**The significance of individual level of analysis in Political science**

Student Name

Institution

Course

Instructor

Due Date

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**Introduction**

Thinking of multiple levels of analysis in international relations, it is important to keep in mind that the observer or analyst may choose to concentrate on the entire system as a whole, various system components that are interacting, or a few system components in particular. Again, it depends on your point of view what constitutes the system's sections or components. The global system can be associating states, groups of states, organizations, societies, or people both within and outside of those societies as a whole. System, state, and individual are the three levels of analysis that international relations often distinguishes between, however group level analysis should also be taken into consideration as a fourth level. We must be certain of our main areas of interest if we hope to use the level of analysis as an analytical tool.

When discussing a specific theme or issue pertaining to the 'international' sphere, we must first define for ourselves what it is precisely that we wish to look at. Choices have a greater impact on an organization's success and the wellbeing of the individuals involved, so we hope we can take a step back and consider everything going on in order to make the greatest decision possible. What we do can be greatly impacted by how we "diagnose" what we see and feel.

Individual-level analysis identifies the root cause of an event to an individual executive or immediate circle of decision-makers in a particular country. It focuses on humans on the world stage who identify the characteristics of human decision-making. At the individual level, the actions and decisions of people in governmental and non-governmental positions are examined, their beliefs, fears and character. In the individual level of analysis, group and organizational events are explained in terms of the characteristics or actions of a single person. Style, personality, and nature are terms used to describe this level. Organizational life is dominated by personal explanations. Most people in organizations begin their explanations with something personal, such as an inept supervisor, subordinate, or peer. On the other hand, the system level encompasses the global system as a whole and deals with issues such as the distribution of political power, economic systems, global governance (international organizations, laws, norms), and the spread of technology. It is also important to consider how these factors create conditions that structurally affect other levels. There are certain conditions under which individual analytical layers can provide unique insights. Below are the three examples;

1. **Processes for making decisions:** Investigating the individual level of analysis can offer insightful information on state activities by looking at the methods used by influential members of the leadership or government. The intentions and justifications for some state actions can be revealed through comprehending the personal views, values, and cognitive biases of decision-makers. For example, researching the individual-level analyses of political figures like Adolf Hitler or Mao Zedong enables us to comprehend how their ideology and personal goals influenced governmental policies and initiatives, such as the start of World War II or the Great Leap Forward in China. Analyzing people’s decision-making processes in political settings can reveal important information about the motives, preferences, and cognitive biases that influence political outcomes. The importance of researching individual decision-making processes can be seen in the following ways:

* Understanding policy results: Decision-making procedures directly influence policy results. Political scientists can better understand why particular policies are adopted or rejected by looking at the individual-level elements that affect decision-making, such as personal beliefs, values, and experiences. For instance, examining a president’s or important policymaker’s decision-making process can shed light on their priorities, ideologies, and strategic considerations, all of which influence the policies they implement.
* Explaining political behavior : Analyzing decision-making at the individual level can be used to explain how politicians, bureaucrats, and other political players operate under certain situations. Researchers can offer light on why politicians act in particular ways by looking at the elements that affect decision-making, such as electoral pressures, interest group influence, or personal goals. Foreseeing and describing political action and its effects, this understanding is essential.
* Finding cognitive biases: Cognitive biases frequently have a role in decision-making at the individual level and have a big influence on policy decisions. Heuristics, emotions, or societal pressures can all lead to cognitive biases, which are systematic departures from making rational decisions. These biases, such as availability bias, confirmation bias, and groupthink, can be found and taken into consideration by looking at decision-making at the individual level.

1. **Transitions in leadership:** When there is a change in leadership, it is important to understand how the new leader’s priorities, experiences, and personality may influence state activities at the individual level. It is possible to learning more about new leaders’ preferred policies and tactical stances by looking at their particular traits. For instance, after Joseph Stalin’s death, the individual level of analysis aided in understanding how the various ideologies and leadership philosophies of the Soviet Union’s succeeding leaders, such as Nikita Khrushchev and Mikhail Gorbachev, influenced state activities. Political science heavily emphasizes leadership transitions, and while examining these transitions, individual analysis is vital. Political scientists and analysts focus on the study of leadership transitions to understand the dynamics and impact of changes in leadership within political systems. Here are some important things to think about:

* Changes in leadership denote a change in the balance of power within a political system. Political scientists can analyze how power is redistributed and how it affects the political landscape by looking at specific leaders, their backgrounds, and political ideologies. This analysis aids in comprehending potential adjustments to governance, policy, and decision-making that could result from new leadership.
* Policy Shifts: Leadership changes frequently result in changes to policies and priorities. It is helpful to predict and evaluate possible policy changes by doing an individual analysis of leaders. Political scientists can predict leaders’ policy preferences and the probable impact on local and international issues by researching their views, values, and prior deeds. Understanding the distinctions and affinities between departing and incoming leaders offers insightful information on policy convergence or divergence.

1. **Analyzing Human Behavior in Crisis Situations:** Understanding individual-level reactions and behaviors becomes essential during crises like pandemics and natural catastrophes. Understanding how people think about risks, make decisions, and deal with difficult situations can help policymakers and those developing remedies. For instance, studying individual responses to a disease outbreak might reveal trends in adherence or non-adherence to public health recommendations, which can help drive focused communications campaigns.

Political science must examine how people behave in crisis situations, and the individual level of study is vital to comprehending and interpreting these behaviors. Here’s why it's crucial:

* Decision-Making and Crisis Leadership: During a crisis, political leaders must make important choices that could have broad repercussions. Researchers can learn more about how leadership styles and personal attributes affect crisis management techniques by examining the traits of individual leaders, their decision-making processes, and their responses during crises. This approach aids in determining how well political leaders manage crises, comprehending their biases in making decisions, and forecasting their behavior in upcoming crisis circumstances.
* Crises frequently elicit powerful emotional reactions from the general public and influence perception. Understanding how individuals perceive and respond to various crisis occurrences requires an in-depth study of individual-level behavior. Political scientists can gauge public sentiment, forecast changes in public opinion, and comprehend how these individual-level responses shape political dynamics both during and after a crisis by looking at factors like risk perception, information processing, and emotional reactions at the individual level. Policymakers can use this knowledge to create efficient crisis communication plans and control public expectations.

In conclusion, when analyzing decision-making procedures, leadership changes, and examining human behaviour in crisis, the individual level of study can offer valuable insights into state activities. We can better understand why states act in particular ways and forecast their likely future behaviors by analyzing the human traits, motivations, and cognitive aspects of key persons.The individual level of analysis has its own significance and gives distinct viewpoints, even while the unit and system levels of analysis offer insightful understandings of collective phenomena in political science. Political scientists can better comprehend complex phenomena like crisis management, leadership philosophies, shifts in public opinion, and social movements by looking at the traits, behaviors, and decision-making processes of particular people. The individual level of analysis improves our comprehension of the role that people play in political processes by offering subtle insights that help with better policymaking, strategic decision-making, and outcome prediction. Therefore, for a thorough knowledge of political occurrences, the person level of analysis must be included in addition to the unit and system levels.

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