



Changing dynamics of political culture

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Abstract

If we define culture as the sum up of knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, custom and other shared common traits of a nation, so the complex of those attitude, beliefs, emotions, and values of society which relate to the political system and to political issues, is called “political culture” which usually symbolized by national flag and national anthem. Political culture of a nation is determined through the geographical, climatic, historical, and religious features of the nation. As political culture deals with the attitudes, behavior’s, views and perceptions which are changing variables and dynamics issues, so it is obvious that political culture is liable to change. A political culture is not static; it changes as a result of its response to new ideas, industrialization, the impact of new leaders, population changes and many other factors. Within a political system the role of political culture is divers in nature. This characterizes the dynamic view of political culture. All political system are subject to change in macro-level, as well in macro – level the individuals attitudes, believes, values and orientations are also changeable. As beliefs and values of the people change, with the change of time, so culture as a whole and political culture as its part is subject to change, but every substantive change in the political culture of a nation might takes decades or even centuries. However, no government, now days’, can to prevent its citizens from political awareness. technology, mass media communications, internet and the like, with the impact of “globalization “are the causes which give more dynamics to the political culture.

Keywords: culture, political culture, dynamics, sub- culture, congruence, ideology

Introduction

There is no general coherence in the nature of political culture of different nations. It differs in its origin. Political culture denotes the attitudes, orientations, sentiments, values and believes of the individuals towards the political objects which prompt him to behave in the political sphere in one way and not in other. But the orientations of the people towards their political system may differ from political system to another. While china has a communist culture, USA and UK have essentially, democratic culture. (Jena, 2002)^[2].

A study of different of political system of the world, whether western and developed or eastern and developing signals that political culture plays a very important role in the sphere of political stability and change.as difference between Britain and France shows, while the conventional view of the French political culture may be seen in the appreciation of absolute conception of authority, the traditional view of Britain political culture is seen in the appreciation of popular control of the government. (Johari,2011)^[3]

Political culture has played and till plays a dominant role in development of the countries as well while, developed political culture are more ready to accept, and attempt to bring new changes in different fields of political sphere, the developing political cultures are less able to lead new changes in their political system. And where is no change, there is no development.

In this paper first we will discuss about nature of political

culture and then will review the effective factors on the dynamics of political culture and point to the few examples of new changes in some political cultures.

Nature of culture and political culture

As political culture is part of general culture, so first we should know what is culture? Alike the other social conception s, there are many definitions about culture which we point to some of them.

Tyler defined it as “That complex whole of which includes knowledge, beliefs, art morals, custom and other capabilities acquired by man as a member of society,”

According to Graham Walla’s, “Culture is an accumulation of thoughts, values and objects, it is the” social heritage acquired by us from preceding generations through learning, as distinguished from the biological heritage which is passed on to us automatically through genes.

H.V Wiseman says, “Culture, simply, is part of the common orientation of two or more people,” Orientation includes three elements. firstly, the cognitive i.e. the knowledge of the physical and social world of those who share the same culture. Secondly, beliefs which in empirical terms are neither true nor false thirdly, there are values which is difficult to separate from attitudes. (Puri, 1997)^[5].

What is political culture?

The term political culture was first used by Gabriel Almond in political science terminology in 1956. According to Almond; political culture is not the same things as a general culture, although related to it. It is a differentiated part of general culture and has certain autonomy. Whereas, to Beer and Ulam, "Certain aspects of the general culture of the society are especially concerned with how government ought to be conducted and what it shall try to do. This section of culture.

To Alam R. Ball, "A political culture is composed of the attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and values of society that relate to the political issues. These attitudes, may not be held. But may be implicit in an individual or group relationship with the political system." (Pure, 1997)^[5].

Components of political culture

According to Almond and Powell, political culture involves three components of orientations;

1. **Cognitive orientations:** Cognitive orientations mean, "Knowledge of and beliefs about the political system, its roles, its objects and officials its inputs and outputs."
2. **Affective orientation:** Affective orientations mean feeling of attachment, involvement, rejection and the like about the political system, its personal and performance and about other political objects.
3. **Evaluation orientations:** Evaluation orientations mean, judgment and opinions about political objects which usually involve applying value standards to political objects and events. (pure, 1997)^[5].

Foundations of political culture:

A political culture depends upon the fact of people's attitude and beliefs towards the political system. These attitude and beliefs are the product of several inter-related factors; history, geography and socio-economic.

1. **History:** A study of history gives sufficient evidence to prove the continuity or discontinuity of a political system, besides the foundations of a political culture can well be known. According to Ball, the importance of political continuity in a country like Britain, for example, lies in the fact that their older values, have been allowed to merge with modern attitude, undisturbed by violent internal strife or domination by foreign power.
2. **Geography:** Geography plays its own part in laying the foundation of a political culture. The insular character of the Britain Isles protected the country from foreign invasion. On the other hand, the limitless frontier of a country like India opened the ways for the foreigners to invade and even stay here many years.
3. **Socio-economic:** According to Ball, "a predominantly urban industrialized society is more complex society, rapid communications, educational standards are higher, groups proliferate, and participation in the decision – making process is wider. Rural societies are not geared to change and innovation, and the states with a predominantly peasant population are more conservatives. (Pure 1997)^[5].

Types of Political Cultures and Measurement of the Dynamics of Diverse Political cultures

According to Kumar Saroj Jena, An individual's orientation, believes, sentiment, values and attitudes are directed towards his fellow beings other than self. An individual develops two kinds of orientations towards his fellow beings trust or hostility.

Trust: An important aspect of political culture is higher level of inter –personal trust that facilitates the political cooperation and political involvements. Here the decisions are reached by mutual consensus through consultations and compromise. Individuals are engaging themselves in peaceful competition with those of opposing political views. This leads to integrations of the members of a political system that ensure the stability of political system.

Hostility: when an individual's attitudes, beliefs, sentiment, values, and norms are oriented towards his own self as a political actor, it is called the view of self. In this self –culture, the nature and extent of the individual orientation vary from society to society and this leads Almond and Powell classify

- the self - culture as
- Parochial political culture
- Subject Political Culture
- Participant political culture.

In a participant political culture, the individual is seen and sees himself as an active participant in political process. Here his cognitive, effective, and evaluative orientations are very high with regard to the political system as a whole, to the input, output, feedback and conversions process as well as to self as a political actor. It is also known as the rationally-activist political culture.

But, these three types of political culture are only the ideals types ; none of them can be found in its pure form in any society since all the individuals within a political system cannot too expected to behave or oriented in the same way and to the same extent. Almond and Verba lists out the following mixed types of

- political cultures:
- Parochial –subject
- Subject – participant
- Parochial-participant
- Civic political culture

Signs of the Dynamics of political culture

During the last half of the twentieth century, we saw much dramatic changes in various political culture. For example, Many African Americans become more willing to stand up vocally for their rights and in so doing become more politically active during 1950s and 1960s. In turn, many white Americans developed more favorable attitude towards their black fellow citizens and began to act accordingly. Today, no one can deny that considerable changes in political attitudes and behavior with respect to race have occurred in United States political culture since 1950. (Dahl & Stinebrickner, 2012)^[1].

The other sign of change in political culture of the nations might be seen in recent Arabic revolutions in some of Arabic countries in the Middle East which is so called "Arab Spring." In these upheavals people of these countries overthrow the dictator regimes and ask for more popular governments, which amply illustrate basic changes in the political cultures of these countries.

Women movements are the other obvious example of change in political culture in most of the countries. While, till mid of twentieth century in European and American countries women had no political right, nowadays, they play major role in political life of most of these countries. However, political activities of women are less than men, but having the equal right in political sphere is a significant change in political cultures of most countries itself (Dahl & Stinebrickner, 2012) ^[1].

Affective Factors in the dynamics of political culture

Why is it that in modern societies with widespread education, universal suffrage, and democratic political systems the apolitical stratum is so large? This is the question which may many of us ask ourselves. Robert A. Dahl and Bruce Stinebrickner present seven propositions which help to explain why people do not become involved in the politics of the governing their state.

1. Individuals are less likely to get involved in politics if they place a low value on the rewards expected from political involvement relative to the rewards they expect from other kinds of activity.
2. If they think that there is no significant difference in the alternatives before them and, consequently, that what they do won't matter.
3. If they think that what they do won't matter because they cannot significantly change the outcome anyway
4. If they believe that the outcome will be relatively satisfactory to them without their involvement.
5. If they feel that their knowledge is too limited for them to be effective.
6. The greater the obstacles placed in an individual's way the less likely that person is to become involved in politics.
7. If no person or group mobilizes them to get involved in politics. (Dahl & Stinebrickner, 2012) ^[1].

The main factors affective on the dynamics or static of political culture may be briefly summarized in the following:

Political subcultures may grow on the basis of region, religion, social class, caste, language, and the like. These subcultures play a significant role in the process of nation building. The existence of such political subcultures may have its positive and negative consequences. In the positive aspect, the existence of variety of subculture helps in a significant way to understand better the national political culture and its process. But judging from a negative aspect, the existence of such a wide range of political subculture may kill the consensus in political system. It may also cause harm to the common national identity. As such it has a vital impact on the range of conflicts and the complexity of these conflicts between the national political culture and various subcultures. (Jena, 2002) ^[2].

A political culture functions as a legitimization instrument. The system is based on authority, authority on legitimacy is based on culture. The higher level of congruence between the masses and the greater interpersonal trust and confidence, the stable the political culture will be, impact every society shows a fundamental deference between the culture of the rulers and that of the masses. The higher is the congruence between these two cultures—the elite culture and mass culture, the greater is the homogeneity of the political culture that ensures the stability of the political system. (Jena 2002) ^[2].

The influence of political elites, the leader, activists and writers, who play the major role in the creating and interpreting the political formula of a nation, in changing political culture should also, be considered significantly. (Johari, 2011) ^[3].

Conclusion

Political culture denotes the attitudes, orientations, sentiments, values and beliefs of the individuals towards the political objects and issues of their system and in some cases towards global political issues. These attitudes, orientation and beliefs are the product of several inter-related factors; history, geography and socio economic circumstance of a nation. However, beliefs and values of the people change with the change of time, so culture as a whole and political culture as its part is subject to change, but as J.C. Johari announces, evidence shows that a sudden or total change leads to the breakdown of the new political system, because the tradition-bound people do not appreciate those changes which stand in total contradiction to the values of their conventional culture. On the other hand, the leaders who strive for a gradual change get more success in their endeavors. So, the stability and integration of the political culture depend on promoting orderly change and achieving a politician's ability to control a balance between the old and new.

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