

Chapter - 6**TYOLOGY OF
POLITICAL SYSTEM**

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Typology of Political System

Introduction:-

The trend of classification of political systems was very common with ancient Greeks. Plato had presented his own classification of political system in the 'Politicus' or the 'Statesman', while Aristotle had portrayed his own classification of political regimes. The work on classification of political systems continued up to the modern age by concluding certain principles and developing certain models.

1. Plato's classification:-

Plato classified the political systems on the basis of two principles. The purpose of the political system,

- (i) whether it is directed by law or not directed by law and
- (ii) the number of persons, who govern, whether it is rule of one, rule of few or rule of many. He classified political systems into six categories; which are:

i. Monarchy:-

It is the rule of one person and is directed by law.

ii. Tyranny:-

It is also the rule of one person and is not directed by law. It is the worst form of system.

iii. Aristocracy:-

It is the rule of few; who are the ablest men, devote themselves for the service of the state, and are directed by law.

iv. Oligarchy:-

It is the rule of few people, which is not directed by law. They are small number of rich people; who rule in their own interest.

v. Moderate democracy:-

It is the rule of many people; which is directed under the law. The rule is working for the welfare of the common man.

vi. Extreme Democracy:-

It is the rule of many people; which neither is directed by law nor is working for welfare of the common people. It is rule of an average man, who is incapable of political stability because of its inefficiency and inherent weakness. See table 6.1.

TABLE 6.1:

Directed by law	Not directed by law
1. Rule of one - Monarchy	1. Rule of one - Tyranny
2. Rule of few - Aristocracy	2. Rule of few - Oligarchy
3. Rule of many - Moderate democracy	3. Rule of many - Extreme democracy

2. Aristotle's classification:-

Aristotle, who was regarded as the father of comparative politics, yet he followed the platonic classification of political system by following the principle of the rule by one, the few or many. However, Aristotle classifies the different forms of political system on a two-fold basis i.e., (i) according to number of persons who hold or share the sovereign power (ii) according to the end the systems have in view. Thus, he classifies the political system into six categories; which are:

i. Monarchy:-

It represents the rule of one man for common good. It is a pure form, but is impossible of realization or at least perpetuation, even if we can find an individual, who possesses all necessary qualifications and virtues, we cannot expect him to pass on his virtues to his successor.

ii. Tyranny:-

It is perverted form of monarchy and represents the rule of one man for personal interest by representing force, deceit and selfishness. Aristotle defines it "as the arbitrary power of a ruler, who is not responsible to any one, and governs all alike, whether equals or better with a view to his own advantages".

iii. Aristocracy:-

It is rule of few for common good. It is too difficult to realize or to continue. Aristotle defines it, "as rule of few for public interest and is carried out through law without being affected by personal desire or interest".

iv. Oligarchy:-

It is perverted form of aristocracy. It is the rule of few for selfish purposes and not for common good. It represents the greed of wealth and maintains itself by force or corruption. In it the standard of merit is wealth and the distributive justice is informed by this criterion.

v. Polity:-

It means the rule of all for the good of all. It represents the virtues and power rests with the middle-class people. It is based on the rule of law.

vi. Democracy:-

It is perverted form of polity. It is rule of all for the good of poor only. The polity is degenerated and becomes anarchical and the rule of mob. It represents the principle of equality with power in the hands of poor. See

table 6.2

TABLE 6.2

Number of rulers	Pure form – Rule in general interest	Perverted form – Rule in self interest	Social group
1. One	Monarchy	Tyranny	King
2. Few	Aristocracy	Oligarchy	The wealthy people
3. All	Polity	Democracy	The middle class / the poor

3. Thomas Aquinas' classification:-

According to Aquinas, man's domination over man is of two kinds (i) that which results from sin and takes the form of slavery and (ii) that from social instinct and takes the form of civil government (political system). He divided the political systems into four kinds, which are (i) sacerdotal (ii) royal (iii) political and (iv) economic. Brief explanation is given below:-

- i. *Sacerdotal* is the representative of papacy, which is the highest type of the political system.
- ii. *Royal* is the way of the government to rule the state; in which the ruler has plenary power rather than the arbitrary power.
- iii. *Political* is also a way of the governance, in which, the powers of the ruler are restricted by laws of the state.
- iv. *Economic* is the method according to which the ruler tries his level best to achieve the economic happiness for the people of the state.

Thomas Aquinas follows the *Aristotle's* classification of political systems into monarchy, aristocracy, polity, tyranny, oligarchy and democracy. but he preferred monarchy to democracy, as a monarchical form of government would ensure stability and unity of state; which is not possible in democracy. Monarchy may degenerate into tyranny, but tyranny must be avoided because it is the bad form of government.

4. Machiavelli's classification:-

Machiavelli accepts *Aristotle's* classification of political systems into monarchy, aristocracy, and constitutional democracy, with their perversions, tyranny, oligarchy and democracy. He says that the mixed type of constitution with proper check and balance is best and most suitable form of government. But the balance he thought of economic or social but not political. He believes in the close connection between wealth and political power.

Machiavelli was a republican rather than a monarchist. According to him republican government is best form of government for a state, where there is general economic equality. A republican maintain its institutions and adapts itself to changing

environment, better than sentimental prince. The republican system leads to more uniform material prosperity and ensure greater equality of opportunity than other form of government. He believes in cyclical character of the forms of political system.

5. Montesquieu's classification:-

Montesquieu does not like the traditional system of classification of government into monarchy, aristocracy and democracy. He classifies the political systems as:

i. Monarchy:-

It represents the rule of one man based on law. It is restrained by customs, social interest, people's privileges and the monarch's own laws.

ii. Despotism:-

It means the rule of an individual without law. In it, the ruler is unrestrained. It is the worst form of government, in which the ruler acts arbitrarily in his own interest.

iii. Republican:-

Republic represents an idealized type of political system in a country, where the moral and intellectual standards of people are very high. The essence of republic is that the government is animated by virtue or not by sin, irrespective of it is in the hands of a few or many. It is the government, in which the whole body of citizens rule directly and not through representatives.

Montesquieu has further classified the republic into aristocracy and democracy. According to him, *aristocracy* is a type of government, in which the political power is in the hands of only a small part of citizens. It must not only possess the virtue of the republic but also be characterized by moderation in ambition.

Montesquieu *democracy* means the democracy of the Greek city-state type; where every adult participate in law – making and government-making process.

6. Modern – classification:-

There are two modern writers, who have given their classification of political systems. They are *Marriot* and *Leacock*, but their classification cannot meet the requirements of modern time.

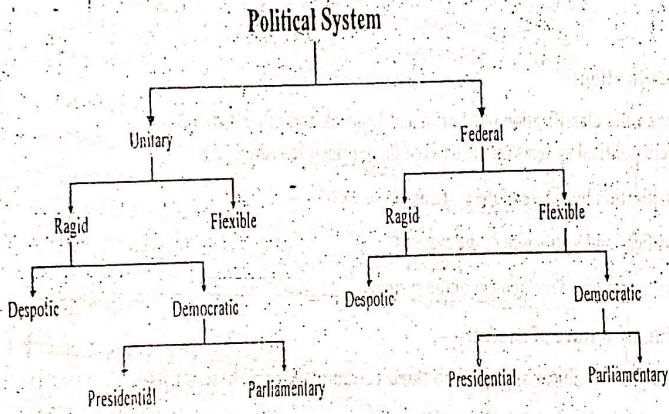
i. Marriot's classification:-

Marriot ventured his classification on a three-fold basis. He accepted Aristotle's classification as fundamental and maintained that it cannot fulfill the requirements of modern time. Therefore, he classified the political systems on the

basis of (i) division of power, as such dividing them into unitary and federal systems, (ii) nature of constitution declaring the rigid and flexible constitution and (iii) relation between executive and legislature dividing into despotic, presidential and parliamentary systems.

- i. **Unitary vs Federation:** If all the powers are vested in single system it is *unitary* and if the powers are divided into single system and sub-systems, it is *federation*.
- ii. **Rigid vs Flexible:** If the constitution of a system is not amended easily, it is *rigid* and if it is amend easily like law-making process it is *flexible*.
- iii. **Despotic vs Democratic:** If the executive is superior to legislature the system is *despotic*, if their powers and relations are coordinated, it is presidential and if the executive is subordinate to legislature it is *parliamentary*. See table 6.3.

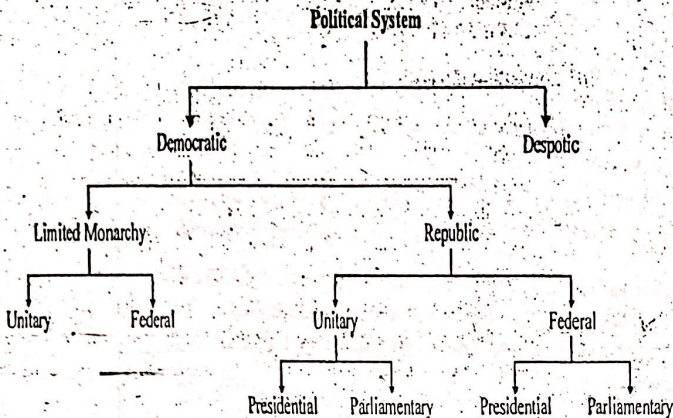
TABLE 6.3



(ii) Leacock's classification:-

Leacock's classification is similar to Marriot and he confined his classification on the basis of existing political systems of the world. His fundamental division is between the democratic and despotic. He divides democratic governments into limited monarchy and a republic. Each of these types may assume the form of unitary and federal system. A unitary or federal system may either parliamentary or presidential. See table 6.4.

SEE TABLE 6.4

**7. Liberal classification:-**

Keeping in view the classification of Marriot and Leacock and other criteria, we can classify the modern political systems on the basis of three principles which are:

- (i) Classification by nature of the systems.
- (ii) Classification by structure of the systems.
- (iii) Classification by development of the systems.

1. Classification by nature of System:-

We can classify the political systems into three categories on the basis of its nature; which are:

(a) Liberal democratic:-

The liberal democratic system is one, which believes in democracy and has faith in democratic way of living and behaving. There is rule of people and every action is taken with the approval of people. Sovereignty is vested in people and the system is working to look after the interest of all. The system has no religious ideology and it maintains the secular character of the state. The system is based on the principle of limited government and power is not concentrated in one

organ, but the each organ has allotted the sphere of activity. The system is operating successfully in the countries like U.K., U.S.A., Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland and many other countries of the world.

(b) Authoritarian:-

Although the outright tyrannies are not possible in the contemporary world, yet there is authoritarian regimes. In authoritarian regimes, liberty is restricted, there is no legally recognized opposition, and the institutions are meaning-less. The power is exercised by the small group such as military leaders, bureaucrats or religious figures. The economic activities can be still pursued independently. There is certain degree of cultural freedom. However, the political activities are strictly restricted only the governing elites can enjoy political freedom. There is a single party which is usually allowed to operate. Examples of such regimes are Argentina under Juan Person, Spain under Francisco Franco, Portugal under Antonia Salazar, Pakistan under Zia and Pervez Mushraf, USSR, China and other communist countries of the world.

(c) Totalitarian:-

Totalitarian is a new form of government falling into general classification of dictatorship. It is a system in which technologically advanced instruments of political power are wielded without restraints for the purpose of affecting a total social revolution, including conditioning of man on the basis of certain arbitrary ideological assumptions.

Fredrick and Z. Brzezinski in their book "Totalitarian, Dictatorship and Autocracy" have defined that in totalitarianism "there is an official ideology, a single mass party usually led by one man; terror is used by government to enforce obedience, the government has monopoly over communication and weapons and there is central direction of economy". In other words, a totalitarian regime has a totalistic ideology, a party reinforced by a secret police and monopoly over mass communication; operational weapons and all organizations including economic ones.

There is subordination of arts and science to the interest of political elite and to the specification of ideology and organization youth groups, labor unions, cultural associations, the educational system and other social systems for the political control and supporting the ideological objectives.

The totalitarian regimes attempt to control not only the citizen's behavior and their thought but also to control the lives and minds of the whole of the population. Three regimes are regarded, as the prime examples of totalitarian model were Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and Soviet Union under Stalin.

2. Classification by structure:-

We can classify the systems into two categories keeping in view the structure of the political system or the distribution of powers between the government and its units. The political system may be classified into Unitary and Federal.

(a) Unitary political system:-

An unitary system is that in which all political authority is vested in a single central government; which is supreme for all the purposes and units of the local government derive their power and authority from it. The administrative units are created for convenience of central government. The unit's governments are working as agents of the central government. Great Britain, France, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, New Zealand and many other countries are the examples of unitary democracies. It is further divided into presidential and parliamentary forms of the political systems.

(b) Federal political system:-

The federal system on the other hand has the division of powers as its basis and the central government and governments of the units stand on a footing of equality. The central and regional governments are equal in their status, having their own spheres of jurisdiction demarcated and defined by the constitution. They are independent in their own jurisdiction. Both the governments derive their powers from the constitution and the constitution cannot be changed at the desire of the central government. A set procedure is provided in the constitution for any amendment. The constitution is supreme and the Supreme Court is for the protection of the constitution. In the case of dispute, the matter is referred to the Supreme Court, which decides it as an impartial arbiter.

Prof. Dicey says that constitution of a federation must be necessarily written one in order to remove misunderstandings, must be rigid in order not to be easily amended and legislature of the federation must be subordinate and controlled by the constitution in order to void the unconstitutionality in the law-making. The federations are available all over the world. For examples India, Pakistan and Russia in Asia continent, Australia, Nigeria and Libyan in Africa, Canada, USA and

Mexico in America and Austria, Germany and Switzerland in European continent. The federation is further divided into parliamentary and presidential political system.

i. Parliamentary political system:-

The distinction between the parliamentary and presidential political system depends upon the relationship between the legislative and executive. If the executive is subordinate to legislature, it is the parliamentary regime. It is also known as the responsible government because executive is always responsible before the legislature. There are head of state and head of executive. The head of state is nominal or ceremonial possessing nominal power; while head of executive enjoys the real powers. The head of executive and the members of the cabinet are chosen by the legislature and they are responsible before it. They remain in office as long as they enjoy the confidence of majority members of the legislature. As soon as it is lost the confidence, the Prime Minister and the ministers have to resign from their offices. The glaring examples of this system are the Great Britain, India, Pakistan and many other countries of the world.

Alan R. Ball sums up the major characteristics of parliamentary political system, which are:-

- a. There is nominal head of state whose functions are chiefly formal and ceremonial and has the limited political influence.
- b. The political executive (Prime Minister) together with cabinet, is the part of legislature, selected by the legislature and can be removed by the legislature if the legislature withdraws its support.
- c. The legislature is elected for varying periods by the electorate, the election date is chosen by the formal head of state on the advice of Prime Minister.

ii. Presidential political system:-

If the executive and legislative departments are independent and the former is not responsible to the latter for its tenure of office, it is a presidential form of government. The head of state is also the head of government and he is elected directly for a fixed term. He is assisted by the ministers, who are appointed by him and are responsible to him alone. The president formulates the policies and makes decisions and asks his ministers to implement them. The examples of this type of political system are U.S.A., Pakistan under 1962 Constitution, France

after 1958 and most of the countries of Latin America such as Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Brazil and Chile and so on.

Allan R. Ball has also summed up some characteristics of presidential system.

Which are:-

- a. The President is both nominal and real head of the state.
- b. The President is not elected by legislature, but directly elected by the total electorate.
- c. The President is not part of the legislature; and he cannot be removed from office by the legislature except through a legal procedure of impeachment.
- d. The President cannot dissolve the legislature and call general elections. Usually the President and the legislature are elected for a fixed period.

3. Classification by Development:-

We can classify the political systems on the basis of political development. Edward A. Shills has also classified the political systems on the basis of political development in to five categories i.e., political democracy, Tutelary democracy, modernizing oligarchies, Totalitarian Oligarchies, Traditional oligarchies.

i. Political Democracy:-

Political Democracy is the developed political system, in which the people participate directly or indirectly; which may be presidential or parliamentary for example USA, UK, Canada and Australia.

ii. Tutelary Democracy:-

Tutelary Democracy is a system where, there is democracy but controlled by its architect. People cannot freely participate. For example Basic democracy under Ayub Khan, controlled democracy under Seakarno, uniformed democracy under Pervez Mushraf.

iii. Modernizing Oligarchy:-

In this system oligarch is considered as a tool of political development. There is centralization of power. The military dictator or political elite occupies the powers of the system. Example of this system is Pakistan, Sudan, and Iraq under Saddam Hussain.

iv. Totalitarian Oligarchy:-

In this system, there are political institutions but all the power and authority is vested in the hands of one person or a group of persons.

Example of this system is the political system in socialist and communist countries.

v. **Traditional oligarchy:-**

In this system all, the structure of the system is depending upon traditional code or constitution. A traditional family or tribe occupies the powers, who are usually against the modernization and development. The examples of this system are available in Africa.

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