

WEEK 1

Comparative politics is one of the subfield of politic science and it is 'the study of domestic politics in countries around the world' (Loxton, 2017). The aim of is to explain **variation**, why do some countries have X variable (democracy, high economic development, ethnic conflict, etc) while others do not.

Dependent variable (DV) is the outcome we want to explain. While **independent variable** (IV), also known as explanatory/causal variable is the hypothesized cause of DV

Comparative method, Mill suggests there are 2 ways in which two or more countries can be compared. **Method of difference** (or "most similar cases" comparison) 'we look at countries that are very similar but differ on the outcome we want to explain'. **Method of agreement** (or "most different cases" comparison) 'we look at cases that are completely different but agree on the dependent variable. Both methods are quite limiting as it is difficult to find two or more cases that fit the criteria.

There are two types of comparisons, **longitudinal** which is comparing the same country in different time periods of time and **subnational** comparisons, comparing states, provinces, etc. of same country). This then can then be either a **Small-N analyses**, which only studies a small number of cases but it studies them in depth (qualitative) or **large-N analyses**, compares a large number cases to find patterns between cause and effect (quantitative).

Classical theoretical approaches:

1. **Economic approach** (e.g., Marxism and modernization theory) suggest that the economy of a country shapes the political system
 2. **Cultural approach**, people's ideas and values affects their behavior as culture is a cognitive lens that shapes how we view the world.
 3. **Institutionalism**, institutions are the rules and the organizations that shape political life and it matters how the political 'game' is played
- Structuralism** emphasizes on deeply rooted social factors (i.e. economic and cultural approach) they tend to give little credit to human agency. While **voluntarism** is the complete opposite, individual leaders and the decisions they make are crucial to the outcome.

WEEK 2

State, a set of permanent administrative, legal and coercive systems that maintain a monopoly over the legitimate use of force in a given territory (i.e. army, police, taxation office, 'the bureaucracy'). A **regime** is a set of rules and procedures by which political power is allocated and exercised, it is also known as 'the political