
Chapter 1

Political Theory: An Introduction

❖ Politics

- Politics is an important and integral part of human society and arises of the varying definitions of what is just and desirable.
- It functions through the agency called 'government'.
- Political organisation is essential for collective decision making and addressing the multiple needs of the members of society.
- The government makes and implements various policies to improve the lives of people. However, a corrupt government can also hamper the society.
- Politics mainly works in accordance to the government at one level, and the public at other level.

❖ Political Theory

- Political theory deals with the ideas to shape constitution, government, political parties and various other aspects of the social life.
- It shapes and clarifies the meaning of the concepts of freedom, justice, democracy, secularism, liberty and power.
- It studies the significance of principles like rule of law, separation of powers and judicial review.
- It is concerned with the forms of governance and their relevance in a society.

❖ Political Concepts

- Many political theorists face difficulty in defining political concepts.
- For instance, equality for one may **not** be the same for other.
- There have also been differences in the practice of equality and liberty enjoyed by the masses.
- Political equality may **not** necessarily translate into economic and social equality and vice versa.

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- Henceforth, it becomes a difficult task to formulate standard criterion.

❖ **Relevance of Political Theory**

- It is important to study political theory as it would always be used in all groups of people, since a person would always remain a citizen of his/her country.
- It is important to have a basic knowledge of the political sphere of one's country in order to be able to choose the right leader.
- Issues like freedom, equality and secularism are **not** abstract, but real, which an individual comes across in daily life.
- Political theory also helps a student to build opinions on different issues present in the society. Therefore, it becomes necessary to have a sound knowledge of the political activities in the society.