B.A.III. (Hons.)

POLITICAL SCIENCE

PAPER VII: POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY

TOPIC:  POLITICAL CULTURE

Prepared by:

Aparajita,
Assistant Professor,
Department of Political Science,
G.J.College, Rambagh, Bihta.

Patliputra University.
**Political Culture**

**Introduction:**

Cultural is a way of life. Transmission of culture into political action is known as Political Culture. In order to understand the political system it is necessary to understand the political culture of that particular country. Political Socialisation is the means and Political Culture is the end of the Political System. After the Second World War, new concepts like political system, political socialization, political culture, power and authority emerged. Political culture consists of attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviour of people towards the political system.

**Definitions:**

According to **Eric Rowe**, “Political Culture is a pattern o individual beliefs, values and emotional attitudes”.

According to **Almond and Powell**, “Political Culture consists of attitudes, values and skills which are current in entire population and those propensity and pattern which may be found in separate parts of the society.”

**Almond** defines Political Culture as set of attitudes, beliefs, notion, faith, and understanding of political system, political issues, political ideology and political characters.

**Orientations of Political Culture**

There are different orientations of Political Culture:

1. **Cognitive**: The knowledge of and belief about the political system, its objects, inputs and outputs.
2. **Effective**: The feeling of attachment, involvement and rejection to a political system.
3. **Evaluative**: It involves decisions regarding the political system.
According to Robert Dahl, there are five orientations of Political Culture.

1. **Orientation to Problem Solving**: This means how people think about their problems and how they find solutions to those problems.
2. **Orientation to Collective Action**: It means the willingness on peoples’ part to work collectively in a political system.
3. **Orientation to Political System**: It demonstrates the attitudes and behavior of people towards a political system.
4. **Orientation to Others**: The faith of person in other person or individuals.
5. **Self-Orientation**: It shows the ability of individual to present their own and original proposals regarding the political system.

**Models of Political Culture**

The model of Political Culture mainly consists of Input, Output and Feedback.

(Feedback can be positive as well as negative)
Explanation:

There are two types of environment that impact a political system: External Environment and Internal Environment. The input that is the values and attitudes towards a political system are built through political parties and pressure groups. The input goes through a process of filtration in which cabinet of a country plays an important role. The outcome comes through Legislature, Executive and Judiciary. After the law is made, executed and adjudicated, the feedback of the people becomes important which comes as an input to a political system. The cycle of input, output and feedback goes on in a political system.

Types of Political Culture

According to Almond and Verba, there are three types of Political Culture:

1. **Parochial Political Culture:** In this type of Political Culture, people have no knowledge of input and output. They are not aware about their political system (Table 1). **Example:** Few Countries of Asia and Africa.

2. **Subject Political Culture:** The people in this type of Political Culture have no knowledge or little knowledge about the input but have the full knowledge of the output (Table 1). **Example:** Major countries of Asia and Few countries of Africa.

3. **Participant Political Culture:** Participant Political Culture is mainly found in the developed countries where people are fully aware and have the knowledge of both input and output (Table 1). **Example:** the USA, France and the European Countries.
In addition to these types of Political Culture, there are other different types as discussed below:

1. **Mixed Political Culture:** There are mixed type of Political Culture found in Political System which contains the features of more than one type of Political Culture.
   
i. **Subject-Parochial:** Such type of Political Culture is found in India where the features of both Subject and Parochial Political Culture are found.

   ii. **Participant-Subject:** Such type of Political Culture is found in the developed countries like the USA and the European Countries where features of both Participant and Subject Political Culture are found.

   iii. **Parochial-Participant:** Such type of Political Culture is found in the Regimented and Totalitarian Countries where features of both Parochial and Participant Political Culture are found.

2. **Civic Culture:** When all the three types of Political Culture Parochial, Subject and Participant Political Culture are found in one political system, it is considered as Civic Culture. Such type is mostly found in India.

3. **Role Culture:** There are certain role models prevalent in a political system that becomes the culture of the political system. A freedom fighter like Bhagat Singh can be the role model and role culture of both traditional and modern society.
4. **Political Sub-Culture:** When the difference is found between one group and the other group then it is regarded as Political Sub-Culture. It is found in almost all types of political system.

**Finer’s Political Culture:** According to Finer, Political Culture may be Low, Matured and High. Low Political Culture is considered as Parochial Political Culture, Matured as Subject and high as Participant Political Culture.

**Foundations of Political Culture:**

1. **Historical:** History plays an important role in affecting political culture of a political system. The culture of France and Russia was influenced by the French Revolution of 1789 and the Russian Revolution of 1917.

2. **Geographical:** The insular position of Britain gives the political culture different from that of the continental countries. Similarly, the Political Culture of the USA is different from other European countries due to their geographical locations.

3. **Socio-Economic Factors:** The difference in the social and economic factors of the political system affects the political culture of that political system.

4. **Ethnic Factors:** The political culture of Africa might have been different than what it is actually at present if there had been absence of racial discrimination.

5. **Religion:** The religious homogeneity affects the political culture as the partition of India in 1947 was due to religious disparities between Hindus and Muslims.

**Symbols of Political Culture:**

The attitudes, beliefs and values of people are reflected through the symbols of Political Culture. The symbols reflect the emotions and sentiments of the people towards a political system. The King or Queen of Britain and the President of the USA may be taken as the national pride, symbols and aspirations of the people. The great leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Patel are considered as the symbol of India. The National Flag, National Anthem and National Calendar are the symbols of
Political Culture. There are certain myths in political system that is also considered as symbols of political culture.

**Importance of Political Culture:**

1. Political Culture enables to understand the connection between the social and economic factor on one hand and political development on the other hand.
2. Political Culture helps to understand the process of political socialization and transmission of political culture from one generation to the other generation.
3. Political Culture enables to understand how the laws and constitution of different countries are observed by different individuals and groups.
4. Political Culture shows the attitude of people towards a political system.
5. It enables to understand the reason that similar phenomenon in the different countries do not produce the same result.

**Criticism:**

1. It is difficult to draw full picture of political culture as the opinion and attitudes of people are not very clear and cannot be represented as whole.
2. The actual performance of the political beliefs and attitudes in a country of political researchers may be different from their expectation.
3. The concept of political culture is hardly better than new labels for old ideas.
4. The political attitudes, beliefs, values and behavior are not sufficient to understand the classification of political system.
5. Basic concept of political culture is not fully worked out and it is difficult to test the different theories of political culture.

**Conclusion:**

Though, the concept of Political Culture had developed after the Second World War, it is important for any political system as it shapes the attitudes, beliefs and notions of people towards the political system, political issues and ideologies. The political system is always influenced by political culture and its role in politics cannot be denied.