparison is to identify both social and political problems by using data and facts and to be able to recommend a policy action or a reform to best address those problems.

It involves both **empirical statements (state facts)** and **normative statements (value judgments)**

(GDP, Gross Domestic Product)

Country	GDP Per Capita
United States	\$54,597
United Kingdom	\$45,653
Mexico	\$10,715
Nigeria	\$3,298

Empirical statement would be that Mexico has a higher GDP than Nigeria.
Normative statement would be that Nigeria should model its economic policy on Mexico's development strategy.

SYSTEM THEORY

It is important to remember that the institution of state (President, parliaments) is not the only significant actor; there are also regular citizens, media commentators, and writers.

There is also national history and **political culture**, which determine if the behavior of political elites is appropriate or inappropriate.

The environment in the system theory would include **political culture**, meaning the basic norms and expectations people have with regard to how politics work.

Political culture is grounded in historical traditions, features of a constitution, and expectations about how the transfer of power works.

“Input” are demands made most commonly by political parties and interest groups but potentially by other citizen social movements, regarding policies they would like to see from the political system, such as more spending on national defense.

“Output” is the feedback; the institutions that commonly produce feedback are the news media, radio, and television.

Institutions outside the formal political system that provide input and feedback are called **Linkage institutions**. (They connect people to policy making, including political parties, elections, interest groups and the media.)

Inside the formal political system are the **state institutions**, which exercise the formal power of policy making such as the legislature or judiciary, which are branches of the government.

Both **linkage institutions** and **state institutions** must behave in the context of political culture; otherwise, they will risk losing their ability to wield influence. For example, there is no record of a president trying to run for another term; if the current president tried to run for another term, which violates the written constitutional tradition, this would be responded to by a negative opinion.

SOCIAL SCIENCE

Social science is like physical science; they both require the pre-sensation of a hypothesis and the testing of that hypothesis based on the gathering of data. However, social scientists cannot perform their testing of hypotheses in a lab experiment.

Correlation refers to a situation where one set of observed data seems to be related closely to another set of data.

Causation is the action of causing or producing.

STATE

Often referred to as countries or nations.

Scenario 1; “When Britain made the decision in 1946 to provide health care to all British citizens through the National Health Service (NHS), it was not only able to create the institutions necessary to run such an operation, but also able to fund the promise of the NHS.”

* Not all states are created equal, there are **strong states**, meaning they have the ability to enact (make) a policy and see through its execution and enforcement.

A **weak state** would not necessarily have the capacity to carry out the programme.

A growing area of concern for the international community is the emergence of **failed states**. They are unable to provide basic law and order to their people; the effect of this would be that the criminal elements are free to behave in impunity without fear of consequences because of the state's lack of capacity to deal with internal problems.

An example of failed states are Somalia, Haiti, and others.

Autonomy is the ability to enact and carry out a policy without the support of the public. States with high autonomy can take actions without much fear of consequences. For example, China is a state with high autonomy and the United Kingdom is a state with low autonomy since they rely heavily on public support.

Legitimacy

(The Perception of the public determines whether the people accept the right of the state to rule over them or not.)

Traditional Legitimacy

When legitimate political rulers acquire their position and powers through old traditions that are simply being maintained for consistency and predictability in the present.

Charismatic Legitimacy or Personality Cult

When a single individual captures the attention and loyalty of the people by gaining a reputation as a great hero of the people or manipulating their public image to portray him as a good service to the nation.

Rational-legal legitimacy

In a state where formal, understood legal practices and rules of the political game determine who wields political power and when.

Terms

Nations

People groups are bonded together by a shared sense of sovereignty and political destiny, most commonly the desire to gain or maintain sovereign government. Sometimes united by a shared sense of ideology and nationality, or in some cases, religion.

Some nations are considered **stateless nations** because they are poorly integrated (blend in) into the political system of the state they reside in.

Regimes (A governmental pattern, either a democratic or authoritarian one)

The rules and system under which the political process takes place. Regimes determine how individuals and groups acquire and exercise political power. () **Regime change can occur through:**

1. **Reform**, important but gradual (slow process) changes to the political system that do not alter the political system.
2. **Revolution**, sudden and radical change in the structures and systems that completely transforms the regime.
3. **Coup d'état**, when the military of the state acts internally to displace and seize the power of those currently in power and seize power for itself.

Government

Individuals currently exercising political power from official positions of authority.

Centralization and Decentralization of Power

Unitary States

Centralize power at one level of government, meaning there is a central government that has the most power. (Britain, for example)

Federalism

Federal states divide power between the central and regional levels of government, there is an official legal constitutional division of powers between certain governments and the regional government in which certain powers belong to each. (United States, for example)

Confederation

A confederal system is an association of independent states.

Supranational Organizations

Which are governing bodies that allow many sovereign states to send representatives to make collective decisions for the group. (The European Union, the UN, and the World Health Organization)

Nations and Society

Ethnicity

It refers to a classification of people based on visible physical traits, such as skin color.

It also refers to the attributes identified by a group of people that make them distinct from others, such as cultural heritage, ancestry, history, language, homeland, religion, ideology, or symbolism.

Nationalism

Refers to a sense of pride in the nation of people and a belief that they can achieve their political destiny.

Citizenship

Refers specifically to the formal relationship between the state and the individual. They may have privileges and specific rights, such as the right to vote.

Patriotism

Which is pride in the state.

Social Cleavages

Cleavages

Act as the basis for political conflict. They separate and divide people into supporters and opponents of political issues based on the attributes or interests of those people.

Owner vs Workers

Church vs State

Urban Vs Rural

Land vs Industry

Cross-cutting cleavages allows politics to continue functioning with civility and without breaking the society unity apart.

Coinciding cleavages deeply divided society to a point that threatened the unity of the society.

Centrifugal forces are the forces that divide and polarize people in a state.

Centripetal force unifies or brings the people of the state together to enhance the stability and legitimacy of the state.

Political Attitude and Ideology

(Refers to how people feel about the pace with which political change should occur.)

Radicals – prefer rapid, dramatic, and revolutionary change, believe that the existing institution is not suitable and needs to be replaced with a new regime.

Liberals – Want to make progressive changes to the system but want to do it through evolutionary reform rather than rapid revolution. Changes to the existing regime rather than creating a new one

Conservative – Conservatives are generally more satisfied with the current regime and fear that changes could be for the worse.

Reactionaries – They seek to push society and state institutions back to the regime and social order of the past. They may support the use of violence.

Political Ideology

(a person preference for the goals of politics rather than the pace and methods of change)

Liberalism – Prioritize economic and personal freedom as central goals of a political system.

Communism – Believe that true freedom comes from economic equality, they seek to abolish economic inequality through strict state control of all economic activity.

Social Democracy/ Socialist – Reject the strict control that comes from communism and seek to balance economic classes through redistributive tax and benefit policies.

Fascism – Reject the notions of equality and freedom altogether, they believe that people, social groups, classes, or ethnicities can be ranked as superior or inferior.

Anarchism – Reject the state and government, believe that to achieve freedom, they must abolish the government altogether, true equality comes from the cooperation of people in communities.

Political Culture

Globalization – Rapidly expanding interaction and interdependence between people all over the planet is what defines the modern era of globalization.

Modernization – Societies everywhere are transitioning away from religious and cultural tradition and moving towards a set of values based on secular or rational principles that emphasize scientific progress, economic development, and individual rights.

Democratization – Elections are now the most common method for a state to choose political leadership. Democracy is now assumed to be a good value that ought to be pursued.

Political Economy

Microeconomics – Low risk and a minor level of decision-making in economics.

Macroeconomic – Major and important decisions that would affect multitudes of people at once.

Economic Freedom - Individuals and private firms are free to own property and make decisions about how to use, invest, and consume it without interference from the state. (The right tends to support this).

Economic equality – Prefer to move towards a society in which neither poverty nor extreme wealth exists. But rather, the resources of society are collectively used to eliminate the struggles of poverty through redistributive state actions. (The left tends to support this.)

Subsidy – Payment from the state to assist consumers in purchasing the products, or payment directly to the producer to keep the price lower.

Black market- Illegal products that are being sold or operated despite the laws of the state.

Public Goods – Goods and services that are provided to citizens either free of charge or at a heavily subsidized rate by the state.

Social Expenditures – Similar to public goods, but are provided to some members of society but not others in the name of helping to achieve more economic equality. Sometimes referred to as the welfare state.

Taxation – **The left** generally supports taxation against wealthier people in the country, while **the right** prefers to reduce progressivity and move closer to **flat taxation**, where all individuals pay the amount of taxes regardless of their wealth or income.

Inflation – When prices would rise dramatically to the point that the currency or money would become essentially worthless.

Regulation – Directive from the government that controls the activities of people and firms in the market.

The Central Bank manages the money supply and is backed by a guarantee from the state that the currency must be accepted as payment by all people within the country. **Recession** – When the economy is declining and less is being produced.

Trade

A **free trade agenda**, allowing people the freedom to buy and sell whatever they please without restriction, will result in the highest economic growth.

Protectionist policies by the state, meaning actions to shield domestic industries and workers from foreign competition. (They fear that free trade will result in losing jobs to cheaper labor abroad.)

Tariffs - Taxes on foreign goods imported

Import quotas (Restriction on the amount of a particular foreign good that may enter the country.)

Dependency theory – Many postcolonial environments in Latin America, Africa and Asia believe that their newly independent societies would never become developed and powerful themselves unless they protected themselves from foreign trade through tariffs, quotas.

Ideology

Democratic centralism – centralizes political decision making into a small revolutionary elite who would make all decisions on the basis of benefiting the common man as much as possible.

Mercantilism – Establishing state-owned manufacturing and trading companies with the aim of bringing gold, prestige, and power to the kingdom.

GDP and Development

GDP - Total value of all goods and services produced within a country for a given period of time.

GDP per Capita – Average income and standard of living for the average person.**The Gini Index** – coefficient that attempts to measure the degree to which income is

distributed from the top to the bottom of a society.

Subsistence agriculture – producing enough food on their land to feed their own family but little more to sell at any profit.

Democratic Regimes

Chapter 1, a political system for choosing and replacing the government through free and fair elections.

Indirect Democracy – Allows the people to choose representatives to exercise policy-making power.

Direct democracy – Allows the people to vote directly on whether a policy will be enacted or not.

Referendum – When the government proposes a specific policy change to voters, at which point a national election is held in which voters cast a yes or no vote on the question. If “yes” is favored then the policy becomes binding law.

Plebiscite – voters may vote “yes” or no” on a policy question, but the results of a plebiscite are not binding.

The necessary components for free and fair elections:

1. Voters can see that their preferred candidate has an opportunity to be on the ballot.
2. There are multiple parties or candidates contending for office.
3. Candidates have adequate time to get their message out to voters, and voters have access to the alternative sources of information.
5. All voters may cast a vote without any institutional obstructions.
6. All voters' votes are counted equally
7. Candidate who receives the most votes is declared the winner.
8. Duly elected officials are allowed to take office, and their orders are executed.

Chapter 2, the active participation of the people, as citizens, in politics and civic life

Civil society – Non governmental organization and institution, group of people choose to form and join in order to express their interests.

Pluralist societies - Allow civil society to form independently and freely.

Corporatist Societies – Give the state a strong and controlling role in the organization of civil society.

Chapter 3, protection of the human rights of all citizens

Liberal democracies – Respect the rights of people in addition to holding regular, free, fair and competitive elections.

Illiberal democracies – hold elections in which the winning candidate is in fact the candidate with most votes and does wield the political power but significant restrictions and violations of these rights occur consistently.
(For example, Putin)

Chapter 4, rule of law in which the laws and procedures apply equally to all citizens

Rule of law is a concept that has emerged and evolved gradually over human history

such as the Magna Carta in England in 1215

Government power is limited by a constitution, which ensures that the government does not abuse their power.

The Role of Political Parties

A Political party is an institution that seeks to gain control of government for the purpose of wielding political power to achieve goals common to its members.

Interest groups and other civil societies – These groups and society back the Political party but do not actually compete for direct control of political offices.

Interest groups begin the process of interest articulation in which the group communicates the common interest of its members with relevant policymakers, government officials and the public at large.

After interest articulation, both interest groups and political parties are involved in interest aggregation, which combines the interests of many individuals and groups into a formal policy program.

Election Systems

Proportional representation system (PR) is a system that elects a large number of representatives. (Give parties seats based on the percent of vote they received) (multiparty democracies)

Example of PR system

There are 100 seats up for election in the constituency, Party A received 45 percent of the vote

Party B received 35 percent of the vote

Party C received 20 percent of the vote

which means that voters have just elected 45 candidates from Party A, 35 candidates Party B and 20 candidates from Party C.

The question to who will take the office is answered by the Party list published before the election in which the political party specifies a ranking of their candidates for voters to review.

The PR system also created a coalition government which means no single party received a majority of the vote which means none of these parties is currently empowered to pass laws without the cooperation of other parties.

However, political parties will team together to choose a government and compromise with each other on policy during the legislative session.

Plurality (Candidate with most vote will win the elections)

Single-member district system (SMD) created a two-party system. Give seats only to the candidate with the most votes in each district.

For example

There are 100 representatives. If we are to be converted to a SMD system, then the candidate with a plurality (most votes but not necessarily the majority) would win representation.

The SMD system will create a two-party system which means that voters in future elections may be inclined to think that voting for a party that is a less popular party could be tantamount to throwing away a vote and will possibly think strategically about choosing between one of the two major parties.

How to choose the Executive: Presidential or Parliamentary

Presidential System

In a presidential system, the voters cast a direct vote for a specific candidate to serve as the chief executive.

The executive as a result is a separate and distinct institution of government apart from the legislature; this is called separation of powers.

It is not unusual for one party to control the executive branch after its candidate wins a presidential election, while an opposition party controls at least one house of the legislature.

Presidential system is much easier to have inability for the legislature and executive to agree on forming and finalizing policy decisions (This is called Divided Government).

Parliamentary systems

Give executive power to the chosen leader of the majority party (or coalition) in the legislature, usually, though not always, titled “prime minister.” A prime minister comes to power first by earning the role of party leader among his or her fellow party legislator.

Head of State

Functions involve the ceremonial responsibility of an individual to display the majesty and power and the might of the state in formal settings.

Head of Government

Responsible for the day- to- day administration for the policies of the state.

Authoritarian Regimes

Distinguished by the way they invest political authority into a small group of individuals who exercise this authority without any constitutional responsibility to the public.

(Authoritarian systems do not give the people a formal or regular opportunity to change the government.)

Totalitarianism regimes

attempt to control and dominate every aspect of their people's lives, including their career choices, family life and their political and religious beliefs.

Coercion

Some regimes use coercion, which essentially means force, to compel people to submit to the regime, using surveillance to monitor the activities of the people or use brute force tactics that are mostly employed by the security services.

Cooptation

Brining groups and individuals into a beneficial relationship with the state so they do not challenge the legitimacy of the regime.

Patron-clientelism/clientelism

Rulers in authoritarian systems can place people into key positions of power with official authority which can often be used or abused for personal gain.

Corruption is closely related to clientelism networks.

Corruption, Power/Authority

Power is the ability to compel or otherwise motivate people to take actions that they otherwise would not.

Authority involves an official position with a defined role and jurisdiction that are given to a person.

Type of Authoritarian Regimes

Personal rule

Do not possess any clear rules or regime boundaries to constrain the ruler. The regime can be reshaped to the interests of the ruler as he or she sees fit.

Military Rule

Usually comes as the result of a coup d'état. At that point, military leaders become policy making and enforcing agents of the state.

One party rule

Only one political party is either legally or practically able to compete for and exercise political power. For example, China where only the Chinese communist party is allowed to exercise policy making power by law.

Theocracy

The power is held by religious leaders and so a theocratic regime entrusts rule of the state to clerical religious authorities simultaneously with their religious role. For example, in Iran since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, the country has had a set of religious laws.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Sovereignty, Authority and Power

The United Kingdom is sometimes called a country of countries in which four separate nations of people are united under one constitutional monarchy, these are the English, Welsh, Scottish and Northern Irish.

When the republic of Ireland gained independence in 1922, Northern Ireland whose people were mostly unionists and did not want to secede, remained part of the United Kingdom.

Britain is a unitary state, with political power firmly concentrated in London in a single political institution, the House of Commons, which is elected by British voters every five years.

Modern Britain is increasingly a devolved unitary state with certain political powers granted by "acts of Parliament" to lower level regional assemblies. This however, does not make Britain a federal state.

Geographic Influences on Political Culture

Britain's island geography protected it from foreign conquest, preserving the sovereign self-rule of the British people to develop and maintain their own distinct political traditions.

When the European Union has emerged and integrated the people of the continent, the British have been generally willing to participate where they see the benefits, but never fully embracing the idea of being "European" people. This is backed by the choices that Britain chose to keep the pound as its national currency and not Euro.

Britain is in a cold and wet part of the temperate zone, with a short growing season that struggles to provide enough food for the people of the island. In addition, natural resources such as wood for energy were in short supply in the early eighteenth century. These factors motivated both the Agricultural Revolution, and later the Industrial Revolution, which both had their beginnings in Britain.

Political and Economic Change

British political history has displayed two distinct trends over the course of its development.

First is the traditionalism and gradualism, in which the British political structure has adhered to long standing political traditions, while at the same time modernizing these traditions through gradual reforms and generally not through rapid revolutionary upheavals.

Second is constitutionalism or adherence to a set of understood limitations on the power of the state. The British constitution does not exist in any singular written forms, but rather a collection of all of the political traditions, acts of Parliament, and established common law that have developed over hundreds and hundreds of years.

Early Traditions

House of Lords, established by William the Conqueror as a check on the power of the King.

The Lords forced the King to sign the Marthas Carta in response to what they felt were excessive taxes for his military expeditions, and it marked the beginning of a long tradition of constitutionalism and rule of law for the monarch.

House of Commons created in response to the emergence of a growing commercial class as towns in England developed.

English Bill of Rights, ensured the role that Parliament would be guaranteed to play in the British state, and further identified rights that could not be violated against British citizens by the monarchs.

Emergence of the Labor Party

Formed in 1906 to represent the interests of the newly enfranchised working classes.

They pushed for legislation to provide public education, public housing, better pay for workers and medical care.

Labor ideology combined militant trade unionism with democratic principles.

(British traditional political party structure consisted of Conservative (Tory) Party, Liberal (Whig)

Party, Labor Party)

Collectivist Consensus (The aftermath of Great Depression and WW2)

During the period of collectivist consensus, the size of the British Welfare state grew dramatically in response to the troubles of the Great Depression and World War II years.

Both Conservative and Labor Parties had embraced the findings of the Beveridge Report which recommended sweeping changes to guarantee at least a subsistence income to all British citizens no matter what.

In 1945 when the Labor Party was voted in power, Atlee's government led Britain to a series of programs of nationalization of many formerly private heavy industries, such railroad, coal or oils. The state would take control of these assets and use their profits to fund the welfare state such as the National Health Service which provides healthcare and medical attention to all British citizens. These programs all created the foundation of a mixed economy which attempted to balance a role for the public and private sectors to benefit the British people at large.

Crisis in the 1970's and Thatcherism

Collectivist consensus was challenged in the 1970 as nationalized industries became increasingly inefficient, and required large sums of taxpayer money to subsidize their losses and high wages for unionized workers. Britain during this time has experienced inflation, high unemployment rate, declining GDP.

The country responded to this crisis in 1979 by electing the Conservative Party, led by Margaret Thatcher to solve the crisis and lead the country.

Thatcher blamed socialist policies such as a strong welfare state and the nationalization of industry for her country's problems, and set out on a

large-scale reform program. Thatcher reforms would be known as Thatcherism which include

Privatization of industry

Reduction in the welfare state Reducing the power of labor unions
Returning to market principles

New Labor

In 1992, Labor chose a new party leadership headed by Tony Blair and Gordon Brown; they rebranded the Labor Party as a center-left party that embraced the positive effects of Thatcher market reform on Britain.

One of the most significant changes of the Era was Labor party decision to remove Clause Iv (Which expressed support for the nationalization of industry)

Significant Social Cleavages

Social Class

Concept of noblesse oblige, which referred to a nobleman's responsibility to care for the serfs and common people under his care.

Nation

Ethnicity

Civil Societies

Elections

Elections in Britain are generally regarded as free, fair and competitive. It is also consistent with the expectation of liberal democracy.

British citizens today participate in elections of officials at three different levels

National Election

The most important of these elections is at the national level to choose the Members of Parliaments (MPs) who will act as the national government in Westminster and choose the prime minister and the cabinet.

Fixed-Term Parliaments Act of 2011, sets a fixed term of five years for every parliament. Britain single-member district is use in national election system

The two large political parties are currently conservative and Labor.

Supranational Elections: The EU parliament

As part of membership in the European Union, every five years, a direct election is held to send members to the European Parliament.

Local/Regional elections

Elections have been held for members of the Scottish Parliament, the Welsh Assembly and the Northern Ireland Assembly. Elections are held in the local city, county.

Political Parties

Britain's electoral system lends itself to create a two-party system.

Conservative

There are two factional divisions inside this party that debate internally within the party on the proper role of government in the economy.

There is a "Traditional Wing"

Embraces the principle of noblesse oblige, that the upper classes have a responsibility to the care and welfare of those in lower classes.

There is also right-leaning "Thatcherite wing"

adheres to the economic philosophy of Margaret Thatcher, believing in the rolling back of the welfare state, reducing government controls and regulation and expanding the role of markets. Thatcherites often tend to be more Euro skeptical than their traditional counterparts.

Labor

The modern Labor Party portrays itself as the defender of the British middle class and working class against a Conservative Party that seeks to make the economic climate more favorable to business and investors, as opposed to “regular” British employees.

Liberal Democracies

U.K Independence Party

One of Britain’s newest parties, the U.K Independence Party (UKIP) is fundamentally Euro-sceptic, calling for a British exit from the European Union.

Regional Parties

These parties include the Scottish national Party (SNP); Plaid Cymru, which is based in Wales; and Sinn Fein, which is based in Ireland but opposes Northern Irish union with Britain.

Interest Groups

The state’s relationship to interest groups is particularly complicated in the case of quasi-autonomous non-governmental organizations (quangos), which refers to publicly funded bodies that operate as integrated parts of the private sector. While also advising the government on policy, which complicates the divide between the state and private actors.

The state created the Media The British Broadcasting Corporation for the purpose of providing information to citizens. Although owned by the state, BBC acts as an independent media company.

State Institutions

The Monarchy

The Monarch still retains many ceremonial functions as the Head of State, the ruler does not hold any policymaking authority. The role of the

monarchy is limited to presiding over the State Opening of Parliament where she gives a speech outlining the government agenda in the Commons.

Hung Parliament, where no party has received an electoral majority.

The Parliaments

Consists of House of Commons and House of Lords

The House of Commons is the dominant political institution in Britain. The Majority party in the house of Commons chooses the prime minister and cabinet to run the government.

Loyal opposition opposes the current government, but are loyal to the state and the regime. Shadow cabinet the leader who would form the government were they would win a majority after the next elections.

Speaker of the house who was elected as an MP but has been chosen by the other Mps to serve in this role.

Prime Minister's Questions, a weekly event that the PM would answer on a live television broadcast.

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Comparing Methods and Terms

Causation: The cause Correlation: associate with two or more variables

For example,

“Expanding access to education for females increases rate of political participation”

This statement is both Causation and Correlation because the rate of political participation which is the Correlation and is connected to the actions of expanding access to education for female which is causation.

Quantitative is numerical data such as charts

Qualitative is descriptive data such as speech by the president

HDI – Human Development Index

State and nation are not the same

State composed of territory, governments, sovereignty, and population.
Nation is a group of people with commonalities including race, language religion, and ethnicity.

Regime Change, a change in the fundamental pattern of rules, for example from authoritarian to democratic.

Change in Government, a change in political leadership such as change in PM or president

Democratic vs Authoritarian

Factors that would indicate the degree of democracy or authoritarianism of states are:

1. The principle that a state should be governed by law and not arbitrary decisions made by individual government officials (Rule of Law rather than Rule by Law)

Rule of Law - Laws being made by the prescribed constitution manners that apply to all citizen

Rule by Law - Authoritarian manipulate the law to their beneficial purposes

2. The degree of state influence on or control of the media

3. The degree and practice of free and fair elections

4. The nature of citizens' participation in government

Different types of authoritarian regimes

Illiberal Democracies/Hybrid Regimes - Have elections but are not free and fair, and many misconduct occurred.

One-Party States - One political party that controls the government

Theocracies - Rule by religious leaders, many governments' decisions are made by religious beliefs.

Totalitarian Government - Government having total control of an individual life including their careers, religious beliefs, and family.

Military Regimes - Usually come from Coup d'etat, where the military acts as the policymakers and the agents who enforce it.

Why authoritarian regimes sometimes hold elections for government officials

1. To gain legitimacy
2. To provide an escape valve for discontent
3. To see what policies the people want
4. To improve accountability
5. To identify or intimidate opponents of the regime, in response to international pressure

Democratization

Democratization is a transition from an authoritarian regime to a democratic regime that aims to result in the following:

1. More competition, fairness, and transparency in elections
2. Increase citizen participation in policy-making processes
3. Universal rights to vote for all adult citizens
4. Greater governmental transparency
5. Protected civil rights and liberties

6. Equal treatment of citizens
7. Establishment of the rule of law

Democratic Consolidation refers to the process by which a democratic regime matures in terms of election rules, protection of civil liberties, and separation of power making it unlikely to revert to authoritarianism.

For example, the UK has been through the process of democratic Consolidation

Sources of Power and Authority Power

(Ability to control or direct others)
(Can exercise one's will over others)

For example, "A report made by the Department of Homeland Security, stated that Boko Haram (a terrorist organization based in northern Nigeria) use brute force tactics to intimidate civilians and political opponents. These tactics include the kidnaps of political figures, tortures of civilians, and direct terrorism attacks in specific places."

(Boko haram does not have the authority to do this kind of action but they do have the power to)

Authority
(Right to control or direct others)
(Accepted or legitimized power)

Sources of Power and Authority

- Constitutions
- Legislatures
- Religions
- Popular Support
- Military Forces
- Political Parties

Change in Power and Authority

Democratic Regimes

Use electoral measures to encourage citizens participation

Free, fair and competitive elections
Limited military role in policy-making

Authoritarian Regimes

Resist citizen participation in policy-making
Lack of Free, Fair, and competitive elections
Military plays an important role in policy-making.

Change of Regime

Change in the way the state is organized
Rules and institutions are replaced
Can be gradual or sudden

Change in Government

Change in the people or parties that occupy the institutions of the state
Usually changes more often
Can be peaceful or violent

Federal and Unitary Systems

Federal System: System of government where significant powers are divided and given to subnational or regional government.

Advantages:

Citizens can participate at multiple levels
Local government can respond to local needs
Less likely that one party will dominate

Disadvantages:

Can be slow and result in inefficiency
Conflicts between levels of government

Unitary System: all political authority is in the Centralized Government
(Unitary system do have regional government but they do not have any real power in a unitary system)

Advantages: Government can act quickly if needed Easier for citizens to understand

Disadvantages: Regional problems are more likely to be ignored. Easier for one party to dominate. Regional governments have little power.

Factors that can cause a change in the relationship between central and regional governments

Ethnic or Religious Cleavages
Supranational Organization
Threats from other countries
Regional protests or discontent
Terrorism

(These changes in the relationship between central and regional government can lead to)

Devolved Unitary System

The central government devolves power to regional governments These devolved powers are not constitutionally protected and can be taken away (For example, UK)

Asymmetric Federal System

Constitutionally granted powers of regional governments are taken away Central government redirect and consolidates power in the central government itself.

Political Legitimacy

Legitimacy Political legitimacy is the degree to which a government's right to rule is accepted by the citizenry

Source of Political Legitimacy

Popular elections (I)
Constitutional provisions
Nationalism
Tradition (I)
Ideology
Policy effectiveness (I)
Religious heritage and organizations (I)

How do we know if a democratic government is legitimate? Using a survey, develop a questionnaire that asks fair, unbiased questions.

Freedom House Methodology:

Political Rights
Civil Liberties
Electoral Process
Freedom of expression and belief
Political Pluralism
Association and organization rights
Participation
Rule of Law
Functioning of Government
PERSONAL Autonomy and individual rights

Authoritarian Governments do have legitimacy, for example, China. The level of legitimacy can be measured by the economic growth of the regime.

Sustaining Legitimacy

Governments maintain legitimacy through a variety of processes or factors
Example:

Policy effectiveness, government action works
Political efficacy, people feel they can understand and influence politics
Tradition, continuing to do things the way that they have been done before
Charismatic leadership, inspires exceptional loyalty.
Institutionalized laws, established as part of an official process

Actions that the government can take to reinforce legitimacy

Peaceful resolution of conflict
Peaceful transfer of power Reduced governmental corruption Economic development
Legitimacy be undermined by these factors
An increase in corruption
Reduced in the fairness and competitiveness of the election Serious problems: Poor economy or social conflict

To resolve these conflict and repair the undermined legitimacy

Recognition, get on the policy agenda
Representation, a seat at the political table

Reform, new or revised policy

Political Stability

State goal to maintain sovereignty (Sovereignty: independent legal authority over a population in a particular territory.)

Challenges to Political Stability, both external/internal

Loss of territory: Invasion, separatist/independence movements.

Loss of population: pandemic, large-scale migration, immigration, emigration.

Loss of government authority: large-scale, violent protests or social movements, coups.

Loss of sovereignty: revolution, regime change.

Parliamentary, Presidential, and semi-presidential systems

Policymaking institution

Legislative Branch – Make the Law

Executive Branch – Enforce the Law

Judicial Branch – Interpret the Law (Explaining the meaning of the law)

Parliamentary System

Voter -> MP's (Legislature) -> Prime Minister (Executive) -> Prime Minister
Cabinet (Government,)

Presidential System

Voter -> President (Executive) -> Cabinet (Government, CANNOT HOLD
LEGISLATIVE SEAT)

Voter -> Members (Legislature, CURRENT MP's)

Semi – President

Voter -> President -> Prime Minister -> Cabinet

Voter -> State Duma MP's (Approve the Cabinet) (Can select or remove
Cabinet and Prime Minister)

Even if there is a president, it does not mean that there is a presidential system. For example, President Xi of China is not directly elected by the voters but rather appointed by the National People's Congress.

Parliamentary System – Combines the lawmaking and executive functions which allow the national legislature to select and remove the head of government and the cabinet.

Presidential System – When voters select the president and the legislature in separate popular elections.

Semi-president – Allows the president to nominate the prime minister (who must be approved by the legislature). The cabinet is accountable to both the president and the legislature.

Characteristics of a Parliamentary System

1. Fusion of executive and legislative authority
2. Voters vote for members of parliament
3. The majority party in the legislature selects the prime minister
4. Prime Minister selects the cabinet from the leaders of the majority party to form the government
5. Policymaking is efficient as government bills are supported by the majority party

Characteristics of a Presidential System

1. Separation of executive and legislative authority
2. Voters vote for president and legislature in separate popular elections
3. President selects the cabinet and the legislature confirms the appointment
4. Policymaking is difficult as a divided government can lead to gridlock.

Political Institutions

Executive Branch, Judicial Branch, Legislative Branch.

Executive Branch duties

(Propose the law)

(Enforce the law)

(Bureaucratic implementation)

Positions in Executive Branch

(Executive)

(Head of Government)

(Cabinet)

Legislative Branch
(Make the law)
(Negotiate lawmaking)
(Get party support)
(Scrutinize)
(Question)

Legislative Limits on the power of the Executive

Legislators in both systems can require government officials to explain their actions thus creating accountability and transparency in government.

Legislators in both systems can remove the executive from power or threaten to remove it to get the government to change policy.

Voter accountability Parliamentary System -> Direct elections for MP's,
Indirect selection for Prime Minister

Presidential System -> Separate elections for president and the legislatures

Efficiency in lawmaking

Parliamentary System - Government bills pass with a majority vote
otherwise vote of no confidence.

Presidential System - Gridlock likely in divided government, power to
override a veto with a supermajority vote.

Executive Systems

Formulate Policies - Manage policy agenda, propose laws and budgets

Implement Policies - Manage bureaucracy, write regulations

Enforce Policies - Administer programs, maintain law and order

Head of State: Ceremonial Leader- represents the state, for example, a
monarch or president.

Head of Government: Legislative leader -formulates policy, for example,
prime minister, president.

Executive Term Limits

The purpose of executive term limits is to limit the executive authority

ADVANTAGES

- To prohibit the emergence of dictators and personal rule

- Provide opportunities for new leaders with new ideas, policies, or goals

DISADVANTAGES

- Forces good executives to leave office

- Allow insufficient time for an officer holder to achieve goals

- Weakens accountability

Executive term limits can help promote and defend the state legitimacy due to the changing of power can limit the emergence of any dictatorship or personal rule and that the public would be able to see accountability or the pass down of power to another candidate with new ideas or thinking that could potentially help the state in a good way.

Removal of Executives

(Only if the regime is democratic that is free, fair, and competitive)

Voters can remove the head of government by voting

Parliamentary System uses a vote of No Confidence (Majority),

Party Leadership MP Vote Presidential System: Impeachment

(supermajority)

Legislative System

United Kingdom's Legislative System

House of Commons

Elected Lower House of Parliament

Approves legislation

Includes the Prime Minister

House of Lords

Appointed Upper House

Reviews and amends bills

Can delay implementation

Russia's Legislative System

Duma

Elected lower house

Passes legislation

Confirms the President's choice for Prime Minister

Federation Council

Appointed Upper House

Approves troop deployment

Confirms judicial nominees

China Legislative System

National People's Congress

Elected House

Party Controlled

Elects the President

Legitimizes policies of the Executive

Iran Legislative System

Majles

Elected House

Approves Legislation

Oversees the Budget

(Acts under the supervision of the Guardian Council)

Nigeria Legislative System

House of Representatives

Elected Lower House

Approves Legislation

Senate

Elected Upper House

Approves Legislation

Confirmation Power

Impeachment Power

Independent Legislature

Legislative independence refers to the degree to which a legislature can exercise its power without being controlled or restricted by other branches or institutions.

Effects of Independent Legislatures:

Potentially increases legitimacy and stability by responding to the public and extending civil liberties or serves as a check on the Executive.

Judicial Systems

China Judicial System

Tiered Court System with **different court levels**.

Judicial appointments are controlled by the Chinese Communist Party.

Emphasis on "Rule By Law" rather than "Rule Of Law," indicating a degree of party influence.

Iran's Judicial System

Based on Sharia Law.

Role of the Judiciary is to ensure the legal system is grounded in Religious Law.

The Head of the Judiciary is appointed by the Supreme Leader.

The Head of the Judiciary can nominate half of the Guardian Council.

Mexico's Judicial System

Tiered Court System.

The Supreme Court has Judicial Review powers.

Supreme Court Magistrates are nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate for a term of 15 years.

Nigeria's Judicial System

Tiered Judicial System.

Judicial Review is a component.

Sharia Courts exist in the North.

Supreme Court Judges are recommended by the Judicial Council, appointed by the President, and confirmed by the state.

Russia's Judicial System

Tiered Judicial System.

Judges are nominated by the President and approved by the Federation Council.

Judicial Review exists in theory, but its application may vary in practice.

UK's Judicial System

Not Unified, following Common Law principles to enforce the rule of law.

The Supreme Court serves as the final court of appeals.

The existence of Judicial Review is mentioned but uncertain.

Judicial Independence

Factors Impacting Degree of Judicial Independence:

Qualifications of Judges

Terms lengths for Judges

Process for Removal of Judges

Authority to Overrule Executive or Legislative Actions

Independent Judiciaries can strengthen Democracy By:

Maintaining checks and balances

Protecting rights and liberties

Establishing the rule of law

Maintaining the Separation of Powers

Civil Societies

Must be:

Associations (Groups)

Voluntary

Autonomous from the State

Types of Civil Society Groups:

Local Religious Organizations

News Media

NGOs (Nongovernmental Organizations)

Neighborhood Organizations

Factors Influencing the Strength of Civil Society:

Regime Type

Governmental Limits

Registration, Monitoring

Civil Society Groups can:

Be agents of democratization

Monitor and lobby the government

Expose government issues

Represent the interests of members

Restrictions on Civil Society:

Restricting NGOs and civil society tends to highlight violations of civil liberties protected in foundational documents.

Political Culture

Political culture refers to the collective attitudes, values, and beliefs regarding the role of government, the rights of individuals, and the expectations set about the exercise of power.

Factors Influencing Political Culture:

Geography

Religious traditions

History

Political Culture is transmitted through:

Family

School

Media

Peers

Religious institutions

Social environments

Political Ideologies

Political ideologies represent a set of values and beliefs regarding a governmental pattern, public policy, or politics.

Types of Political Ideologies:

Individualism: Belief in individual civil liberties and freedom over governmental restriction.

Neoliberalism: Belief in limited governmental intervention in the economy and society. Support for privatization, free trade, deregulation, and the elimination of state subsidies.

Post-materialism: Value orientation that emphasizes self-expression and quality of life over economic and physical security.

Statistics: Centralized power in government.

Nature of the Role of Political Participation

Participation is:

Citizens' involvement and influence in the political process.

Present in all political systems, both democratic and authoritarian.

Can be voluntary or coerced.

May be supportive of the system or against it.

Takes formal or informal forms.

Formal Participation:

Elections

Referenda

Personal Contact

Informal Participation

Protests

Civil Society

Political Violence/Terrorism:

Political Participation in Democracies:

It is the basis of the regime.

Legitimacy.

Efficacy.

Political Participation in Authoritarian Regimes:

More restricted and controlled.

More supportive and less oppositional.

Less voluntary and more coerced (making people submit to their regime).

Political Participation in China:

Local elections.

Protests.

Party membership.

Mass organizations.

Limited civil society.

Both democratic and authoritarian regimes: Allow political participation and restrict political participation. For stability and order, security, and maintaining power.

Civil Rights and Civil Liberties:

Liberties: Basic freedom from government interference.

Rights: Promote equality, granted by the government.

Example: Freedom of Speech, the right to a fair trial, and equality under the law.

Social Cleavages: Internal divisions that impact political systems.

Based on identity and values.

Example in the UK: Class cleavages. Ethnicity cleavages (Scottish, Irish, Welsh, English). Religious cleavages, such as Protestants vs. Catholics.

Democratic Regimes: Usually more concerned about legitimacy and unity.

Tend to address cleavages by devolving power, allowing more autonomy, and bringing people together.

Authoritarian Regimes: More concerned about maintaining stability and control.

Often use coercive tactics.

Provide an illusion but not the reality of inclusivity.

Electoral District:

An area that an elected official represents.

Direct Election:

People directly elect a candidate or party they want to represent them.

Indirect Election:

People do not elect candidates for representative positions directly; Instead, the people elect candidates who then choose members for that representative position.

Electoral System:

Rules and methods that determine how voting is conducted.

Unicameral Legislature: One chamber of state legislature.

Bicameral Legislature: Law-making responsibilities are divided.

Specific Electoral Systems:

Mexico has **PR (Proportional Representation)** and **SMD (Single Member District)** systems, with **gender quotas**.

Nigeria has only an **SMD system**.

Iran has **SMDP (Single Member District Plurality)** and **multi-member districts** but mostly **SMDP**; the Guardian Council **can limit the seats in the Iran Majles**, preventing a variety of political ideas and candidates from running.

Russia has **SMDP and PR systems**.

The UK follows the **SMDP system**.

China is **indirectly elected**; the National People Congress (NPC) with 3000 members is selected **by local and regional assemblies**.

Second Round Voting: If a certain voting percentage is not met by any candidates in the initial election, a runoff election is held among the top candidates.

Runoff Election: If no candidate gets the majority of votes, there will be a runoff election between the top two finishers in the first election.

Plurality Vote: Only the most votes are needed to win an election, not a majority.

Majoritarian Vote/System: A candidate must get more than 50 percent or more to win, considered good for democracy.

Mandate to Rule: Authority given from the people to a leader to act as their representative.

Gini Index: Measures the state economic inequality.

Nation: People who want self-rule.

Nigeria's Political System: Nigeria has both a parliamentary system and a presidential system.

The Cabinet in Parliament mostly consists of elected MPs who are the leading members of the majority party.

In Nigeria, the president's power to appoint senior government ministers and officials requires the approval of the majority of the state.

Mexico's Political Transition: Mexico transitioned from a dominant party system to a multi-party system by increasingly privatizing state-owned corporations and creating the IFE, then transitioning to the INE.

Nigeria's Political Parties:

In Nigeria, the PDP (People Democratic Party) used to dominate the political system. As of now, the two dominant parties in Nigeria are APC and PDP.

SMDP (Single Member District Plurality): Helps minor political parties because they are concentrated in a geographical area.

Iranian Politics: Parties come and go; they are more like factions. There are two main factions in Iranian politics: conservatives and reformers.

Nigerian Politics: Despite having 30 political parties, many people still choose APC and PDP due to their power.

Command Economy: Production and investment are usually determined by the government.

Mexico's Multi-Party System: Mexico has a multi-party system, but minor parties know they have a low chance of getting presidential representation. Therefore, they often back the major political party, forming a coalition government.

Political Leadership in Various Countries:

In the UK, the monarch is the head of state, while the prime minister is the head of government.

In Russia, the president is the head of state, and the prime minister is the head of government.

In China, the president is the head of state, and the premier is the head of government.

In Iran, the supreme leader is the head of state, and the president is the head of government.

Nigeria's National Assembly: Represents single-member districts.

Nigeria's House of Representatives: Directly elected.

Presidential Elections in Iran and Nigeria: Presidents are elected by runoff elections in Iran and Nigeria.

Appointed Legislative Bodies:

Iran: Guardian Council (not Assembly of Experts since they are elected directly by voters).

The Supreme Leader selects 6 members of the Guardian Council, and Majlis approves these 6 members after approval by the judicial branch.

Russia: Federation Council.

Governors and regional legislatures represent their region in the Federation Council.

United Kingdom: House of Lords.

The House of Lords is the upper house of the legislative body, appointed for life. The prime minister and an independent commission appoint the members, who are then approved by the monarch.

Multi-party system: At least three parties can compete for government power and control (e.g., Mexico, Nigeria).

Dominant Party System: Multiple parties exist and can win seats, but one party wins a high percentage of elections and has a virtual monopoly of power in government (e.g., United Russia, PRI in Mexico from 1929-2000).

Catch All Party: Can earn support from population groups with very different characteristics, attracting popular support with an ideologically diverse platform, which may lead to a dominant party system.

(For example, Russia)