Compare and contrast the four distinct categories of presidential personality des...

History

College: Categories of Presidential Personality James Barber published Barbers research. He studied presidential character and personalities to predict the performance of a president. In his study, he classified presidents into four different categories according to different attitudes. The different groups comprised of persons with a positive or negative attitude, and those who are either active or passive. In his Study, he found that president who were positive and active were more successful than those who were passive and negative. According to Barber, their personalities made them approach the presidency with enthusiasm and a drive to lead and be successful (2).

In the active positive presidential category, Barber described them as adaptive. They are also self-confident and flexible. They tend to create opportunities for actions and enjoy exercising their power. They usually do not take themselves too seriously. In addition, they are optimistic individuals. Power is considered as means to achieve beneficial results by this group. They spend much energy in their job and enjoy doing the job. The group is also productive, result-oriented, and successful in pushing programs through (Barber 6). A good example is George W. Bush. His character of taking action without too much caution as was the case with the Iraq invasion portrays a key characteristic of this group.

The second group of active negative tends to be compulsive. They mainly tend to use power as a means of self-realization. This group expends a lot of energy on the job but derive little joy in the process. They are always preoccupied with whether they are succeeding or failing in their job. In addition, they tend to have low self-esteem. Mostly, they are rigid, pessimist, highly driven, and have problems when it comes to aggression and

management. They usually want to get and retain power to prove to others that they are people to reckon with. A good example of active negative presidents is Woodrow Wilson. Wilson put much effort in his work but did not receive any emotional rewards. He rarely received satisfaction with the work he did. He was said to have a compulsive and perfectionist personality.

The other group is passive positive. This group tends to be compliant and usually seek to be loved. They are easily manipulated. The have a low self-esteem, which they overcome by adopting an ingratiating personality. They are reactive, lack initiative, and are superficially optimistic. They spend less energy on the job but like doing the job. William Taft and Warren Harding are typical examples of passive positive presidents. They were considered receptive, compliant, affection seeking, and easy to manipulate.

The last group is passive negative. They are mainly withdrawn and are very responsive to the sense of duty, have low self-esteem, and avoid power. The low self-esteem is compensated by giving service to others. They are responsive but lack initiative. They try very much to avoid conflicts and uncertainty. In effect, they emphasize principles, procedures, and avoid politicking. Such a president spends less energy on the job and does not like the job. His main reason of becoming a president is that he thinks he should, out of a sense to give service to the country, and to derive a certain level of satisfaction in doing his duty. They usually do not have much experience and are vague. A good example of passive negative is the American first president George Washington. He had no plans of becoming president, leave alone the first president. However, he felt pressured and obliged to become one as duty to serve his country and his fellow Americans.

In conclusion, Barber's presidential character classification is pretty convincing as it seems to be full of facts, even though augments have been put forward that there is no set definition of an individual character . Barber is persuasive in his ideals in the context of different characteristics of different individuals. However, what makes him convincing is his depiction of Roosevelt, who lived a very independent and religious life full of discipline and structure. Barber also uses the rational actor model in decision making. Under this model it is assumed that the decision makers are rational in their decision making process. They weigh the pros and cons of each decision alternative and select the most optimal course of action. As a result, they make very informed decisions. Their decision making process is equally influenced by the organization process model. Under this model, the decisions made by leaders are highly influenced by the structure of the institutions that they lead. For instance, political leaders are highly controlled in their decision making process by a country's constitution as well as the nations administrative bodies. This ensures that their decisions are aimed at equitably benefiting all individuals in the society, rather than a selected group of people. In many cases, country governance takes a bureaucratic approach. Under this approach, institutions as well as their mandate is established upfront. This ensures that the leaders have to govern within the confines of the established rules and regulations, reducing instances of arbitrary decision making (Barber 2).

Work Cited

Barber, James. Politics by humans: Research on American leadership.

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