What do you understand by politics politics essay

Understanding the term politics may be more complicated than it may first appear. To be more specific the right answer for the definition of politics can vary due to the fact that the term can be defined in several conflicting ways. On one hand, some people define politics as a greedy battle for power while some believe that politics is a way by which one individual takes in the hankering of his own community into achievement. Regardless of the two opposing views several authors have managed to define politics on a common ground. For example Peter Joyce defines politics as " the study of the behaviour of individuals within a group context" (Joyce 2010: 1), similarly a definition of politics was given by Andrew Heywood in which he explains politics " as the activity through which people make, preserve and amend the general rules under which they live" (Heywood 1997: 4). Therefore because there isn't a single definition of politics the purpose of this essay is to use political concepts to further elaborate the term politics and give the reader a better understanding. The following concepts which will be used to better your understanding of the term politics in this essay are: power, conflict, consensus and art of government.

To begin with the several political concepts mentioned above for the better understanding of the term politics we shall first of all look into politics in form of power.

POLITICS AS POWER: Power in a political analysis is usually " thought of as a relationship which is the ability to influence the behaviour of others in a manner not of their choosing" (Heywood 2000: 35). As given example by Andrew Heywood he explains that power only appears when one person

makes another individual to do anything they might not have interest into(Heywood 2000: 35).

Likewise from Peter Joyce point of view he sees politics in the form of power to be more of a " relationship between two parties in which one has the ability to compel the other to undertake a course of action involuntarily" (Joyce 2000: 7).

The nature of power is an important matter when it comes to politics, due to that we shall Identity the three different dimensions or faces of power, which are power as decision making, power as agenda setting and power as thought control.

Power as decision making: This type of dimension of power consists of a certain plan that may alter the content of decisions (Heywood 1997: 11). This approach is comparable to the idea of mechanical or physical power. This indicates that power involves the pushed or pulled against ones intention. Influencing decision itself has been categorized into three ways by Keith Boulding where there is the " use of force or intimidation (the stick), productive exchange involving mutual gain (the deal) and lastly the loyalty and commitment (the kiss)" (Heywood 2000: 36).

Power as agenda setting: Secondly is the dimension of power which was advocated by Bachrach and Baratz in the year 1962. These faces of power possess the skill to deny any decision from being made. (Heywood 2000: 36)

Power as thought control: lastly but not the least of all dimensions of power, is the face of power which is used to influence the wants and need of

individuals. This face of power is important due to the fact that it highlights the impact of ideology (Heywood 2000: 36).

Talking more on the concepts of politics, this essay will now move on to politics as consensus.

POLITICS AS CONSENSUS: The term consensus itself means general agreement and when it comes to politics as consensus it is more towards the way in which decisions are made. As said by Andrew Heywood " politics is seen as a particular means of resolving conflict" (Heywood 2007: 9). What this author is basically saying is that in politics we have to agree to disagree on both terms instead of enforcing power. This concept of politics is implied when politics is portrayed as " the art of the possible" similarly an interesting definition of politics which relates to this concept of politics was given by Bernard Crick in which he says " Politics is the activity by which differing interest within a given unit rule are conciliated by giving them a share in power in proportion to their importance to the welfare and the survival of the whole community" (Crick 2000: 21), well from the above point of view given by Crick he says that the key to politics is therefore a wide dispersal of power. Crick further elaborates his definition by adding that politics can also be portrayed as " that solution to the problem of order which chooses conciliation rather than violence and coercion" (Crick 2000: 30). A view towards his explanation shows more of a belief that society is characterized by consensus rather than irreconcilable conflict (Heywood 2007: 10)

This concept of politics has a great importance because as we all know politics is certainly no utopian solution but instead of having a military

solution for a problem which is more of a use of bloodshed and brutality approach we can use this concept of politics to have a solution which is by a better harmonious debate. (Heywood 2007: 10). I believe in this manner we can take politics to be more of a civilized and a civilizing force.

Lastly even if one agrees to accept it or not, consensus is necessary in our professional arrangement it can't be effectual without the use of consensus. (Jones 1981: 160)

Next on the list of political concepts we may now look into politics as an act of government.

POLITICS AS AN ACT OF GOVERNMENT: To be more specific into the definition given by all these great authors we will see that politics is not much of a science but an art. Bismarck himself believed that his way of politics was more of an arts not science and he then elaborates his clause by saying that " it is more of the exercise of control within the society through the making and enforcement of collective decisions". (Heywood 2007: 5). To me right here I believe this is a classical definition of politics. Either way definitions of politics as an art were given by various philosophers. One was by the French philosopher Paul Janet in which he states that " political science is that part of social science which treats the foundation of the state and principles of government", similarly a definition was given by David Easton a former US political scientist which he says " politics is an authoritative allocation of values". By this he is saying that politics is surrounded by many processes through which our government answer to the

burden from citizens, to be more exact by distributing rewards, benefits or penalties. (Heywood 2007: 5)

As we all know states carry out all of its activity through the government. It main burden stays on the machinery and personnel of government. The basic thing about politics is to study politics we basically have to study about the government. (Heywood 2007: 5).

A major disadvantage of this concept and definition of politics is that it shows a sectional look into politics. Thereby it affects the percentage of people trying to be in the government as well as people trying to influence politics. This makes many citizens and firms as being considered as outside politics. . (Heywood 2007: 5).

Lastly from all of the above concepts is Politics as conflict. In this particular concept I believe that it may vary from countries and region around the world. This is due to the fact that some countries have one dominating religion; it could be Islam or Christianity. So from my basic point of view I selected a country with nearly an equal percentage of both religion to further explain the term politics using " politics as conflict" as a concept. Even though I have used only religion to be the key of variation I keen to think that they are other issues that may do so as well.