

Intro political science



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

To many the study of politics is about using power to establish the "right" values. What are the pros and cons of this normative approach to politics? Does the scientific method represent a better alternative? Why or why not?

In the study of politics, power is an essential aspect to consider. It is the ultimate source of authority. It is the force that drives the people to obey the leaders in a society. It is the foundation of public trust. The source of which is the people. All these facts taken into account, power in politics is studied in two major approaches, normative and scientific. In adopting the normative approach, politics is considered as the study of power to establish the "right" values. The normative approach in the study of politics is actually founded on value. As stated by Jayapalan, the normative method is a value-laden method (21). In this approach, emphasis is placed on "what ought to be" and not "what it is" (Jayapalan 21). This means that in applying the normative method, the values that politics should uphold are stressed. It is more on formulating ideals. It can also be asserted that this approach is idealistic in a sense. In this context, certain disadvantages have been attributed to this method. First, it is claimed as not analytical (Macridis and Brow, qtd. in Jayapalan 21). It only poses ideas which are ought to be practiced and observed in politics. It is purely descriptive (Macridis and Brow, qtd. in Jayapalan 21). It is already contented in making suggestions and does not entertain a critical way of analyzing political events and behaviors. Second, it has a very legalistic approach and demonstrates an outlook that is very narrow (Ball and Lauth, qtd. in Jayapalan 21). For the political scientists who use this method, the study of politics is ought to be legalistic. The problem on being legal is that it is restrictive. Third, it puts emphasis on values. Values and norms according to Jayapalan are susceptible to

immediate changes (23). In other words, they are not fixed. The societies of the world have different beliefs. Despite the aforementioned disadvantages, the normative approach has also advantages. It can be historical, comparative and structural. It is Apter's contention that historical normative is helpful in the study of values and institutions (qtd. in Jayapalan 23). The study of ideologies and thinkings of different states has become possible due to comparative normative method (Apter, qtd. in Jayapalan 23). In another way, the structural normative approach has been useful in the study and establishment of norms of authority, creating ideologies and data collection (Apter, qtd. in Jayapalan 23). After examining the pros and cons of the normative approach, it is contended that the scientific method of studying politics provides a better alternative. This method is focused on facts. It is not satisfied with ideals alone. It looks for evidences. Finding of evidences to support the available political theories is helpful in the field of political science. Notably, the persons who study politics are called political scientists. It is proper to highlight the fact that these people are scientists. Scientists deal with theories. They prove theories by gathering evidences (Kellstedt and Whitten 3). They try the theories in different occasions to have a reliable finding. Moreover, politics is actually part of science. Science is known to be a body of knowledge. This goes to say that finding new political ideas which are scientifically tested helps politics to be recognized as a science. Works Cited Jayapalan, N. Comprehensive Modern Political Analysis. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers & Distributors, 2002. Print. Kellstedt, Paul, and Guy Whitten. The Scientific Study of Politics. Cambridge University Press. [Pdf]. .