



**AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY–BANGLADESH (AIUB)**

**FACULTY OF ENGINEERING**

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SCIENCE**

**Fall 2022-2023**

**Group: 02, Section: E**

**REPORT ON**

***Democracy and Political Culture of Bangladesh***

**Supervised By**

**FARHANA AFROZ**

**Submitted By:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>ID</b>
<b>1. ROBIUL ISLAM ROMAN</b>	<b>22-46490-1</b>
<b>2. TRIDIB SARKAR</b>	<b>22-46444-1</b>
<b>3. MAHMUDUS SAMI MAAHI</b>	<b>22-46446-1</b>
<b>4. ABDULLAH AL ANJUM ARIAN</b>	<b>22-47637-2</b>
<b>5. SHISHIR MAHMUD</b>	<b>22-47683-2</b>

**Date of Submission: December 5, 2022**

## **1.1. Introduction:**

Democracy is a form of government in which the people have the authority to choose their governing legislation. A democracy is a government of the people, for the people and by the people where people elect their representatives. Democracy means rule by the people. The name is used for different forms of government, where the people can take part in the decisions that affect the way their community is run. Political culture is a distinctive and patterned way of thinking about how political and economic life ought to be carried out. A political culture consists of fundamental assumptions about how the political process should operate. For example, Americans assume that when an election is lost, the loser will accept the results and not hinder the winner from taking office. We frequently ask why Bangladeshis ignore laws and policies, intended for the common good, and do not do what they know is right. The issue is really bound up in the political culture we generated over the years. This study provides an overview of the political culture and its various typologies. It analyses and expressed the political culture of Bangladesh. The study is based on review of existing secondary sources. Every society has a culture that differentiates its members' values and life styles from those of other societies. The anthropologist Clyde Kluckhohn defined culture as "the total life way of a people, the social legacy the individual acquires from his group." Or culture can be regarded as that part of the environment that is the creation of man." Most social scientists seem to agree that culture shapes or influences social action but does not fully determine it. Culture is only one of many factors that may give form and direction to human behavior. We are interested here in the portion of the general culture of a society that can be designated political culture: widely held values, beliefs, and attitudes on what governments should try to do, how they should operate, and relationships between the citizen and government. Political culture is one of the main factors of policy environment in Bangladesh. It has great influence on policy making. Our political culture is democratic and but less tolerant. We all believe in democracy and the right of everyone to be heard. There also exists participant political culture though sometimes it goes toward wrong direction. The dictatorship of famous political leaders, material laws, political violence, faulty election system, red-tapism was also the feature of political culture in Bangladesh for last 4 decades.

## **1.2. Democracy:**

The ancient Greeks were the first to create a democracy. The word “democracy” comes from two Greek words that mean people (demos) and rule (kratos). Bangladesh achieved sovereignty from Pakistan in 1971, a country established with a democratic framework. As a result, Bangladesh was also established with democratic institutions at its core. Democracy in Bangladesh was first introduced when the British ruled South Asia from 1700 to 1947, where Bangladesh was among the first British colonies in the subcontinent. Politics of Bangladesh takes place in a framework of a parliamentary representative democratic republic, whereby the Prime Minister of Bangladesh is the head of government, and of a multi-party system. Executive power is exercised by the government. Legislative power is vested in both the government and parliament.

### **Types Of Democracy:**

1. Direct Democracy.
2. Representative Democracy.
3. Constitutional Democracy.
4. Monitory Democracy.

When the people themselves directly express their will on public affairs, the type of government is called pure or direct democracy. Direct Democracy was established in ancient Greek city-states. This system now prevails only four cantons of Switzerland. Indirect Democracy the will of the state is formulated and expressed not directly by the people themselves, but by their representatives to whom they delegate the power deliberation and decision-making. This type of government was established in England in the seventeenth century. In France, it was established in 1830 and in Italy in 1948. Today this system is seen in many countries like- Bangladesh, Japan, Sri Lanka, India, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the United States of America, West Germany, Italy, France, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Austria and Belgium.

## **Principles Of Democracy:**

1. Liberty.
2. Equality.
3. Fraternity.
4. Fundamental rights to the people.
5. Independence of judiciary.
6. Fair election.

## **Crisis Of Democracy in Bangladesh:**

1. Absence of democratic political culture.
2. Absence the rule of law.
3. Absence of strong political leadership.
4. Corruption.
5. Lack of political morality.
6. Weak Parliamentary Committee System.
7. Problems of political parties.
8. Problems of press media.

Though Bangladesh has facing various problems to institutionalize democracy but the suggested policy measures that was discussed can improve the situation and there are many prospects for Bangladesh.

### **1.3 Political Culture:**

Political culture refers to those ideas, values, attitudes or orientation about a political system which is acceptable to and shared by the majority of the people in the state. The term political culture will be more assertive when it will be explained in the realm of politics. So, it means that within a group and society there is diverse strands of opinions about a political system, norm and beliefs. Definitions of political culture are many and varied.

Roy Macridis writes of it as the 'Commonly Shared Goals and Commonly Accepted Rules'. Samuel Beer made the concept of one of four variables crucial to the analysis of political systems.

According to Beer, the components of the culture are values, beliefs, and emotional attitudes about how government ought to be conducted and about what it should do.'

Robert Dahl has singled out political culture as a factor explaining different patterns of political opposition. The salient elements of the culture for Dahl are:

1. Orientations of problem-solving; are they pragmatic or rationalistic?
2. Orientations to collective action; are they co-operative or non-co-operative?
3. Orientations to the political system; are they allegiant or alienated?
4. Orientations to other people; are they trustful or mistrustful?

Lucian Pye has been particularly concerned with the aspects of political culture pertaining to political development in the new states. For Pye the indicators of a nation's political culture include such factors as: the scope of politics; how ends and means in politics are related; the standards for the evaluation of political action; the values that are salient for political action.

Finer's definition of a nation's political culture seems to concentrate largely on the legitimacy of the rulers and political institutions and procedures. For our purpose, we may regard the political culture as a shorthand expression to denote the emotional and attitudinal environment within which the political system operates. It is the 'particular pattern of orientations' in which, according to Gabriel Almond, every political system is embedded. Different countries have different political cultures. For example, American political culture can be defined according to some basic and commonly shared beliefs, such as our commitment to democracy, equality, free enterprise, and individualism. Concepts related to liberty, nationalism, and reliance on a legislative body, instead of an individual ruler, are also unique to American political culture.

### **Components of Political Culture:**

- Cognitive Orientation: - It is implied by the amount and the type of the knowledge which the people possess about political problems and events.
- Effective Orientation: - It implies the amount of devotion and interest of the people toward their political system.
- Evaluative Orientation: - While evaluating their political system people try to know if the political system has achieved the objective which it had sought to achieve it.

## 1.4 Policy Environment and Political Culture:

Whenever make any policy, its environmental influence must be taken into consideration. If environment doesn't response positively, the output of public policy may negative. Policy Environment means where any policy is made, its outputs are applied and from where the feedback of this policy is taken. It includes political, social, economic culture. There are some actors and factors in policy environment which greatly influence the public policy. Political Culture is one of the most important factors in policy environment.

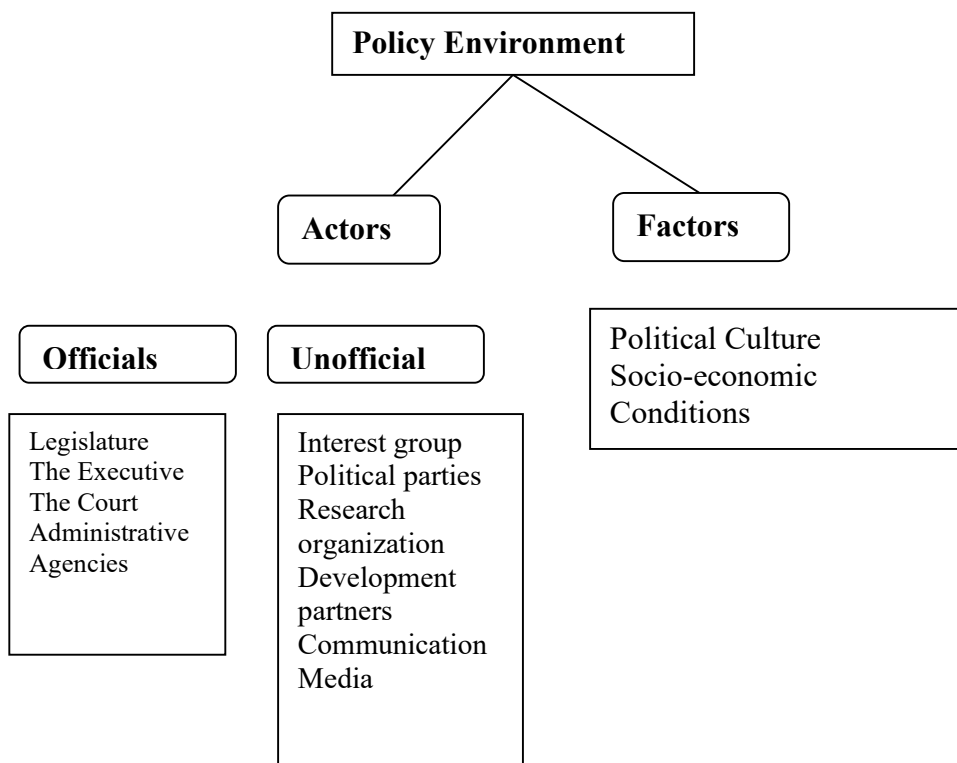


Figure: Political Culture is the factor of policy environment.

A political culture is a set of attitudes and practices held by a people that shapes their political behavior. It includes moral judgments, political myths, beliefs, and ideas about what makes for a good society. A political culture is a reflection of a government, but it also incorporates elements of history and tradition that may predate the current regime. Political cultures matter because they shape a population's political perceptions and actions.

Governments can help shape political culture and public opinion through education, public events, and commemoration of the past. Political cultures vary greatly from state to state and sometimes even within a state. Political culture of any country influences the policy making processes. In a democratic country, government should consider the peoples participation in policy making. If there exists intra party conflict in any country, it will violate the policy making process.

## **1.5 Political Culture and Political Ideology:**

Political culture is a broader and more basic thing than political ideology. For example, just about everyone in Bangladesh shares a political culture. Our political culture is democratic and tolerant. We all believe in democracy and the right of everyone to be heard. So political culture is sort of our deepest attitudes towards how the system should work. On the other hand, Political ideology is a structured set of orientations and beliefs through which individuals understand and interpret politics.

### **Types of Political Culture:**

Almond and Verba pointed out that individual political orientation can be tapped systematically if we explore the following:

1. What knowledge does a citizen have of his/her political system in general terms, its history, size, location, power, constitutional characteristics and the like? What are his/her feelings towards these systematic characteristics? And what are his/her more or less considered opinions and judgement of them?
2. What knowledge does he/she have of the roles and structures, the various political elites, and the policy proposal that are involved in the upload of flows of policy making? What are his/her feelings and opinions about the structures, leaders and policy proposals?



3. What knowledge does he/she have on the downward flow of policy enforcement, the structures, individuals and decisions involved in these processes? What are his feeling and opinions for them?

How does he perceive himself as a member of his political system? What knowledge does he have of his rights, powers, obligations and strategies access to influence? Does he feel about his capabilities? What norms of participation or of performance does he acknowledge and employ in formulating political judgement, or in arriving at opinions? Almond and Verba classify political culture into the followings:

- a. Parochial political culture.
- b. Subject political culture.
- c. Participant political culture.

### **Parochial Political Culture:**

In a parochial political culture, system as a whole, citizens have little awareness of or orientation toward either the political system as a whole, the input process, the output process, or the citizen as a political participant. The parochial expect nothing from the system. It is suggested that some African chiefdoms, kingdoms, and tribal societies as well as modern Italy illustrate parochial political cultures.

In these societies, there are no specialized political roles; headman ship, chieftainship, shaman ship are diffuse political-economic-religious roles, and for members of these societies the political orientation of these roles are not separated from their religious and social orientations. A parochial orientation also implies the comparative absence of expectations of change initiated by the political system. The parochial citizen expects nothing from the political system. Even larger scale and more differentiated polities, however, may have predominantly parochial cultures. But relatively pure parochialism is likely to occur in simpler traditional systems where political specialization is minimal. Parochialism in more differentiated political systems is likely to be affective and normative rather than cognitive. That is to say, the remote tribesmen in Nigeria or Ghana may be aware in a dim sort of way of the existence of a central political regime. But his feelings toward it are uncertain or Types of Culture System as general object Input Object Output Object Self as active participant Parochial Culture 0 0 0 0 Subject Culture 1 0 1 0 Participant Culture 1 1 1 1 negative, and he has not internalized any norms to regulate his relations to it. This type of political system is associated with traditional system.

## **Subject Political Culture:**

In a subject political culture like that of Germany the citizen is oriented toward the political system and the output process, yet has little awareness of input processes or of the individual as a participant. He or she is aware of governmental authority and may like or dislike it, but is essentially passive. The person is, as the term implies, a subject.

The second major type of political culture listed in above table is the subject political culture. In this regard, the subject is aware of specialized governmental authority; he is affectively oriented to it, perhaps taking pride in it, perhaps disliking it; and, he evaluates it either as legitimate or as not. He is also essentially a passive one, meaning he does not take part in any input of government. The citizen also is aware of the outputs of the government - welfare programs, coercive measures or tax legislation, but plays no part in the inputs. He does not participate and believes he has no influence on the government. In this kind of political culture, the government expects obedience from the people and conformity to its directive without questioning. It is a political culture that is associated with authoritarian rule.

## **Participant Political Culture:**

In a participant political culture, which Almond and Verbal say exists in the United States, citizens have a comparatively high level of political awareness and information along with explicit orientations toward the political system as a whole, its input and output processes, and meaningful citizen participation in politics. They also understand how individuals and groups can influence decision making.

The third major type of political culture, the participant culture, is one in which the members of the society tend to be explicitly oriented to the system as a whole and to both the political and administrative structures and processes: in other words, to both the input and output aspects of the political system. Individual members of the participant polity may be favorably or unfavorably oriented to the various classes of political objects. They tend to be oriented toward an "activist" role of the self in the polity, though their feelings and evaluations of such a role may vary from acceptance to rejection. Such culture is usually associated with democracy where citizens recognize the political system, participate in the put and output process as well as recognize themselves as active participants. Such culture of participation may either negatively or positively oriented. We must acknowledge that when our country's development program is going forward, our political culture is backing up. The subject can be understood with the concept of 'binary opposition'. That is, the country's economic growth, increase in per-capita income, successful childhood of digital Bangladesh, strong leadership in the political arena, advancement of tigers in sports, reaching the top of women's sports in international competition, when the image of the country is highlighting the world, only the politics of mischief is ours Fades. That is, at this point we are passing a completely different time, where both development and non-development are happening simultaneously.

## **1.6 Political Life of Bangladesh:**

### **Parliamentary Democracy:**

Bangladesh is a parliamentary democracy largely influenced by the British parliamentary system. Executive power is in the hands of the prime minister, who is the head of the cabinet, and who must be a member of the 300-seat Jatiya Sangsad (unicameral parliament). She/he recommends the council of ministers to the president. The president is the constitutional head of state and is elected for a 5-year term by the parliament, but plays a largely ceremonial role. The president can act only on the advice of the prime minister, as the presidential power was significantly reduced in accordance with constitutional changes in 1991.

### **Women's interest in politics:**

All adult citizens (18 years old and over) are eligible to vote, including women and ethnic minorities. One of the unique features of the political system in Bangladesh is that 50 seats in the parliament are reserved for female members, and they are elected by the members of the parliament.

### **Different political ideologies:**

Constitutions of the four political parties specify certain ideological principles and goals. Table 1 illustrates these self-described ideologies. We will discuss the evolution and changes of the ideological principles over time for each of the parties.

Political Party	Ideologies
Awami League	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bengali Nationalism</li> <li>- Democracy</li> <li>- Secularism – freedom of all religions and non-communal politics</li> <li>- Socialism – establishment of exploitation-free society and social justice</li> </ul>
BNP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bangladeshi nationalism</li> <li>- Democracy</li> <li>- Free market economy</li> <li>- Preserve the teachings of Islam, religion of the majority and other religions</li> </ul>
Jatiya Party	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Independence and sovereignty</li> <li>- Islamic ideology and freedom of all religions</li> <li>- Bangladeshi nationalism</li> <li>- Democracy</li> <li>- Social progress and economic emancipation</li> </ul>
Jamaat*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establish Islamic way of life</li> <li>- Establish just, exploitation-free society and state</li> <li>- Faith and trust in Allah, democracy, economic and social justice</li> <li>- Ensure basic needs of all citizen irrespective of religions and ethnicity</li> <li>- Fraternity with World Muslims and friendship with all states</li> </ul>

Source: Constitutions of the Awami League, BNP, Jatiya Party and Jamaat

## Inter and Intra-Party Conflict Resolution:

The politics of vengeance always comes in our country. Everyday people are being killed in the fire of this political vendetta. People are living in fear. Feeling insecure in your own house. The only reason for this situation is that there is no equal rights politics in the country. Political parties have no respect. There is no national leader by whom the general people will call together or to assist the government. This national leader cannot be created because there is no friendly politics after independence, there is no politics of respect for each other.

## **Confrontational politics:**

Politics in our country is confrontational in nature where there is no cooperation, trust and solidarity among political parties and groups. There is no census among political parties on issues of national interest. They oppose each other only for the sake of opposition. In our country, there is no sign of absolute tolerance of politics. One leader is busy working to defeat another leader, one group and another. The two pillars of the Parliament are the leaders of government and the leader of opposition. But they sit in the two corners of the parliament without sitting on the front row., as if no one's eyes do not leave anyone. Do not go to any event two. If they go, that is only in an army ceremony though it was also stopped from this year. It is a democratic culture? jealous? Arrogant? When the 9th Parliament was the first sitting, then it was started by the people of obscenity. Members of the parliament had such a poor indication of the leader of the different party that many of the people were shocked. Even the last two leaders Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib and Ziaur Rahman were not spared in this episode.

## **Lack of people's confidence in government:**

People's self-assurance in government and following institutions is a significant criterion of developed democracy. Here, popular support and confidence may be centered approximately three areas: disillusionment:

1. with politicians;
2. with following parties;
3. With political institution.

In Bangladesh the level of people's confidence in administration, politicians, affectivity of policies and other following administrative and political institution and services is very low. Politicians and administrator are so corrupted that natives always try to refrain themselves from any treaty as well as intimation with them.

## **Restricted political communication:**

The contribution of ordinary people in democratic following requires that they have to have the feelings that it is safe to do so. For this, there be supposed to have a unrestricted communication procedure which involve,

1. A free press media;
2. Interest groups free from law making and party control;
3. Regular, free and fair elections;
4. Effectual law and order situation.

## **1.7 Political Culture in Our Country:**

### **Government:**

The People's Republic of Bangladesh is a parliamentary democracy that includes a president, a prime minister, and a unicameral parliament (*Jatiya Shongshod*). Three hundred members of parliament are elected to the 330-seat legislature in local elections held every five years. Thirty seats are reserved for women members of parliament. The prime minister, who is appointed by the president, must have the support of a majority of parliament members. The president is elected by the parliament every five years to that largely ceremonial post. The country is divided into four divisions, twenty districts, subdistricts, union *parishads*, and villages. In local politics, the most important political level is the union in rural areas; in urban regions, it is the municipality (*pourashava*). Members are elected locally, and campaigning is extremely competitive.

### **Leadership and Political Officials:**

There are more than 50 political parties. Party adherence extends from the national level down to the village, where factions with links to the national parties vie for local control and help solve local disputes. Leaders at the local level are socioeconomically well-off individuals who gain respect within the party structure, are charismatic, and have strong kinship ties. Local leaders draw and maintain supporters, particularly at election time, by offering tangible, relatively small rewards.

The dominant political parties are the Awami League (AL), the BNP, the Jatiya Party (JP), and the Jamaat-i-Islami (JI). The Awami League is a secular-oriented, formerly socialist-leaning party. It is not stringently anti-India, is fairly liberal with regard to ethnic and

religious groups, and supports a free-market economy. The BNP, headed by former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, is less secular, more explicitly Islamic in orientation, and more anti-India. The JP is close to the BNP in overall orientation, but pushed through a bill in Parliament that made Islam the state religion in 1988. The JI emphasizes Islam, Koranic law, and connections to the Arab Middle East.

### **Social Problems and Controls:**

Legal procedures are based on the English common-law system, and supreme court justices and lower-level judges are appointed by the president. District courts at the district capitals are the closest formal venues for legal proceedings arising from local disputes. There are police forces only in the cities and towns. When there is a severe conflict or crime in rural areas, it may take days for the police to arrive.

In rural areas, a great deal of social control takes place informally. When a criminal is caught, justice may be apportioned locally. In the case of minor theft, a thief may be beaten by a crowd. In serious disputes between families, heads of the involved kinship groups or local political leaders negotiate and the offending party is required to make restitution in money and/or land. Police may be paid to ensure that they do not investigate. Nonviolent disputes over property or rights may be decided through village councils (*panchayat*) headed by the most respected heads of the strongest kinship groups. When mediation or negotiation fails, the police may be called in and formal legal proceedings may begin. People do not conceive of the informal procedures as taking the law into their own hands.

### **Freedom of Expression:**

Several laws were proposed in 2016 to increase restrictions on freedom of expression. The Distortion of the History of Bangladesh Liberation War Crimes Act provides for imprisonment and fines if details of the 1971 war of independence are debated or disputed. The Foreign Donation (Voluntary Activities) Regulation Act, passed in October, to control nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) will hinder freedoms of expression and association. Proposed Press Council Act amendments include provisions for closing newspapers. The government continues to use the overly broad and vague Information and Communication Technology Act against people critical of decisions and activities of senior government officials or their families.

Bloggers expressing secular views and editors and writers supporting sexual minority rights were attacked in 2016, many of them hacked to death in public spaces. While authorities condemned the attacks, some recommended that individuals holding unpopular views censor themselves, implying that the responsibility for avoiding such attacks lay with the victims.

## **1.8 Conclusion:**

Political culture is trans-mitted from one generation to another by socialization, a process in which the individual, through many experiences with parents, friends, teachers, political leaders, and others, learns politically relevant values, beliefs, and attitudes. Political culture, then, is acquired by the individual, becomes a part of his or her psychological makeup, and is manifested in his or her behavior.

## **References:**

1. Ahmad, A. (n.d.). Where the fault lies. *The Daily Star*. Retrieved February 02, 2010, from <http://www.thedailystar.net/news-detail-124410>
2. Anderson, J. E. (2003). *Public policymaking: An introduction*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, pp. 51 – 55
3. Chowdhury, R. %. (n.d.). *The Political Culture of Bangladesh: An evaluative Overview from own Perspective*. Retrieved from [https://www.academia.edu/9902378/The\\_Political\\_Culture\\_of\\_Bangladesh\\_An\\_evaluative\\_Overview\\_from\\_own\\_Perspective](https://www.academia.edu/9902378/The_Political_Culture_of_Bangladesh_An_evaluative_Overview_from_own_Perspective)
4. Kavanagh D. (1972) *Approaches to Political Culture*. In: *Political Culture. Studies in Comparative Politics*. Palgrave, London, pp. 9-10
5. (n.d.). Retrieved July 26, 2017, from <http://study.com/academy/lesson/political-culture-definition-theory-types-examples.html>
6. Siddiqi, D. M. (2014, September 14). Political culture in contemporary Bangladesh. New Age. Retrieved from <http://archive.newagebd.net/49137/political-culture-in-contemporary-bangladesh/>
7. Swedlow, B. (2013, January). POLITICAL CULTURE. Retrieved from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/274073884\\_POLITICAL\\_CULTURE](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/274073884_POLITICAL_CULTURE)
8. Whalen, H., Almond, G. A., & Verbal, S. (1964). *The Civic Culture. Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*. *International Journal*, 19(2), 235. doi:10.2307/40198974.