Refurbishing the curriculum for Political Science course

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ABSTRACT

Political science is an old subject and has been in existence for many decades now. There are several considerations that need to be borne in mind for refurbishing the domain of Political Science. Political Science curriculum needs to include many new dimensions and in this sense, the present study seeks to present three new domains to the realm of Political Science. Specifically, the three domains are related with the appreciation of "Politics of Sports", "Politics of Culture" and "Politics of Cinema". These three domains shall enrich the Political Science curriculum in a major way. Hitherto, academic research on different fields of Political Science has been on the rise. However, academic interest to appreciate the developments in the environment and to incorporate the same in the mainstream education has been wanting. The present study seeks to provide a background of the three domains and rounds up with pointers for further research and practitioner implications.

Keywords: Political Science, curriculum, Politics of Sports, Politics of Culture, Politics of Cinema

INTRODUCTION

In the humanities and social sciences courses, or what we now understand as liberal arts, different disciplines exist and each of these disciplines have their unique attributes. Thus, disciplines like History, Economics, Sociology, Political Science, Literature, Psychology, Anthropology, etc. have differentiation in themselves and off themselves in the sense that they have branches and sub-branches and the inter-disciplinary nature of these subjects makes them cross-pollinate in other streams, including the natural sciences. As an important course, Political Science has emerged on the fore about hundred decades back and come of age now (Oren, 2014). It is time that in keeping with the requirements of the present and the future times, the domain of Political Science undergo some radical shifts to become more equipped to address three things: ability to meet the challenges of the government and citizens to provide a more holistic environment, multi-disciplinary approach and the ability to meet the job market needs. In this vein, the present study seeks to provide changes in the mainstream Political Science education by introducing three branches: Politics of Sports, Politics of Culture and Politics of Cinema. The present study shall progress as follows: following a brief on what Political Science is, the paper shall progress further to understand how the three new additions to the subject shall be advantageous. Thereafter, academic and practitioner implications shall constitute the tail-end of the study.

Background

Political Science has been described as the study of the State and Government (Michael, 2015). It encapsulates the study of citizens in their capacity of performing the civic duties of voting as well (Isaac, 2015). Political Science is delineated into several branches like Political History, Political Psychology, Political Communication, Political Sociology, Political Economy and the like. There are other domains linked with Political Science like Constitutional Studies, Public Administration, Democracy, Technology and Government, and the like. As a discipline, it has been maintained that Aristotle is the Father of Political Science and the contribution of Woodrow Wilson is acknowledged in the American domain. Political Science was first introduced in the curriculum of the American universities and later the discipline spread like wild fire across other parts of the globe (Mershon & Walsh, 2016). Dedicated departments came to be established for furthering the growth and development of Political Science.

Over a period of time, the subject has witnessed a churn in the sense that different disciplines are attempting a cross-pollination of ideas (Elman, Kapiszewski & Lupia, 2018). For instance, the domains of Natural Sciences like Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, etc. are also being linked with Political Science. For instance, the innovations across these disciplines involve the release of patents and the same are reflected in the political backing and support of the innovators and patent filers. Whereas that would be a separate research idea, it needs to be mentioned that advances in such interdisciplinary format are also being witnessed among and within the social sciences themselves, including areas like media studies, journalism, hospitality management, law and management. It is the proposition of the present study that Political Science curriculum needs to be upgraded and for this purpose, novel additions are to be made by including strands from other disciplines. In line with the aforesaid, the purpose of the present study is to appreciate the inclusion of three new domains in the realm of Political Science, viz., Politics of Sports, Politics of Culture and Politics of Cinema.

Politics of Sports

This is the first domain that the researchers would like to introduce in the Political Science domain. Right from the time when the individual develops a liking for sports, sports psychology comes to the fore. Similarly, the establishment of alliances and leagues like the Chelsea, Premier League tournaments etc. are also political in nature and scope given the involvement of different political leaders and their countries in line with their policies for sports and the resources earmarked for the same. Politics of Sports would look into the implications of player purchase and auctions that take place across range of sports. Further, it would also look into the organization and structure of the major institutions meant for the promotion and furthering of sports like the Sports Authority of India (SAI), etc. Furthermore, the organization of events and contests for the sports is also an area where political leaders are involved and this should be captured in the Political Science syllabus.

Politics of Culture

This domain shall veer around the appreciation of culture wherein politics is involved. For instance, the arrangement of different cultural events involves the participation of different countries and this means that governments shall be involved in the choice of events and also the choice of venue and programmes. There have been instances wherein some countries' representatives are banned from participating in another country's events and contests and this leads to major complications in the

relationships between the states. Likewise, Politics of Culture shall include the aspects such as dance forms, theatre, music, etc. which shall go a long way in understanding how these formats build or spoil the political relations between the countries. Finally, the written forms of culture in the sense of the civilization and history have been studied politically from long- case in point being the Jerusalem site or that of Mecca wherein the countries vie with one another regarding the jurisdiction and significance of the sites for their citizens.

Politics of Cinema
Politics of Cinema is a novel domain to be included in the realm of Political Science. In this domain, the intersection of cinema shall be seen vis-à-vis Political Science. It is commonplace to witness the movies – mainstream and parallel- that movies veering around political themes are in the fore. For instance, there are movies with the plot delving into the issues of corruption, nepotism, lack of transparency and trust in administration, etc. There are movies basing their theme on the life and legacy of the political leaders as well. Some political leaders have led a tainted life with their leadership style and mutilated vision for the country, others have been optimistic enough with trails of reforms for the country. Movies on wars and conflicts and the sacrifices made by the people and soldiers have been made. Also, movies on the sacrifices of the freedom fighters have also been made. Thus, Politics of Cinema would be able to appreciate how the political leaders, administrators, freedom fighters, etc. have contributed towards the cause of their country. Students will watch these movies and come up with their analysis of the visuals and characters. Politics of Cinema would also deal with case studies of leaders, administrators, patriots, etc. and prompt the students to come up with novel solutions regarding the new themes and ideas for forthcoming movies.

Conclusion
Political Science is a burgeoning subject and the subject involves a study of political cultures and climate alongside a study of the governments and states that are the main constituents of the subject (Jung, 2019). As such, it involves a study of the territory, sovereignty, population and government and all these four elements are investigated in myriad forms. Political Science began with the evolution of man himself and the subject cannot be complete without appreciating the crisscross of different ideas related with the politics of the day. Different domains in Social Sciences and Natural Sciences have worked together to bring a holistic outlook for Political Science. In this vein, the present study sought to appreciate the manner in which three domains of culture, sports and cinema may intersect with Political Science to result in three domains of Political Science. The broad contours of the three domains were investigated in the present study and it may be deduced that these three domains shall provide a nuanced approach to the study of Political Science. Students shall benefit from understanding the manner in which these domains would be catering to their employability needs as well. Besides leaning heavily on case studies, it is hoped that the three domains shall provide an analytical outlook to understand the implications of the three domains for their purpose. Further research is warranted to appreciate how the other domains linked with social sciences, law, liberal arts, management, natural sciences, etc. may be useful to be crafted as domains of Political Science. For instance, perspectives from relevant stakeholders may be taken to appreciate the manner in which Political Science may be studied from the lens of English Literature. Thus, the writings in literature veering around political themes may be studied as a separate fringe

of Political Science. Likewise, further research is warranted in order to appreciate the manner in which pedagogical tools need to be improvised for launching the novel domains in Political Science discipline. Finally, further research may be conducted to analyze the differences in the reception of students towards the three domains of Political Science in different contexts.

As far as the practitioner implications are concerned, it may be pointed out that the educationists need to understand if the Political Science curriculum needs an upgrade from the top-down or bottom-up levels. Thus, it would be worthwhile to understand if the schools should also have a differentiation of Political Science domains. Policies need to be made to understand if all the mainstream disciplines may be studied in terms of their intersections. Faculty members stand to gain from the launch of the three domains of Political Science as identified in this research paper in the sense that they would be better able to know how the syllabus needs to be tailor-made for the needs of students hailing from different backgrounds. Likewise, faculty members can conceive of novel methods of teaching the three domains and others as well for driving home the concepts of Political Science. Lastly, parents can appreciate the need for such domains to further the chances of employability of their children.

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