



# **POS 111**

## **The Study of Politics**

### **Course Manual**

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# **The Study of Politics**

## **POS111**



**University of Ibadan Distance Learning Centre**  
**Ibadan Open and Distance Learning Course Series Development**  
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# Vice-Chancellor's Message

The Distance Learning Centre is building on a solid tradition of over two decades of service in the provision of External Studies Programme and now Distance Learning Education in Nigeria and beyond. The Distance Learning mode to which we are committed is providing access to many deserving Nigerians in having access to higher education especially those who by the nature of their engagement do not have the luxury of full time education. Recently, it is contributing in no small measure to providing places for teeming Nigerian youths who for one reason or the other could not get admission into the conventional universities.

These course materials have been written by writers specially trained in ODL course delivery. The writers have made great efforts to provide up to date information, knowledge and skills in the different disciplines and ensure that the materials are user-friendly.

In addition to provision of course materials in print and e-format, a lot of Information Technology input has also gone into the deployment of course materials. Most of them can be downloaded from the DLC website and are available in audio format which you can also download into your mobile phones, IPod, MP3 among other devices to allow you listen to the audio study sessions. Some of the study session materials have been scripted and are being broadcast on the university's Diamond Radio FM 101.1, while others have been delivered and captured in audio-visual format in a classroom environment for use by our students. Detailed information on availability and access is available on the website. We will continue in our efforts to provide and review course materials for our courses.

However, for you to take advantage of these formats, you will need to improve on your I.T. skills and develop requisite distance learning Culture. It is well known that, for efficient and effective provision of Distance learning education, availability of appropriate and relevant course materials is a *sine qua non*. So also, is the availability of multiple plat form for the convenience of our students. It is in fulfilment of this, that series of course materials are being written to enable our students study at their own pace and convenience.

It is our hope that you will put these course materials to the best use.



Prof. Isaac Adewole

Vice-Chancellor

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# Foreword

As part of its vision of providing education for “Liberty and Development” for Nigerians and the International Community, the University of Ibadan, Distance Learning Centre has recently embarked on a vigorous repositioning agenda which aimed at embracing a holistic and all encompassing approach to the delivery of its Open Distance Learning (ODL) programmes. Thus we are committed to global best practices in distance learning provision. Apart from providing an efficient administrative and academic support for our students, we are committed to providing educational resource materials for the use of our students. We are convinced that, without an up-to-date, learner-friendly and distance learning compliant course materials, there cannot be any basis to lay claim to being a provider of distance learning education. Indeed, availability of appropriate course materials in multiple formats is the hub of any distance learning provision worldwide.

In view of the above, we are vigorously pursuing as a matter of priority, the provision of credible, learner-friendly and interactive course materials for all our courses. We commissioned the authoring of, and review of course materials to teams of experts and their outputs were subjected to rigorous peer review to ensure standard. The approach not only emphasizes cognitive knowledge, but also skills and humane values which are at the core of education, even in an ICT age.

The development of the materials which is on-going also had input from experienced editors and illustrators who have ensured that they are accurate, current and learner-friendly. They are specially written with distance learners in mind. This is very important because, distance learning involves non-residential students who can often feel isolated from the community of learners.

It is important to note that, for a distance learner to excel there is the need to source and read relevant materials apart from this course material. Therefore, adequate supplementary reading materials as well as other information sources are suggested in the course materials.

Apart from the responsibility for you to read this course material with others, you are also advised to seek assistance from your course facilitators especially academic advisors during your study even before the interactive session which is by design for revision. Your academic advisors will assist you using convenient technology including Google Hang Out, You Tube, Talk Fusion, etc. but you have to take advantage of these. It is also going to be of immense advantage if you complete assignments as at when due so as to have necessary feedbacks as a guide.

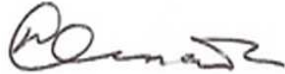
The implication of the above is that, a distance learner has a responsibility to develop requisite distance learning culture which includes diligent and disciplined self-study, seeking available administrative and academic support and acquisition of basic information technology skills. This is why you are encouraged to develop your computer skills by availing yourself the opportunity of training that the Centre’s provide and put these into use.



In conclusion, it is envisaged that the course materials would also be useful for the regular students of tertiary institutions in Nigeria who are faced with a dearth of high quality textbooks. We are therefore, delighted to present these titles to both our distance learning students and the university's regular students. We are confident that the materials will be an invaluable resource to all.

We would like to thank all our authors, reviewers and production staff for the high quality of work.

Best wishes.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Bayo Okunade', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Professor Bayo Okunade

Director

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# About this course manual

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The Study of Politics POS111 has been produced by University of Ibadan Distance Learning Centre. All Political Science course manuals produced by University of Ibadan Distance Learning Centre are structured in the same way, as outlined below.

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## How this course manual is structured

### The course overview

The course overview gives you a general introduction to the course. Information contained in the course overview will help you determine:

- If the course is suitable for you.
- What you will already need to know.
- What you can expect from the course.
- How much time you will need to invest to complete the course.

The overview also provides guidance on:

- Study skills.
- Where to get help.
- Course assessments and assignments.
- Activity icons.
- Study sessions.

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We strongly recommend that you read the overview *carefully* before starting your study.

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### The course content

The course is broken down into study sessions. Each study session comprises:

- An introduction to the study session content.
- Learning outcomes.
- Content of study sessions.
- A study session summary.
- Assessments and/or assignment, as applicable.

## Your comments

After completing this course, The Study of Politics, we would appreciate it if you would take a few moments to give us your feedback on any aspect of this course. Your feedback might include comments on:

- Course content and structure.
- Course reading materials and resources.
- Course assessments.
- Course assignments.
- Course duration.
- Course support (assigned tutors, technical help, etc).
- Your general experience with the course provision as a distance learning student.

Your constructive feedback will help us to improve and enhance this course.



## Course overview

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### Welcome to The Study of Politics POS111

This Course provides a survey of the major issues of politics; who rules, in whose interests and on what basis. It explains different types of involvement in politics, the role of conflicts of interests, the relation between the elite and the masses, and the government and the people. Also, it exposes students to different ways of studying politics and a brief survey of the methods of political science.

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### The Study of Politics POS111— is this course for you?

POS111 is a *compulsory* foundational course for students studying Political Science. It also aimed at students of Social Sciences, Arts, and Education who are allowed to choose their electives from the Department of Political Science in general. The course attempts to provide clues to those who are curious about the meaning of politics, its fundamentals, and approaches by introducing what politics and indeed Political Science entail.

### Course outcomes

Upon a successful completion of The Study of Politics POS111 you will be able to:



#### Outcomes

- *point out* the fundamental developments in the study of politics.
- *explain* the various levels at which politics take place and
- *discuss* the general approaches for studying politics.
- *highlight* the operations, processes and actors in politics.
- *apply* political concepts, methods, techniques and processes to the analysis of contemporary political issues.

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## Timeframe



**How long?**

This is a one semester course.

45 hours of formal study time is required.

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## Study skills



As an adult learner your approach to learning will be different to that from your school days: you will choose what you want to study, you will have professional and/or personal motivation for doing so and you will most likely be fitting your study activities around other professional or domestic responsibilities.

Essentially you will be taking control of your learning environment. As a consequence, you will need to consider performance issues related to time management, goal setting, stress management, etc. Perhaps you will also need to reacquaint yourself in areas such as essay planning, coping with exams and using the web as a learning resource.

Your most significant considerations will be *time* and *space* i.e. the time you dedicate to your learning and the environment in which you engage in that learning.

We recommend that you take time now—before starting your self-study—to familiarize yourself with these issues. There are a number of excellent web links & resources on the Course CD. Go to “Self-Study Skills” menu in course CD.

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## Need help?



**Help**

As earlier noted, this course manual complements and supplements POS111 at UI Mobile Class as an online course.

You may contact any of the following units for information, learning resources and library services.

**Distance Learning Centre (DLC)**  
University of Ibadan, Nigeria  
Tel: (+234) 08077593551 – 55  
(Student Support Officers)  
Email: [ssu@dlc.ui.edu.ng](mailto:ssu@dlc.ui.edu.ng)

**Head Office**  
Morohundiya Complex, Ibadan-  
Ilorin Expressway, Idi-Ose,  
Ibadan.

**Information Centre**  
20 Awolowo Road, Bodija,  
Ibadan.

**Lagos Office**  
Speedwriting House, No. 16  
Ajanaku Street, Off Salvation  
Bus Stop, Awuse Estate, Opebi,  
Ikeja, Lagos.

For technical issues (computer problems, web access, and etcetera),  
please send mail to [webmaster@dlc.ui.edu.ng](mailto:webmaster@dlc.ui.edu.ng).

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## Academic Support



A course facilitator is commissioned for this course. You have also been assigned an academic advisor to provide learning support. The contacts of your course facilitator and academic advisor for this course are available at [onlineacademicsupport@dlc.ui.edu.ng](mailto:onlineacademicsupport@dlc.ui.edu.ng)

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## Activities



This manual features “Activities”, which may present material that is NOT extensively covered in the Study Sessions. You will be provided with answers to every activity question. Therefore, your emphasis when working the activities should be on understanding your answers. It is more important that you understand why every answer is correct.

There are different forms of activities in this manual, ranging from reading activities, case studies, discussion activities. The use of activities is particularly based on learning outcomes and nature of content. Some Study Sessions comes with discussion topics. You may discuss the Study Sessions at respective discussion boards on course website.

You may see dates for active discussion with tutor on course schedule. This course schedule is available on the course website.

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## Assignment



### Assignment

This manual also comes with tutor marked assignments (TMA). Assignments are expected to be turned-in on course website. You may also receive TMAs as part of online class activities. Feedbacks to TMAs will be provided by your tutor in not more than 2-week expected duration.

Schedule dates for submitting assignments and engaging in course / class activities is available on the course website. Kindly visit your course website often for updates.

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## Assessments



### Assessments

There are two basic forms of self assessment in this course: in-text questions (ITQs) and self assessment questions (SAQs). Feedbacks to the ITQs are placed immediately after the questions, while the feedbacks to SAQs are at the back of manual. You will receive your TMAs as part of online class activities at the UI Mobile Class. Feedbacks to TMAs will be provided by your tutor in not more than 2-week expected duration.

Schedule dates for submitting assignments and engaging in course / class activities is available on the course website. Kindly visit your course website often for updates.

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## Bibliography



### Reading











For those interested in learning more on this subject, we provide you with a list of additional resources at the start of this course manual; these may be books, articles or websites.

# Getting around this course manual

## Margin icons

While working through this course manual you will notice the frequent use of margin icons. These icons serve to “signpost” a particular piece of text, a new task or change in activity; they have been included to help you to find your way around this course manual.

A complete icon set is shown below. We suggest that you familiarize yourself with the icons and their meaning before starting your study.

			
Activity	Assessment	Assignment	Case study
			
Discussion	Group Activity	Help	Outcomes
			
Note	Reflection	Reading	Study skills
			
Summary	Terminology	Time	Tip



# Study Session 1

## The Nature and Scope of Political Science

### Introduction

This study session will introduce you to the various definitions of politics within the context of Political Science as a distinct field of study. This will facilitate your deeper understanding of the concept. The study session will also expose you to the scope of politics and what political science entails.



#### Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- *discuss* the art and science of politics and government.
- *differentiate* between politics, political science and government.
- *discuss* the idea of politics in terms of definition and significance.

### 1.1 Political Science and the Study of Politics

**Queen of Science** The main driving force upon which other sciences / scientific discoveries depend.

Political science is indeed a very old discipline. Aristotle (384 – 322 BC), a Greek, described ‘politics’ as ‘**Queen of sciences**’ in his book “Politics” (1282). By this he meant that almost everything happens in a political context, that the decisions of the polis (the Greek city state) governed most other things. Politics is intimately connected to social, economic, geographical, psychological systems. For instance, disaster is natural, but its impact on society is controlled in large part by politics. Most of the choices we make either as individual, group or government are political.

Until the last quarter of 19th century, however, political science lacked a separate identity as a distinct field of study. It was dominated by political philosophers, theologians, and journalists, but seldom engaged in by full-time professional political analysts.

A convenient starting point at understanding what Political Science entails is a discussion on what politics is all about.

#### 1.1.1 What is Politics?

**Society** A group of people who share a common culture- a culture that includes formal and informal social arrangements such as mores and processes of government.

Like many other concepts in social sciences, politics has no single or universally acceptable definitions. In fact, you need to know that there are as many definitions of politics as there are works in Political Science. Many of these definitions are however mutually contradictory or irreconcilable.

According to the Greek philosopher Aristotle, “Politics is the essence of social existence and that two or more men interacting with one another are invariably involve in a political relationship”. This definition appears to make every man living in **society** a politician and therefore too broad.

**Power** the ability to influence the behaviour of people.

**Social class** broad group in society that have common economic, cultural, or political status.

**Utilitarian** an adherent of utilitarianism. Utilitarianism refers to the principle according to which an action is right if it tends to maximize happiness, not only that of the agent but also of everyone affected. To this end, utilitarian view that political conducts should have as its goal the procurement of the greatest happiness for the greatest number of persons.

**Governmental institutions** includes all of legislature, presidency and judiciary with their various establishments.

**Authority** Right to enforce

Harold Lasswell in his own view, defines politics as “*who gets what, when and how*” which underlines the significance of **power** as the major ingredient of politics. In other words, politics for Lasswell is concerned with which group of individuals in the society gets what resources at what time and in what manner. In this sense, politics is equated with the study of power. The problem with Lasswell’s definition is that it is also too broad. You should be conscious of the fact that there is always a question of who gets what, when and how, or strictly speaking, the central issue of power, influence and authority, wherever two or more men are involved in a relationship, for instance in the family, a social club, cultural organisation or in the university.

Another American political scientist, David Easton has defined politics as authoritative allocation of values for a society. Easton’s definition is however appears to be rather abstract; this is because it fails to tell us what the relevant values are, how the values are produced, who makes the authoritative allocation of values and what rules govern these allocations. To a German philosopher, Karl Marx, politics is seen as the confrontation or struggle among **social classes** or economic groups. This definition is too narrow in that groups other than social classes are involved in the struggle for power in the society. These groups can be ethnic groups, racial groups or religious groups. To the **utilitarian**, ably represented by Jeremy Bentham, politics is the means by which men could promote their private and collective interest. This is also narrow in the sense that there are other means by which men promote their interests.

- **ITQ** Harold Lasswell’s definition of politics as “Who gets what when and how” emphasizes the notion of:

- A. power
- B. government
- C. state
- D. territory

#### Feedback on ITQ answers

- The correct answer is A.
- If you choose B and C, then you would have stated that the definition of politics as “who get what when and how” revolves only in the public realm (government circle) and not in the private realm (family, school etc). In fact, Laswell’s definition makes more reference to the acquisition of power that can be seen in both the public and private realm.
- If you choose D, then you would have related the definition to territorial boundaries. This conception of politics is however, not limited by geographical locations of a state. It can also occur in both domestic and international forum, among government and private individuals.

Some scholars posit that politics equates with the organization and operation of **governmental institutions**. According to this definition, politics involves the functioning of institutions which make law, enforce it and settle controversy arising from different interests and various



obedience.

interpretation of the law. The problem with this definition is that it is too narrow and formalistic; this is because it ignores the political activities of such non-governmental institutions as political parties and interest or pressure groups. Other scholars perceive politics as the quest for power, order and justice, the art of influencing, manipulating and controlling others, using **authority**, a process of resolution of conflict in society and a struggle among actors pursuing conflicting desires on public issues.

### Note

More appropriately, politics can be seen as concerning the activities of governmental institutions in a state as well as any aspect of the society that directly or indirectly affects the operation of these institutions. In short, politics involves organisation of government and the behaviour of groups and individuals in matters that are likely to affect the course and conduct of government as for examples in voting and in forming pressure groups.



### Tip

Crucial to any definition of politics is the **state**, which is the most important contemporary framework for the conduct of politics. The state is simply defined as a territorial organization exercising a legitimate monopoly of force over a people within the specified geographical boundary. The modern state has four major characteristics namely; people, territory, government and sovereignty.

Also, while there is no best definition of politics, most political scientists agree that politics has something to do with power, influence and authority, which are the central organizing concepts of the study of politics.

- **ITQ** State is the most important contemporary framework for the conduct of \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. government
  - B. people
  - C. territory
  - D. politics

### Feedback on ITQs answers

- The correct answer is D
- If you choose A, B or C, you are wrong. In fact, people, territory, and government are elements of a state.

## 1.1.2 Political Science, Politics and Government

Having exposed you to different meaning of politics, it is important to explain what Political Science entails? There exists some confusion on what political science entails. Part of the confusion is in respect of politics as *an academic discipline* and politics as *an art*. To some people, political scientists are 'politicians'. Even to some people, political science offers training for revolutionaries or politicians. Let me point out this to you that political science is not necessarily training to become a practicing politician. Political Scientists as pointed out earlier carry out systematic and objective analysis of politics, which may or may not aid

working politicians. Meanwhile, you should be aware that Politicians love power, while Political Scientists are skeptical of power. While Politicians seek popularity and think practically, Political Scientists seek accuracy and think abstractly. More importantly, Politicians often respond to group and seek name recognition while Political Scientists seek the good of the whole and seek professional prestige. Therefore, it could be inferred that not all Political Scientists are politicians and vice – versa. Billy Dudley in his inaugural lecture titled “Scepticism and Political Virtues” delivered in 1975 cleared the ground on what political science is all about. From his submission, it is evident that political science is the study of politics.

To him, politics and indeed political science entails the following:

1. **“Consciousness Formation**, that is, the evolving of awareness amongst a collectivity of the issues and problems that confront that collectivity”.
2. **“Social Mobilization**, which is the organisation of a collectivity for joint collaborative action”.
3. **“Contestation”**, the contesting of the determination of natural priorities through the process of argumentation and debate.
4. **“Institutional Struggle** or the conversion of fights into games and debates” and
5. **Transcendence**, the bringing about of change both at the level of the person and at the systemic and sub-systemic levels.

In his conclusion, he opined that Political Science “is the systematic study of these various components of politics”. Like Dudley, the World Book Encyclopedia (1997) describes Political Science as the systematic study of political life. It however added that political scientists seek answers to such questions as “what reasons justify the actions of government? And “whose interests are served by government?”

## 1.2 The Scope and Importance of Political Science

Political scientists study the various forms of government as well as political parties, pressure groups, elections, international relations, public institutions, comparative politics and public administration. All these deal with the activities of individuals and groups, both at the national and international levels. You should note that Political Science deals with fundamental values such as equality, freedom, justice and power. These are issues within and outside formal operations of government.

In terms of significance of political science to human endeavours, it is well established from the definitions given above (see study session 1.1.1) that politics matters to every human being. Let me illustrate: if you do not take an interest and participate, someone else will, and they will influence the decisions that affect and govern your lives. Awareness of what politics is and how it works raises the consciousness in us to look after ourselves and prevent others from using us, since the ignorant are usually manipulated. The fact remains that you need not like the thing you study. For instance, virologists studying viruses and diseases may observe a disease-causing virus under a microscope. The fact that they do not like the virus does not hinder them from studying how it grows, how

it does its damage, and how it may be prevented or eradicated. Neither do biologists get angry at the bacterium and smash the glass slide with stone. They first understand the forces of nature and then see how they can work with them to improve mankind's existence. What political scientists try to do with politics is not different.



### Activity

*Allow 20 minutes*

So far, we have discussed the nature and scope of politics. You will now engage in a reading activity on consensus view and conflict views on Politics”.

#### Task

Read the article below and answer the questions that follow.

#### Introduction

Many scholars have attempted to conceptualize politics and give meaning to the term. One of them is Stephen Giliat who introduced two major traditions into the understanding of politics as a means of conflict management, and at the same time, perceived it as a means of conflict. This activity is aimed to expose you to consensus and conflict views of politics so as to have comprehensive understanding of some salient issues in political science.

#### Consensus and Conflict Views of Politics

According to Stephen Giliat, there are two major traditions in the understanding of politics. One tradition views politics as a positive means of conflict management, while the other one sees it as concerned with the production and promotion of conflicts. The first view, Stephen Giliat called the consensus or management view of politics. The second he described as the conflict view of politics.

#### The Consensus View of Politics

The following are the arguments associated with the consensus or management view of politics:

1. Politics is the process of resolving the problem of conflicting desires. It is concerned with resolving conflicts and contradictions peculiar to human existence. In short, controlling conflicts is the crucial and central function of the political process.
2. Conflicting desires arise when people want resources that are incompatible or in short supply. In other words, scarcity of resources leads to disagreement. Even men have diverse views, interests and characteristics. They differ in their view of the nature of man and of his role in the world; they have conflicting interests as young and old, employer and employee or rich and poor. They also differ racially and psychologically. These differences provide the basis for political activities. Consequently therefore, competing political parties are evidences of the disagreement not causes of this disagreement.
3. Politicians and political processes function to accommodate and regulate differences by recognizing, representing or responding to them. Thus, the primary role of the political process is to

integrate and reconcile conflicting desires in order to produce policies that benefit everybody and ensure security and order.

4. Inevitably therefore, politics is concerned both with conflict and consensus, disagreement and agreement, disorder and order or politicking and policy making. While differences or conflicting desires provide basis for politics, consensus or agreement is also required in order to reconcile the conflicting interests and ensure social stability and effective government. In essence, if politics is not to degenerate into anarchy, it is imperative or it is important that people who hold divergent interests should also accept the constraints imposed by the political framework of the rule, which regulate the gains of politics in society.
5. Finally, politics is therefore the functional activities having as its aim the accommodation and resolution of conflict, the establishment of order and formulation of decisions or policies. Politics is a cure for rather than the cause of disagreement and that maintaining order is the legitimate aim of all political activities.

### **The Conflict View of Politics**

The conflict view of politics makes the following propositions or arguments:

1. Politics is concerned not with the management of conflict but for its production and promotion. Differences become unmanageable when they are politicized and issues become controversial when they are giving energy by politicians.
2. The consensus view of politics is a faulty and mistaking description of the nature of political activities. The inadequacy of consensus view of politics becomes obvious when we look at the nature of international politics. The international political arena is conflict-ridden. Different nations aggressively compete for power and there are no universally acceptable processes or rules to regulate relations among these nations. This unregulated competition among states in the international system has transformed international politics into a turbulent and dangerous process. You need to know this is also true of domestic politics.
3. It is wrong to assume that competing political parties are evidences of disagreement not causes of them. On the contrary, it is through politics that disagreement and conflicting interests are established and accepted in the first place. Strictly speaking, this view argues that politics plays a major role in creating differences and conflicting interests. Therefore it does not resolve conflicts it creates them.
4. Political groups are not always ready to accept the constraints imposed by the established institutions and structure of societies. To be political is to be militant, and to be militant may entail the breaking of established conventions and processes. For example, Marxist's or socialist's books in capitalist societies do not regard public institutions for accommodating and regulating conflicts in these societies as legitimate. Rejection of institutional constraints therefore seems to be an essential ingredient of what it takes to be

political.

5. Widespread apathy to politics among ordinary people is rooted in the conflictual nature of politics. For the ordinary people, politics involves taking an issue of principle to a point where confrontation becomes inevitable and cooperation impossible. Politics is seen as something to be avoided by people who want to live with each other on friendly terms. In other words ordinary people see politics as an obstacle to the regulation of conflict and the survival of associations.
6. Politicians survive not by building consensus or reconciling differences but by placing groups and associations against one another through the exaggeration of differences and the use of propaganda. They encourage groups to conceive others' point of view as opposite and antagonistic to their own. The campaign of socialist politicians for example informs workers about their exploitation by the bourgeoisies and the use of political institutions as instruments of class domination. Thus, politicians tend to complicate issues which could be resolved peacefully and with little noise.

In conclusion, the conflict view emphasizes that politics is not about co-existence and conciliation but polarity and antagonism. In short, politics is not a means of peaceful accommodation and resolution of conflict but an instrument for the promotion of conflicts.

### Question

**Fill in the empty spaces with the most appropriate answer**

Many scholars have expressed their views about politics. \_\_\_\_A\_\_\_\_ as one of the scholars identified two major traditions in the understanding of politics which are conflict. One tradition views politics as a positive means of conflict management, while the other one sees it as concerned with the production and promotion of conflicts. The first view was called the \_\_\_\_B\_\_\_\_ or management view of politics while the second was described as the \_\_\_\_C\_\_\_\_ view of politics.

The first tradition concludes that \_\_\_\_D\_\_\_\_ is a cure for rather than the cause of disagreement arising from scarcity of resources; and that maintaining order is the legitimate aim of all political activities. The second tradition on the contrary emphasizes that politics is not about co-existence and conciliation but polarity and antagonism. To this conflict view, politics is not a means of peaceful accommodation and resolution of conflict but an instrument for the promotion of \_\_\_\_E\_\_\_\_.

- **ITQ** Which of the following statements about the consensus view of politics is not true?
  - A. Politics is the process of resolving the problem of conflicting desires.
  - B. Conflicting desires arise when people want resources that are incompatible or in short supply.
  - C. Politicians and political processes function to accommodate and regulate differences by recognizing, representing or responding to them

- D. politics is concerned not with the management of conflict but for its production and promotion

**Feedback on ITQs answers**

- The correct answer is D
- If you believe A, B and C as true and the odd one is D, then you are correct. This is because while A, B and C are concerned with the consensus view of politics, D is concerned with the conflict view of politics.

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## Study Session Summary



### Summary

In this Study session we noted that politics has no single or universally acceptable definitions. Politics involves organization of government and the behaviour of groups and individuals in matters that are likely to affect the course and conduct of government. The state, which is regarded as the most important contemporary framework for the conduct of politics is crucial to any definition of politics. Most political scientists agree that politics has something to do with these central organizing concepts of the study of: power, influence and authority.

You also learnt that Political Science is the systematic and scientific study of politics. According to Billy Dudley, it entails consciousness formation, social mobilization, contestation, institutional struggle and transcendence.

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## Assessment



### Assessment

Now that you have completed this study session, you can assess how well you have achieved its Learning Outcomes by answering these questions. Write your answers in your Study Diary and discuss them with your Tutor at the next Study Support Meeting. You can check the back of this manual for feedbacks to these SAQs

SAQ 1.1 (tests Learning Outcome 1.1)

Study the table below, and fill the empty labelled columns with the appropriate answer.

A	means by which men could promote their private and collective interest
B	authoritative allocation of values for a society
C	the essence of social existence and that two or more men interacting with one another are invariably involve in a political relationship
D	confrontation or struggle among social classes

	or economic groups
E	who gets what, when and how

SAQ 1.2 (tests Learning Outcome 1.2)

Discuss the difference between political science and politics.

**SAQ 1.3 (Tests learning outcome 1.3)**

Explain the scope and significance of politics.

## Assignment



### Assignment

This is a tutor marked assessment for this study session. Turn in your response at UI Mobile Class – the course website. You may see submission date at the course website as well

1. “Politics is the process of resolving the problem of conflicting human desires”. Discuss.
2. In few words state your understanding of the second major tradition in the conception of politics according to Stephen Giliat?

## Study Session 2

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### The Levels of Politics

#### Introduction

In the last study session attempts were made to conceptualize politics and discuss its nature. In this study session we will discuss the three basic levels at which politics takes place. In addition, you will be shown differences and similarities among the three levels.



#### Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- *discuss* the levels at which politics takes place. (SAQ 2.1)
- *show* differences and similarities among the three levels of politics. (SAQ 2.2)
- *discuss* the dimensions and ramification of politics. (SAQ 2.3)

#### 2.1 Levels of Politics

Politics, generally speaking, takes place at different levels. While Aristotle posits that politics is both ubiquitous and universal because man by nature is a political animal, and so takes place from the individual level to the state and inter-state level; some contend that for a more conventional understanding of politics, it is at three basic levels. Eric Rowe, in his book - *Modern Politics: An Introduction to Studying of Behaviour and Institutions* - identifies three levels of politics:

- i. the state levels of politics;
- ii. intra-state levels of politics; and
- iii. inter-state levels of politics.

##### 2.1.1 The State Level of Politics

This is the most important level of politics, which some scholars even consider to be the only level of politics. This level enjoys primacy over other levels because the state, apart from being more or less permanent with a territory that is defined, is also an institution that exercises the monopoly of the legitimate use of force over its territory.

Put differently, other associations groups and institutions are ultimately subjected to the jurisdiction of the legal control of the state. In other words, the state unlike other associations has compulsory jurisdiction. State politics includes the activities of the national or federal government, the sub-national or regional government and those of local governments. In Nigeria, these will mean the federal, state and local governments. Legislative, executive and judicial activities form part of state politics.



### 2.1.2 Intra-State level of Politics

This refers to those forms of political behaviour or conduct which take place within associations or social groups that form part of the state. Put differently, intra-state politics has to do with the activities, interactions and co-existence of all the groups within a definite territory. For example, the relationship between the governed and the governors, two or more arms of government, the pressure groups and the government, etc, constitutes intra-state politics.

It is however pertinent to note that such relationship all works towards the smooth running of the state through policy making and policy feedback. It may not be governmental that all times, but actions of groups influence government decisions. Intra-state politics is limited by such state rules as exist. In addition, however, associations can participate in state politics, that is politics that move beyond the internal affairs of the associations and involve the activities of government. For example, members of a church or university may campaign against any governmental policies or decisions that affect its activities. Such participation by an association in the politics of the wider state environment or government can be more conveniently described as an instance of state politics rather than of intrastate politics.

### 2.1.3 Inter-State Level of Politics

Another name for inter-state politics is international politics. As the name suggests, it is the politics that goes on between two or more states. According to scholars like Nicholas Spykman, Frederick Dunn, Joshua Goldstein and of course Hans Mongenthau, among others, it is activities involving political actors and other related ones, carried across state boundaries.



**Tip**

*Unlike state and intra-state politics, international politics or inter-state level of politics does not take place within a definite territory. There are also no existing institutions of government that enjoy the monopoly of the legitimate use of force. What best occurs at the level of inter-state politics is voluntary association, and cooperation among states.*

There is however attempts to create stability and a world order that will set the tone for a world government. The United Nations Organisation (UNO) with independent nations of the world as members is however faced with ideological conflicts, lack of commitment and the inability to compel obedience because it does not have absolute control over the member-states. The inter-state politics takes place in a setting in which no institution monopolises superior authority or jurisdiction.

- **ITQ** State-level of politics enjoys primacy over other levels because
  - A. the state exercises the monopoly of the legitimate use of force over its territory.
  - B. the state does not have the capacity to use coercion.
  - C. groups or institutions have jurisdictional supremacy.
  - D. the state has its main objectives as the promotion of people's welfare

### Feedback on ITQs answers

- The correct answer is A.
  - If you choose B, then you would have stated that the state cannot enforce obedience. The fact is, a state exist because it has the instrumentalities of power to enforce obedience
  - If you choose C, then you would have stated that institutions and groups have jurisdictional supremacy over the state. The fact is that most institutions or groups are located within the state and thus subject to the state.
  - If you choose D, then you would have believed the most important thing about the state is the provision of social welfare. You might be right but for a state to be able to provide social welfare, it must be able to have the monopoly of the use of coercion to carry out its responsibilities of ensuring social order which provides avenue for the provision of people's welfare.
- **ITQ** \_\_\_\_\_ does not take place within a definite territory.
- A. international politics
  - B. supra inter state politics
  - C. intra-state politics
  - D. state politics

### Feedback on ITQs answers

- The correct answer is A.
- If you choose B, you would have suggested that there is another level of relationship higher than international politics, state and intra-state politics apart from the three levels of politics stated by scholars.
- If you choose C & D, then you would have stated that politics carried out among institutions and groups or state politics is not done within a defined territory. State and intra-state politics are carried within a clearly defined territory.

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## Study Session Summary



### Summary

Although politics is described as ubiquitous and universal, this study session has shown that there are three basic levels at which politics takes place, which are: state level politics, intra – state level politics, and inter-state or international politics. The state level of politics is considered to be the only level of politics that includes the activities of the national or federal government, the sub-national or regional government and those of local governments.

Intra state politics refers to those forms of political behaviour or conduct which take place within associations or social groups that form part of the

state. The inter-state or international politics is activities involving political actors and other related ones, carried across state boundaries. It does not take place within a definite territory like the other two levels of politics.

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## Assessment



### Assessment

Now that you have completed this study session, you can assess how well you have achieved its Learning Outcomes by answering these questions. Write your answers in your Study Diary and discuss them with your Tutor at the next Study Support Meeting. You can check your answers with the Notes on the Self-Assessment Questions at the end of this Manual.

#### **SAQs 2.1 (tests Learning Outcome 2.1)**

Attempt a definition of state, intra-state and inter-state politics.

#### **SAQs 2.2 (tests Learning Outcome 2.2)**

With illustrations, differentiate between state and inter-state (international) politics.

#### **SAQs 2.3 (tests Learning Outcome 2.3)**

Identify the similarities in the state and inter-state level of politics.

## Study Session 3

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### Development of the Study of Politics

#### Introduction

Having discussed the levels at which politics take place in the last study session, it is important for us to trace the development of political science. In this session, you will be exposed to the behaviouralism revolution that swept across sociology and psychology in 1950s caught up with political science; and shifted the attention of the political scientists from the formal structure of the state to man's political behaviour. Behaviouralism aims at subjecting human behaviour to scientific analysis. Prior to 1950, study of politics had been preoccupied with the moral end of the state as well as the formal structure of government that is the constitution, the origin, and purpose of the structure.

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:



#### Learning Outcomes

- *trace* the development of political science as a discipline. (SAQ 3.1)
- *identify* major events that have shaped the course and content of political science as the scientific study of politics. (SAQ 3.2)
- *discuss* the debate on the issue of a science of politics or scientificness of politics. (SAQ 3.3)

### 3.1 The Study of Politics before the Advent of Behaviouralism

Let me remind you that political science as an academic discipline is concerned with the systematic and scientific study and analysis of politics. As a separate field for the study and analysis of politics, political science is a relatively late arrival within the social sciences where it is well developed. It is a relatively young academic field of study in many countries. It may interest you to note that political science was first taught in American universities in the 1850s. In the past as noted earlier, the term "political science" was not always distinguished from political philosophy and political history since the subject was taught as part of other academic disciplines. Even the modern discipline has a clear set of antecedents including also political economy, moral philosophy, history, political theology, and other fields concerned with normativism or "what ought to be" questions and with a major emphasis on the characteristics and functions of the ideal State.

The history of Western politics, strictly speaking, can be traced back to the political philosophers who belonged to the **Socratic school of thought**, namely, Plato (427–347 BC), Xenophon (430–354 BC), and Aristotle, who is considered to be the founding father of political science (384–322 BC). The works of these authors, *The Republic* and *Laws* by Plato, and *The Politics* and *Nicomachean Ethics* by Aristotle, analyzed

political systems philosophically, going beyond earlier Greek poetic and historical reflections.

It is important to point out that in the height of the **Roman Empire**, the study of politics was oriented toward understanding history, understanding methods of governing, and describing the operation of governments. Nearly a thousand years elapsed from the foundation of the city of Rome in 753 BC to the fall of the Roman empire or the beginning of the **Middle Ages**; philosophers and historians in this period emphasized the importance of Roman institutions in making the State as a whole stable. According to Polybius, “Roman institutions were the backbone of the empire but Roman law is the medulla”.

With the fall of the Western Roman Empire, there arose a more disperse arena for political studies. The rise of monotheism and, particularly for the Western tradition, Christianity brought to light a new space for politics and political action. For instance, Augustine of Hippo’s *The City of God* synthesized current philosophies and political traditions with those of Christianity, redefining the borders between what was religious and what was political. During the Middle Ages, the study of politics was widespread in the churches and courts and the theologians and political commentators of the period were preoccupied with the political questions surrounding the relationship between Church and State. The two concepts were clarified and contested in this period. In the 13th century Aristotle’s *Politics* was translated and became the basic text as in the works of Saint Thomas Aquinas.

The antecedents of politics can be traced back to scholars from other continents as well. For instance in ancient India, Chanakya (350–275 BC) as a political thinker wrote the *Arthashastra*, a treatise on political thought, economics and social order. This work discusses monetary and fiscal policies, welfare, international relations, and war strategies in detail, among other topics. Also the ancient China was home to several competing schools of political thought, these included *Mohism* - a utilitarian philosophy; *Taoism*, Legalism - a school of thought based on the supremacy of the state; and Confucianism – a school of thought that greatly influenced strategic studies in political science. Moreover, during the Italian Renaissance, Niccolo Machiavelli established the emphasis of modern political science on direct empirical observation of political institutions and actors. Machiavelli in the early 16th century introduced what some believe is the crux of modern political science. His great work “*The Prince*” was about getting and using political power. As a realist he focused on power, arguing that to accomplish anything good – such as the unification of Italy and expulsion of the foreigners who ruined it – the Prince had to be rational and tough in exercise of power. Machiavelli has been described as the father of the “politics model” of political science. Let me point out at this point that the expansion of the scientific paradigm during the Enlightenment further pushed the study of politics beyond normative determinations.

- **ITQ** Which of these political philosophers did not contribute to the study of politics?

A. Aristotle

- B. Plato
- C. Xenophon
- D. Comte

**Feedback on ITQs answers**

- The correct answer is D.
- If you choose D, then you are correct because Auguste Comte works dwells on the discipline of sociology and of the doctrine of positivism.
- Options A, B & C in fact include political philosophers such as: Aristotle, Plato and Marx have made useful contributions to the development of politics as a discipline.

In the Enlightenment period, the Contractualists emerged and contributed immensely to the study of politics through their **social contract theory**. Social contract is a theory that assumes that individuals join and stay in civil society as if they had signed a contract. Like Machiavelli, Thomas Hobbes, one of the Contractualists believed that a strong central power, such as a monarchy, was necessary to rule the innate selfishness of the individual but neither of them believed in the divine right of kings. John Locke, another Englishman, on the other hand, who wrote the Two Treatises of Government and who did not believe in the divine right of kings either, sided with Aquinas and stood against both Machiavelli and Hobbes by accepting Aristotle's dictum that man seeks to be happy in a state of social harmony as a social animal. Unlike Aquinas' preponderant view on the salvation of the soul from original sin, Locke believed man comes into this world with a mind that is basically a *tabula rasa*. According to Locke, an absolute ruler as proposed by Hobbes is unnecessary, for natural law is based on reason and equality, seeking peace and survival for man. It should be mentioned that Jean- Jacques Rousseau who lived in 18<sup>th</sup> century France was considered as one of those who laid the philosophical groundwork for the French Revolution. Although he accepted the theories of Hobbes and Locke, he deviated a little, by theorizing that life in a state of nature was downright good; people lived according to him as “Noble savages” without artifice or jealousy. To Rousseau, what corrupted humans was society itself. Let me remind you his famous word in the beginning of his Social Contract: “Man is born free but everywhere he is in chains”. This social contract theory by these writers provided an alternative explanation on the origin of the modern State.

The antecedents of politics can also be traced to Hegelian philosophy during the Enlightenment Period. Hegel's political philosophy produced Marxism. Karl Marx who popularized Marxism was trained in Hegelian Philosophy. Like Hegel, Marx argued that things do not happen by accident; everything has a cause. Nevertheless they differed, while Hegel posited that the underlying cause that moves history forward as spiritual, specifically *Zeitgeist* – the spirit of the times, Marx found the great underlying cause in economics.

- **ITQ** Social contract theory was developed by the
  - A. the Structuralists
  - B. the Functionalists
  - C. the Contractualists

#### D. the Socialists

##### **Feedback on ITQs answers**

- The correct answer is C.
- If you choose A, then you would have suggested that the social contract theory was developed by philosophers such as Ferdinand de Saussure and French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss.
- If you choose B, then you have stated that the social contract theory was developed by political philosophers such as Emile Durkheim.
- If you choose D, then you have stated that political philosophers such as Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels developed the social contract theory.

### **3.2 Behavioural Revolution and the Study of Politics**

In the 1950s and the 1960s, a behavioural revolution stressing the systematic and rigorously scientific study of individual and group behaviour swept political science discipline. A focus on studying political behaviour, rather than institutions or interpretation of legal texts, characterized early behavioural political science, including work by Robert Dahl, David Easton and Phillip Converse.

Political behaviour refers to a particular approach, a set of methods for the study of politics, and the study of human behaviour in politics. Let me point out that behaviouralism is not a new field of Political Science; rather it is a new approach to the study of political and governmental phenomena. The goal of behaviouralism is to make political science a more scientific discipline, one which analyzes politics empirically, that is, using the scientific method.

The behavioural approach adopted by behaviouralists is distinguished by its attempt to describe government as a process made up of the actions and interactions of individuals and groups of individuals. It is concerned with the activities of governments, political parties, interest groups and voters. Unlike institutional theoretical approach, behavioural approach rejected institutions as the unit of analysis because, government, after all, is not made up merely of documents, containing laws and rules or of structures of a particular form but is fundamentally based upon patterns of actions and activities of men. Thus, the units of analysis of behaviouralism should be the observed behaviour and relationships of individuals.

Beginning from 1950s, behaviourally inclined political scientists borrowed the natural scientists' approach and accumulated statistics from elections, public opinion surveys, votes in legislatures, and anything else they could hang a number on. Specifically, the term "behavioural science", subsequently called "behaviouralism", was coined by a group of quantitatively oriented, rigorously inclined social scientists, at the University of Chicago. As we shall soon see in this study session, Behaviouralists made some remarkable contributions to political science, shooting down some long-held but unexamined assumptions, and giving political theory an empirical basis. Their best work has been on voting patterns, the area in which they can get lots of valid data.



The decline of behaviouralism as an intellectual force in the late 1960s led to the emergence of new perspectives in the study of politics. By 1969, a newer movement post-behavioural emerged as a synthesis of traditional and behavioural approaches. Post behaviouralists recognize that facts and values are tied together; they are willing to use both the qualitative data of the traditionalists and quantitative data of the behaviouralists.

There was to be a greater emphasis on the informal processes of politics and less on state political institutions in isolation. Post-behaviouralism developed from the criticisms of behaviouralism which was attacked for concentrating on quantifiable but trivial politics, downgrading the importance of normative values in political research, and neglecting vital areas of political life which are not directly amenable to scientific treatment.

Thus, the post behavioural approach is engaged to promote a political science that would be as scientific or precise as possible, philosophical normative, politically relevant and also socially responsible. It was eclectic in that it supported the incorporation into political science as many perspectives or approaches as can throw light on the complexities of political life. The approach encourages borrowing from other social science disciplines particularly, sociology and psychology.

The advent of political science as a university discipline was marked by the creation of university departments and chairs with the title of political science arising in the late 19th century. In fact, the designation "political scientist" is typically reserved for those with a doctorate (PhD) in the field. You should be aware that the process of integrating political studies of the past into a unified discipline is ongoing, and the history of political science has provided a rich field for the growth of both normative and positive political science, with each part of the discipline sharing some historical predecessors.

- **ITQ** The goal of behaviouralism is to make political science
  - A. a more scientific discipline.
  - B. a more philosophical discipline.
  - C. a more dependent discipline.
  - D. more constricted discipline.

**Feedback on ITQ**

- The correct answer is A.
- If you chose B, then you have suggested that behavioural approach to the study of politics revolves around the normative-philosophical or legal-institutional approach, which once dominated the study of politics.
- If you choose C & D, then you would that the suggested that the behavioural approach to the study of politics limited. The behaviouralist would argue otherwise

Those who study and teach politics have formed different professional associations in various countries as well as at the continental and international levels, such as Nigerian Political Science Associations, (NPSA), American Political Science Association (APSA), International Political Science Association (IPSA), and the African Association of



Political Science (AAPS). The American Political Science Association was founded in 1903 and the American Political Science Review was founded in 1906 in an effort to distinguish the study of politics from economics and other social phenomena.

### 3.3 A Science of Politics

There is a crucial and controversial debate on the scientificity of the study of politics. Questions that are usually posed in connection with this debate include but not limited to: Is there a science of politics? To what extent is political science a science? Can one speak of the laws of political behaviour? Without mincing words, in the sense of the precision that is attributed, often mistakenly, to such pure and natural sciences as physics, mathematics, chemistry, zoology and biology, perhaps political science is not a science. It is well established that political science can not be considered an exact science because it is a behavioural or soft science. Its controls are less exact. It deals with people rather than with matter. Nevertheless, it is possible to talk about a scientific study of politics. By this, we mean that the study will be systematic and orderly and that political scientists will attempt to find out what is or what actually exists. Strictly speaking, we mean the use of scientific method to study political phenomena. (This debate will be extensively discussed in another course meant for 200 level Political Science Students; POS 211 – Political Analysis).

Like all social sciences, political science faces the difficulty of observing human actors that can only be partially observed and who have the capacity for making conscious choices unlike other subjects such as non-human organisms in biology or inanimate objects as in physics. Despite the complexities, contemporary political science has progressed by adopting a variety of methods and theoretical approaches to understanding politics and methodological pluralism is a defining feature of contemporary political science. Due to the interdependence of all social life, political science also moved towards a closer working relationship with other disciplines, especially sociology, history, economics, anthropology, law, psychology, administration and statistics without losing its own identity.

Increasingly, political scientists have used the scientific method to create an intellectual discipline involving quantitative research methods, as well as the generation of formal economics-style models of politics to derive testable hypotheses followed by empirical verification. Over the past generations, the discipline placed an increasing emphasis on relevance and the use of new approaches to increase scientific knowledge in the field and provide explanations for empirical outcomes.

In 2000, the Perestroika Movement in political science was introduced as a reaction against what supporters of the movement called the mathematicization of political science. Those who identified with the movement argued for a plurality of methodologies and approaches in political science and for more relevance of the discipline to those outside of it.

- **ITQ** Political science as an academic discipline is concerned with

- A. systematic study and analysis of politics.
- B. scientific study Marxism.
- C. the idea of the social contract .
- D. the philosophy of Aristotle.

**Feedback on ITQs answers**

- The correct answer is A.
- If you choose B, then you would have limited the study of politics to the political philosophies of Karl Marx which stipulates that the stratification of the state or society into classes such as the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, and the struggle among these classes, will finally cumulate into the victory of the proletariat and the subsequent establishment of a classless society.
- If you choose C, then you would have also suggested that politics essentially entails Thomas Hobbes' idea of the emergence of the state through a social contract that exists between the citizens and the state.
- If you choose D, then you would have limited to study of politics around Aristotle's dictum that man seeks to be happy in a state of social harmony as social animals.

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## Study Session Summary

**Summary**

In this Study session you traced the origin of political science as an academic discipline. As a separate field for the study and analysis of politics, political science is a relatively late arrival within the social sciences. As demonstrated in the study session, Plato, Xenophon, and Aristotle, who is considered to be the founding father of political science contributed immensely through their works to the development of western politics. In fact the antecedents of politics can be traced back to many scholars from different continents as discussed in the study session. In the post Second world war era, the major growth area in the study of politics has been the area designated political behaviour with the emergence of behavioural approach.

You were also exposed to the advent of political science as a university discipline arising in the late 19th century in America. Those who study and teach politics have formed different professional associations in various countries as well as at the continental and international levels like NPSA, IPSA, and AAPS etc. In spite of the pessimism about the scientificness of politics you were informed that contemporary political science has progressed by adopting an eclectic approach.

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## Assessment



### Assessment

Now that you have completed this study session, you can assess how well you have achieved its Learning Outcomes by answering these questions. You can check the back of this manual for feedbacks to these SAQs.

#### **SAQ 3.1 (tests Learning Outcome 3.1)**

How would you conceptualize political science?

#### **SAQ 3.2 (tests Learning Outcome 3.2)**

Briefly discuss the major developments in the study of politics

#### **SAQ 3.3 (tests Learning Outcome 3.3)**

Is there a science of politics?

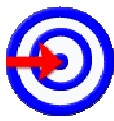
## Study Session 4

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### Approaches to the Study of Politics

#### Introduction

We discussed the levels at which politics take place in the last study session. The main aim of this study session is to help you identify and discuss various approaches to the study of politics. Four main approaches that dominate the study of politics before and after the Second World War will be explained.



#### Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- *identify* four basic approaches to the study of politics. (SAQ 4.1)
- *explain* the approaches to the study of politics. (SAQ 4.2)

Since the emergence of Political Science as a separate discipline, there are four major approaches identified to be useful in the study of politics. These are:

- i. Normative-philosophical approach,
- ii. Descriptive-institutional approach,
- iii. Scientific-behavioural approach, and
- iv. Eclectic/post-behavioural approach.

#### 4.1 Normative Philosophical Approach

Traditionally, the study of politics was dominated by philosophical reflections on universal political values that were regarded as essential to the just state and the good state. Among the questions that attracted the attention of such great traditional philosophers as Plato, Aristotle Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau were: What is justice? What makes the existence of political power legitimate? What should be the proper role of the state? What reciprocal obligation exists between the state and its citizens? What interpretation and importance should be attached to such political values as justice, natural rights, freedom and obedience? In short, they were preoccupied with “what ought to be” or normative questions.

In its present form the normative philosophical approach has taken the form of a discussion and analysis of the answers that the traditional philosophers provided to some of those questions. But contemporary students of normative philosophical approach have tried not only to provide fresh answers to the question posed by the traditional philosophers but also to empirically investigate the extent to which such political values as justice and liberty or freedom are actually been accepted in a particular society. Thus, the application of the philosophical approach in political science usually leads to a focus on the great ideas, values and doctrine of politics.

The normative philosophical approach is the oldest and the least scientific approach to the study of politics and it has been taken over although not completely displaced by newer or more contemporary approaches.

## 4.2 Descriptive Institutional Approach

The strongest legacy that philosophy, history and law have bequeathed to the study of politics is in the field of descriptive and institutional approaches. In broad terms, an institution can be defined as 'any persistent system of activities or any pattern of group behaviour'. More concretely, an institution has been conceived as 'offices and agencies arranged in a hierarchy, each agency having certain functions and powers'. You should be informed that this approach emerged to strengthen the weakness of normative philosophical approach.

The institutional approach to political inquiry focuses on the formal structures and agencies of government. It originally focused on the evolution and operation of legislatures, executives and judiciaries. As the approach developed however, the list is extended to include political parties, constitutions, bureaucracies, interest groups and other institutions which are more or less permanently engaged in politics. In the descriptive institutional approach, the emphasis is on facts rather than values. In other words, the approach seeks to provide factual and historical answers to such questions as what are the historical sources of parliamentary supremacy over the monarchy. What are the procedures followed when a bill becomes law? By what electoral arrangement are rulers or representatives chosen? What are the relative merits and demerits of rigid and flexible constitutions?

Although descriptive institutional approach is fairly old, political scientists still, in spite of recent developments, concentrate chiefly on examining the major political institutions of the state such as the executive, legislature, the civil service, the judiciary and local government and from these examinations valuable insights as to their organisation can be drawn, proposals for reform discussed and general conclusions offered. The approach has been criticised for the neglect of the informal aspects of politics, norms, beliefs, values, attitudes, personality and the processes.

- **ITQ** The Descriptive–Institutional Approach focuses on:
  - A. Organization of data for presentation purposes. The discussion of such universal values as equality, justice and freedom.
  - B. the reciprocal obligations that exist between the state and citizens.
  - C. the evolution and operation of governmental institutions and other bodies engaged in politics

### Feedback on ITQs answers

- The correct answer is C.
- If you choose A & B then you would be making reference to the normative-philosophical approach to the study of politics

### 4.3 The Scientific Behavioural Approach

Beginning in the 1950s, strictly speaking, some Political Scientists started to concentrate their attentions on actual human behaviour as opposed to thoughts and feelings. They borrowed the natural scientists' methods and accumulated statistics from elections, public opinion surveys and so on. The key assumption of the behavioural approach or behaviouralism is that there are certain uniformities in political behaviour which can be stated as generalizations or theories and which are capable of explaining and predicting political phenomena. As an approach to the study of politics, it introduces two major elements to the study of politics.

The first was the emphasis on the political behaviour of the individual or the group of individuals as a central or crucial unit of political analysis and the basic building block of political science. For example, if you say the court is conservative, we mean that the judge in the Supreme Court is conservative. Behaviouralists argue that although the institution is an important aspect of politics, being on its own is not the real stuff of politics. In other words, institutions do not and cannot exist physically apart from the person or groups who inhabit them. It is therefore the behaviour of the individual within institutions rather than the formal structure and characteristics of those institutions which should be the main focus of the political scientists.

The second element that behaviouralism brought to the study of politics was the emphasis on the use of scientific method in political analysis. The behavioural approach insists on the scientific methods in making accurate statements about political phenomena, on cumulative research and on broad generalizations. The advent of behaviouralism in political science was marked by the emphasis on the collection of empirical political data and the use of mathematical and statistical techniques to analyze data collected. Past behavioural studies were especially good in examining the 'social bases' of politics, the attitudes and values of average citizens, which go a long way toward making the system function the way it does.

There are several criticisms levelled against the behavioural approach. Critics questioned its basic assumption and argued that political reality consists mainly of unique elements and that whatever regularities that exist are trivial in nature. It was further stressed that political phenomena are not amenable to experimentation. However, despite its perceived shortcomings, the behavioural approach has greatly encouraged the scientific study of political phenomena.

### 4.4 The Eclectic-Post Behavioural Approach

The decline of behaviouralism as an intellectual force in the late 1960s led to the emergence of new perspectives in the study of politics. There was to be a greater emphasis on the informal processes of politics and less on state political institutions in isolation. Post-behaviouralism developed from the criticisms of behaviouralism which was attacked for concentrating on quantifiable but trivial politics, downgrading the importance of normative values in political research, and neglecting vital

areas of political life which are not directly amenable to scientific treatment.

Thus, the post behavioural approach is engaged to promote a political science that would not be as scientific or precise as possible, philosophical normative, politically relevant but be also socially responsible. It was eclectic in that it is supported the incorporation into political science as many perspectives or approaches as can throw light on the complexities of political life. The approach encourages borrowing from other social science disciplines particularly, sociology and psychology. Some of the new perspectives that later developed into approaches in Political science include, the systems approach, structural-functional approach, the group approach, decision-making approach among others. Each of these approaches has its own weakness(es) and strength(s).

It has to be mentioned that there is indeed no agreement on one single approach to the study of politics.

- **ITQ** The Normative–Philosophical Approach emphasized:
  - A. the development in the study of behaviours of political actors.
  - B. the study of state parastatals.
  - C. the discussion of such universal values as equality, justice and freedom
  - D. the scientific study of politics

**Feedback on ITQs answers**

- The correct answer is C.
- If you choose A & D, then you would be referring to the scientific-behavioural approach to the study of politics.

If you choose B, then you would be referring to the descriptive institutional approach to the study of politics.

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## Study Session Summary



### Summary

As it is pointed out in the study session, politics can be studied using four different approaches; these are: *normative philosophical* approach which focuses on philosophical reflections on universal political values that were regarded as essential to the just state and the good state; *descriptive institutional* approach that focuses on the formal structures and agencies of government; *behavioural approach* that emphasizes the scientific study of political behaviour of individuals and group of individuals; and the *post-behavioural* approach that is eclectic in nature and engaged to promote a political science that would not be as scientific or precise as possible, philosophical normative, politically relevant but be also socially responsible.

## Assessment



### Assessment

Now that you have completed this study session, you can assess how well you have achieved its Learning Outcomes by answering these questions. You can check feedbacks on SAQs to get the answers.

#### **SAQ 4.1 (Tests learning outcome 4.1 and 4.2)**

Differentiate between the normative-philosophical and the descriptive-institutional approach to the study of politics.

#### **SAQ 4.2 (Tests learning outcome 4.2)**

What is behaviouralism?

Discuss eclectic/post behavioural approach in political inquiry.



## Study Session 5

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### Power, Influence, Authority and Legitimacy

#### Introduction

You were told in our first study session that power, influence and authority are the central organizing concepts of the study of politics. In this study session, much emphasis will be on these inter-related concepts. The meaning of each concept and the difference between the concepts will be demonstrated with illustrations.



#### Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- *explain* the concepts of power, influence, authority and legitimacy as the central issues of politics. (SAQ 5.1)
- *distinguish* between these concepts of politics. (SAQ 5.2)

#### 5.1 The Central Organizing Concepts of Politics

Power, influence, authority and legitimacy are common terminologies in political analysis. Even, most of the definitions of politics given by scholars (some of which were given in study session one) emphasize these concepts. Specifically speaking, some defined politics as the quest for power and let me remind you of Harold Lasswell's definition of politics as 'who gets what when and how', which focuses on power. The concepts of power, influence and authority express relationships among political actors, and the distinction that could be made between these concepts is only in the extent of variance in the form of relationship. These concepts are generic terms and hence Robert Dahl used 'influence' and related concepts such as control, persuasion, might, force and coercion to explain them all.

Often, we have heard of terms like physical power, military power, economic power, political power, presidential power, judicial power, national power, etc. Dahl sees power as the product of human relationships. **A** has power over **B** to the extent that he can get **B** to do something that he would not otherwise do. A person may be said to have power to the extent he influences the behaviour of others in accordance with his intentions. Max Weber's definition of power indicates that power involves the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance.

To most political thinkers, politics is all about power and influence, thus Harold Lasswell and Abraham Kaplan see politics as the shaping, distribution and exercise of power. Power is bilateral as well as relational. It is exercised with respect to others. For there to be a leader, there must be followers.

### 5.1.1 What is Political Power?

According to Max Weber, power is the possibility of imposing one's will upon the behaviour of other persons. To him, power involves domination, i.e. 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.

Carl Frederick sees power as the capacity of an individual or group of individuals to modify the conduct of others in the manner which he desires. From the above definition, it is clear that political power is a social power. It is exercised over man not over nature or things. Power is the ability to get things done, to make others to do what we want, even if they do not want to do it.

There are three major terms that can be identified with the term power, and these are force, domination and manipulation.

#### **Force**

This is the physical manipulation of the subordinated individual. The exercise of force can be assault, confinement, etc.

#### **Domination**

This is an influence on the behaviour of a person by making it explicit to others what he wants them to do (command, request etc). To Max Weber, domination is identical with authoritarian power of command, for domination to be present, there must be:

- a. an individual who rules or a group of rulers
- b. an individual who is ruled or group of people ruled.
- c. The will of the rulers to influence the conduct of the ruled and expression of that will (i.e. through command).
- d. Evidence of the influence of the rulers in terms of the objective degree of compliance with command
- e. Direct or indirect evidence of that influence in terms of the objective acceptance with which the ruled obey the command.

#### **Manipulation**

This is another form of power obtained when an actor influences the behaviour of others without making explicit the behaviour which he wants them to display. Manipulation may be exercised by utilizing symbols of performing acts. Propaganda is a major form of manipulation by symbols.

### 5.1.2 Influence

When a relationship is devoid of sanctions, coercion and physical force, there is said to be a relationship of influence. The distinction between power and influence can only be made in terms of the form of relationship among persons. While it will be correct to assert that power relationship connotes influence, relationship based on influence on the other hand does not connote the use of force which is synonymous with power. However, both concepts express relationship between two persons, for instance person **A** and person **B**.

It should be noted that power and influence are inseparable concepts. According to Robert Dahl, influence is a relation among actors such that the wants, desires, preferences or intentions of one or more actors affect the actions or predispositions to act, of one or more other actors. One person has influence over another within a given scope, to the extent that the first, without resorting to either a tacit or an overt threat of severe deprivations, causes the second to change his course of action. The exercise of power depends upon potential sanction, while the exercise of influence does not.

Influence can be classified into two broad categories, though it takes several forms:

- a. Manifest or explicit influence
- b. Potential or implicit influence

Manifest or explicit influence is an influence exercised by **A** over **B** to the extent that **A**'s action causes a change in **B**'s behaviour. **B** is able to anticipate **A**'s wants and **B** complies accordingly.

Potential or implicit influence is an indirect or unknown influence by the influencer e.g. the National Assembly trying to make a law on a subject and putting different groups into consideration and considering alternatives before they will eventually make the law that favours a particular group. This group may be said to have potential or implicit influence on the decision of the National Assembly.

- **ITQ** When a relationship is devoid of sanctions, coercion and physical force, there is said to be a relationship of
  - A. Influence
  - B. Power
  - C. Manipulation
  - D. Domination

#### **Feedback on ITQs answers**

- The correct answer is A.
- If you choose B, then it would be incorrect because power entails the use of sanctions, coercions, or physical force.
- If you choose C, it would also be incorrect because manipulation is another form of power obtained when an actor influences the behaviour of others without making explicit the behaviour which he wants them to display
- If you choose D then you are incorrect because according to Max Weber, domination is identical with authoritarian power of command.

### **5.1.3 Authority**

Authority is a form of power; perhaps it could be described as a superior form of power. Authority is the quality of being able to get people to do things because they think the individual has the right to tell them what to do. Those in authority are followed because it is believed that they fulfil a need within the community or political system. Authority is linked with respect which creates legitimacy and therefore leads to power.

Authority is a form of power derived from approved procedure of the political culture which enables the political office holder to act in certain ways that will affect the behavior of others. Thus authority has been described as legitimate power.

Max Weber identified three types of authority, which are:

- i. Traditional authority,
- ii. Charismatic authority, and
- iii. Legal authority

### **Traditional Authority**

This authority rests on the sanctity of tradition in conventional usage, in which prevailing social order is seen as inviolable or sacred. This takes the form of respect for the monarch or chief. Traditional authority is legitimate in the sense that it is in accordance with the custom and tradition of the people.

### **Charismatic Authority**

This authority is exercised because of the belief in the personal qualities of a particular person (the charisma of a person). The power of command may be exercised by a leader when he possesses extra-ordinary gifts or personal attributes. Persons who obey such a leader are called followers or disciples, examples of such leaders are ObafemiAwolowo, Indira Gandhi, Adolf Hitler, Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere, Nelson Mandela etc.

### **Legal Authority**

This authority is legitimated by the supremacy of the law, meaning that the exercise of the law is accepted as legitimate because all subscribe to existing rules, regulations, laws and policies of the land. The laws subscribed to are seen as constitutional and in line with the political culture of the people.

- **ITQ** Political authority refers to
  - A. the electorate
  - B. the right to influence the attitude and conduct of others
  - C. the power one exercise as a result of complete ownership of the means of production and distribution
  - D. the right to influence the election of the representatives of the people

### **Feedback on ITQs answers**

- The correct answer is B
- If you choose A, then you have stated that the electorates can also be called political authority.
- If you chose C, then you are making reference to economic power and not political authority.
- If you choose D, then you are making reference to election rigging.

### 5.1.4 Legitimacy

In order to understand what is meant by legitimacy one needs to look at different definitions of legitimacy and their differences in detail. Useem refers to state legitimacy as “the widespread public belief that the society’s governing institutions and political authorities are worthy of support, is commonly held to be a precondition for political stability in advanced capitalist democracies”. Beetham in his attempt to define legitimacy argues that “where power is acquired and exercised according to justifiable rules and with evidence of consent, we call it rightful or legitimate”. Another way to approach this problem of conceptualization is to define what illegitimate means and therefore reason what legitimate means. Rotberg for example argues that an illegitimate state is a state with broken and corrupt state institutions. This approach does not seem to be reasonable, because in reverse, this definition would imply that a state is legitimate only when its institutions are not corrupt or broken. This definition lacks a moral element. Weber argues that legitimacy arises out of the confidence of the ruled. This definition also lacks a sufficient moral element.

From the foregoing, legitimacy denotes the belief in the rightness of an individual to make authoritative and binding decisions. It is the belief in the right to govern and to be governed. Legitimacy refers to an attitude in people’s mind (in some countries strong, in others weak) that the government rule is rightful. Through it, power is translated to authority.

When the government is perceived as dishonest and dirty, people feel less obliged to obey laws which can lead to the erosion of the legitimacy of the government of the day. Government is seen as legitimate when its rules and decisions are respected and obeyed. To get citizens’ approval of its policies and programme, government in most cases follows public opinion.

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## Study Session Summary



### Summary

In this Study session you learned that power, influence, authority and legitimacy are central concepts in political analysis. Although people erroneously make use of them interchangeably, they connote different meaning. Generally speaking, power is the ability to get things done, to make others to do what we want, even if they do not want to do it. Power is relational and bilateral. Authority is a form of power derived from approved procedure of the political culture which enables the political office holder to act in certain ways that will affect the behaviour of others. You were told in the study session that when a relationship is devoid of sanctions, coercion and physical force, there is said to be a relationship of influence. In essence therefore, the distinction between power and influence can only be made in terms of the form of relationship among persons. It is through legitimacy, which denotes rightness or acceptance; that power and influence can be translated into authority. Max Weber categorized types of authority into three, namely, Charismatic, legal-rational and traditional.

## Assessment



### Assessment

Now that you have completed this study session, you can assess how well you have achieved its Learning Outcomes by answering these questions. You can check the back of this manual for feedbacks to these SAQs.

#### **SAQ 5.1 (Tests learning outcome 5.1)**

Attempt a short definition of power, authority and legitimacy

#### **SAQ 5.2 (Tests learning outcome 5.2)**

What is the difference between power and influence?

# Study Session 6

## Government and Its Roles

### Introduction

As we discussed earlier in this course (Study Session 1.1.1), the State is a contemporary framework for the conduct of politics. Since the State is an abstract entity, and it is through government that people can actually feel the impact of it, it becomes important for us to have a discussion on government. In this study session, you will be exposed to the basic components of government, and the role of government as an agency through which the State formulates and implements her policies.



#### Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- *discuss* basic components of government. (SAQ 6.1)
- *highlight and explain* the major roles of government as one of the crucial concepts of politics and an agency of the state. (SAQ 6.2)

### 6.1 Basic Components of Government

Government is that decision making and enforcing agency in a state that control a monopoly of legitimate use of force. This definition highlights three crucial components of government.

#### 6.1.1 Decision Making and Enforcement

Government exists to make and enforce decision. All human society needs to make a collective decision as to the ends (wants) of the society and the best means of achieving them. Government is the highest and the most formal level at which such decisions are taking or implemented. The decision like what type of economy strategy should Nigeria takes to wipe off armed robbery, to reduce poverty and eliminate corruption.

#### 6.1.2 Source of Coercion in Social Affairs

Government is the ultimate source of coercion in social affairs. If collective decisions must be implemented or enforced there must be some form of collective agency with a monopoly over the use of force. This agency is the government. While the use of force or the threat of the use of force is not always advisable, it may be unavoidable in instances where groups or individuals resist or violate collective decisions.

#### 6.1.3 Legitimacy

Government conduct is normally seen as legitimate. Legitimacy refers to an acceptance by the people that it is right for government to seek and receive the obedience of the citizens. In other words, the government is popularly accepted and authorized to govern. Compare with other

institutions in the society, the conduct of governmental institutions is usually seen as legitimate.

## 6.2 The Roles of Government

“Contract, collective action and a desire to maximize social well being all generate possible roles for government”.

- Michael Laver in Eric Rowe, *Modern Politics and Introduction to Behaviour and Institution*

The roles of government are hereby discussed.

### 6.2.1 Contract Enforcement

We must all deal or enter into contract with people, however only very few deals can be contracted that does not involve enforcement. These few deals are those that depend on mutual trust or involve individuals in a small or closely integrated community. In other words, the enforcement of contract may not be necessary among individuals who trust each other or live in a small community, where members are no strangers to each other and are expected to deal with each other from time to time. In this situation, deals may not need to be enforced. However, most deals or contracts involve a collection of individuals who are not in continuous interaction or do not share a sense of community, the temptation to double cross or be dishonest is therefore very high. In this context, contracts need to be enforced and a role for the government emerges.

### 6.2.2 Collective Action

When there is a need for a project that would benefit all, but no individual is prepared to contribute towards it, there is a problem of collective action which creates a role for the government. Basic elements of problem of collective action are:

- Almost all private actions have public consequences either in the form of social benefit or social cost.
- Some private actions may not produce private benefits only but also social cost, while other private actions, may entail private cost but produce social benefits.
- Social cost and benefit produced by private action have an indiscriminate influence on society. In other words, the cost can not be suffered by one and the benefit enjoyed by another. Any attempt to exclude anyone from the cost or benefit will almost invariably exclude everyone.
- Except in very special circumstances, individuals will not voluntarily continue to incur private cost to produce social benefit or forgo private benefit to reduce social cost.
- The effect of all these is that social cost will tend to increase and social benefits tend to decrease.



Government can solve collective action problem by encouraging, supporting, or even assuming responsibility for private actions which produce social benefits.

### 6.2.3 Social Well-Being or Welfare

In order to make the society a better one; it may be necessary to help some individuals or groups at the expense of others. For example, it may be necessary to help the poor at the expense of the rich in order to increase the overall social welfare. In the absence of government action however, the distribution of resources from the rich to the poor may be resisted by the rich. Indeed the privileged member of the society usually argued that social inequality is necessary for economic efficiency and productivity, and that any attempt to redistribute wealth is bad because it suppresses competition and creativity. Redistribution that increases social welfare will tend therefore to depend on the use of authoritative sanction or legitimate coercion by government.



Tip

*It is significant that every government that is established is expected to perform some certain duties. The primary duty of government as you know is the maintenance of peace and order.*

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## Study Session Summary



Summary

This study session has revealed that government as an agency of the state makes and enforces decision. It has monopoly of legitimate use of force. It is the ultimate source of coercion and its conduct is always seen as legitimate. According to Michael Laver, three major roles are generated for the government to perform. These include, contract enforcement, responsibility for collective action and the desire to maximize social welfare.

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## Assignment



Assignment

### TMA6.1 (tests Learning Outcome 6.1)

What do you consider as components of the state?

### SAQ 6.2 (tests Learning Outcome 6.2)

What is the end of the state?

Forward your response to your tutor at UI Mobile Class. Response should not be more than 200 words.

## Study Session 7

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### Types of Political System or Polity

#### Introduction

Having discussed the roles of government in our last study session, it is imperative to identify and explain different types of political system that exist in the world today. David Easton defines political system as that system of interactions in any society through which binding or authoritative allocations are made and implemented. This authoritative allocation may be roughly translated as policy making. This study session will examine the three basic forms of polity or political system in our contemporary world.



#### Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- *Identify* three major political systems/polities existing in the contemporary world.
- *Explain* the major features/ characteristics of these political systems.

It is possible to classify political systems or polities into three main groups namely: liberal democratic polity, socialist democratic polity, autocratic polity.

#### 7.1 Liberal Democratic Polities

These polities share the following important features:

- i. **Political Participation:** Participation in politics is widespread and open. In liberal democratic political system there is a relatively unrestricted opportunity to seek political office in competition with others. Moreover, there is usually more than one political party competing for power.
- ii. **Limited Government Intervention:** The political sphere is relatively small. Government intervention in social life is limited. In other words, limit exists as to what rulers may do or what is generally regarded as political. The government does not control or even largely influence such institutions as the mass media, trade union, religious associations and other pressure groups. In the words of Samuel Finer, the liberal democratic government operates only at the margin of social activity.
- iii. **Civil Rule:** Rule is by civilian, a large number of who are directly and periodically accountable to the adult population at large or to a substantial proportion of it.
- iv. **Respect for the Rule of Law:** There is widespread agreement and respect for the procedure for competition or rules of the political game. Both the victor and the vanquished accept that at some future date their positions may be revised without violent action.

- v. **Presence of Autonomous Pressure Groups:** Pressure groups enjoy considerable autonomy (independence) and are able to operate to influence governmental decisions. Associations, such as trade union and the press are subject to close governmental control and can exercise their tremendous influence on the policies of the government.
- vi. **Civil Liberties:** Civil liberties such as freedom of speech, association and religious belief are recognized and entrenched in the system. The role of opposition groups is also accepted and institutionally protected.
- vii. **Institutional Autonomy:** Finally, each of the traditional branches of government possesses enough institutional autonomy to act as check on the other. A system of check and balances exists in relation to operation of the structure of government and there is also a formal attempt at the separation of powers.

Liberal democratic polities are found all over the world but are particularly prominent in North America and Western Europe. The political systems of Britain, France, The United States of America, and Germany and so on are all examples of established liberal democratic polities.

## 7.2 Social Democratic Polities

Social democratic polities are more popularly known as totalitarian polities. They include China, Vietnam, Cuba, North Korea, Former Soviet Union, and most countries of Eastern Europe. The major features of socialist democratic polities include:

- i. **Adoption of Socialist Ideology:** There is an elaborate and officially recognized socialist ideology, which everyone living in the society is expected to support at least passively.
- ii. **Monopolization of Political Power:** Political power is monopolized by a single mass party, which is hierarchically organized and led by a dedicated group of party functionaries. The party is typically superior to or completely integrated with the state bureaucracy (the machinery of government in the state). The party also plays a very active role in the selection, deployment and training of functionaries of government. Opposition to the single party is not permitted and those who oppose are felt to do from ignorance.
- iii. **Promotion of Social Rights:** There is a great emphasis on social rights than civil liberty. Citizens in socialist democratic polities have the right to work, rest, leisure and maintenance at old age or cases of sickness or disability. The promotion of these socio-economic rights is regarded as the legitimate goal of government activity. However, civil liberties like freedom of speech, of the press or association are permitted only in so far as they are exercised in manner that does not threaten the stability of the socialist system.
- iv. **Limited Governmental Authority:** The scope of government authority is not limited but it is total. The government exercises substantial control over many areas of social life particularly the economy, which is centrally planned and controlled. All means of

communication are also operated by the government. Private associations and groups subject to a greater degree of political control than in liberal democracies. In other words the political arena under socialist democratic polities is very wide.

- v. Lack of Institutional Autonomy: There is no equivalent of the liberal principle of separation of powers under socialist democratic polities. In particular the judiciary is subservient (not independent) and enjoys no distinct autonomy of its own. Indeed it is regarded as another instrument of the state by which the interest of the ruling party and its leaders may be expressed.

## 7.3 Autocratic Polities

This category of political system is very heterogeneous and it seems to contain that political system that cannot be included in the liberal democratic or socialist democratic category. The varieties of the regimes that can be included in this category include the traditional or historical oligarchies in many Arab countries, the military oligarchies in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, the defunct racial supremacist regime in South Africa and the defunct colonial oligarchies in many part of the third world. However, while autocratic polities differ in their level of authoritarianism and modernization they share certain common condition. For instance they are all to be found outside Europe, and are mostly concentrated in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Most of those polities are also relatively backward economically or in per capita income when compared with the socialist and liberal democratic countries. All of these polities are either colonized or subjected to cheap diplomatic and economic penetration by the western power. The major characteristics of autocratic polities include:

- i. Absence of Coherent Ideology: There is an absence of a strongly articulated and coherent ideology. This is one major factor that distinguished autocratic from socialist democratic polities. Furthermore, government under autocratic systems unlike those in socialist democratic polities do not or perhaps cannot control all areas of public life.
- ii. Weakly Institutionalized Political Authority: Political authorities are weakly institutionalized. In other words, political institutions lack autonomy, complexity, adaptability and coherence. There is no consensus as to who or what constitute the legitimate authority in the society. Indeed a majority of the people has little attachment to or even understands political institutions in the society.
- iii. Widespread Use of Violence: The use of violence is widespread. Might is right and political repression is not uncommon. The political dominance prevalent in it is usually depends on the use of force to enforce political obedience or control civil tension arising from domestic social conflicts.
- iv. Government Total Control: Civil liberties such as freedom of expression and association are weakly supported and frequently violated by the government. The major means of communication are either owned by the government or placed under close government control or supervision.

- v. **Political Competition:** There are important limitations in open political competition. Elections are uncommon and are often manipulated in the interest of the ruling oligarchies. There is not in existence (in most cases) a wide public approval of the procedure of transforming power and a corresponding belief that no exercise of power out of this procedure is legitimate. Changes in government are usually effected through violence or revolution.

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## Study Session Summary



### Summary

In this study session, you learned that political systems or polities could be categorized into three main groups namely, Liberal Democratic, Socialist Democratic and Autocratic Polities. In liberal democratic polities participation in politics is widespread and open, the political sphere is relatively small, rule is by civilian, respect for the rule of political game and so on. Examples of these political systems include Britain, France, The United States of America, and Germany. In Social democratic polities, there is an elaborate and officially recognized socialist ideology, political power is monopolized by a single mass party, emphasis is on social rights as against civil liberty, the scope of governmental authority is total and so on. These systems are found in countries like China, Vietnam, Cuba, North Korea, and most countries of Eastern Europe. Autocratic polities are characterized with absence of a strongly articulated and coherent ideology, weakly institutionalized political authorities, widespread use of violence and limited open political competition among others. As you were told in the study session, varieties of the regimes that can be included in this category include the traditional or historical oligarchies in many Arab countries, the military oligarchies in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, the defunct racial supremacist regime in South Africa and the defunct colonial oligarchies in many part of the third world.

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## Assignment



### Assignment

#### **TMA 7.1 (tests Learning Outcome 7.1 and 7.2)**

Which of the political systems promotes genuine democratic ideals and why?

#### **TMA 7.2 (tests Learning Outcome 7.1 and 7.2)**

Write a short essay on: Contemporary Nigeria Political System.

## Study Session 8

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### Political Culture

#### Introduction

Although two political systems may look similar in most respect; culturally, a careful investigation will show that they are distinct. In other words, one of those things that distinguish one political system from the other is political culture. In this study session, you will be exposed to the meaning, elements and types of political culture.



#### Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- *demonstrate* political culture.
- *highlight* the elements of a political culture.
- *explain* different types of political culture

#### 8.1 Meaning and Key Elements of Political Culture

In generic terms, culture is the totality of the way of life of a people. Culture covers a people's ideas about the world social structure, education, economy, religion, politics, etc. It refers to "that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, custom and other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. Put differently, culture connotes the way a people have been doing their things from the past to the present – their thinking, beliefs, values, relationship, etc. All these, passed from generation to generations, have conditioned their life and have a unique style for them.

Thus, political culture is part of the larger culture of a society. It is a differentiated, part of generic culture, a sub-culture influenced by the general culture. It is important to inform you that each society imparts its norms and values (culture) to its people and the people in turn have distinct notions about how the political system is supposed to work and about what the government may do to them. These values, beliefs, and symbols are the political culture of a particular society. Political culture focuses attention, however, on that part of a culture which bears relevance to politics. You should be aware that the political culture of a nation is usually affected by its history, economy, religion and social pattern. Political culture is just one aspect of the total way of life of a given people.

There are varied conceptualizations of political culture. Robert Dahl in his own view considered political culture as a significant factor explaining different patterns of political opposition. For Gabriel Almond and Sydney Verba, a political culture is defined as:

*Political orientations, attitudes towards  
the political system and its various parts*

*and the attitudes towards the role of self  
in the system.*

They refer to it as the subjective realm which underlines and gives meaning to political activities. Lucian Pye defines a nation's political culture as "the set of attitudes, beliefs and sentiments which give order and meaning to a political process and which provides the underlying assumptions and rules that govern behaviour in the political system. It encompasses both the political ideals and the operating norms of a polity. Put differently by Sydney Verba, political culture consists of the system of empirical beliefs, expressive symbols and values which define the situation in which political action takes place. Consequently, as the attitude of the people affects their actions, so does the political culture of a nation affects the conduct of the people and the leaders in a political system.

It is defined by the Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences as "the set of attitudes, beliefs and sentiments, which give order and meaning to a political process and which provide the underlying assumption and rules that govern behaviour in the political system." On the other hand, political culture could be seen as encompassing both the political ideal and the operating norms of a polity. Another scholar sees a nation's political culture as "the set of attitudes, beliefs and sentiments which give order and meaning to a political process and which provides the underlining assumptions and rules that govern the behaviour in the political system. It is also defined as the "commonly shared goals and commonly accepted rules". Similarly, Heywood sees political culture as "pattern of orientations to political objects such as parties, government, the constitution expressed in beliefs, symbols and values."

Almond and Powell identified three attitudes of political culture namely:

- a. **Cognitive Orientation** towards the system, that is, the recognition of the political objects and beliefs.
- b. **Affective Orientation:** That is the feeling of attachment, involvement or rejection of political objects and symbols.
- c. **Evaluative Orientation:** That is the application of judgements and opinions of political objects and events.

A nation's political culture, hence, involves the political style, values, norms, emotions, beliefs and symbolic attachment that are dominant among a population.

Similarly, Dahl identified the salient elements of the culture as:

- i. Orientations of problem-solving; whether they are pragmatic or rationalistic.
- ii. Orientation to collective action: whether they are cooperative or non-cooperative.
- iii. Orientation to the political system: whether they are allegiant or alienated and
- iv. Orientations to other people: whether they are trustful or mistrustful.

By orientations we mean predispositions to political action, which are mostly determined by such factors as traditions, historical memories,



motives, emotions and symbols. The objects of political orientations 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. Also, the component parts of the political system – legislature, executive, bureaucracy, judiciary, the political leaders, such as monarchs: presidents' party leaders, public policies, etc.

It is pertinent to note that, there cannot be a uniform political culture for any nation, as there are many sub-cultures as there are variant groups with different elements or orientations. Hence, a society's political culture is determined by the levels of the differing kinds of cognitive, affective and evaluative orientations towards the political system.

According to Almond and Powell the key elements of what constitutes a nation's political culture include among other things:

- i. The degree of social trusts or mistrust which prevails in society.
- ii. The general attitude of tolerance and inter-personal cooperation permeating political relations among people.
- iii. Attachment and loyalty of citizens to the national political system.
- iv. People's attitudes towards authority – degree of public recognition of what constitute the legitimate authority.
- v. People's sense of their right, powers and obligations. Do they feel that they can influence and participate in the decision-making processes or is there wide spread apathy and political alienation in the political system?

## 8.2 Types of Political Culture

Gabriel Almond and Sydney Verba from their pioneering study of cross-national differences in political beliefs, symbols, and values came up with three types of political culture namely, parochial, subject and participant cultures. In their book, *The Civic Culture*, Almond and Verba based their classifications upon whether members of society take an active role in the political process or whether they are inactive.

### 8.2.1 Parochial Culture

This type of political culture is characteristic of small and traditional societies where there is no specialization of any kind in societal responsibilities. It is considered lower than the subject political culture. Actors here combine the functions of political, economic and religious roles all at the same time. Hence, the orientation of such individuals is parochial; members of the political community tend to be less politically conscious; and individuals here seem far away from government. They take no pride in their country's political system and expect little of it. It is important for you to know that the set of people sharing this culture have no sense of political efficacy or competence and feel powerless in the face of existing institutions. Here, political efficacy means feeling that one has at least a little political input and political competence means knowing how to accomplish something politically. I should also add that they have neither the desire nor the ability to participate in politics.



Politics, where parochial culture is pervasive, is permeated by ethnic loyalty and primordial sentiments. In addition, there is little expectation on the part of the members of the political community that significant changes in their lives can be made through politics. A parochial citizen does not expect anything from the political system; he makes no demand on it. This was common in pre-colonial Nigerian societies. In Mexico, parochial political culture manifests in the sense that many people do not care much that they are citizens of a nation. They rather identify with the immediate locality. Let me also tell you that it will be very difficult to make attempt to grow democracy in a parochial political culture without new institutions and a new sense of citizenship.

### **8.2.2 Subject Culture**

Here, there is a high level of political consciousness, but the citizens are passive in the political process. Put differently, while the people are aware of the political process, they play little or no role in it. This is because they believe they do not matter in the scheme of things. This type of political culture is described as being lower than the participant political culture. A subject orientation is essentially a passive one. Citizens are often aware of the outputs of the government welfare programmes, coercive measures or tax legislation, but they play no part in the inputs. They do not participate and believe they have no influence on the government. In this kind of political culture, the government expects obedience from the people and conformity to its directives without questioning. Citizens that share this kind of political culture often follow political news but are not proud of their country's political system and feel little emotional commitment towards it. Their sense of political efficacy or competence is lower; some feel powerless. Most of them often participate in voting during election, but without enthusiasm. Examples abound in developing countries like Iran, Togo, Swaziland and Nigeria under General Sani Abacha. Subject political culture was predominant in West Germany and Italy at that time, in which people still understand that they are citizens and pay passive attention to politics. You should note this fact that democracy has more difficulty sinking roots in a culture where people are used to thinking of themselves as obedient subjects rather than as participants.

### **8.2.3 Participant Culture**

This is a situation in which the people are not only politically very conscious but they are also very active in the input and the output processes of governance. Put in another way, they are conscious of their role in the government and participate actively in politics as gladiators, that is; politicians, kingmakers and decision makers in various capacities. This participant culture is characterized by a citizenry which is aware of both the inputs and outputs of government. The citizens believe in their ability to influence their government. They manifest attitudes of personal political competence. They are encouraged to participate actively, in the decision-making process. In Britain and United States where participant political culture is predominant, people understand that they are citizens and pay attention to politics. They take pride in their country's political system and are willing to discuss it. Citizens that share this culture often believe they can influence politics and claim they would organize a group

to protest something unfair and unjust. As you may expect, they show a high degree of political efficacy and competence. It is important to call your attention to the fact that a participant political culture provides a good environment for a democracy to thrive or flourish.



**Tip**

*It should be pointed out that no political system 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 or society. In Nigeria, for instance, there is no predominant political culture the various ethnic groups such as the Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo 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 integration into a Nigerian whole.*

In another study, Professor S.E. Finer identified another set of typologies namely: mature, developed, low and minimal political cultures. These are reflected in advanced, developed, developing and underdeveloped countries respectively. Britain, United States, Canada, and Australia are good examples of matured culture. Germany, Japan, and former USSR are examples of developed culture, while low culture is represented by Egypt, Syria. Turkey, Iran, Sudan, South Korea and minimal culture existed in Mexico, Argentina, Congo and many West African countries, where they had witnessed military coups.

Let me point out to you that the political cultures of most of the advanced democracies have recently grown more cynical, and voter turnout has declined. This is partly due to the perception of some citizens about politicians and government. They see politicians as corrupt and government institutions as ineffective. It is also important to point out that political culture affects politics as it provides the connecting link between micro-politics and macro-politics. It constitutes a structure of orientations, values and norms which help to ensure coherence in the operation of institutions and organizations.

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## Study Session Summary



**Summary**

In this study session the different meanings of political culture are given and the key elements identified. You can attempt to define political culture in view of the definitions given in this study session. Three attitudes of political culture as identified by Almond and Verba include; Cognitive, Affective and Evaluative orientations. Through their study they categorized types of political culture into three. These are parochial, participant and subject political culture. The set of people sharing parochial culture have no sense of political efficacy or competence and feel powerless in the face of existing institutions. Under subject political culture there is a high level of political consciousness, but the citizens are passive in the political process. Participant political culture is a situation in which the people are not only politically very conscious but they are

also very active in the input and the output processes of governance.

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## Assignment



### Assignment

#### **TMA 8.1 (tests Learning Outcome 8.1 and 8.2)**

50 years of Nigeria's independence: does political culture matter?

#### **TMA8.2 (tests Learning Outcome 8.3)**

Explain the three types of political culture found by Almond and Verba.

Submit your response to your tutor on POS111 course page at UI Mobile Class.

## Study Session 9

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### Political Socialisation

#### Introduction

In our previous study session, we discussed political culture – its meaning, elements and types. We established that 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. In short, political socialization serves as a means of effectively transmitting the political culture of a nation from generation to generation. In this study session, the meaning, agents and analytical framework of political socialization will be discussed.



#### Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- *Define* the term ‘political socialization’.
- *Identify* the agencies of political socialisation.
- *use* analytical framework to distinguish patterns of political socialisation

#### 9.1 The Meaning of Political Socialisation

The political behaviour of an individual often results from the socialisation process: an individual's learning from others in his environment the social patterns and values of his culture. Most attempts to define socialisation have generally agreed that it is a process in which individuals incorporate into their own attitudinal structure and behaviour patterns; the ways of their respective social groups and society. The term socialisation refers to the process of growing up into a human being, a process which necessitates the contact with other people. It describes the way by which as we grow up in our society, we are led to absorb the ideas, the beliefs, tastes, aversions and standards of the groups in which we find ourselves. To put it simply, if culture is the way of life of a people, socialization is the process of acculturation. It is referred to one's introduction into a political culture, and perhaps one's capacity to change it. Hence, political socialization can simply be defined as the process whereby political culture is transmitted from generation to another.

Several authors have attempted to define political socialisation, but there is no general consensus on its definitions. To start with, in the broadest sense political socialisation refers to the way society transmits its political culture from generation to other generation. It is a process, mediated through various agencies of society, by which an individual learns politically relevant attitudinal dispositions and behaviour patterns. These include attitude and behaviour related to political legitimacy, electoral behaviour, interest articulation, decision-making, which affects the

authoritative allocation of values in the system, feelings of personal competence to influence decisions affecting the allocation of values, and attitudes toward authority. According to Robert Levine, "political socialization is the acquisition by an individual of behavioural, dispositions relevant to political groups, political systems and political processes".

Political socialisation may serve to preserve, transmit and inculcate traditional political norms values and institutions across time. It helps to maintain continuity and stability and helps to ensure some degree of discipline among members of a political community. Political socialisation is also a means of role-training and as well as a vehicle for social and political change. Political change refers to a fundamental or far-reaching change in the distribution or exercise of authority in the polity or political system.

## **9.2 Agents of Political Socialisation**

By agents, we mean the means (bodies, groups, institutions, etc) by which one acquires the culture, norms, and values of a political system. They include:

### **9.2.1 Family**

The family is a very powerful agent of political socialization because an individual's formative years are spent here and what he learns there may have a permanent impact on him. Development of attitude towards authority, obedience, cooperation, protest, etc is learnt or acquired here. Parents, siblings are influenced at this level. You should note that our first political and politically-relevant learning occurs within the family. Most of this learning is informal, unintentional and often subconscious. Families initially provide everything necessary for a child to survive and grow such as food, shelter, affection and social interaction. Because of this, families influence basic personality development and have great influence on acquisition of non-political but politically relevant values. Children's basic personality orientation such as capacity for trust and cooperation is often developed within the family. Even politically relevant ideas and values, such as proper conduct or orientation to authority, rules, and obedience is developed within the family.

### **9.2.2 Schools**

While the family is an informal agent of political socialization, educational institutions are formal agents. This starts from the nursery, to primary to secondary schools and to university level. Schools tend to inculcate and foster certain attitudes, values, orientations; respect for authority, rights and duties to the state, etc are learnt and internalized. The school accomplishes political socialization through its curriculum, classroom routines and values and attitudes unconsciously transmitted by the teachers and schoolmates. The school's social climate, political and non-political organizations and extracurricular activities also serve to instill political values, such as participation, competitiveness, achievement, and observing the rules of the game. The school contributes significantly in shaping an individual's political behaviour. It is in the

school that the most formal political socialization takes place because one is directly taught and trained to obey the rules of the society. Through well defined methods, the school formally inculcates political beliefs into the individual. This is done by teaching subjects, like civics and government to educate students about the political system. Individuals are taught how to be good citizens and obey constituted authority. Patriotism is also emphasized.

### **9.2.3 Peer Group**

Peer group means friends, colleagues and associates. From them, we learn certain attributes including political attitudes and orientations. Hence, friends, schoolmates, age-mates, etc., shape our world view and attitude towards the political system.

### **9.2.4 Political Parties**

These tend to encourage their supporters and members to be more politically conscious and thus, active. Political parties also play the role of political enlightenment and mobilization. As parties integrate groups into society, they also teach members how to play the political game. In addition, political parties introduce citizens to candidates or elected officials and show members how to speak in public, to conduct meetings and campaigns, and to compromise. These they do to deepen the political competence of their members and building among them legitimacy for the system as a whole. You should also be aware that parties are also the training grounds for leaders.

### **9.2.5 Mass Media**

These include newspapers, magazines, radio and television stations. They are important instruments and agents of political socialization. They help in informing and enlightening the society. Consequently, they shape the opinions, values and attitudes of people to the political system.

### **9.2.6 Pressure Groups**

These are interest groups. Put differently, they are organisations with individuals that share similar views and/or opinions. As they shape the political attitude of their members, their activities also help mould the political culture of the society. They are instruments of conscientisation, mobilization and enlightenment. They include the NLC, NBA, ASUU, NANS, etc.

As an analytical or conceptual category, agencies enable us to distinguish between primary and secondary institutions of political socialisation. The primary agency is the family, while secondary agencies refer to such extra- familial institutions of socialisation such as the school, mass media, pressure groups, and so on as mentioned earlier.

## **9.3 Process, Time-Span & Change as Analytical Categories of Patterns of Political Socialisation**

Patterns of political socialisation can be distinguished further by using process, time-span and change as analytical categories.

The process of political socialisation can be either latent or manifest. Political socialisation is manifest when it is explicitly and consciously undertaken by such secondary agencies as the schools, mass media or political parties. It is latent when it is largely informal, unintentional or unconsciously and takes place through the family.

With regard to time span, we mean the specific period or phase at which political socialisation takes place in an individual's life history. In essence therefore, the time span of political socialisation may involve an individual's childhood or formative years, or his adulthood or matured years. Political socialisation that occurs at the formative years of an individual tends to occur through the family and it is latent in terms of process. On the other hand, political socialisation through the secondary agencies tends to occur during an individual's relatively mature years and tends to be manifest.

The last analytical category is change, which seeks to explain the structural consequences of political socialisation on the political system. The political change may be systemic or non-systemic. It is systemic if the process of political socialisation produces a fundamental change in the distribution or exercise of authority in the political system as alluded in this study session. It is non-systemic when the process of political socialisation produces relatively insignificant or incremental changes in the patterns of political participation and association which do not alter to distort the existing distribution of power and authority in the political system. It is indeed significant for me to point out that political socialisation is essentially a stabilizing process and hardly results into any systemic change. It is only under conditions of rapid modernization or societal crisis that the process of political socialisation becomes destabilizing or produces systemic change.

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## Study Session Summary



### Summary

In this study session, we have exposed you to the concept of political socialisation. Political socialisation is essentially concerned with the process of transmitting a society's political culture to successive members of that society. As discussed, political socialisation may serve to preserve, transmit and inculcate traditional political norms values and institutions across time as well as helps to maintain continuity and stability. Also we have attempted to distinguish the various forms or patterns of political socialisation through the use of analytical categories- Agencies (primary or secondary), Process (latent or manifest), Time-span (Formative years or mature years, and Change (systemic or non – systemic).

## Assignment



### Assignment

#### **TMA 9.1 (tests Learning Outcome 9.1)**

Differentiate between political culture and political socialisation.

#### **TMA 9.2 (tests Learning Outcome 9.2)**

Mention five agents of political socialization and discuss their role in influencing individual's future political participation.

#### **TMA 9.3 (tests Learning Outcome 9.3)**

- A. Discuss the process of political socialisation in Nigeria's contemporary political system.
- B. Distinguish between the forms or patterns of political socialisation using, agencies, process, time-span and change as conceptual or analytical categories.

Submit your response to your tutor on POS111 course page at UI Mobile Class.



# Study Session 10

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## Political Participation

### Introduction

In our last study session we discussed the meaning of political socialisation and distinguish between its various forms or patterns using agencies, process, time-span and change as conceptual or analytical categories. In the present study session you will be exposed to the definition and forms of political participation. The first part of this study session shall be devoted to the conceptualization of the term 'political participation', while the second part shall focus on the major forms and levels of political participation.



#### Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- *define* political participation in your own words.
- *discuss* levels of political participation.
- *identify* forms of political participation.

### 10.1 The Meaning of Political Participation

Political participation is one of those concepts in the social sciences that have been defined in several ways and given different meanings. Nie and Verba have defined political participation as consisting of those level activities by private citizens which are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of government personnel and/or the action they take. It involves those voluntary activities by which members of society share in the selection of rulers and directly or indirectly in the formation and implementation of public policy. Simply put, it is involvement of private citizens in political activities and effective political socialization affects in positive terms the future political participation.

By implication, political participation involves from the various interpretations given to it the following:

1. It is concerned with influencing the composition and conduct, or personnel and policies, of government.
2. It is not limited to voting at elections but includes many other ways in which citizens try to influence government decisions.
3. Since political participation is often defined to include the activities of private citizens only, government and party officials are described as objects not source of political participation.
4. Illegal and often violent forms of participation such as riots and assassinations are treated as abnormal as only legal forms of participation are recognized.
5. Participation is often regarded as a desirable or positive process. It has been seen as civic duty, as a sign of political health, as the

best method of ensuring that one's private interests are not neglected and as requisite in a democracy.

6. Finally, political participation is a concrete activity of behaviour, and not simply a psychological orientation or disposition.

## **10.2 Forms and Levels of Political Participation**

You should be aware that political participation can take a wide variety of forms and can occur at various levels. Also, getting involved in politics entails costs in time, energy and resources. By implication, the amount of resources that individuals are able and willing to sacrifice is likely to determine the form or level of their participation. Lester Malbraith in his book '*Political Participation*' published in 1965 has made a very useful classification of levels of political participation. He distinguishes between political participation at the Spectator-level, the Transition level and the Gladiatorial level. Our discussion will mainly be on the corresponding activities of each of these levels of participation and as well include the cost in terms of time, energy, material resources involved; percentage of the participants at each level and the benefits derived.

### **10.2.1 Spectator-Level of Participation**

These are the activities in which people involve themselves at the spectator level of participation:

- (a) Voting at election;
- (b) Initiating a public discussion;
- (c) attempting to influence another into voting in a certain way; and
- (d) wearing a political party badge or displaying party stickers.

It is quite obvious that the activities listed above entail relatively little costs in time, energy and resources. Market women, artisans and students of higher learning form the bulk of participants at this level in Nigeria, for instance. Consequently, many people are able to participate at this level than at either of the other two levels. It is important to note that some citizens do not participate in politics even at the level of spectator. These are the apathetics who do not want to involve themselves in politics at all, and are almost totally unconscious of the political world around them.

### **10.2.1 Transitional-Level of participation**

Activities at the transitional level include:

- (a) Attending a political meeting or rally, (b) making some monetary contribution to a campaign or political course and (c) contacting a public official or political leader. Activities at this level require more costs in time and financial resources than those at the spectator level. For example, only 7 and 9% of United States citizens participate at this level. Activities at this level are referred to as transitional because of the general tendency for participants at the level either to descend to spectator level or ascend to gladiatorial activities.

**The Gladiatorial-Level of participation**

With regard to gladiatorial level of participation, activities involved include the followings:

- (a) Holding a public or party office;
- (b) being a candidate for office;
- (c) soliciting or appealing for party funds;
- (d) attending a caucus or strategy meeting; and
- (e) contributing time or other resources in a campaign.

At this level activities are not only the most expensive, but also the most effective form of political participation. Not surprisingly, only about 1 - 3% of the population is usually able to participate in politics at the gladiatorial level. On this, a study conducted by Nie and Verba in 1972 revealed six forms of participation that are characteristics of six different kinds of citizens. According to this study, the six different kinds of citizens in a given country are:

- a. The inactives
- b. The voting specialists
- c. The campaigners
- d. The communalists
- e. The parochialists
- f. The complete activists

Different factors influence the levels and forms of political participation and these factors vary across political system. Generally, these factors can be categorized as economic, social, political and psychological.

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## Study Session Summary



### Summary

In this study session we have been able to define political participation. It is agreed by most political scientists with behavioural orientation that political participation involves those activities which are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of rulers and the formulation of public policy. While political participation is not limited to voting during election, illegal and often violent forms of participation like assassination and riots are considered as abnormal ways of participation. You were told that not all people get themselves involved in politics, or participate to the same degree. This is due to the fact that participation involves considerable costs in terms of time, energy and resources, and it is not all people are willing or able to make the necessary sacrifices. Malbraith, therefore classified participants into three different levels. These are Participants at the spectator level, transitional level and gladiatorial level. The conclusion here is that with the costs of participation in political activities increasing, the number of participants decreasing at each successive level.

# Assignment



## Assignment

### **TMA 10.1 (tests Learning Outcome 10.1 and 10.2)**

Write a short essay on any of the following topics:

- A. Overview of Political Participation in African States: 2005 to date.
- B. Political Participation in Nigeria: Decreasing or Increasing?

### **TMA 10.2 (tests Learning Outcome 10.3)**

Discuss five major characteristics of political participation.

Submit your response to your tutor on POS111 course page at UI Mobile Class.

## Study Session 11

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### The Institutions of Politics: State Instrumentalities

#### Introduction

Although, the study of politics is not all about institutions, institutions are critical in the understanding of modern governments and politics. In this study session, state apparatuses or instrumentalities will be discussed.



#### Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- *define* state apparatuses. (SAQ 11.1)
- *explain* the functions of each apparatus of the State. (SAQ 11.2)

#### 11.1 State Instrumentalities

You were told in one of our previous study sessions (Study session 1.1.1) that the state is not a thing; it is an abstract entity. More importantly, we are about to discuss in this study session the concrete instruments through which the state expresses itself in the real world. The instruments through which the state "does its thing" in the political system is referred to as state apparatuses. The institutions of the state collectively wield state power and it is through their individual operations that individual citizens and groups in the society experience the state and state power. These instrumentalities give body, reality or concreteness to the legal abstraction that is popularly known as the State. Thus, when it is said that the State provided health facilities, formulated foreign policies and increased taxes, it is through these instrumentalities that it does whatever it does. We prefer to use the term 'instrumentality' or 'institution' here because this seems to capture the level of concreteness that we shall find desirable in this discussion. Nevertheless, other scholars like Raphael Miliband preferred such other terms as "elements of the state system" and Louis Althusser called it "state apparatus".

The political organization we call the State has developed some institutions for governing its society. These institutions consist largely of the following: the government, the constitution, the central administrative agency and parastatals, the military and paramilitary institutions, the judiciary, sub-central administrative agencies, and the representative assemblies. State power inheres in the simultaneous control and operation of these institutions, and it is through them that the citizen experiences the reality of state power. In short, the State apparatus contains the Government, the Administration, the Army, the Police, the Courts, the Prisons, etc.

Let us attempt to give brief explanation on some of the instrumentalities. The first on the list is government. Our next study sessions will be devoted to the discussion of constitution and political parties as other institutions of politics.

### 11.1.1 Government

This is an agent of the state, it is not the state. In fact it is the most important agent of the state. It can be defined as the machinery for deciding and implementing the will or the end of the state. It is often seen as a set of activities, as a set of persons and as a set of institutions. Government acts and speaks on behalf of the state, and is formally vested with state power. It takes responsibility for whatever is done in the name of the state. It has also been observed that a government is a group of people who have the ultimate authority to represent and act on behalf of the state. It is important for you to note that unlike its principal, the state, which is permanent, the government comes and goes – it is a temporary entity. Government is made of three branches and it is indeed the sum total of the legislative, executive and judicial bodies in all political systems. It is best represented by the political executive, namely, the corps of elite personnel who man the high institutions of the state. This will include presidents, prime ministers, vice presidents, governors of the states, ministers or members of the federal executive council, leadership of the legislatures, heads of the numerous parastatals, and the judiciary.

### 11.1.2 Central Administrative Institutions.

They are administrative systems, especially in a government at the centre or at the national level, which divides work into specific categories carried out by special departments of non-elected officials. These agencies assist to carry the laws into effect, that is, to execute or carry out the laws with the assistance of a police force, a military force and the civil service. In Nigeria, for instance, the central administrative bureaucracy includes the federal ministries and their associated parastatals. This is the administrative backbone of governance. It assists in the formulation and, primarily, implementation or execution of the policies of the government of the day. It is important to point out that the influence of the central administrative institution goes beyond just the formulation and implementation of policies. The institution plays the advisory role to the political executive and, through its control of information which informs much of the decisions of government; it plays an important role in determining policy. It is therefore not just an administrative tool for execution. Let me tell you that in most countries of the world, bureaucrats and public servants working in these administrative institutions wield tremendous political power.

### 11.1.3 Security Services

These are also part of the apparatuses of the State. They are often referred to as the *coercive institutions of the State*. The security services function as agents for the management of violence on behalf of the State. They consist of, for instance, in Nigeria the military and police forces, and various para-military institutions such as the State Security Service (SSS), the Directorate of Military Intelligence (DMI), the Customs and Immigration Services, the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) etc. Again, like the central administrative institution, these coercive agencies owe their allegiance to the government of the day. These agencies serve the state by

serving the government of the day. The Marxists call them the "repressive apparatus" of the state, while liberal theorists refer to them as an agency for the "management of violence" or "security services". Though loyal to the government of the day, they are supposed to be non-political; but it is their increasing interest in politics that has made these agencies especially the military dangerous to constitutional governance in some political systems, especially in the so-called developing societies.

#### **11.1.4 The Judiciary**

This is another apparatus of the state. It is an institution meant for the administration of justice. It consists mainly of the law courts, is responsible for interpreting and enforcing the law. Suffice to say that the judicial power is the power to interpret and apply the law to disputes and conflicts that arise between the state and the individual and disputes and conflicts that arise between individuals. Unlike the central administrative institutions and the security services which owe loyalty to the political executive, the judiciary is constitutionally empowered to operate independently of the political executive or the government of the day. It is for this reason that people demand for the independence of the judiciary, especially in democratic governments. The judiciary is the apparatus of the state which helps to defend the citizen against the operations; I mean the excesses of the government or political executive. It is also common to hear people referring to the judiciary as the last hope of the common man. Let me inform you that how much of a hope it affords the common man would depend on how much independence it enjoys from the government.

#### **11.1.5 Sub-central Administrative Agencies.**

Down the hierarchy of government at the national or federal level are other sets or tiers of administrative units that basically perform the function of policy formulation and implementation. In the Nigerian context, these will consist of the state government ministries and parastatals, and local government institutions. These are agencies operating at the sub-national levels of government. The character of these institutions may well depend on whether the system in which they function is a federal or unitary one. In most unitary states, they exist in the form of simple local administrative units responsible for implementing national policies at the local level being controlled by appointed or selected officials. In federal systems, there is that tendency for them to enjoy considerable political autonomy. It is significant to point out that in federal systems the sub-central administrative agencies operate not only as instruments representing the national government at the local level, they also represent the interests of the people at the grassroots or local level at the centre.

#### **11.1.6 Legislature**

Another important instrumentality of government is the legislature, which is also known as **the Representative Assembly**. Representative assemblies are responsible for law-making and for overseeing the operations of the government. They perform critical roles in a democracy. These roles include and not limited to oversight, law/policymaking and

representational role. In Nigeria, they consist of the National Assembly, the State Houses of Assembly and the Local Government Councils. The members are elected and, in discharging their constitutional functions, are supposed to represent the interests of their constituencies. The relationship between the legislature and the executive is one of both cooperation and conflict. It usually takes the form of cooperation mainly when the political party that controls the executive is the dominant party in the legislature. A situation of conflict defines the relationship when the ruling party is not the dominant party in the given assembly. The relationship between the executive and the legislature is often affected by the character of the regime. In parliamentary systems, in which the legislature is fused with the executive, the control which the executive has over the legislature predisposes the latter more into cooperation than conflict. In fact parliamentary systems are prone to promoting executive dominance of the legislature, except in multi-party systems when party fragmentation in the legislature tends to destabilize the executive branch. It is well known that through cabinet control of the legislature, parliamentary system of government guarantees executive supremacy. In presidential systems, the emphasis on separation of powers tends to promote independence of the legislature, as well as tends to increase the probability of conflict between the legislature and the executives. Thus, presidential systems operate to encourage legislative supremacy.



### Activity

*Allow 20 minutes*

Get a copy of any Nigerian Constitution and identify those institutions of the State provided for in the constitution.

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## Study Session Summary



### Summary

In this Study session highlight and discuss State instrumentalities or apparatuses, which are the instruments through which the state "does its thing" in the political system. These instrumentalities consist largely of the following: the government, the central administrative agency and parastatals, the military and paramilitary institutions, the judiciary, sub-central administrative agencies, and the representative assemblies.



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## Assessment



### Assessment

#### **SAQ 11.1 (tests Learning Outcome 11.1)**

What do you consider as State instrumentalities?

#### **SAQ 11.2 (tests Learning Outcome 11.2)**

Discuss any two state instrumentalities you know.

## Study Session 12

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# The Institutions for Political Interactions: Political Party and Pressure Groups

## Introduction

In the last study session, we highlighted and discussed some of the major instrumentalities of the State. I want you to know that the understanding of the operation and functions of these formal institutions of the State is not complete without adequate knowledge of the nature of the informal institutions of politics. The operations of the latter affect the functioning of the former. In this study session, we shall make attempt to define political parties and pressure groups as institutions of political interaction. Also the major features, types and functions of these institutions shall be outlined in the study session.

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:



### Learning Outcomes

- *define* political parties and pressure groups as institutions for political interactions.
- *explain* the major features of political party and pressure groups.
- *Outline* functions of these institutions as instruments for political interactions.
- *differentiate* between political party and pressure groups.

## 12.1 Political Parties

Many scholars have attempted to define political parties as institutions of political interaction. Not unlike other concepts in political science, there is no consensus on the meaning of political parties. Generally speaking, a political party is an organised group of like-minded persons seeking to take control of government through constitutional means. Let us consider some of the definitions given by scholars.

### Definitions

According to Edmund Burke, a political party is a body of men united for promoting by their joint endeavour the national interest, upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed”. Tekena Tamuno sees it as “an organist group that either strives for self-government or contest election on a competitive basis in order to influence and control the personnel and policy of government”. Richard Rose conceives political party as “an organization (of voluntary membership with ease of entry/acceptance and exit/withdrawal) concerned with the expression of popular preferences and contesting control of chief policy making offices of government”.

### 12.1.1 Features of a Political Party

Political parties have the following characteristics:

- i. **Adoption of a Manifesto:** Political parties usually have a manifesto, which is a document listing their intentions, aspirations and objectives.
- ii. **Existence of manifest and permanent organization at the national and local levels.** They usually organize membership to reach all nooks and crannies of the country by establishing their secretariats at the national and sub national levels.
- iii. **Self-conscious determination to capture power and hold power of decision-making alone or in coalition:** The main objectives of political parties are to contest elections, win and form government through constitutional means.
- iv. **Capacity to strive for political education to elicit popular support:** Political parties usually attempt to show that they are loyal to the electorate, and would serve their interest if voted into power. Thus, they seek for the support of the electorate through political enlightenment.
- v. **Alignment to a political ideology;** political parties usually tend to align with a major socio-economic cum political ideology, such as socialism, capitalism, liberalism, conservatism, which guides their members' actions, especially when they come to power.
- vi. **Political symbols for identification:** for easy identification by their supporters, political parties usually have party logos, badges, signs and anthems as political symbols.

### 12.1.2 Functions of a Political Party

Political parties perform the following functions:

- i. **Representation** – ability to articulate the views of the electorate and capture it in campaign platforms. Political parties help to bring together and represent differing interests and opinions of a large number of people.
- ii. **Elite Formation and Recruitment:** It is through the parties that leaders are selected by the people through election. Parties also provide training ground for politicians by equipping them with skills, knowledge and experience.
- iii. **Goal Formation:** Party platforms are used to set collective goal that captures the interest of the various groups that make up the electorate.
- iv. **Interest Articulation and Aggregation:** Parties provides platform for the various groups in society to express their interest, as well as aggregate (combine) the various interests of groups within society.
- v. **Socialization and Mobilization:** In their bid to elicit popular support, parties engage in political education and socialization of the people as issues they bring up sets political agenda that make profound impression on the citizen, thus shaping their political culture. They help to disseminate information on government policies to the people, especially when they are in power. Through effective mobilization, political parties help to arouse the interest of the electorate towards participation in political activities such as elections.

- vi. **Organization of Government:** Parties makes it easy to constitute a government, they give government stability, fosters cooperation among the arms of government and help to create an environment of competition for political positions.
- vii. **Forum for National Unity and Integration:** Political parties serve as a forum for national unity and integration by bringing together people from different cultural, ethnic, religious and professional groups.
- viii. **Policy Formulation:** It is important for you to note that the manifestoes of political parties serve as a ready source from which government policies can be formulated.
- ix. **Checking Government Excesses:** Members of political parties outside the government usually serve as the opposition and often act as checks of government excesses.

It is important to point out that there are different types of political parties. They include Mass parties, Elite parties, Personality parties and Religious parties among others. The mass parties are those whose membership is drawn from all segments of society, for example, People's Party, Labour Party etc. An elite party is also referred to as cadre party, often comprises only the wealthy, well educated, professional and the influential. A party is described as personality party if the guiding spirit and leadership are motivated by a charismatic man or woman. Religious parties are mainly formed by members of a particular religion.

## 12.2 Party System

This is a network of relationship through which parties interact and influence the political process. Also, party system denotes the pattern of political parties in a particular country. This may vary according to the number of political parties in the country. Generally speaking, there are three types of party system, namely, one party system, two-party system and multi or multiple party systems. Each category has its advantages and disadvantages. Let us examine these party systems one after the other.

### 12.2.1 One Party System

This is where only a single party is allowed to exist in a country often through legislation. Advocates of single party contend that it promotes unity by bringing together all the varying tendencies under one umbrella for mutual understanding. Therefore, in single party system, multiple candidates contest election in constituencies. Single party system is cheap and inexpensive to operate. However, a single party system can lead to regimentation of opinion. It is a system that provides no choice of alternative political platform. Most times, single party system leads to totalitarian regime or dictatorship.

### 12.2.2 Two Party System

These are found in political systems (countries) where two main or dominant parties exist i.e. USA, Britain (before Tony Blair was elected as the prime-minister), and Nigeria (under the Third republic). Though two main political parties exist, other political parties are not denied participation in the political process. However, those parties remain

insignificant to make any meaningful impact in the political landscape of those countries (i.e. Britain – Liberal and Socialist parties). In two party system, independent candidates are allowed to participate after they satisfied a stipulated criteria set by the electoral law. Two party system help to bring about stability in the polity by stirring and bringing about vibrant opposition and alternative to the ruling party. However, two party system can make politics a bipolar affair (ruling – opposition) which can become dangerous at times. It can as well degenerate into a destructive opposition politics when the opposition group stays out of power over a long period of time.

### 12.2.3 Multi-Party System

Multi- party system exist in political systems where more than two political parties are allowed to exist i.e. France, India, Nigeria, South Africa, Ethiopia etc., It caters for plurality of interest more so in a heterogeneous polity. It encourages diversity of opinion and constructive opposition. It allows for freedom of association and self expression. Multi party system gives greater opportunity for the electorate to identify with a political party that reflects their views accurately. Nevertheless, it is prone to instability and ineffective (it is very difficult for one party to win). It makes parliamentary work to drag because of difficulty to reach compromise, thus it can weaken a government. Again a multiple party system weakens the fused executive of the parliamentary system and increases the chances of governmental instability of the parliamentary regime.

## 12.3 Pressure Groups

These are groups of organized sections of the community promoting their own (parochial) interest by regularly putting pressures on the authorities (government) or public opinion. This is usually with the objective of securing favourable changes and preventing detrimental policies or decisions of government.

Pressure groups are association of individuals united by a common interest, belief, activity, purpose that seek to achieve its objectives, further its interest and enhance its status. Existence of pressure group is based on the gradual enthronement of individualism and atmosphere of freedom. This environment of freedom enabled individuals to band into groups in furtherance of such interests. Pressure groups do not seek power, but they influence government to make favourable policies and decisions.

### 12.3.1 Types of Pressure Groups

**Communal Groups:** These are pressure groups where membership is based on birth rather than recruitment. It is rather embedded in the social fabric. Examples are OhanezeNdi-Igbo, ArewaPeoples Congress, Odua Peoples Congress, Afenifere, and Movement for the Survival of Ogoni Peoples (MOSOP) etc.

**InstitutionalGroups:** These are groups that are part of the machinery of government. Their influence is exerted through the machinery of government. They differ from the others because they do not enjoy

autonomy or independence. Examples include bureaucracies, military etc.

**Associational Groups:** Consist of individuals banded together to pursue shared but narrow goals. This type is characterized by voluntary action and existence of common interest. Examples are Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), Nigeria Medical Association (NMA), Nigeria Union of Teachers (NUT), NACCIMA etc.

**Anoemic Groups:** Consist of pressure groups that emerge spontaneously in response to issues and usually extinct after the issue became resolved. Examples are National Actualization of Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) etc

### **12.3.2 Channels of Exerting Influence**

Pressure groups exert their influence through the following institutions and mediums:

- i. The Bureaucracy
- ii. The Legislature
- iii. The Courts
- iv. Political Parties
- v. The Mass Media

## **12.4 Pressure Groups and Political Parties Compared**

- i. Pressure groups seek influence from outside, whereas political parties seek to capture power.
- ii. Pressure groups have narrow issues that are particular to their members, whereas political parties' articulate broader interest in order to win election.
- iii. Political parties sponsor candidate for election but pressure groups use other means like aligning with a political party (i.e. Labour Party – TUC in Britain)
- iv. While political parties strive to mobilize a majority of the voters to gain power, pressure group serves to give special representation to minorities.
- v. They both contribute to political education but differ in approach.

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## Study Session Summary



### Summary

In this study session we have tried to define political parties and pressure groups as institutions for political interactions. Their functions and types were also discussed. A political party is an organised group of like-minded persons seeking to take control of government through constitutional means, while pressure groups are groups of organized sections of the community promoting their own (parochial) interest by regularly putting pressures on the authorities (government) or public opinion. Political parties and pressure groups are significant in terms of the roles they play, particularly in a democracy. There are three types of party system, namely, one party, two party and multi party systems. Types of pressure groups include anoemic, communal institutional and associational groups. One of the significant differences between political parties and pressure groups is that the latter seek influence from outside, whereas the former seek to capture power.

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## Assessment



### Assessment

**SAQ 12.1** (tests Learning Outcome 12.1)

How would you define political party and mention any two attributes of a political party.

**SAQ 12.2** (tests Learning Outcome 12.2)

Attempt a definition of pressure group and identify three ways pressure group influence government decisions.

## Study Session 13

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### Constitution and Constitutionalism

#### Introduction

This study session will expose you to constitution as another example of institution of politics. In essence therefore, this study session will not only define constitution; it will show the connection between it and the concept of constitutionalism. It will also highlight the various sources and types of constitutions.

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:



#### Learning Outcomes

- *highlight* the components of constitution.
- *identify* the sources, types, morphology and functions of constitution.
- *explain* the term constitutionalism.

#### 13.1 What is a constitution?

In common usage, a constitution may be defined as a collection of norms or standards according to which a country is governed. Simply put, it is a written document outlining the structure of political system. Political scientists broadly defined 'constitution' as the rules and customs, either written or unwritten, legally established or extralegal, by which a government conduct its affairs. Most constitutions contain statements intended to define the relations between rulers and ruled, the basic institutional framework of government, the rights and duties of citizens, and many important procedures to be followed in connection with those matters. In a democratic setting, the constitution is expected to define the conditions for the exercise of legitimate power; who shall exercise political power, how they shall exercise their powers and the limits of these powers. Even in chaotic, corrupt or dictatorial systems, though constitutions may not count for much, there exist some forms of rules and regulations governing those systems. Invariably, almost all political systems or polities have constitutions since they operate according to some set of rules.

According to Kenneth C. Wheare, a constitution is defined as a collection or aggregation of norms, mores, conventions, customs and standards on which a country is governed. It is considered superior to the rules of ordinary law. It is the grand norms, supreme and fundamental laws of the land. It is the pulse of the nation, sustaining loyalty as well as unifying the society. Constitution is an experiment as all life is also an experiment, providing frame or platform for dissenting voices of people with various political opinions. Like money in the bank, is useful only due to its provision of satisfaction and utility. Constitutional authority is constituted under the current Nigerian Federal Constitution of 1999. It is well



established that the purpose and functions of the state is the establishment of law and order, protection and provision of welfare and participation in the state system. To fulfil this purpose, most states adopt one form of constitution or the other.

It is important to note that a few countries like Britain and Israel have no single written document but still have constitutions. In other words, a constitution may be a vague body of unwritten laws, taking the form of customs, statutes, precedents, usages, understandings, or conventions; which courts may not recognise as laws: but which are not less effective in regulating the government, as in Britain. On the other hand, a constitution may be a detailed written document, as in the. United States, Nigeria and most modern States; in these States, the constitution is usually an elaborate document in which the organization of the government, its powers and its relations to individuals are all carefully set down. It is inconceivable that any state could exist without a written or unwritten constitution, defining the relationship between governors and the governed. By their very nature, constitutions everywhere are regarded as embodying the fundamentals of the political system. These fundamentals have the force of law, which is enforceable by the courts.

## 13.2 Genesis of Constitutions

Credit must be given to the founding fathers of the United States of America for given to the world the longest surviving written constitution in the world. American constitution was adopted in 1787; this is followed by Poland 1791, France 1791, Sweden 1809, Venezuela 1811, Ecuador 1812, Spain 1812, Norway 1814 which is the second largest surviving constitution in the world, Mexico 1824, Argentina 1826, and Liberia 1847.

## 13.3 Sources of Constitutions

There are many sources of constitutions.

- i. **Organic Laws:** These are laws that occur or develop gradually and naturally without being forced or contrived. For examples special legislative rules like Magna Carta 1215, providing trial by jury and due process of law. Habeas Corpus of 1679 confirming rights of citizens to protection against imprisonment. Act of settlement of 1710 which established the supremacy of the Legislature and independence of judges, and the Acts or Parliament 1911 and 1949, which limited the powers of the Lords
- ii. **Judicial Decisions:** The ambiguous languages of law necessitate the clarifications, expansion or contraction for laymen. The courts deal with controversies that may arise over interpretation of law and her judicial decisions are usually regarded as authoritative; that is clothed with legitimacy.
- iii. **Philosophical Ideas** The ideas of great philosophers have also provided important principles that have been incorporated in most constitutions. Such principles as limited government, consent of the governed and religious tolerance, stem from the writings of the English philosopher, John Locke. The French philosopher Montesquieu wrote convincingly about limited

government, separation of powers and checks and balances, which today are included in most constitutions. of political philosophers like John Locke, Montesquieu, Thomas Hobbes, Niccolo Machiavelli and others serve as sources of some constitutional provisions.

- iv. **Constitutional Conventions and Customs:** They are the fundamental rules of government clearly understood; obeyed and accepted. For instance, it is conventional for a cabinet which clearly cannot command the confidence of a parliament to resign. They are the fundamental rules of government that are not expressed in the formal and official manner of written constitutions, organic laws and judicial decisions. They are obeyed in public life as if they were laws because they are necessary for efficient government.
  - v. **Experience:** The unique experience of a people is usually a fountain of wisdom on which constitutions are framed as well amended e.g. 1979 constitution of Nigeria which outlawed military take over of Government as a de facto Government.
  - vi. **International Laws and Practices:** Laws and treaties entered into at such international fora as the United Nations, African Union, and the European Union among others serve as materials for constitution making in some countries.
- **ITQ** A written constitution usually does not make provision for
    - A. customs and conventions.
    - B. civil service regulations.
    - C. historical documents.
    - D. judicial precedent.

#### **Feedback on ITQs answers**

- The correct answer is B.
- Options A, C & D are the major sources of constitution while option B cannot be said to be a source of constitution.

## **13.4 Kinds of Constitutions**

The two kinds of constitutions have been discussed earlier, these are:

- i. Written constitutions e.g. USA, Nigeria
- ii. Unwritten constitutions e.g. Britain, Israel, Belgium etc.

## **13.5 Types of Constitutions**

- i. **Flexible:** Flexible constitutions are easy to change. For instance, in Britain, Italy, New Zealand that have constitutions that are flexible, there is provision for easy amendment procedures in respect of change or amendments.
- ii. **Unflexible/Rigid:** difficult process involved in amending constitutional provisions of a rigid constitution. USA, Australia and Switzerland are good examples.

## 13.6 Variants of Constitution

- i. Unitary constitutions provide single, central government that is supreme. Britain, Belgium, France, Sweden, and Italy to mention just a few are examples of countries with unitary constitutions.
  - ii. Federal constitutions divide powers among the federating units for unity and supremacy. Federal constitutions are usually written and rigid and are often adopted by heterogeneous societies like USA, Nigeria, and Switzerland etc.
- **ITQ** A written constitution usually does not make provision for \_\_\_\_\_.
- A. the party system
  - B. the powers and limitations of government
  - C. the change of government through coup d'état
  - D. the fundamental rights of the citizens

### Feedback on ITQs answers

- The correct answer is C.
- Options A, B & D are items that can be found in a written constitution, option C which entails a forceful and most times bloody means of power transition cannot be found in a written constitution.

## 13.7 The Morphology of Constitution

A typical constitution usually provides for the following:

- i. **A Preamble:** Statements of values and ideals stating the authority establishing a constitution.
- ii. **Structure of the Government:** makes provision for the organs and agencies of government.
- iii. **Distribution of power:** Governmental powers are divided among organs of government - Legislature, Judiciary and Executive. In Nigeria, the 1999 makes provisions for the exclusive list to the Federal, Concurrent list to the Federal and states and residual list for local governments.
- iv. **Rights of Individuals:** Judiciable rights, non-judiciable rights obligation of the government, collective rights, privileges and fundamental objectives and directives of state policy are usually included in the

## 13.8 Functions of a Constitution

It is also important to highlight major functions of a constitution. They include the following;

- 1. A constitution defines the powers of the government.
- 2. It also defines the basic organs of government
- 3. Probably more important than the first two, a constitution sets limits on the use of the powers of government

## 13.9 Constitutionalism

Constitutionalism is government that respects the constitution or government based on rules of law or due process for maintaining of law and order. Constitutionalism deals with the rule of law. What this means is that a government which a constitution sets up should conduct itself in accordance with the rules of law – that is according to agreed procedures. Any government set up by a constitution has limits to its powers. Constitutionalism says that not only should these limits be recognized and accepted by government, the fundamental human rights of the citizens should also be recognized and guaranteed. Dictatorship and constitutionalism do not go hand in hand.

From what I have said earlier, constitutionalism is a term with definite implications. As a concept it means essentially limited government, a system of restraints on both rulers and ruled. It is mostly bound up with the notion of the rule of Law. By implication the concept of constitutionalism embraces the idea that a government should not be permitted to do whatever its officials please but should conduct itself according to equitable and agreed procedures. The purpose of this restriction on its freedom of action, you need to know is to safeguard fundamental area of freedom for his citizens. Constitutionalism is expected to protect human rights such as free speech, free association, free press, due process of law.

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## Study Session Summary



### Summary

In this Study session you learned that constitutions are part of formal institutions of politics. A country's constitution is the body of basic law, principles, conventions, rules and regulations which govern the country. You also learnt that there are different kinds, types, and variants of constitution. Constitutionalism refers to government that respects the constitution or a government based on the rule of law or due process. Constitution, irrespective of types or forms are sourced from organic laws, customs and conventions, judicial precedents/ decisions, past experience, intellectual works of philosophers to mention just a few.

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## Assessment



### Assessment

#### **SAQ 13.1 (tests Learning Outcome 13.1)**

Attempt a definition of constitution.

#### **SAQ 13.2 (tests Learning Outcome 13.2)**

Identify three sources of a constitution

#### **SAQ 13.3 (tests Learning Outcome 13.3)**

Define constitutionalism.



## Revision Session

### Introduction

This last study session is devoted for revision. So far, the course study sessions have focused on the basic concepts, approaches and other important aspects of political science as a discipline involved in the systematic study of politics.

At the end of this study session, you should be able to

- *write* a concise and informative essay on any of the topics discussed in preceding study sessions.



Reflection

What will you ascribe as the components of politics and political science? Have I ever being involved in politics? If yes, how?

### Summary

At the beginning of this course you were introduced to the nature and scope of political science. It was established in the study session that politics has no single or universally acceptable definitions. Nevertheless, notable scholars including Aristotle, David Easton, Harold Laswell, Jeremy Bentham have attempted to define politics in one way or other. As you were told in the study session it is agreed by most political scientists that politics has something to do with power, influence and authority, which are the central organizing concepts of the study of politics (later discussed extensively in study session six). Political Science as an academic discipline is the systematic and scientific study of politics. According to Billy Dudley, it entails consciousness formation, social mobilization, contestation, institutional struggle and transcendence. The scope of the discipline extends to cover but not limited to the study of political parties, pressure groups, elections, international relations, public institutions, comparative politics and public administration.

In study session two, it was mentioned that many scholars have expressed their views about politics. Stephen Giliat as one of the scholars identified two major traditions in the understanding of politics. The arguments put up under each tradition were highlighted and discussed. One tradition views politics as a positive means of conflict management, while the other one sees it as concerned with the production and promotion of conflicts. The first view was called the consensus or management view of politics while the second was described as the conflict view of politics.

In the third study session you were told that there are three basic levels at which politics takes place. These are; state level politics, intra – state and inter-state or international politics. The state level of politics considered to be the only level of politics includes the activities of the national or federal government, the sub-national or regional government and those of

local governments. Intra state politics refers to those forms of political behaviour or conduct which take place within associations or social groups that form part of the state. The inter-state or international politics is activities involving political actors and other related ones, carried across state boundaries.

The fourth study session was used to trace the origin of political science as an academic discipline. As a separate field for the study and analysis of politics, political science is a relatively late arrival within the social sciences. As demonstrated in the study session, Plato, Xenophon, and Aristotle, who is considered to be the founding father of political science among other scholars contributed immensely through their works to the development of western politics. You were informed that in the post Second world War era, the major growth area in the study of politics has been the area designated political behaviour with the emergence of behavioural approach. It was mentioned in the study session that in spite of the pessimism about a science of politics you were informed that contemporary political science has progressed by adopting a variety of methods and theoretical approaches to understanding politics and methodological pluralism is a defining feature of contemporary political science. Political scientists in their quest to study political phenomena have used the scientific method to create an intellectual discipline involving quantitative research methods.

It was pointed out in study session five that politics can be studied using four different approaches. These are: Normative Philosophical approach focusing on philosophical reflections on universal political values that were regarded as essential to the just state and the good state; The Descriptive Institutional approach that focuses on the formal structures and agencies of government; the behavioural approach that emphasizes the scientific study of political behaviour of individuals and group of individuals; and the Post- Behavioural approach that is eclectic in nature and is engaged to promote a political science that would not be as scientific or precise as possible, philosophical normative, politically relevant but be also socially responsible. The weakness(es) and strength(s) of these approaches were pointed out.

The seventh study session attempted to define power, influence, authority and legitimacy as central concepts in political analysis. Although people erroneously make use of them interchangeably, they connote different meaning. The differences between them were clearly shown in the study session with lucid examples

Study session eight was devoted to the discussion of government as an agency of the state. Its basic components and roles were highlighted and discussed. You were told that government makes and enforces decision and has monopoly of legitimate use of force. It is the ultimate source of coercion and its conduct is always seen as legitimate. According to Michael Laver, three major roles are generated for the government to perform. These include, contract enforcement, responsibility for collective action and the desire to maximize social welfare.

In study session nine, features and examples of political systems or polities formed the basis of our discussion. These polities as you were told can be categorized into three main groups namely, Liberal

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Democratic, Socialist Democratic and Autocratic Polities. Examples of liberal democratic political systems include Britain, France, The United States of America, and Germany. Social democratic polities are found in countries like China, Vietnam, Cuba, North Korea, and most countries of Eastern Europe. Autocratic polities have several varieties including the traditional or historical oligarchies in many Arab countries, the military oligarchies in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, the defunct racial supremacist regime in South Africa and the defunct colonial oligarchies in many part of the third world.

Study session ten focused on the different meanings of political culture, its key elements and types. Political culture, however it is defined focuses attention on that part of a culture which bears relevance to politics. Three attitudes of political culture as identified by Almond and Verba include; Cognitive, Affective and Evaluative orientations. Through their study they categorized types of political culture into three. These are parochial, participant and subject political culture. The set of people sharing parochial culture have no sense of political efficacy or competence and feel powerless in the face of existing institutions. Under subject political culture there is a high level of political consciousness, but the citizens are passive in the political process. Participant political culture is a situation in which the people are not only politically very conscious but they are also very active in the input and the output processes of governance.

Study session eleven serves as a follow-up to study session ten. In this study session we tried to define political socialization, which is essentially concerned with the process of transmitting a society's political culture to successive members of that society. As you were told political socialisation may serve to preserve, transmit and inculcate traditional political norms values and institutions across time as well as helps to maintain continuity and stability. Also we attempted to distinguish the various forms or patterns of political socialisation through the use of analytical categories- Agencies (primary or secondary), Process (latent or manifest), Time-span (Formative years or mature years, and Change (systemic or non – systemic.)

In study session eleven the meaning, forms and types of political participation were examined. Generally speaking, political participation involves those activities which are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of rulers and the formulation of public policy. While political participation is not limited to voting during election, illegal and often violent forms of participation like assassination and riots are considered as abnormal ways of participation. You were told in the study session that not all people get themselves involved in politics, or participate to the same degree. This is due to the fact that participation involves considerable costs in terms of time, energy and resources. Lester Malbraith classified levels of participants into three, namely, spectator level, transitional level and gladiatorial level. We concluded that with the costs of participation in political activities increasing, the number of participants decreasing at each successive level.

As from study session twelve, the focus of the course shifted to the institutions of politics. In that study session we tried to highlight and discuss State instrumentalities or apparatuses, which are the instruments through which the state "does its thing" in the political system. These



instrumentalities consist largely of the following: the government, the central administrative agency and parastatals, the military and paramilitary institutions, the judiciary, sub-central administrative agencies, and the representative assemblies.

In study session thirteen attempts were made to define political parties and pressure groups as institutions for political interactions. Their functions and types were also discussed. A political party, as you were told is an organised group of like-minded persons seeking to take control of government through constitutional means, while pressure groups are groups of organized sections of the community promoting their own (parochial) interest by regularly putting pressures on the authorities (government) or public opinion. Political parties and pressure groups are significant in terms of the roles they play, particularly in a democracy. There are three types of party system, namely, one party, two party and multi party systems. Types of pressure groups include anoemic, communal institutional and associational groups. One of the significant differences between political parties and pressure groups is that the latter seek influence from outside, whereas the former seek to capture power.

Study session fourteen focused on constitutions as examples of formal institutions of politics. As it was shown in the study session, a country's constitution is the body of basic law, principles, conventions, rules and regulations which govern the country. It is a document that specifies the limits of and as well as relationship between various branches and agencies of government. There are different kinds, types, and variants of constitution. Constitutionalism refers to government that respects the constitution or a government based on the rule of law or due process. Constitution, irrespective of types or forms are sourced from organic laws, customs and conventions, judicial precedents/ decisions, past experience, intellectual works of philosophers to mention just a few. It usually provides for a preamble, structure of government, distribution of power to mention just a few.

Study session fifteen concludes the course. This concluding study session attempts to revise the course study sessions in form of summary of the highlights of the preceding fourteen study sessions. It is assumed that you have gained very well in this course. It is advisable to carefully go over the course again and make use of some of the available recommended texts cited in the references at the end of each study session so as to get an adequate and rewarding insight into the nature and theories for contemporary political analysis.



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## Feedbacks to Self Assessment Questions (SAQs)

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- SAQ 1.1** A. Jeremy Bentham  
B. David Easton  
C. Aristotle  
D. Karl Marx  
E. Harold Lasswell
- SAQ 1.2** There is no clear cut difference between the two concept. They both complement each other. Political science is the study of politics. Political Science According to Dudley, “is the systematic study of these various components of politics”. More so, the World Book Encyclopedia (1997) describes Political Science as the systematic study of political life.
- SAQ 1.3** The study Political science entails the various forms of government as well as political parties, pressure groups, elections, international relations, public institutions, comparative politics and public administration. Political Science also deals with fundamental values such as equality, freedom, justice and power. In terms of significance of political science to human endeavours, politics matters to every human being. The study and understanding of politics and how it works raises the consciousness in us to look after ourselves and prevent others from using us, since the ignorant are usually manipulated.
- SAQ 2.1** State Level of Politics is those actions carried out by the national or sub-national and local governments. It enjoys primary over other level of politics because it has a definite territory and has a monopoly of the use of force and other level of politics are carried within it and through it.
- Intra-state level of politics are those activities or interactions that takes place among institutions or groups within a state or defined by the rules of the state; while inter-state level of politics are those activities or interactions that carried out by political actors (state and non-state actors) across state boundaries.
- SAQ 2.2** In Nigeria, the review of the 1999 constitution, which is a statutory responsibility of the National Assembly with support from the State Assemblies, and which will be enforced by the executive arm of government and interpreted by the judiciary on the successful review, is an example of state politics while Resolution 1373 reached by the United Nations (comprised of 153 states) after September 11 2001, aimed at countering the upsurge of terrorism globally is an example of inter-state or international politics.
- SAQ 2.3** The similarities between state and inter-state level of politics include:
- They are both carried by state actors
  - They both apply the instruments of coercion. While states can enforce its decision on it citizens, at the international level or

international community states can reach an agreement to enforce its decision on a non-compliant state.

- SAQ 3.1** Political science is an academic discipline that is concerned with the systematic and scientific study and analysis of politics.
- SAQ 3.2** Prior, to the behavioural revolution, the study of politics was dominated by the normative-philosophical and legal-institutional approach. These approaches were popularized by plato, Aristotle, Niccolo Machiavelli, John Locke, Jacques Rosseau Thomas Hobbes Chanakya, Arthashastra, etc. However, in the 1950s and the 1960s, a behavioral revolution stressing the systematic and rigorously scientific study of individual and group behavior swept political science discipline. A focus on studying political behavior, rather than institutions or interpretation of legal texts, characterized early behavioral political science, including work by Robert Dahl, David Easton and Phillip Converse.
- SAQ 3.3** Irrespective of the arguments by the traditionalist who questioned the adoption of science in the study of politics citing the complexities inherent in the study of man's social life, political scientists (Behaviouralist) in their quest to understand political phenomena have adopted the scientific methods to create an intellectual discipline involving quantitative research methods.
- SAQ 4.1** In the normative-philosophical approach, the study of politics is dominated by philosophical reflections on universal political values that were regarded as essential to the just state and the good state, while in the descriptive-institutional approach to political inquiry, its main focus is on the formal structures and agencies of government.
- SAQ 4.2A** The basic assumption of the behaviouralism or behavioural approach to the study of politics is that there are certain uniformities in political behaviour which can be stated as generalizations or theories and which are capable of explaining and predicting political phenomena.
- SAQ 4.2B** The post behavioural approach to political inquiry is concerned with the promotion of political science that would not be as scientific or precise as possible, philosophical normative, politically relevant but be also socially responsible. It was eclectic in that it is supported the incorporation into political science as many perspectives or approaches as can throw light on the complexities of political life.
- SAQ 5.1** Power is the ability to compel obedience through application or threat of coercion. Authority is the right to exercise power. It is also described as legitimate power. According to Beetham, Legitimacy is "where power is acquired and exercised according to justifiable rules and with evidence of consent".
- SAQ 5.2** While Power is the possibility of imposing one's will upon the behaviour of other persons, Influence is devoid of sanctions, coercion and physical force.
- SAQ 11.1** State apparatuses or instruments are concrete structures through which the state carries out its statutory responsibilities in the political system.
- SAQ 11.2** We do not know what makes up your discussion, but your discussion may include any of the following:

A. **Security Services:** also known as the repressive institutions of the State. Their responsibility includes: the management of violence on behalf of the State. These security agencies includes the following: Nigeria the military and police forces, and various para-military institutions such as the State Security Service (SSS), the Directorate of Military Intelligence (DMI), the Customs and Immigration Services, the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC)

B. **The Representative Assembly:** They are charged with the functions of for law-making and for overseeing the operations of the government. Their roles also include and not limited to oversight, law/policymaking and representational role. In Nigeria, they consist of the National Assembly, the State Houses of Assembly and the Local Government Councils.

**SAQ 12.1** A political party comprised of men and women united by a common ideology and who seek to capture state power. Attributes of political parties include:

- (i) Self-conscious determination to capture power and hold power of decision-making alone or in coalition;
- (ii) Adoption of a Manifesto: Political parties usually have a manifesto, which is a document listing their intentions, aspirations and objectives.

**SAQ 12.2** Pressure groups are organized men and women whose major aim is to influence government policies for the interest off their members and sometimes public interest. Attributes of pressure groups include:

- (i) lobbying
- (ii) strike

**SAQ 13.1** A constitution may be defined as those fundamental principles, rules and regulations, customs and convention by which a country is administered or governed.

**SAQ 13.2** A. **Judicial precedents:** these are her judicial decisions which are usually regarded as authoritative.

B. **Organic Laws:** These are laws that occur or develop gradually and naturally without being forced or contrived.

C. **Philosophical Ideas:** The ideas of great philosophers have also provided important principles that have been incorporated m most constitutions.

**SAQ 13.3** Constitutionalism simply means adherence to the dictates or stipulations of the constitution. Constitutionalism deals with the rule of law.