

Concepts of politics and economics



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- Ramon Hernandez

The Dictator's Dilemma

The dictator's dilemma is when an authoritarian ruler's oppression is so great that the public greatly fears him/her, which then leads to uncertainty as to how much support the ruler actually has. This leads the ruler to spend more resources than is needed to try to expose who potential rivals maybe or to try to buy out the potential opposition. They then begin to spend more and more money trying to keep everyone loyal and often end up spending too many resources on one particular group such as the military. This creates more problems as the groups that aren't being represented or are not being funded begin to feel more oppressed and less represented. Thus begins a new cycle of people that the ruler must now try to win over.

The dictator's dilemma causes the dictator to become paranoid and forces said ruler to make drastic changes to his/her agenda. For example authoritarian rulers who wish to improve their home regions usually do make improvements at the beginning of their regime but as soon as they begin to fear a potential overthrow they start to spend resources on other regions to keep the popular support. The dictators' dilemma leaves the ruler in constant states of paranoia because they are never truly sure how much support or opposition they face.

Social vs Liberal Market Economies

A social market economy is an economic system that combines a highly productive market economy with an extensive and generous welfare state, as well as unusually active involvement of both business and labor in

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economic policy. It combines private enterprise with regulation and state intervention so that it may create fair competition as well as maintain a balance between high rates of economic growth and low levels of unemployment. It is designed to promote good working conditions, social welfare, public services and lower inflation. It has many of the foundations of a free market economy such as private property, free foreign trade, and free formation of prices. There are provisions to confine the free market such as antitrust codes that help reduce the occurring problems within a free market.

A liberal market economy is a system that provides the ability for companies to interact with other companies, their employees, customers, and suppliers in whatever mechanisms they prefer, within the broad regulations implemented by a government. They incorporate a free prices system however they limit the potential for monopolies to form as well as the rates they can charge during certain states of the economy. This allows for competition in the market place to grow. Liberal market economies include government intervention in order to create a basis for domestic and international commerce between businesses in the form of legislation that requires business transactions to take place within specific boundaries.

Market Externalities

Market Externalities occur when the cost or benefit of the production process is not fully included in the price of the final market transaction, which reduces efficiency. An example of a market externality is the production of a bottle of water. When producing bottles of water, pollution is also produced.

However the cost of cleaning up the pollution is not a factor in price of the bottle, nor is a factor in the supply and demand chain.

Environmental damage is the most common form of market externalities. When factories pollute the air when they make their products, the costs of the long term damage the local residents as well as the environment receive are not paid by the factory owners. The cost of the bottle is not taken out of the cost for pollution damage. The factory would pollute more if they had to pay for the damages however.

Welfare Policy Types

Universal Entitlements are benefits that governments provide to citizens more or less equally, usually funded through taxation. An example would be public education in the US. All communities in the US must provide public education to all school age residents without any exemptions including those who are not born in the US. Public education tends to reduce the likelihood that a person will end up in poverty, which is why public education is a universal benefit. In many European countries families are provided child or family allowances to help them raise their children. The allowance is adjusted for household income or on the number of children. Some the criticism to these entitlements is that some people who do not need them still receive the entitlements.

Social Insurance provides benefits to categories of people who have contributed to public insurance fund. Examples in the US are social security, disability benefits and unemployment. Workers and employers contribute to

the fund and only those who contribute to the fund may benefit from them when they need them for instance when a worker retires.

Means-tested public assistance are programs that provide benefits to individuals who fall below a specific income level. Food stamps, subsidized public housing and temporary assistance to needy families are the most common examples in the US. The level of assistance from these programs usually depends on the income level but other factors may contribute such as work requirements. These are unlike universal entitlements where everyone is entitled to their benefits and social insurance where those who contribute get to partake in the benefits; means tested assistance only targets those whose income levels are low.

Tax expenditures are targeted tax breaks for specific groups of people or activities designed to achieve social policy goals. Tax breaks on certain people or expenditures subsidizes activities that the government believes to be beneficial. Tax breaks on people or on expenditures has the same effect as amount of social spending on that group of people or project.

Cap and Trade System

Cap and Trade systems are systems where the government allows a specific amount of acceptable pollution in an industry. Once the amount of pollution is reached the government begins to give out vouchers to companies.

Companies are allowed to pollute depending on the amount of vouchers they possess. The companies are allowed to trade and sell their vouchers to other companies. The vouchers were designed in order to regulate and reduce pollution in industries. There are two parts designed to reduce pollution. The

first part puts a cap on pollution by companies, the reason being is that companies will not go overboard and pollute as much as they want without having to pay for their future environmental complications. The second part was designed to persuade companies to develop cleaner forms of energy. Switching to cleaner forms of energy would get rid of the need for vouchers and other benefits would then be created.

However there are criticisms to the cap and trade system that companies make. One criticism is that it creates monopolies on the vouchers thus creating a monopoly on pollution levels. Big companies will begin to acquire all the vouchers leaving smaller companies unable to pollute and making them have to sell out to the larger companies. Bigger companies have more resources and can use them to their advantage. This allows them to merge all pollution levels and have control over particular industries. Another criticism is that vouchers will allow the government to have control over private industries. The government would have specific powers over companies and would allow them have their needs meet before the company. The government would also have control over who gets the vouchers and how many they can receive.

The Science of Comparative Politics

Many people believe that there isn't a science behind comparative politics, while others believe that there are legitimate reasons as to why and how comparative politics has its own scientific characteristics. There are many examples as to how comparative politics has a science behind it. I will provide a few examples that make comparative politics a science, such as

the research methods and how they are used to compare and contrast various state politics.

Comparative Politics is defined as the study of the domestic politics, political institutions, and conflicts of countries. Scholars have been studying politics among various regimes for centuries. Aristotle and Machiavelli were some of the first pioneers to study comparative politics so that they could gather information on the success and weaknesses of various governments throughout history as well as their own era's. As the years went by different methods were developed in order to better understand government institutions, and as people started to move around and create new governments around the world there was a focus shift from European countries to these new developing countries.

There was another shift in studying comparative politics, this time the focus was not to describe the type of governments that emerged but how they came about and the likelihood of that government entity to survive. As the governments developed and began to create different institutions, scholars were given more things to study and focus on. This brings about why there are people who do not believe comparative politics to be scientific. As is the case with other scientific forms of study, there are biases to research methods of comparative politics. Those that study comparative politics have their own beliefs and opinions and it comes out when researching a specific topic. The people who are studying and making observations are the ones who draw up the conclusions and facts. Their findings could be completely different from people who have different ideas, beliefs, and research methods and this could result in struggles over what actually happened or <https://assignbuster.com/concepts-of-politics-and-economics/>

what is really going on. This has similarities to other forms of scientific research. Scientists with different beliefs and research methods can come up with one idea and another scientist can come up with something opposite of what that person came up with. Scientist can choose to leave things out that they don't agree with, the same thing can and does happen in comparative politics. Scientists in all fields can determine what is said and they can use it to manipulate readers that are not informed on that specific topic; much like in politics where the public believes what politicians say even when they are not educated on that subject.

But quite possibly the biggest criticism as to why comparative politics is not a science is the material they have to work with. Politics is all historical in a sense, meaning that politics wasn't created in a lab rather it something that came about through hundreds of years of ruling and experience. Scientists have many forms of acquiring sources and information where as political scientists get their knowledge from historical events and past regimes. Gathering the information is harder for political scientists as well. They may not be granted access to some of the information they need or the truth could have been kept a secret from the rest of the world. By this I mean that past political regimes have kept some of their information a secret. An example of this was Russia after WWII; they did not fully disclose the death rate they faced after the war. Incidents like this make it harder on political scientists when they are trying to put the facts together. Another problem that political scientists have to deal with when arguing for their legitimacy is that they are limited with trials and errors. Scientists can have infinite trials to test their hypothesis; they simply have to create the experiment, test it,

and draw conclusions. Political scientists can only go by either past examples or current examples. Scientist can manipulate their experiments, political scientists can't. Scientists can have multiple tests where as political scientists have to go by assumptions.

Although it may seem as if political science is not an actual science there is a key part of it that makes it a science and that is that they follow the scientific method of research. Political scientists take the same steps that other scientists take when testing there research. They create a hypothesis as to why a certain political movement occurred in history, and how it affected that country and history. Afterwards they test their hypothesis, the same as any other experiment. The forms and methods they use to test their hypothesis are unlike other forms of science but they are still genuine forms of testing. They then come up with a conclusion of their hypothesis. Their conclusions are difficult to accept depending on your political views and own personal beliefs, but they are accurate in their own right. Political scientists follow the scientific method and prove that their field of science is in fact possible and legitimate.

Political science faces many of the same criticisms that other forms of science face. There are people that are biased against their beliefs. They have to perform experiments in order to test their hypothesis. They do extensive research on their topics and come up with the best possible answers they can. Political science is a science, even if there aren't laboratories and people in white coats doing the research

Advanced Democratic States

The greatest policy challenges that advanced democratic states face today have to deal with political institutions, societal institutions, and economic institutions. Advanced countries are having trouble getting former communist states or poorer states to become part of their union. They are also having trouble figuring out how to create social welfare. They are having problems with devolution. Advanced political institutions are struggling to keep the people happy.

In Europe the major problems they are facing are within the European Union. They are having difficulty with several things such as who to grant membership into the union, the currency system, patriotism, as well as fears within the society. Former communist states are having difficulty getting membership into the European Union due to their former governmental policies as well as their economic status. Their transition from communism to democracy has been a difficult one as they are switching from one form of government to a completely different one. Former communist states usually tend to be poorer than the older members of the union which brings up problems when deciding how to fund these governments. Some countries need more help than others and they don't produce as much wealth as the older members which create problems within the EU as to how much help and funds they should receive. Former members of the Soviet Union are not the only ones that are having trouble acquiring membership into the EU; countries with a Muslim background have also had problems gaining membership. Turkey has had difficulty because of their predominantly Muslim culture. Allowing predominantly Muslim cultures into the EU causes religious problems as well as societal fears. Predominately Christian states

within the EU fear that allowing Muslim states into the EU would result in religious turmoil as well as trigger a rise in terrorist threats. Christians fear that Muslims would outnumber them in members, and the society thinks that this would cause terrorist groups to upsurge. Membership is not the only problem the EU faces, currency is always a problem no matter what. The Euro has been an idea that most EU members prefer but that others do not want. The euro was suggested in order to create a type of currency that would help bring EU members closer as well as create a reserve currency that would have international backing. But some countries such as the United Kingdom and Sweden have refused to join the monetary system because they see it as a loss of sovereignty; which brings up another problem and that is patriotism. Some members of the EU feel as if they are losing their identity, they feel as if they are all merging into one and are losing their cultural identity.

Other advanced nations, such as the US face many of the same problems as the EU. The US, EU, and advanced countries all over the world are having to deal with social policies that are designed to help out its people. The US faces difficulties with its welfare programs as to who gets them and how much they are entitled to. Many advanced countries see the importance of helping out the lower class so that they may decrease the levels of poverty but also get more people contributing to society in big ways. However some feel that the social policies are not working and that many people are not giving back to society. The poor are not the only ones that get to benefit from these programs. Social security was a program designed to help out the elderly population of the US. It's a program that has helped many, but due to

the ever increasing population of the elderly as well as the life expectancy rate continuing to increase, programs such as social security will be affected in major ways. The US is not the only country that is facing this problem; other advanced countries such as Japan have to deal with lower rates of birth and higher elderly populations. If this continues to happen many advanced populations will start to see a decrease in population. Immigration would seem to be the solution to this problem, but many countries fear and dislike immigration as they feel like immigration would cause cultures to lose their identity to assimilation. Immigration is something that all advanced societies face and it is something that causes problem within the state. Fear of overpopulation, assimilation, and racial prejudices prevent immigration from growing.

Globalization would fix some of the problems that advanced democracies face, however it will not fix all of them. Globalization could fix both racial fears and patriotism. Globalization is a process of international integration arising from the exchange of world views, meaning that countries around the world are communicating, trading, and exchanging personal views. This would obviously ease some of the fears of assimilation that many people think are bad. This could also put a dent in racial prejudices that are faced around the world. Globalization could possibly encourage immigration allow for vast integration of cultures and views. Globalization could possibly help the EU with establishing the euro within all of its members. Globalization calls for many countries to come together which could possibly lead to a rise in the need for a single unit of currency. Globalization will not fix all of the problems such as the complications that are involved with welfare programs.

It won't stop life expectancy from growing, it won't stop poverty, it won't end violence, but it could bring countries closer together and could lead to the solutions to some of the problems that advanced democracies face.