



# TOPIC-POLITICAL THEORY MEANING AND APPROACHES

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# POLITICAL THEORY: MEANING, DEFINITIONS

- To understand the meaning of political theory first we need to know what does the word theory means?
- **What is theory?**
- **Origin --Greek word Theoria.**
- Theory means atleast ,may mean a well focussed mental outlook taken at something in a state of contemplation with the intention of grasping or understanding it.

# NATURE OF POLITICAL THEORY

- Political theory is considered as the basis and branch of political science which attempts to arrive at generalizations, inferences, or conclusions to be drawn from the data gathered by other specialists, not only in political science, but throughout the whole range of human knowledge and experience.
- Political theory reflects upon political phenomenon, processes and institutions and on actual political behaviour by subjecting it to philosophical or ethical criterion
- The theories are the results of thoughts and research of many scholars and exponents of political science.
- Thinkers on the subject formulate definitions of various political concepts and establish theories.



# explained the nature of political theory.

**David Held described that** "Political theory is a network of concepts and generalizations about political life involving ideas, assumptions and statements about the nature, purpose and key features of government, state and society, and about the political capabilities of human beings."

**According to Andrew Hacker,** "Political Theory is a combination of a disinterested search for the principles of good state and good society on the one hand, and a disinterested search for knowledge of political and social reality on the other."

**Another theorists, Norman Barry** defined that “Political theory is an electric subject which draws upon a variety of disciplines. There is no body of knowledge or method of analysis which can be classified as belonging exclusively to political theory.“

**According to Sabine**, „Political theory is, quite simply, man's attempts to consciously understand and solve the problems of his group life and organization. It is the disciplined investigation of political problems not only to show what a political practice is, but also to show what it means. In showing what a practice means, or what it ought to mean, political theory can alter what it is.

# What do these definitions tell us about Political Theory?

**The above definitions indicate the following:**

1. The area in which political theory works extends to the realms of politics only-political life of a citizen, his political behaviour, his political ideas, the thought he establishes and the tasks the government performs
2. The methods, which political theory applies, include description, explanation, and investigation of any political phenomenon.
3. Though political theory is all about what is "political", yet it attempts to understand "political" in relation to "social", "economic", "psychological", "ecological", "historical", "moral" and the like.



4. The object of political theory is to ultimately build a good state in a good society and in the process create processes, procedures, institutions and structures, that are historically tested and rationally attuned.
5. As a body of thought, political theory seeks to explain, evaluate, and predict political phenomena, and in the process build not only scientifically testable models but suggest value as rules of human conduct
6. Political theory is both prescriptive as well as explanatory. Political theory is, thus, an overview of what the political order is all about. It is a symbolic representation of what is "political". It is a formal, logical, and systematic analysis of the processes and consequences of political activity. It is analytical, expository, and explanatory.