



## Comparative Politics: Nature And Major Approaches

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### Abstract:

Comparative politics is the study and appraisal of domestic politics across countries. Comparative politics has a long and very eminent history dating back just before the origin of systematic political studies in ancient Greece and Rome. Even ancient people, compared their situations with those of other people's with whom they came in contact. The ancient Greeks performed the earliest systematic comparisons of a more modern and secular.

Comparative politics is key area in political science, pigeonholed by an empirical approach based on the comparative method. To put it in another way, comparative politics is the study of the domestic politics, political institutions, and conflicts of countries. It often encompasses comparisons among countries and through time within single countries, emphasizing major patterns of similarity and difference. Many political theorists like Arend Lijphart argued that comparative politics does not have a functional focus in itself, instead a methodological one (Lijphart, Arend,1971). In simple form, comparative politics is not defined by the object of its study, but by the method it applies to study political phenomena. Peter Mair and Richard Rose gave modern definition of comparative politics and stated that comparative politics is elaborated by a combination of a substantive focus on the study of countries' political systems and a method of recognising and explaining similarities and differences between these countries using common models (Peter, 1996).

**Keywords:** *Comparative Politics, Approaches, Traditional, Modern, Behavioral*

### Introduction:

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

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

Many theorists articulated that "Comparative political science" as a general term for an area of study, as opposed to a methodology of study, can be seen as redundant. The political only shows as political when either an overt or tacit comparison is being made.

### NATURE OF COMPARATIVE POLITICS:

Nature and scope of comparative politics is fathomable only when one understands the main characteristics and significance of comparative government. Although the two terms 'Comparative Politics' and 'Comparative Governments' are used lightly and interchangeably, there is distinction between them. Conventionally, the comparative study of politics stands entitled as 'comparative government'. Comparative government includes the study of features and legal powers of political institutions existing in various states. It is the study of state and other political institutions in terms of their legal powers, functions, and positions on a comparative basis.

Key characteristics of comparative government are mentioned below:

- Stress upon the study of political institutions of various countries.
- Focus on the study of major constitutions of the world.



- ❖ It emphasizes static rather than current situations.
- ❖ It is a value free research, as its debate is not possible.

#### 4. Structural functional approach

According to this approach, the society is a single inter-related system where each part of the system has a definite and distinct role to play. The structural-functional approach may be considered as an offshoot of the system analysis. These approaches accentuate the structures and functions. Gabriel Almond was an advocate of this approach. He described political systems as a special system of interaction that exists in all societies performing certain functions. According to him, the main attributes of a political system are comprehensiveness, inter-dependence and existence of boundaries. Like Easton, Almond also believes that all political systems perform input and output functions. The Input functions of political systems are political socialization and recruitment, interestarticulation, interest-aggression and political communication. Almond makes three-fold classifications of governmental output functions relating to policy making and implementation. These output functions are rule making, rule application and rule adjudication. Therefore, Almond believes that a stable and efficient political system converts inputs into outputs.

#### Conclusion:

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

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