

# **Approaches to Comparative Politics**

**TRADITIONAL APPROACHES  
& STRUCTURAL-FUNCTIONAL  
APPROACH**

Department of Political Science  
Jawahar Lal Nehru College, Palsighat

# INTRODUCTION

- Approaches are tools by which the scholars of politics arrive at greater political understanding.
- Approaches aid in defining the kinds of facts which are relevant.
- The diversity of approaches are used by political scientists to attack the complexity of political systems & behavior.

- Approaches can be classified into two broad categories:

### ***I. Traditional approaches***

Among the traditional approaches we can include:

- a) The philosophical approach
- b) The historical approach
- c) The institutional approach
- d) The legal approach

# The Philosophical Approach

- Being one of the oldest approach, its first features is that it made thinker to fly in the heights of imaginations to find out the truth & knowledge.
- It is normative in character & believes in building norms or certain standards.
- It followed the deductive method where researcher has his own values & predetermined notions.

# The Historical Approach

- This approach emerged in the last quarter of 19th century.
- Some political scholars believes that through the study of historical background, they could have a better & close insight into the working of institutions & political phenomenon.
- Thus, in order to understand political theory, we must bear in mind the time, the place & circumstances in which it evolved.

# The Institutional Approach

- In this approach, the formal institutions of govt. like legislature, executive & judiciary provide the subject matter of comparison in terms of their powers, functions, role & mutual relations.
- It involves a relatively detailed description of analysis followed by an attempt to clarify which details are similar or different.

# The Legal Approach

- This approach treats the state primarily as an organization for the creation & enforcement of law.
- Here, the study of politics is integrally bound up with the legal processes of the country & the existence of a harmonious state of liberty & equality is earned marked by the glorious name of *the rule of law*.

# Modern Approach- The Structural Functional

- At its most basic level, the model of structural functionalism asserts that a political system is made up of institutions i.e. structures such as interest groups, political parties, the executive, legislative & judicial branches of govt. & a bureaucratic machinery.



- But in order to make comparison between the two political systems, this information is not sufficient.
- For Almond, a fuller understanding emerges only when one begins to examine how institutions act within the political process.
- According to this model, systems are never entirely self-contained. They exist in a dynamic relationship to other political systems.
- All political systems require efficient feedback mechanisms.

# Thank you!

Class- B.A. IV Sem

Session- 2018-2019

Department of Political Science, JN College, Pasighat,  
Arunachal Pradesh.

Department of Political Science  
Jawahar Lal Nehru College, Pasighat