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# **MASTER THESIS**

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**Political Leadership Performance and Style of British  
Premiership (1979-1997): Case Study of Margaret Thatcher  
(1979-1990) and John Major (1990-1997)**

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## **Dedication**

To my restless parents who believed in me more than myself, my dynamic siblings who make my life eventful; and my younger aunt who motivates me. My friends Amina, Fatiha, Latifa, Hadjer and Safa who constantly help me get through rough times; and lastly to my lost girl who is trying to find her purpose in life.

All of whom I appreciate their existence and cherish. Love you!

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## **Abstract**

The British political leadership performance has been subject to debate among political scientists and historians alike and critics ever since the 1940s. Much of the literature focuses on American presidency's leadership and decision-making process which was given worldly attention; additionally, the 'exceptional' nature of Margaret Thatcher's 'uncompromising' approach to governance generated a debate about leadership style and the importance of leadership personality onto the general British polity. The notion owing to the progress of the assessment of political leadership and comparative political leadership for leaders is the importance of decision making in today's global politics. Prime ministers are usually rated upon their policy decision-making and leadership. Nevertheless, a critical and scientific assessment is needed, and various scholars have contributed to the present literature to the methodological evaluation of successful elite leader. This research aims to inspect the nature of leadership style and political performance of two British Prime Ministers, Margaret Thatcher (1978-1990) and John Major (1990-1997). Moreover, it questions the success nature of John Major and Margaret Thatcher's premierships. Furthermore, it considers the contribution of Greenstein's *Presidential Difference* (2000) to assess political leadership in Britain. Thus, this research follows a comparative method in the sense that it deals with the process of comparing their circumstances, policy-making, authority and influence. Moreover, the research relies on content analysis of the available biographies, leadership assessment documents and their relevant primary and secondary sources. The research finds that the current assessment methods undermine the achievements of the British leaders since they did not give the appropriate significance to circumstances; however, they did provide a valid investigation with the existing available.

**Keywords:** Prime Minister, Political Leadership, Leadership Performance, Margaret Thatcher, John Major

## **List of Abbreviations**

EMU	Economic and Monetary Union
ERM	Exchange Rate Mechanism
EU	European Union
IGC	Intergovernmental Conference
IR	Irish Republican Army
N 10	Number 10 Downing street whitehall 'Prime Minister's Office'
PCP	Parliamentary Conservative Party
PM	Prime Minister
PMQs	Prime Minister's Questions
UK	United Kingdom
VAT	Value-Added Tax

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## General Introduction

Ever since the existence of leadership, various writers, thinkers and politicians attempted to write about it to have a better understanding of it. The definition of leadership varies according to the position or the author's views; since they have yet to agree on a fundamental definition. Leaders are viewed by the public and judged by their exterior appearance and achievements, Aristotle focuses on the trio trajectory which are Ethos, Pathos and Logos and discusses the making of a leader based on them. On the other hand Machiavelli puts emphasis on the position of power where he highlights two elements which are *virtu* and *fortuna* of leaders and justifies according to their talent in handling the surrounding situation. Some are inherent traits and others are accumulated through experience and vision. From the perspective of Weber, the position of authority is the most important for leadership where he stresses the need for followers' and public's endorsement; since they give him the authority to act and manage.

In recent years, the idea of comparative political leadership emerged and as an attempt to conceptualize it. There is a need to outline the debated meaning of leadership for the appropriate context as to advance to the notion of political leadership, the role of the Prime Minister is essential in comparative political leadership as to justify the need for it in our research. Certain authors such as Hennessy, Greenstein, Bell, Theakston and Skowronek developed a model in which it enables the United States to assess leadership from a methodological perspective. Each model is based on a certain boundary, such as the contextual or historical approach.

The proposed research attempts to discuss the assessment of Margaret Thatcher and John Major based on the six criteria of Greenstein's. It tackles the biography to have a more  
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understanding of the circumstances and leadership style that identifies their image, and lastly their assessment with a comparative element. It concentrates on the assessment of their political leadership; thus, this research intends to provide an answer for the research question below:

How British Prime Ministerial tenure was assessed as to rate Thatcher as successful and Major as ineffective failure? This question provokes three subsidiary questions:

1. What are the differing factors that involve the making of a leader?
2. How is John Major a failed Prime Minister and Thatcher a successful Prime Minister?
3. Does personal characteristics and number of policies relate to the formula of a successful tenure?

This research aims to provide a theoretical framework of previous and existing literature; furthermore, it examines the way the two successive Conservative prime ministers, Margaret Thatcher (1979–90) and John Major (1990–97). Finally, it seeks to highlight the essence of contribution that their similarities and differences provided for the British polity.

This research sheds light on the roots of leadership, since it is the stepping stone for the comparative political leadership. Moreover, provide a background that assists students interested in British politics to recognize the significance of political leadership and the need for re-assessment. More importantly, major's tenure has often been characterized as being weak and incompetent compared to thatcher's and we are here to examine this claim

This research bases upon the comparative method; considering that it deals with the social context and human experience of a specific group. Under this light, it rely on the alumna interviews and biographies. Furthermore, it analyzes existing literature relevant to

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the research topic and variables and provide an account of critics' perspectives of the analyzed documents. Since the research topic emphasizes British politics, it requires the observation of previous cabinet staff or related individuals in the political realm, journalists or political analyst.

This study has potential limitations. First, with the choice of Prime Ministers, the research fails to analyze every aspect relevant to the problem in detail, seeing as we are discussing the psyche of human beings who are constantly changing. Furthermore, we could not get access to most of the documents and it needs more time and effort to analyze and process the information. Thus, these flaws can constitute the base of a future extended research.

The presented research is divided into three sections; the first being a theoretical framework, the second and third are a biographical background and analytical assessment, with a comparative element. The first part is a theoretical and a conceptual framework that aims to provide a detailed philosophical background and assessment models. Additionally, the first chapter defines leadership as well as political leadership and highlights the concept of comparative political leadership. The second and third chapters are a biographical background check for significant influences and key events with an analytical assessment. This part discusses leadership based on six criteria.

# **Chapter One: Theoretical and Conceptual Framework of Political Leadership and Performance**

1. Introduction
2. Classical Theories on Leadership
  - 2.1.The Art of Rhetoric
  - 2.2.The Prince
  - 2.3.Theory of Social and Economic Organizations
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  - 4.3.Bell, Hargrove & Theakston (1999): Skills in Context a Comparison of Politics
  - 4.4.Hennessy, P. (2000) The Prime Minister
5. Conclusion

## **1.1.Introduction**

This chapter is an attempt to provide a fixed theoretical and conceptual account about political leadership and its assessment which the coming chapters are based upon. Its aim is to highlight the major models of evaluation and their basic concepts, psychological, contextual and historical. Considering that the classical and contemporary theories had their own evaluation of leadership, the assessment models are more detailed.

Inevitably, this chapter gives an overall view of political leadership as the cornerstone of our research. Furthermore, it is important to recall the history of leadership and its philosophical nature, as well as introduce its subfields. Since the research tackles. To assess the political leadership of certain figures, referring to assessment models is significant. Therefore, this chapter briefly discusses theoretical framework of leadership and its evaluation methods.

## **1.2.Classical Theories on leadership**

The Art of Rhetoric, The Prince, and Weber's The Theory of Social and Economic Organizations are fundamental theories that entail the essential characteristics for the making a leader; their views refer to the use of the self for political purposes that befit a comparative structure.

### **1.2.1. Aristotle's *Art of Rhetoric***

Aristotle Aristotle had various writings on politics. He collected a number of proofs that serve as a necessity for any leader to possess in order to convince his audience. For example, Aristotle's The Art of Rhetoric makes a meaningful contribution to our research on leadership style. The three rhetorical techniques that outline the book consist of Ethos (the person), pathos

(use of emotion), and logos (use of logic) proofs. Those techniques are relevant to our analysis since it highlights the nature of communication and the charisma of public leadership. (Lahel 18)

Moreover, Aristotle links Ethos, the first rhetorical proof, to the persuasive appeal of one's character. **“Proofs from character are produced, whenever a speech is given in such a way as to render the speaker worthy of credence,”** according to him, **“we [the audience] more readily and sooner believe reasonable men on all matters in general and absolutely on questions where precision is impossible and two views can be maintained”** To clarify, character produces arguments to persuade people, whenever a speech is given in a way that makes the speaker gain the audience's faith reliance –which means to consider the relevant issues, question the information and assumptions used, and assessed whether the analysis provided by their counter-part is reasonable with the right characteristics— since the audience prefers reasonable and wise men in all matters without a shred of speculation (Aristotle 74-5)

Moreover, Aristotle stresses two determinants: to be middle-aged “men” who own an elite status as in positive ancestral background/history that comes with wealth and power. Therefore, to him, the “morale credence” is set on age and social status. However, even if we maintain his characterization of Ethos, Aristotle's explanation could be modified to suit modern grounds. As an illustration, the speaker's age, background, and personal/ political orientation are significant and encapsulate the orator's individual character or context performance. (Lahel 19-20)

Furthermore, the second proof is pathos, which indicates “the power of emotions” that influences people's minds when it comes to making a judgment about a particular claim; the latter are accepted based on emotional persuasion without proper analysis (Aristotle 141). It is the speaker's skill to sway, stimulate, direct, and generate emotions of the audience to persuade or convince them of an idea, opinion, or belief. Nowadays, politicians use various manipulative techniques while delivering their speeches, such as biblical references, analogies and metaphors,

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and emotionally charged words, as well as a variety of other techniques: Epizeuxis<sup>1</sup> , Epanalepsis<sup>2</sup> , and other rhetorical questions. (20)

The third rhetorical proof is Logos. It appeals to reason and rational argument; it is the attraction to one's intellect through the argument itself since logical arguments are not easily dismissed. Aristotle states that speech is the way to obtain proof, especially when we demonstrate either a real or apparent persuasive aspect of each particular matter (Aristotle 75).

Aristotle's triptych of rhetorical proofs is relevant to our research on contemporary political leadership as it showcases the use of rhetoric in the public sphere in order to use it as a political tool in public leadership. Also, Aristotle stresses the importance of moral credence, which signifies a persuasive character. Hence, to modernize this theory, referring to a number of leadership-oriented characteristics such as policy vision, judgment, articulation of vision, decisiveness, and relationship with the followers is only necessary. (Lahel 30)

### **1.2.2. Machiavelli's *The prince***

Machiavelli, a political theorist, wrote his first work of modern philosophy focusing on political philosophy, a political discourse called *The Prince* published in 1532; it is a 16th-century political discourse that adds to leadership concept. He attempts to frame how leaders should govern their territories and simultaneously maintain their political power through various

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<sup>1</sup> The definition of epizeuxis is the repetition of a word or phrase in quick succession. This rhetorical device, also known as "palilogia," is designed to add increased emphasis or vehemence to the repeated word or phrase. Epizeuxis comes from the Greek word epizeugnumi, which means "fastening together." ("Understanding Epizeuxis: Definition and Examples of Epizeuxis." MasterClass, [www.masterclass.com/articles/definition-and-examples-of-epizeuxis](http://www.masterclass.com/articles/definition-and-examples-of-epizeuxis). Accessed 13 Oct. 2020.)

<sup>2</sup> Epanalepsis is a rhetorical term for the repetition of a word or phrase at regular intervals. It epanalepsis may refer to repetition at the end of a clause or sentence of the word or phrase with which it began. (Nordquist, Richard. "Definition, Examples of the Rhetorical Term Epanalepsis." ThoughtCo, Aug. 26, 2020, [thoughtco.com/what-is-epanalepsis-1690655](http://thoughtco.com/what-is-epanalepsis-1690655).)

character traits referred to as *Virtù*<sup>3</sup>. The author stresses that it should be used when necessary according to circumstances and events that surround the leader; individual personalities that are associated with *Virtù* such as generous and rapacious; cruel and compassionate; affable and haughty; selfish and caring; hard and easy; earnest and frivolous; (Machiavelli 50).

Moreover, the contradictory disposition where *Virtù* affects *Fortuna*<sup>4</sup>, or vice versa, is necessary since the character's role is a significant element of political persona in the national consciousness and public endorsement. In addition, his notion of leadership and power focuses on the changing environment as in personality, institution and events. According to Machiavelli, events, and circumstances a leader might face connect to *Fortuna*, both good and evil. Machiavelli emphasizes that leadership and power are intertwined; he claims that for leaders to maintain their power, they need to preserve a flexible nature/character in accordance to the present *Fortuna* and circumstances. As an illustration, he states in his famous passage, the "*ends [retaining power] justify the means.*" (57)

Furthermore, in his notion of public perception to the political persona, the importance of image preservation, and observed character traits, Machiavelli writes "*...men in general judge by their eyes...*" according to him "*rather than their hands,*"; since the audience mainly watches, and only a few can come in close touch with the leader. The majority perceive the performance, whereas only some come across the real character "*... the common people are always impressed by appearances and results*" (58).

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<sup>3</sup> *Virtù* is power, drive, talent, or ability directed toward the achievement of certain goals, and it is the most vital quality for a leader. ("Understanding Epizeuxis: Definition and Examples of Epizeuxis." MasterClass, [www.masterclass.com/articles/definition-and-examples-of-epizeuxis](http://www.masterclass.com/articles/definition-and-examples-of-epizeuxis). Accessed 13 Oct. 2020.)

<sup>4</sup> *fortuna* to refer to circumstances which human beings cannot control, and in particular, to the character of the times, which has a direct bearing on a leader's success or failure ("Understanding Epizeuxis: Definition and Examples of Epizeuxis." MasterClass, [www.masterclass.com/articles/definition-and-examples-of-epizeuxis](http://www.masterclass.com/articles/definition-and-examples-of-epizeuxis). Accessed 13 Oct. 2020.)

### ***1.2.3. Weber's Theory of Social and Economic Organization***

Max Weber, a sociologist interested in authority forms that characterize groups and society, divides them into three types: traditional, rational-legal, and charismatic authority. Since he stresses the notion of charismatic authority within an individual, this theory managed to promote Max as a traditional thinker in political leadership. The author defines the charismatic leader as an individual who possesses a certain quality of an individual personality that sets him/her apart from ordinary men. They perceive them as a divine origin who are ***"[gifted with] supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities."*** (Weber 358-359).

For him, rational and traditional authority refers to forms of everyday routine control of the action. Simultaneously, the charismatic type is the direct contrast where charismatic authority is a figure of revolutionary force (361-2). Additionally, Max indicates the importance of leader and follower relations ***"... To be judged from an ethical, moral point of view is naturally entirely indifferent to definition purposes"*** According to him, the importance is ***"[how the] individual is regarded by those subject to charismatic authority by his 'followers' or disciples"*** (359).

Given that followers are influential in endorsing leaders, charisma exists in leaders by being positively judged and endorsed by followers, sustaining the character's role, persuasive language, communication, performative actions, and most importantly, they are significant. Weber does indeed stress the relationship between institutions and personal authority, leadership performance and positive endorsement, and the audience's perception as significant in constituting the persona of leaders.

## **2.1. Conceptualizing Comparative Politics**

The comparative study of political leadership appears to be an “emerging field” of political science but it only got insignificant attention from researchers and students. As an illustration, according to Lewis, this sudden interest in leadership analysis seems to reflect on an effort to overcome a cultural lag as politics became increasingly internationalized. The study of political leadership dates back to Plato and Aristotle, whereas the discipline of leadership studies is a recent by mid-1940s. Even though leadership is a much-studied concept in different fields, nonetheless, its definition is debated in the political context, such as Blondel 1987, Burns 1978. In an attempt to have a better understanding, researchers apply the leadership characteristics’ and leadership performance frameworks to identify top-leader’s styles and evaluate their performances whether presidential or (prime) ministerial.

### **2.1.1. Leadership**

Leadership has always been the subject of examination by thinkers, artists, writers, and researchers. As a concept, it is entirely socially constructed, thereby allowing the possibility of a variety of different interpretations and definitions within the social science community. Leaders are the object of intense admiration, due to their ability to shape the world around them, provide guidance, reform, and their natural capacity to gain followers that are active participants. There are some common pointers about leadership, such as giving direction, guiding others, providing solutions to common problems and so on. Leadership in itself is related to various positions, goals-setting and motivation which are pursued by different means. (Elgie 1995: 2; 2015: 25-26)

The current literature is full with definitions that associate leadership with the position of power, influence, command, authority and control in a manner that may suit the purpose of

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certain scholars (Edinger, p 6-8). To Lewis Edinger, the various leadership definitions has always been a source for confusion for the comparative analysis which is why applying these definitions to comparative study of leadership is debatable since it could only be defined at a level of abstraction (Lewis 255). At its central core, leadership is linked to another abstract social science concept, power. As Robert C. Tucker asserts, *“leadership is a process of human interaction in which some individuals exert, or attempt to exert, a determining influence upon others”* (Tucker 11) since he explains that it is a social relationship between leaders and whom they lead.

However, even power does not necessarily showcase leadership. According to MacGregor Burns **“all leaders are actual, or potential, power holders, but not all power holders are leaders”** (MacGregor Burns 18); he attempts to explain that it is a reciprocal relation that leaders arouse people with certain (economic, political or social) motives and values where leaders and followers realize goals mutually realize (425). Blondel stresses that leadership and power are parallel concepts in terms of their abstract nature, which indicates that there is a place for different interpretations by social scientists.

Joseph S. Nye, (2010) stresses Leadership’s relation to power, it is often associated with it but it is not synonymous with power. The relationship between the two concepts is somehow complex. Recent contribution divided leadership into a soft power and hard power, which Nye coined in 1980’s, where the prior uses force to coerce others and the latter “co-opts people”.

Lewis, on the other hand, states that when leadership is defined, it is associated first and foremost with the rights and duties of an officer or status in a hierarchical structure. As an illustration, it may be qualified for someone in a position of authority or command. In this sense, leadership is identified with being in a superior position and fellowship with their subordinates. From a behavioral point of view, leadership is recognized with certain individuals who shape the

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actions of their people. It is linked with followership and interpersonal relations rather than a position of hierarchical structure since a leader cannot be a leader if his subordinates do not execute his command. Ronald Heifetz, however, notes that leadership research is a diversified discipline both at theory and practice. He argues that one can lead without followers since, according to him, a leader needs “engaged citizens” not followers and disagrees with the well-known putative truism that “**there can be no leader without followers**”.

In support, Machiavelli states that the interpretation of power considers followers as holders of some extent of ‘subordination qualities’ when stating that a Prince, although powerful, needs the favor and benevolence of the people to keep his position. This criteria is emphasized in democratic systems. On one hand, Blondel stresses an essential condition which relates leadership to influence which is the possession of an office and asserts that it is not a sine qua non (an essential condition) for leaders to gain authority. In contrast, the equal form of holding a formal position in an organization or a group is by acquiring or showing a personal influence, persuasive capacity or charisma, as an illustration. On the other hand, Philip Selznick, a management specialist defines “leadership” as the promotion and protection of values in an organization highlights the fact that holding an office, despite its institutional resources and capacities, does not naturally make a leader.

### **2.1.2. Political Leadership**

Politics is growing more complex and a leader figure is needed for guidance or problem solving purposes. However, leaders and leadership are often criticized in the modern political sphere and public debates, which stresses the importance of its notion for the overall political performance in regimes —democratic, non-democratic or the relation between the two—. Usually, executive political leaders are the main attention of citizens—being the *raison d’être* for

the regime—. The definition of leadership for citizens, however, differs according to their political culture, as per Ludger Helms (2012: 1).

Blondel highlights the number of different elements which could be examined when trying to get to grips with the concept of leadership. These include: personality vis-a-vis the environment and behaviour with regard to the roles and institutional structures, or “...*the characteristics of leaders whilst not losing sight of the problems posed by their aims and achievements*” (Blondel 1987, 2). Some scholars come to conclude that the question of why we would rather choose one rather than the other as a leader is still mysterious. In their view political leadership remain an enigma that eludes systematic, comparative and analysis need for research, while others simply associate it to inherent traits.

## **2.2.Comparative Political Leadership**

Comparative politics is not a clearly defined discipline in political science. Scholars pointed out various elements of comparative politics, focusing on the substance and studying foreign countries was often raised as one of its characteristics chiefly to understand their own countries and avoid ethnocentrism. (Takayasu, 2004)

In his research *The Comparative Analysis of Political Leadership*, Lewis Edinger, states that there are too many definitions of leadership which constitute a source of confusion. According to Edinger, it’s not a new problem since political scientists used definitions pursued in other social sciences in an attempt to broaden the conceptual scope.

Blondel (1999) states that within political science there’s been an aspiration to broaden the agenda of comparative political research and to gain more understanding of different political systems rather than systems of government where the discipline changed its name from

comparative government to comparative politics, since it aims at the state or actors operating within its boundaries, focusing on politics beyond the government.

Political leadership is a complex concept with no universal definition. Though there are a number of definitions, nevertheless, it needs a systematic and cautious investigation, with solid theoretical and methodological means. Moreover, most political scientists define it according to their own perception of the concept matching the areas they are interested in. Yulk (2002) and Peele (2005) note that political science has barely improved to be recognized as a ‘Consensual Concept Of Leadership’. It is related to other concepts such as influence, power, charisma and authority which are linked to the definition of leadership. Hockin (1977) stresses the notion that the element which makes leadership complex is to base each definition according to its proper context where leadership is to be exercised from an operational view, which makes it harder for scholars to identify with leadership styles. Leadership is a paradoxical phenomenon: it is admired yet controversial, respected and often ridiculed, explainable but uncertain, relevant, yet blamed by so many.

For example, Stanely A. Renshon believes that:

*“The circumstances that modern presidents and other leaders face – the expectations they are deeply involved in creating and must then manage, the powers at their disposal and their creativity in using them and, ultimately, the limitations inherent in their efforts are what makes American presidential leadership a fruitful arena for the comparative political psychology analysis of leadership”*

For him, it is to have the ambition to reverse a situation to their favor by using available opportunities and constraint at hand in a resourceful manner. This leads us to question the

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definition of Political Leadership, nevertheless, no definition is possible without regards to what should be political. The question stresses the need to adhere to different variables, among them the focus on *res publica* (public affairs) one of which includes the public lives of political figures

### **2.2.1. The Role of Prime Minister in Comparative Political Leadership**

Barber (1977) states that any leadership style that leaders adopt can shape the way they handle dilemmas, which leads to the nature of decision-making process. The study of prime ministerial leadership styles played a minor role in research in comparative politics, despite its prominence in parliamentary systems (Jones, 1991 a)

*“Biographies and memoirs abound, but works by academic political scientists are few and far between. All the books on the prime ministership can easily be held in one hand the books on the prime ministership and the cabinet together can easily be held in two hands. The article literature is similarly meager.... The contrast between the paucity of writing on the British prime ministership and the richness and variety of work on the American presidency could hardly be more striking”* (qtd in Kaarbo and Herman 244)

Comparativists started to address this gap within the last fifteen years in a more theoretical and empirical approach in order to explore their impact on policymaking (Rose & Soluleiman, 1980; a special issue of *West European Politics*, 1991 on prime ministers ). According to certain scholars (Blondel, 1980; Rose, 1991) what leaders are like has a possibility for shaping decision-making, foreign policy and its process. Thus, prime ministers are becoming more “presidential” since they became more capable of selecting and dismissing ministers, cabinet structures and proceedings. According to Blondel (1980), prime ministers are assuming the role of “first among equals” often assigned to U.S presidents.

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### **3.1. Leadership Performance Models**

Most of the literature on political leadership performance originates from the United States. By the end of the 1960s a range of scholars had attempted to reach generalizations about the circumstances that made presidential leadership more or less ‘successful’, according to Greenstein.

There are those who took a contextualist approach, which seek to place Presidents in their historical context, including an analysis of ‘skill in context’ that emphasizes the offered opportunities and restrictions (Skowronek 1997, Hargrove 1998, Hargrove 2002). Greenstein was not one of the first to apply notions associated with political psychology to political leadership but he managed to come up with his own analytical framework, utilising it to ensure he had what was a catch-all model to assess political leadership.

#### **3.1.1. Greenstein, F.I (2000). The Presidential Difference**

Fred Greenstein’s *A presidential difference*, and its editions mainly focuses on American presidency; it is an analytical framework and assessment model for political leadership. It was originally proposed for researching the American polity which is a debatable topic in the American presidency where it opts for six criteria (public communicator, organizational capacity, political skill, public policy vision, cognitive style and emotional intelligence) which rely upon the personal characteristics of presidents and takes into consideration situational, institutional and cultural contexts and their impact on political processes. Greenstein’s emphasis upon the personal relates to high levels of personalization politics, especially the U.S. His model highlights executive figures, polities such as America, France, and, arguably, Britain. (Lahel, 2012: 28) His work so far is solely about the American presidency. He attempts to measure the success of presidential case studies, leaders from Roosevelt to Clinton, according to six standards, that are

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not rank-ordered, which he refers to as measures of presidential success. His framework is used by other authors to assess leaders such as Theakston, who provided an assessment of the British Prime Ministers Tony Blair and Gordon Brown. The first category is public communication which represents strategies that leaders use such as the utilization of rhetoric and public presentation to gain the citizen's support, it examines the leader's effectiveness as a public communicator since the "power to persuade" is an opportunity to sell their ideas and policies according to Theakston (2010: 4).

Second category constitutes the ability to manage the staff (cabinet staff and ministers), it may include rivals and adversaries as well as organizational skill. It is an aspect of the presidential leadership, which attempts to establish a valuable advisory system to skillfully design efficient institutional arrangements. However, most British premiership approached the government in a people-centered method rather than organization-centered such as Blair and Thatcher except for Heath in 1970s. Political skill is the third category in which Greenstein assesses leaders as political operators, using various skills in persuasion, negotiation, manoeuvre and deal-making in Washington system. Indeed problem-solving and goal seeking shows successful political management; however, in the British political context leaders have different abilities and capacity especially when it comes morality they ought to, according to Norton and Theakston, use a variety of skills same as in the American arena where they utilize persuasion, conciliation, manipulation and brokerage with their cabinet colleagues, parties and others. Fourth category is policy vision where it gives priority to government and long term goals, even though in Britain it is an exception. The reason is that since it functions as a traditional collective cabinet and party government, prime ministers do not draft individual agendas.

Nevertheless, both Blair and Thatcher saw it necessary to push for their own policies and goals. Fifth category is cognitive style, it is a process in which they deal with information, and

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the opposite of inherent traits since it is learnt from experience. It differs for each person since some politicians like Winston Churchill work with intuition, instinct and imagination rather than analyzing the situation with a pros and cons. Others prefer to focus on papers rather than people.

On the other hand, Edward Heath prefers a more rational approach where there is place only for hard facts and concrete recommendations. Thatcher, on the other hand, opted for a more aggressively argumentative manner instead of calmly analytical style; while Major, was not a strategic thinker, instead he opted for a details man style and reactive problem-solving method. (Theakston, 2007: 241-244) The last measure of presidential success is emotional intelligence which is the ability to manage emotions in order to render them into meaningful purposes instead of being over consumed by them and lose track of his/her leadership (6)

### **3.1.2. Skowronek, S (1993). The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to George Bush**

The framework consists of four categories: reconstruction, disjunction, pre-emption and articulation. In his model, Stephen Skowronek showcases that each stage has a different form of presidential leadership where leaders have different opportunities and limits. According to him, two contexts are associated with political authority, in other words, whether the leader is affiliated with the pre-existing coalition or opposed to it. A leader's position allows the researcher to point the qualitative differences of the leader in his/her cycle of political time. In the British political sphere, cabinet and political parties and media are a frame for British prime ministers. (Skowronek, 1993: 35)

Skowronek stresses the contextual and situational factors, unlike Greenstein. His framework does not take into account personal and cultural factors. Much of the existing literature is on the American presidency; hence, he exemplifies that situational factors are vital when addressing the

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performance of U.S. presidential actors in order to have an easier way of understanding their political discourse. Political institutions are frames which condition leadership performance, a matter that Skowronek built his model on. Greenstein and Skowronek's frameworks are based on the high personalization in the American polity therefore the context must be included based on the Skowronek's work where he stresses it matters to the research as a whole.

### **3.1.3. Bell, Hargrove & Theakston (1999): Skills in Context a Comparison of Politics**

Bell, Hargrove and Theakston, also proposed a framework, which was a revised version of Hargrove (1998) that he based on the U.S. presidency. The adjustments address the geographical limits in order to serve a comparative purpose. Furthermore, the model attempts to compare and assess personal leadership traits within context (political institutions). The structure of the model is based on personal traits in the political spectrum such as political skill (leadership of coalition, bargaining, clever maneuver, rhetoric, character as a skill—psychological, moral and personal integrity parameters), skill in context (Historical situation and policy, electoral politics, dynamics of government, policy problems, policy achievements and failures and assessment of skills in context), strategic leadership (purpose, discernment, prudence) and teaching reality and illusion (preaching, cultural traps,). Bell et al apply their model on three main cases George Bush, John Major and Jacques Chirac. It supports the notion of analyzing the individualistic character traits according to the political institution.

The framework attempts to evaluate leaders based on their character traits in accordance to their political and personal skills. The character traits establish the political persona stressing its importance within the cultural and institutional contexts as is the performance of the persona. The authors suggest Jacques Chirac as a reference to political persona. In addition, authors draw

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attention to the notion that the study of personal and political path influences character. However, Lahel (2012) stresses the notion that authors put less emphasis on the interaction of character within the institutional configurations in presidential or prime ministerial office. As an illustration, the effect of Major's weak image on his premiership's policies. Indeed, the historical impact of culture on leadership matters, but Bell et al highlight the importance of immediate culture upon each polity. For example, the American expansionist impulse, British uncertainty concerning European Union and the French search of glory in foreign policy (1999, p. 530).

#### **3.1.4. Hennessy, P. (2000) The Prime Minister**

The author does not propose a framework of political leadership in itself but components of assessment for prime ministerial performance. His work is based on post-war historical political perspective. He makes reference to the current context in relation to history and institutions.

His model has five criteria. The first category backdrop to the premiership focuses on the condition of the economy and society during his/her premeirship, parliamentary arithmetic, internal condition of premier's party and disposition of the media to the premier, his/her government, his/her part. The second category, the management capacity concentrate on the premier's skill at managing the status quo (i.e., the prosaic but necessary on- going functions of central government) and handling crises (including the media aspects of crisis management). The third category insight and perception highlights the prime minister's personal (including self-awareness), political (sensitivity towards colleagues, official and party), and policy (a capacity to see beyond the outmoded belief of established or manifesto positions). Changes and innovation of the prime minister during his time, is the fourth category which includes his planned and improvised actions toward circumstances, in addition to, the reaction upon unforeseen events. The running of No. 10 and the balance within it between the political and the administrative, the

handling of Cabinet and the apparatus of collegiality, managing Whitehall and the career civil service; the personal handling of the House of Commons; the care and attention paid to the institutional of Parliament, the management of his/her party in both Commons and Lords which is the last category for the framework, constitutional and procedural. Probity and decency of the system (Prime Minister as manager of codes, ministerial and Civil Service).

The author's measures serve as a base in assessing the prime minister's performance to aim for a balance between personal traits of the prime minister and the institutions in which he/she serve as actor (policy decision, the exercise of political calculations and judgments, ruling behavior, disposition towards handling crises and attitude towards staff, internal condition of political affair, state of economy and parliament and Number 10—Whitehall— management). Indeed, this frame work includes the prime minister's response to media but the political path is not included; in contrast to what was mentioned in the previous model which serves as a leadership performance context.

#### **4.1.Conclusion**

This chapter reviewed the literature relevant to leadership evaluation; the contributions of the literature and related parameters. Aristotle, Machiavelli and Weber discussed their own vision of leadership which differs from one another. Researchers such as Greenstein, Skowronek, Bell et al and Hennessy contributed to the modern study of leadership literature where the focus was different for each and the assessment was based on institutional and contextual factors rather than psychological.

## **Chapter Two: An Analysis of Margaret Thatcher's Leadership Style and performance**

1. Introduction
2. Biography of Margaret Thatcher
  - 2.1. Early years and significant influences
  - 2.2. Before the Premiership
  - 2.3. The Prime Ministerial Tenure
  - 2.4. Post Prime Minister
3. The Leadership Style of Margaret Thatcher
4. Leadership Performance of Margaret Thatcher
  - 4.1. Public Communicator
  - 4.2. Organizational Capacity
  - 4.3. Political Skill
  - 4.4. Policy Vision
  - 4.5. Cognitive Style And Emotional Intelligence
5. Conclusion

## **2.1.Introduction**

This chapter's main aim is to highlight the life of Thatcher before, during and after her tenure as a prime minister. Additionally, it underlines her political leadership style based on her skills and the analytical assessment of her leadership based on Greenstein model. The chapter hence provides an overall look at thatcher's life, achievements and failures.

## **2.2 Biography of Margaret Thatcher**

### **2.2.1. Early Life and Singnificance Influences**

Margaret Hilda Robert was born on October 13, 1925. Daughter of Alfred Robert and Beatrice Stephenson. She was from a lower-middle-class family. Margaret got a scholarship and studied chemistry in oxford. She entered politics and joined the Conservative party fighting several unsuccessful elections until she later became the president of Oxford University Conservative Association. She was influenced at university by political works such as Friedrich Hayek's *The Road to Serfdom* (1944), which condemned economic intervention by the government as a precursor to an authoritarian state. She married Denis Thatcher; he was also from a Methodist family in 1951. She was a woman who believed in the place of women in the home and the need to provide a good living for her family; however, she also had a political vision. Her political life started by the late 1940s and beginnings of the 1950s (Blundell (2008), p. 30; Reitan (2003), p. 17.)

In the 1950 and 1951 general elections, Thatcher was the Conservative candidate for Dartford's Labour seat, where she attracted media attention as the youngest and the only female candidate. Later on, Thatcher worked as a research chemist. Next, she studied law

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where she aimed for the bar after becoming a lawyer in 1953, she qualified as a barrister in 1953 and specialized in taxation. Margaret took a break from 1955 to 1958 for her family. She saved a seat after a hard campaign in the 1959 election, where she got appointed as the candidate for Finchley in April 1958. (“margaretthatcher”)

Afterward, Margaret Thatcher began to attend lunches at the Institute for Economic Affairs in London, a right-wing think tank whose members were disciples of the philosopher and economist Friedrich von Hayek. She read von Hayek's political texts, including *The Road to Serfdom* (1944), as stated previously, influenced by his classical liberal analysis, in particular, commitment to individualism and the free market, opposition to Keynesian economics and state planning. As a result, Thatcher came to the view that the welfare state encouraged dependency and was a drain on Britain's prosperity. She took these classical liberal ideas, Methodist values, and worship for the free market with her as she rose the political ladder. (Stepny, 2013: 136)

### **2.2.2. Prime Ministerial Tenure**

Thatcher won three consecutive election victories – 1979, 1983 and 1987 and her tenure is known for certain key events. Within months of taking office the Conservative government was very unpopular. Geoffrey Howe's first budget in June 1979 had hit wide sections of the electorate. VAT went up from 8 percent to a uniform 15 percent. The high interest rates hit industry hard as did the strengthening pound and rapidly growing unemployment followed. The entire country was out of control in July 1981 when the youth unrest exploded over Britain. Even though Thatcher's monetarist and deflationary economic policies saw a cut in the inflation rate from a high of 22 percent in May 1980 to just over 13 percent by January

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1981 and to 4.9 percent by June 1983, the unemployment rose from 1,500,000 at the time of the 1979 general election to a record 3,200,000 four years later. (Campbell 18-20)

However, when the Falkland Islands were seized by Argentine forces in March 1982, Thatcher declared war which was won on 14 June with the surrender of the Argentinians. This was a decisive moment for the government, because the success of the campaign brought Thatcher back in the lead in all of the major opinion polls. Her grip on the Conservative Party began to weaken around the late 1980s and was characterised by her flawed decision to introduce the Poll Tax and her growing resistance to Britain's place in the European Union. More long-term observations of her decline also point to the 1985-6 Westland Helicopters dispute as a point beyond which Thatcher began to attract the deep-seated resentment in the party that would eventually result in her being challenged for the leadership by Michael Heseltine in 1990. Although the party declined to elect Heseltine in her place, Thatcher's career as Prime Minister was over and she was replaced by John Major, more of whom later. Thatcher's political and leadership style has been much debated. Here, we can attempt to draw together some of the defining elements of this style in terms of the impact that it had on the workings of the political system in Britain. When Britain went to the polls on 9 June 1983 the question was not who would win, but merely how big would be the Conservative majority. (22-7)

The Falklands victory was a key factor together with Labour's incompetence and alleged extremism and the Conservatives won with just 1 percent fewer votes than in 1979. Having won her second term Mrs Thatcher lost no time in reshuffling her government. But the miner's strike was so powerful a blow for the government. When Arthur Scargill was elected president of the National Union of Mineworkers, using Marxist spectacles, he convinced the miners to enter a strike. By 15 March 1984, 140 pits were idle. But the

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government did not cave and the strike finally came to an end in March 1985 when the miners marched back to work with banners held high, but without a settlement. After a year of strike the costs were appalling. In his budget speech of 1985, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Nigel Lawson, estimated the strike had reduced the level of national output by over 1.5 percent and worsened the balance of payments by 4 billion pounds.

Mrs Thatcher tried to solve these new financial problems, and by doing so, she faced more opposition from within her own party than any other Conservative Prime Minister since Chamberlain. There was a great deal of criticism of Thatcher's alleged authoritarian style of government: the proposal to abolish the earnings-related pension, the generous pay awards for top public servants in 1985, the privatization of the royal ordnance factories and naval dockyards and effective cuts in student grants. These measures proved to be effective, because 87 percent of the workforce were in employment, the buying power was up considerably, more people possessed more consumer goods and more people were buying their own homes. Britain had enjoyed its longest (roughly five years) sustained upturn since 1945.(30-5)

All this success was not enough, because the two by-elections which preceded the general election of 1987 gave the opposition hope. Then, Mrs. Thatcher was well on her way back to popularity after a visit to Moscow: "*I am cautiously optimistic. I like Mr. Gorbachev . We can do business together.*"( Harris, 1998: 21).

The fight for power was fierce, every side used all their resources: "*Among other exploits were the television commercials for the privatization of British Telecom, in effect, the most expensive party political broadcasts ever.*" (Cockerell, 1988:314). On 11 June 1987, Margaret Thatcher scored a historic victory by winning her third successive election. No other twentieth-century Prime Minister could claim such success. However, on

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a closer inspection, the Conservative victory was not as impressive as it first seemed. The Conservatives gained 42.2 percent of the U.K vote, suffering a net loss of twenty-one seats since the 1983 elections. However, Britain was feeling restless. Even though the Thatcher era had coincided with the exploitation of North Sea oil and with low commodity prices which brought in turn low inflation, on Black Monday, 19 October 1987, things started to go wrong. Over 50 billion pounds was wiped off the value of shares in London. Not long after that, in April 1988, the government pushed through the legislation called the community charge but what critics called the poll tax. On 30 March 1990 rioting broke out in London following a peaceful demonstration against the poll tax by around 40 000 people: *“London’s image as a safe and pleasant city was damaged by the riots which caught thousands of innocent tourists unawares”* (Childs, 1992:344). After prison riots, football hooliganism and continuing terrorism of the IRA, confidence in Mrs Thatcher was no more. On 3 December 1989, Sir Anthony Meyer decided to stand against Mrs Thatcher for the leadership of the Conservative Party. She won easily, but this was the first time she had been challenged and it opened the road for others. That was the case for Michael Heseltine, who announced, on 14 November 1990, that he would challenge her for the leadership of the party. Thatcher polled 204 votes to 152 for Heseltine in the first round. Less than twenty-four hours later, after a night of consultations with Cabinet colleagues, she resigned.(Campbel 159-63, 170)

### **2.2.3. Key Events**

The Falklands War – where Argentina misread British intentions towards possession of the Falkland Islands in the South Atlantic and subsequently invaded. Thatcher’s response was to send a task force to the South Atlantic to take back control of the islands and restore

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British sovereignty in the process. The campaign was daring and audacious, and the potential for military disaster at the end of a very long supply line was considerable. British forces finally recovered the islands, however, in the face of patchy resistance from ill-armed and ill-trained Argentinian forces. There was loss of life on both sides, most notably in set-piece attacks on shipping, including the Argentinian General Belgrano and the British ships, HMS Sheffield and Sir Galahad, among others. Thatcher's reputation was made by the Falklands war in the way that Blair's was tarnished by the war in Iraq. For both leaders, the future became filtered through the events of war. Thatcher became a tabloid heroine (as opposed to the demonisation of Blair, especially in the Daily Mirror), and the Conservatives went on to win an election in 1983 that looked very much beyond them in late 1981. This was the key turning point in the consolidation of Thatcher's premiership and reveals much about her leadership style.

Sacking the 'wets' – the 'wets' were those members of the Cabinet between 1979 and 1982 who were not in favour of Thatcher's policies and who actively opposed them. Thatcher moved against the wets – Jim Prior, Ian Gilmour, Peter Walker – and established a domination over the Cabinet that would not be challenged until the late 1980s. Once again, the tabloid version of these events framed Thatcher as determined and focused rather than tyrannical and antidemocratic.

The economy – began to recover where high levels of unemployment associated with the government's economic policies began to fall and the high levels of inflation associated with the government also began to fall. While these developments owed little to the political skill of Thatcher, her handling of economic issues certainly added to the media and popular perception of her as someone determined to 'have her way' with the direction and policy of the government.

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### **2.3. Thatcher's Leadership Style**

Thatcher was an opinionated and crusading 'conviction politician', with a radical vision and a driving sense of mission, leading from the front and battling to impose her views on party, government and society. 'Thatcherism' was, to be sure, often a matter of gut instinct rather than an ideologically consistent or coherent approach, but she was able to impart a sense of purpose and direction and to innovate in government. Crucial to her success (at least up to her third term), however, was the way in which, while always keeping sight of her strategic goals, she tended to work to achieve them in a cautious, tactically flexible, and step-by-step way. In short, her leadership style managed to reduce the number of cabinet meetings and cut down on paperwork. Also, it Allowed intervention in departmental affairs. Showed the workings of an odd relationship with the convention of collective cabinet responsibility. Thatcher was prepared to leak and brief against ministers when it suited her but, in turn, was equally forceful in demanding adherence to the same doctrine from her ministers. (Steve 678-82)

She showed a preparedness to make major policy decisions without first consulting Cabinet and to keep some major issues off the cabinet agenda altogether. Examples include support for the American bombing of Libya in 1986 and excluding trade unions from organising in the Government Communications Headquarters at Cheltenham in 1984. Michael Heseltine would also claim this as the main reason for his resignation from the Cabinet in 1986. Showed a willingness to appoint weak ministers who could then be easily controlled. She had a distinct approach to cabinet meetings that would begin with her stating her own views. Represented a populist appeal to those who had come to feel marginalized by the 1970s and developed a style that was highly substantive in content and directly confrontational in approach. The extent to which Thatcher's style has been

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responsible for permanent changes to the nature of central government has also been debated in detail. Thatcher's period in office has been synonymous with discussions on the gradual presidentialism of the office of Prime Minister, yet many writers argue that Thatcher had advantages at her disposal that other holders of the office did not, and that many of Thatcher's strengths were not permanent. What were initially considered to be Thatcher's strengths and assets were far from permanent. (293-98)

Her combative personality and overriding opinions of colleagues gave rise to discontent against her within the party. Her unpopular poll tax shifted the burden from the wealthy to the poor and instigated Poll Tax Riots where they felt the government was trying to squeeze money out of the people. Widespread outcry where the protests quickly became a national issue.

#### **2.4. Political Leadership Assessment of Margaret Thatcher**

Margaret Thatcher's political leadership will be assessed based on Greenstein's model.

##### **2.4.1 Public Communicator**

Thatcher made her own stamp as a "communications legacy" – the exact headline appearing in a print issue of CorpComms Magazine. The article, written by Clare Harrison, rightly mentions that the Thatcher administration redefined traditional political communications. When the Conservative Party entered power in 1979, they did not rely on the conventional leaflets and podium speeches to get their message across, but hired Saatchi & Saatchi Garland Compton as its advertising agency. This "Thatcheristic" move helped established Maggie's communication strategy and inspired local governments to explore advertising as a means of connecting with the electorate. The respective advertising agency

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used succinct messaging to get Thatcher into residence at 10 Downing Street, crafting a simple poster campaign: “Labour Isn’t Working.” Similarly, even though the public are less receptive to photo opportunities nowadays, it was of course Thatcher who promoted the photo op as a way to leverage her power and oomph.

An interesting aspect of Thatcher’s campaign is the careful fine-tuning of her brand image in order to politically communicate and engage with voters. Two points to note: (1) her “growing” hairstyle which gave an extra four inches in height, and (2) her effort to ensure that the administration wear bright blue suits at keynote events. Both these moves contributed in giving the Thatcher party a distinctive brand and “look” and helped Maggie acquire a distinguished political voice. (Harris-Perry, 55)

In Britain, equally, there has “*been only a few real communication ‘stars’ in Number 10 since 1945 and more whose performance has been poor or ineffective*” (Theakston 2007, 230). Of these, the most effective (Macmillan, Wilson, Thatcher and Blair) each recognised that dealing with the media – both print and television – was an essential part of the Prime Minister’s armoury, a clear link existing between presentation and substance in all government decisions (Seymour-Ure 1995, 169-171).

Thatcher’s loyal and media-savvy Press Secretary, Bernard Ingham Gordon Reece. It was Reece who famously got Thatcher to modify her voice, her hair and her clothes in an attempt to perfect a screen image of her of “toughness with femininity” (Cockerell 1988, 253). Her ladyship would be the war-like rhetoric of the past - most memorably when Thatcher declared at her party conference in 1980, “The lady’s not for turning” (qtd in McMeeking: 145), At the House of Commons and at Party Conference. Thatcher survived the 1986 Westland debate, caused by the resignation of Michael Heseltine and Leon Brittan, not because of her great rhetorical skill but because of Neil Kinnock’s rhetorical

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failure at the despatch box (Toye 2011, 185; Crines et al 2016). Thatcher who was a master in the epideictic display rhetoric on big occasions.

#### **2.4.2. Organizational capacity**

Mrs Thatcher's first Cabinet had 22 members, compared with 24 in the out-going Labour Cabinet. She re-organized some of the ministries and named most of her team from member who had served under Edward Heath. The key appointments were : William Whitelaw (Home Secretary); Lord Hailsham ( Lord Chancellor); Lord Carrington ( Foreign and Commonwealth Office); Geoffrey Howe ( Chancellor of the Exchequer); Sir Keith Joseph ( Industry); Francis Pym ( Defence); Lord Soames ( Lord President of the Council, Leader on the Lords); James Prior ( Employment); Sir Ian Gilmour ( Lord Privy Seal with special responsibility for foreign affairs); Peter Walker ( Agriculture, Fisheries and Food); Michael Heseltine (Environment); Patrick Jenkin ( Social Services); Norman St John Stevas ( Leader of the Commons and Minister for the Arts) and John Nott ( Trade). It was a team of experienced men, most of whom knew the corridors of power better than Margaret Thatcher did. (Childs, 1992: 291).

Mrs Thatcher, in opting for non-departmental ministers such as the Lord Privy Seal, John Wakeham, or the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, David Hunt, to chair the committees whereas Thatcher had chosen Cabinet ministers with direct departmental responsibility. Margaret Thatcher, by contrast, was regarded as the 'Lyndon Johnson' of modern politics, such was her "*hectoring, cajoling and bullying style*" with Cabinet and parliamentary colleagues in order to achieve her objectives (Theakston 2007, 237-238).

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### 2.4.3. Political skill

Thatcher was without doubt the most dominant peacetime Prime Minister of the twentieth century. There are many aspects of her leadership style that bear close comparison with Tony Blair. These include The outsider in the party. Both Thatcher and Blair were adept in utilising their outsider status. An outsider status Thatcher utilised certain aspects of her outsider status as Prime Minister - her sex and social origins, to take on established interests, especially those in Whitehall (Theakston 2002: 292-293; 296). The will to opt for a radical reform Dominated Cabinet and willing to be seen apart from it. Willingness to lead from the center as head of a highly personalized government. Effective use of 'hiding' and giving a sense of distance from government when it suited. Conviction and moral certainty of a personal political message as opposed to collegiality and consensus. Willingness to shift significantly from the 'old' party ideology.

Thatcher's style may be defined in relation to a turning point in her time in power. Having won the general election in 1979, Thatcher found herself as head of a Conservative government that. By the end of 1981, Thatcher faced a worsening situation that included rising unemployment and inflation, a range of serious economic problems and a Cabinet which was very much split on how best to manage the government. there are three developments that saved Thatcher from what appeared to be certain electoral defeat when viewed from the perspective of early 1982.

### 2.4.4. Policy Vision

The emergence of ideology in the connotations associated with visionary leadership arguably emerged only when Margaret Thatcher became Prime Minister, "*an opinionated and crusading conviction politician, with a radical vision and a driving sense of mission,*

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*leading from the front and battling to impose her views on party, government and society*” (Theakston 2007, 239). As a consequence of the premiership of Margaret Thatcher, *“parties and the mass media expect leaders to come up with a ‘narrative,’ set out clear long-term goals and provide a strong sense of direction for their governments”* (Theakston 2012, 204). This narrative must also be “consistent and feasible” (Buller and James 2012, 537). Consistency is apparent for when Thatcher was joined by Tebbit and other Eurosceptics within the PCP in their opposition, seeing the ERM *“as a stepping stone to the single currency,”* thereby conflating it with their opposition to the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty and further European integration (Lamont 2000, 385).

It is arguable to say that in viewing the personality of Mrs Thatcher and her influence on government, *“[n]o British Prime Minister has stated so forcefully or so frequently his or her fundamental beliefs about morality, life, economics, education, the scope of public and private spheres, or indeed about any subject”* (Kavanagh She is associated with her own 'ism', a set of values and a set of policies. Her Cabinet was bound to be divided because she wished to break with so many of the policies of her predecessors. To get her policies through she had to fight with the Cabinet or bypass it.” ( Campbell: 155)

Whatever else Margaret Thatcher did during her years in office she was unique in that she gave her name to what her friends and enemies alike elevated into a political doctrine: Thatcherism. No one had ever talked of Wilsonism, Attleeism or even Churchillism. However, when she was elected leader, few had expected Thatcher to create her own values, but over the second half of the 1970s the Thatcher vision of the New Right became fashionable in the Conservative Party. Thatcherism was now the most important political doctrine in Britain, taking the lead over Butskellism ( derived from the names of R.A. Butler and Hugh Gaitskell). Thatcherism considered that only capitalism can guarantee real

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freedom for the individual, that the title of collectivism must be rolled back and that deregulation, privatization, wider property ownership, self-help and trade union reform were the weapons in this crusade. As part of this crusade, the government embarked on a massive privatization programme, they decided to sell the council houses to sitting tenants below the market price and, for creating a climate for enterprise, at their recommendation, Murdoch, Laker and Sinclair ( the most successful entrepreneurs in Britain) got knighthoods. Even after Mrs Thatcher's resignation, Thatcherism survived, her ideals and her beliefs being continued by James Prior, her protégée, and by many others. 1997, 22).

The notion of innovation is having long term goals for her agenda and adopting an ideology "Thatcherism". Visionary; where she installed effective policies, initiated new economic policies. She successfully managed the Irish crisis and recaptured the Falkland Islands from Argentina as the first Female PM. She managed to curb the power of trade unions at the beginning of her tenure. She opted for privatization where transfer the ownership of business from the public sector to the private sector in an attempt to revive the economy. Also an ideology "Thatcherism" that carried the decrease of state's role in economy and influenced government thinking in other countries as well.

## **2.5. Conclusion**

Margaret Thatcher has been a remarkable Prime Minister. Having political beliefs so far ahead of her time, she needed to fight with the opposition and sometimes even with the Conservative leadership to get her policies through. Her decisions and actions in difficult international situations, like the war in the Falklands and in international political circles in general. But her strength such as persistent and having the will to stay faithful to her ideals

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turned into weakness where she was portrayed as a radical and ruthless outsider, by the end it caused her downfall.

## **Chapter Three: Analysis of John Major's Leadership Style and Performance**

1. Introduction
2. The life of John Major
  - 2.1. Early Years and Significant Influences
  - 2.2. Blaxploitation Film Features
  - 2.3. Premiership
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  - 4.4. Policy Vision
  - 4.5. Cognitive Style and Emotional Intelligence
5. Conclusion

### **3.1. Introduction**

This final chapter of the research offers a general overview about the life of Sir John Major and certain key events, in order to stress the influential elements on his leadership. It relies on knowledge from the first chapter for discussion to apply Greenstein's model as to give an analysis on his political leadership where there are point of views by his previous cabinet staff provided by McMeeking interviews which is an essential point in this chapter.

### **3.2. Biography of John Major**

#### **3.2.1. Early Life and Significant Influences**

Sir John Major was born on 29th March 1943, the son of Tom Ball, known as Tom Major, and Gwen Major. He was educated at Cheam Common Primary School and then Rutlish Grammar School. He left school in 1959, on the day before his sixteenth birthday. Out of school, he continued to study, and qualified as a Banker (AIB). Major's political career began when he helped form the Brixton branch of the Young Conservatives in 1965 and was elected to Lambeth Borough Council in 1968, where he eventually became Chairman of the Housing Committee. It was at about this time, in 1970, that he married Norma Johnson. (Seldon)

#### **3.2.2. Prime Ministerial Tenure**

Following Margaret Thatcher's resignation following the November 1990 Conservative leadership contest, Sir John became Prime Minister on 28th November 1990. In Sir John's first Cabinet, Norman Lamont became the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Kenneth Baker became Home Secretary and Douglas Hurd remained as the Foreign Secretary. Sir John

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became Prime Minister just after Saddam Hussein had invaded Kuwait, and he collaborated with President George Bush to FREE Kuwait as part of Operation Desert Storm. After the war ended, Sir John launched the “Safe Havens” policy, which protected them and saved many thousands of lives as a reaction to Saddam’s killing of kurds. While in the local scene, Sir John pledged to concentrate on keeping inflation low, and started to launch the Citizen’s Charter assuring to give power back to individuals. In the early part of 1991 plans were drawn up to replace the unpopular “Poll Tax” with the Council Tax. In December 1991, Sir John negotiated the Maastricht Treaty, but obtained an opt out from the Euro to keep Sterling an independent currency. He also withdrew of the Social Chapter. (Seldon 30-34)

He pledged to seek a solution to the troubles in Northern Ireland and launched the Peace Process, working successively with Albert Reynolds and John Bruton as Taoiseach of Ireland. On 15 December 1993, he and Albert Reynolds launched the Downing Street Declaration. Sir John supported public services because they were his only salvation at an early point of his life. In his first Conservative Party conference as leader in October 1991, he referred to his commitment to the NHS, saying “it is unthinkable that I, of all people, would try to take that security away”. (44, 52)

Sir John won the General Election on 9th April 1992, with the highest number of votes ever obtained by any political party, over 14 million. Unfortunately, this translated into only a small majority of seats. The 1992 Conservative Party manifesto set out the aims for the next Parliament. In 1993 the National Lottery Act was passed, with the aim of raising extra money for the arts, sports, millennium and good causes. Sir John spoke on this at the English Heritage Conference in September 1994, he launched it the following November.

Sir John gave a speech at the William and Mary lecture in Leiden putting forward his vision for the future of the European Union. In September 1994, Sir John visited South  
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Africa to mark the progress made in the country since apartheid. He addressed the South African Parliament with his vision for the country's future. (90)

In February 1995, the Framework Document on peace in Northern Ireland was published, following the IRA ceasefire in August 1994. In February 1996 an IRA bomb ended the ceasefire, but all-party talks resumed in June 1996, despite a bomb that month in Manchester. The Government published an update on the Prime Minister's position in November 2006. In June 1995, Sir John stood down as leader of the Conservative Party, triggering a leadership contest, which he won in the first round. Sir John's time in office saw interest rates fall from 14% to 6%, unemployment was down to 1.6 million and inflation remained low. He handed over an economy that had been growing for five years.(95-9)

Sir John was awarded the Companion of Honour by the Queen in 1999 and he stood down from Parliament in 2001. On St. George's Day, 2005, Sir John was appointed a Knight Companion of the Most Noble Order of the Garter by HM Queen Elizabeth II. Britain eventually made the decision to enter the Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM) on 8 October 1990, within a 6 per cent band of the central rate and at 2.95 DM to the pound. It was a situation which rebounded on 16 September 1992, later known as 'Black Wednesday', when Major's government was forced to suspend membership of the ERM. (112-7)

The emergence Major also had to deal with the European Monetary Union. In the single European Act, signed by Margaret Thatcher in February 1986, Thatcher committed Britain to joining the Union. Yet the French sought the creation of a single currency which Thatcher felt would be an unacceptable surrender of sovereignty and Nigel Lawson supported the emergence of competitive currencies which might veer towards one currency. In a speech on 20 June 1990 John Major offered the 'hard ECU as his contribution to diverting the French away from the single currency. The ECU was to be a basket of currencies which would be

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re-valued against the Deutschmark every so often. The idea of the hard ECU was that when such devaluation occurred, the share of the devalued currency within it would be at once reduced and thus the ecu would not become weaker. It was an idea which all European Economic Community governments rejected and which even Thatcher disowned.

### 3.2.3. Key Events

Black Wednesday refers to September 16, 1992, when a collapse in the pound sterling forced Britain to withdraw from the European Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM). George Soros is known for "breaking the Bank of England", he thought that the U.K. would ultimately fail in its attempts to sustain the pound because it depreciating<sup>5</sup> and falling close to the lower limits set by the ERM. He publicized his belief that the pound could not be defended and other joined him. The British government took steps to bolster the pound, including raising interest rates and authorizing the use of foreign currency reserves to purchase pounds.

Soros reacted by began selling large amounts of pounds on the market, causing the price to plunge. Although the Bank of England took steps to restrict the sell-off, it was unsuccessful. On Black Wednesday, the Bank of England declared that the U.K. would leave the European ERM. Black Wednesday was widely condemned as a massive waste of money at the time. This reflected badly on Major's reputation and his effective economic management. The political damage from Black Wednesday was much worse because the Conservative Party had recently won reelection on a pro-euro platform. The center of John

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<sup>5</sup> Currency depreciation is a fall in the value of a currency in a floating exchange rate system. Currency depreciation can occur due to factors such as economic fundamentals, interest rate differentials, political instability, or risk aversion among investors.( Smith, Sam. "Currency Depreciation." Investopedia, 30 Sept. 2020, [www.investopedia.com/terms/c/currency-depreciation.asp](http://www.investopedia.com/terms/c/currency-depreciation.asp).)

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Major's economic policy was Britain's participation in the European ERM and eventual adoption of the euro. This policy was a complete failure

The Maastricht Treaty, known formally as the Treaty on European Union, is the international agreement responsible for the creation of the European Union (EU) signed in 1991 and which became effective in 1993. The European Union (EU) is a group of 28 countries that operates as a cohesive economic and political block. Nineteen of the countries use the euro as their official currency. Major's attempts to ratify the Maastricht treaty, which created the constitutional basis for the union, involved protracted negotiations and internecine Conservative party feuding that lasted more than a year. He eventually faced down his critics by threat of a confidence motion in November 1993. Danish rejection of the Maastricht Treaty in June 1992 to shelve the Treaty entirely which destroyed Major's quest to put the UK at the heart of Europe

The sleaze scandals that were to engulf the government from 1992 to the 1997 which are sex scandals of cabinet staff like the Hamilton affair between 1994 and 1997 and the 1996 Scott Report, which damaged Major's reputation for honesty and integrity since he could not get a grip of the 'sleaze' allegations and so his damaged image was fatally undermined by 'Back to Basics' and the flunk to guard 'his own stakes' over this issue.

### **3.3.Major's Leadership Style**

Major was known for being a conciliator who always sought consensus between his party members. His cautious leadership style, unlike Thatcher, was more amiable. Major was known for being a good negotiator, manipulator who had a nudge towards compassionate conservatism and strong cognitive style with his likable atmosphere that enabled him to gain a network. Also while being excellent at discerning the political

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antenna, he initiated a number of reforms. However, His weakness was apparent in his sensitivity over the media and journalists since they did not appreciate his kindness. He would rather lead from the rear and follow through; his threats and various damages to his reputation costed him his authority. Although Major was famous for being the ant-thesis of Thatcher, nevertheless, his policies followed through the previous Prime Minister's agenda. Major was uninspiring when it came to economy and it showed his ineffective management of the economy.

### **3.4. Political Leadership Assessment of John Major**

Apply Greenstein's model to the political leadership of Major in order to analyze.

#### **3.4.1. Public Communicator**

One of the most important things in the political leadership in modern political institutions is "*the outer face of the president*" since prime ministers conduct themselves on a daily basis and it became essential in the multi-media age (Greenstein 2009:5; Theakston 2012, 196). This category focuses on three main points: the communication strategy of the press office and Downing Street, rhetorical skills and the relation of the prime minister's to media and public meetings. Broadcasting parliamentary events in media between 1978 and 1989 focused on the party leader's actions to showcase his leadership competence. As a result political campaigns started to address party leader's strengths and weaknesses. (Toye 2011, 181; McMeeking, 69).

Thus, the election campaign started to highlight charisma and likability of individual party leader's personality traits, in an attempt to influence voters (Denevr 2005). In the first phase of his time in office as an opposition leader, Lang Ian (2017) confirms that his

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communication strategy was a success. He changed the style by being the polar opposite of Thatcher where he had a better relationship with tabloids and broadcast media and it was received positively (Bale and Sanders 2001, 95-96). In his first tenure between 1990 and 1992, John Major had a seemingly successful communication strategy (qtd. in McMeeking). From an institutional point of view, Major decided to opt for an antithesis of Thatcher when it comes to dealing with journals and media. The latter celebrated the unusual turn of events where the prime minister and his press secretary Gus O'Donnell changed to a more amiable style (Bale and Sanders 2011, 95-96)

Rhetorically speaking, Major opted for a new anti-rhetorical style, his bold yet friendly style was seen as lyrical (Seldon 1997: 370). In times of national crisis such as the Operation Desert Storm in 1991, the prime minister managed to come across as a statesmanlike figure through his rhetoric (Lang, 2017). It is unquestionable that the most successful rhetorical accomplishment in his premiership was the soapbox in the 1992 election, which enhanced his reputation and elevated the public view on Major's ethos (Toye 2011: 184). He was known for using a deliberative rhetorical style in which he took the past actions as a reference in his argumentative debate unlike the ceremonial rhetorical style of the previous prime minister. His style lacked emotional appeal compared to the prior which led to the unavailability of memorable performances at the party conference in the House of Commons which affected his legitimacy negatively.

John Major's public communication approach twisted to a weak and incompetent label post Black Wednesday (Seymour-Ure 1994: 399,400). This was due to the overly good will that the press office and prime minister portrayed. The undesirable result of the media's political onslaught post ERM was a consequence of his lack of serious control and exceedingly genial clubbable atmosphere between the government and media (Seldon, 1997:

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322). In addition, neither the press office nor Downing office made an institutional attempt to resolve the situation (qtd McMeeking 2018). Seymour-Ure (1995) points out that Major's weakness was due to his poor decision to appoint a non-political civil servant as a press secretary. His press secretary lacked the necessary background in political journalism for all three of them which had a negative impact in times of crisis.

From that crisis onwards, media attacks on the Major government were ruthless and severely personal towards Major; where editors and journalists were somehow competing on in mocking him among which the previous press secretary Campbell (qtd in Seldon 87-90). Major deemed that 'courting' the press as an undignified act (Major 2012: 14-19). In an attempt to support his authority, the prime minister shifted his focus to party management in his post Black Wednesday rhetoric. The memorable performances during this period was the opponent's rhetoric Tony Blair and Major's boomerang rhetoric.

His oratory on Europe was unable to persuade his own party of the merits of his pragmatic 'negotiate and decide' approach on the single European currency. Hence his deliberative attempts to stress the limitations of opponents failed to gain support. Additionally, Major suffered from a similar problem to the prior on European matters which were mentioned in his Back to Basics speech. The latter was one of the most controversial speeches that managed to undermine Major in his 1993 speech. He stressed the need of resurrecting 'old values of neighbours, decency and courtesy'. His argument was attacking the 'fashionable theories' such as: building tower blocks, preaching a criminal's treatment instead of punishment which caused a damage to society, according to him (Major, 1993) those theories were plainly 'wrong, wrong, wrong'. His emphasis on traditional values was attacked by social conservatives in which they focused on single mothers and preaching sexual fidelity that was a result of his ministers' sexual scandals as a way to distort his

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'Back to Basics' .This is best described as the boomerang effect which are self-inflicted wounds caused principally by his choice of deliberative style where his speech on the importance of continuing European membership within which his rhetoric was used against him as circumstances changed.

Rhetoric even though Major attempted to create a break with Thatcher through inserting more advanced rhetoric that were successful in presenting a new image of Conservatism as caring and compassionate after the harsh Thatcher rhetoric, at first. However Major was unable to spark the same level of excitement in the public across the nation, and only occasionally to the faithful party (Evans and Taylor 1996, 247-267), being unable to offer the same type of "symbolic politics" that Thatcher was able to do during his time as Prime Minister (McAnulla 1999, 197).

Thatcher had defined herself against enemies such as the trade unions, nationalised industries or the post-war consensus which had encouraged her radical agenda. Major was left therefore with the problems of expectations (Kavanagh 1997, 206).

### **3.4.2. Organizational Capacity**

In this category we discuss the quality of advice that was acquired through efficient networking and institutional arrangement where Alumnus testify whether the party get on well in a harmonious manner or not, since Major's aim was the party's unity on the first tenure. There was a level of "frankness" within Number 10 which indicated that the prime minister obtained reliable advices personally and sorted it to its proper category which was on whole reliable. Hill stresses the notion that the government's rational was prioritising personal relationships over institutional ones which was a problem since the cabinet needed a new structure with innovative ideas as to break with the previous one due to the fact that

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the replaced staff is not able to help the advancement of the party unless they generate approachable ideas. (qtd. In McMeeking: 120) Major was not a radical reformer, rather he had a traditional approach which fitted in his cabinet but indicates his lack for innovation where he preserved the structure of his predecessor.

However the impact of Black Wednesday impacted the party greatly due to the fact that there was a clear difference before and after the event in Whitehall. The inherent structure did not work as smoothly anymore. The event resulted in Major's sensitivity to media criticism where he did not defend himself and this reaction affected the cabinet management's planning because he started to have less meetings or he shortened the time. (qtd. in McMeeking 135). There was no clear chain of command. For example, the policy unite was entirely dependent on Sarah Hogg; even if she was adequate for the job in terms of performance that does not allow certain parliament members to behave in a manner to allow her to meddle in other offices despite her intellect; only for critics later to describe her ambiguous stand on whether she was speaking for the Prime Minister or not. (136) This weak chain of command was difficult since it led to a 'battle of memos' at times and made it harder to receive a reliable advice. (Seldon 1999; qtd. In McMeeking 138)

Additionally there was a lack of efficient operation of Number 10 due the Prime Minister where he had an excessive attention for others where it impacted the government; such as, overly planning for the PMQs where it was considered time consuming and affects decision-making at cabinet level.

According to Kavanagh and Seldon, number 10 had little to no sense of being a power house for the staff and there was no institutional measures that could have counterweighted the loss of political authority. As Major later regretted in his memoires the fact that reforms did not take place in his office's structure

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Despite it working well among the staff, no internal reforms took place between 1990 and 1997 which directly means that there was no innovation on Major's part nor a displacement of strength. According to Hill (qtd. in McMeeking) it is not about the systems but rather about power and its use in its proper manner; since the same piece of machinery can create different responses depending on the person. Major's weakness was his so called official machinery of the cabinet office where he gave higher value to personal relations rather than generating innovative reforms to the inherited internal structure.

Major's period was known for his advisor team where he had a sturdy and dependable structure surrounding him. The advisor's influence in Whitehall was dependent upon his authority that lost its influence post Black Wednesday event which resulted in weak organisational structure.

### **3.4.3. Political Skill**

According to McMeeking 2018, Major had 5 distinctive skills: negotiation, manipulation, persuasion, hiding, and discernment. To ensure his survival as a prime minister during his premiership.

Kevin Theakston (2007) summarizes Major's performance as a political operator where he stresses his former whip skills in one-to-one negotiations, conciliation and man-management. Where he outperforms others in terms of networking with his refined personal relationship charm. However, he was unable to impose himself during the faction fight concerning the European issue. Davies (2017) emphasizes the notion of the prime minister's man-management strategy which is being nice to everybody but according to him that works for junior whips whereas it is a hopeless formula for the esteemed prime minister. Heffernan (2003) says that even if Major was overshadowed with being the grey of the British prime

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ministers, nevertheless, he assimilated the characteristics of individuals who reach the top by being a determined political operator. His previous workforce such as Lyne, Turnbull and Brandreth witnessed his skills in negotiation, manipulation and agenda control. Accordingly Major was able to maintain his unified party during lethal circumstances that faced his government such as: the possible single currency entry during the 1996 Intergovernmental Conference. On another note, Major was known for utilizing the skill of hiding where he manages to successfully disassociate himself from ministerial personal and debatable provocative policies during his tenure. As well as, his ability to discern where he managed to confront the thereupon political environment he had to face which was an impossible period according to Brandreth (2017).

Baker et al (1993) states that these skills enabled Major to get through an unsettled period on the conservative's history compared to the Corn Law crisis 1846 and the tariff reform crisis in 1906, the Europe issue was speculated to cause a rift in the party. However, Major managed to appease both the Eurosceptic and the Europhile wings of the parliamentary conservative party and won the leadership in 1995 where he put down the expectations of his rivals who awaited his fall among which Ken Clarke, Michael Heseltine, Michael Portillo, Michael Howard and John Redwood. As a result Major was able to portray strength in the use of accurate political perception awareness (qtd McMeeking 2018). Nevertheless, Major appeared to be weak for the majority of his tenure that was stressed by his staff where they noted that his influence was only partial toward certain sections of the Whitehall ministry community. Hence Major's popularity and support were negatively affected since reputations is of high value in the British polity that once it is recognized it results in it being hardly forgotten. (Ellis 2002)

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The main reason for his characterization as weak was due to his failure in displaying the persuasion skill. In the case of Europe issues where Major threatened to end his government by voting a matter of confidence on the Europe legislation which was supported by underhanded tactics of the whip's office. His strategy was effective which enabled the efficacious implementation of the Maastricht 'Paving' vote in 1992, the social chapter protocol motion in 1993 and the Europe budget contribution legislation in 1994, however, it caused a rift among the once united party. (Baker et al 1994). Nonetheless, his success came at a price of damaging of his party's reputation for unity; the threats damaged his reputation and prestige and caused a tension among the party members which ultimately lead to a rift in his party (Crewe 1996). Consequently, it affected his majority within the party. This shows that his threats were the manifestation of weakness rather than strength which underlined his desperate performance which undermined his own political leadership by highlighting his parliamentary defeat that may lead to the ruin of his government in 1997.

#### **3.4.4. Policy Vision**

Policy vision involves direction, consistency and inspiration according to Greenstein, where leaders focus on key long term goals whether it is cutting taxes or rejuvenating economy or in terms of policy content and over reaching goals possession or the consistency of viewpoint; it all serves as the 'anchor' for political community. "*A [leader] who does not have a readily definable agenda risks being guided by events, advisors or agenda of politicians*" (Bose 2006, 29) First, direction was apparent in Major's premiership in his attempt at offering an alternative view and new direction of conservatism as to break with his predecessor's constraints due to the defined party with thatcherism. Hence, there was a need to revive the party due to the public's exhaustion with the label

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where it affected all parts of the community based on social attitude survey's throughout 1980's. this puts emphasis on the notion that the continuity of thatcher's agenda would only create an ideological discontinuity.

There was no such thing as 'majorism'. Major apparently failed to propose a distinct and rational vision of post-thatcher conservatism of the British politics. This was the conceptual constraints that resulted by Thatcherism influence which prevented Major from outlining his individualistic vision after 1992 especially when it came to the promotion of European incorporation. (Hayton, 2012; McAnulla, 1999) According to Dorey (1999) an opportunity to renew post-thatcher conservative thought mandate and introduce his own personal tenure where an ideological disconnection came to be between Thatcherism and the people and create a new vision for the party, yet it was neglected by Major himself because during his premiership it was an attempt to opt for a compassionate thatcherite neo-liberal and an expansion of free market toward public sector support without thatcher especially when it came the economical factor (Dorey 1999) from Major's point of view, he tried to adjust post-thatcher thought toward a companionate one structured with his thoughts on classless society and the one nation ideology.

Additionally in foreign affairs, Major showed support for thatcher's believes that contradicted with his own such as the wish of britian to be at the heart of Europe, or the defence of national sovereignty that opposed with his devolution agenda with his denial of federalism in relation to Northern Ireland peace process (Gamble 1996). Dorey contemplated the fact that 'Majorism' was purely Thatcherism without Thatcher, and with a slightly less coarse and vociferous rhetoric (Dorey 1999b, 226). Thus, his direction was ambiguous where his closest colleagues were uncertain of his ideological baggage and came to be known as 'Janus faced' later in 1990 which means that he had one face that looked at

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tradition of conservatism and the other one faced towards thatcher' ideology. As an illustration, his policies were parallel in terms of profiting off public services, restricting civil service and the ceremonial control of European integration through opt-outs and the crafty privatization of rail and coal which are all incomplete areas of her project according to Ludlam (1996).

The only apparent discontinuity was the poll tax which was for the aim of gaining electorates rather than an ideological reason which did not go well with thatcher. The latter was apparently part of a strategy to be ideologically constrained and rise above the factions where he wanted to gain maximum support by the Parliamentary Conservative Party and, simultaneously, endorse himself as a cure for Thatcherism in order to obtain party unity and electorates. Major did not focus on providing a long term constant vision, he favoured logical selection rather than an ideological one since he believed that ideology disrupts the flow of communication and negotiation and would rather run a government where ***“ideology, vision, conviction are no longer to be the principle driving forces”*** (“Financial Times”). It explains his practical and short term policy preference, taking into account his appeal toward the European issue and attention to party unity concerning the party management. However he was later on rebuked for the lack of governance skills and purposefulness. Suspicion arose concerning major's leadership from both wings on his standing on thatcher's agenda because there was no recognizable ideological underpinnings. One of the reasons for that tension is that each wing had high expectations where the new right choose him as leader because he supported thatcher's agenda and the One Nation progressives choose him for his differences in ideology where he supports the traditions of conservatism and his mild temperament compared to the previous prime minister.

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One of major's staff says that his direction was the very epitome of Conservatism, as a former MP observed:

*“The reason why the Conservatives have been so successful over two hundred years is because of pragmatism, pragmatic politicians. And John Major is in a tradition that would include Baldwin, Macmillan, and Cameron. These are people whose basic instincts are Conservative, wanting smaller government, a free market economy and social improvement. All pretty mainstream stuff”* (qtd McMeeking 2018).

However, only to find out that they were betrayed by their own expectations where their delusion wore off later on 1993 where he switched his policy direction from a compassionate social liberalism to social conservatism especially with his ‘Return to Basics’ speech. Moreover, the European integration were working along for both wings in the first six months in the negotiations for Maastricht treaty, however, a conflict rose because of his uncertain ideological position on whether it lies with the national sovereignty or with his wish for them to be at the heart of Europe which Thatcher opposed by stating that they will take ‘our’ political power where it ended in his opt out of the single currency and his decision to “wait and see”.

Secondly, Major attempted to form a number of policies among them a policy that is centered on his citizen's charter the key part of his compassionate agenda which aim to alleviate the public service standards. However, it failed due to its focus on individual consumers of service and the fact that people did not witness any immediate change to their surroundings which indicated that it was a theoretical policy rather than a practical one.

Another he created a ‘Cones Hotline’ initiative in 1992 which a telephone hotline that allows members of the public to enquire about road works and report traffic areas was a national joke at the time. Major, also, created the National Heritage that was once rejected

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by Thatcher due to 'Residual Methodism' but Major regards art, heritage and sports as an integral part of life and not just an optional extra that could impact the public spending instead be used for good.

When it comes to consistency Major was in essence a pragmatist, where Norton (1996) states he was a balancer who is concerned with present status of British politics. He was a practical politician who aims for problem-solving with a view of bettering people's lives (Hill 2017). As stated before, Major had things under control when it was at the stage of negotiating the Maastricht treaty concerning Europe where he managed to preserve his party's unity by balancing the dismissal of federation and his desire to be at the heart of Europe where it was accepted by Thatcher's Eurosceptic wing; which signify that his attempt of opting for a middle grounds of action that permits maximum flexibility reveals his manoeuvring technique. He claimed to have the national interest at heart, however, his pragmatic approach at decision making went from advantage to disadvantage through his inherent ideological contradictions and conflicts. Norton stated that he was not able to provide a clear lead where his leadership was from the rear through following the agenda setting and adjusting his actions to their demands.

Inspiration core value was apparent in rhetoric and the leader's tone for Greenstein.

However, Major was not able to engage in tasks of symbolic politics like his predecessor.

### **3.4.5. Cognitive Style and Emotional Intelligence**

This category discusses the remaining two elements which are the cognitive style and Emotional intelligence. The latter, emotional intelligence, was evident in his constant want for consensus where it is arguably a result from his own emotional agitation due to childhood scares (Seldon 1999). As an illustration, the loath of class distinction from his

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Rutlish Grammar school, or his direction towards neo-liberalism because of the previous discrimination he experienced. In addition, his emotional uneasiness allowed him to showcase his strength and weakness at different times in his political tenure. To illustrate, his sensitivity to media criticism; pride at achievements which could also hint at being overly attached to lost cases such as the sterling in the ERM and Maastricht treaty. Additionally, he portrayed his street fighting tough act when provoked from his upbringing years where he got hot-headed at time to the point where he called a former cabinet colleague a bastard and appeared as un-Prime Ministerial.

The prior which is the cognitive style. Where Major had a strong style due to absorbing civil services briefs on complex government policies. Major was evoked for being a “brain”. This ability allowed him to be useful in negotiations at both the domestic and international level, it also promoted him in networking in which supported his advancement to the premiership and seizing major decisions like the 1992 and 1995 leadership contest.

### **3.5.Comparative Political Leadership of Thatcher and Major**

The political leadership of both prime ministers went through different circumstances. However, both of their strengths became a fatal weakness. Her extended tenure in office meant that, by the 1980s, many holders of senior posts in public service had been appointed by her and, in a sense, ‘owed’ her, Consistently large Commons Majorities and Weak parliamentary opposition; only to be betrayed by her most trusted members. Her determined and forthright personality did not suffer fools or opposition, and she had a widespread public support, highly respected abroad for her sense of vision. Nonetheless, her personality was depicted as radical and instigated public hate because of the unpopular policies. Although Major had a good start by acting as the anti-thesis of thatcher, it did not take long to turn the

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tables; nevertheless, John Major felt powerless when it came to big decisions where his party members felt that he is unfit for the role such as Black Wednesday and Maastricht Treaty. He suffered a legitimacy problem since his rivals hindered him when it came to speech time with the rival's control of the 'narratives' and he did not enjoy Thatcher's majority support. Margaret Thatcher believed it was better to be feared than loved and contracted out her media management accordingly.

Unlike, John Major, especially with his amiable behavior and sensitivity towards media criticism; though it backfired on both of them. His choice of an initially personal approach and a civil service (rather than political or professional) media regime, along with his humane stoicism in the face of the appalling behavior of assorted colleagues, proprietors and editors, helped ensure (to borrow a phrase from the Daily Mail) that despite being 'one of the least respected leaders of modern times' he was also the 'most likeable'. John Major is something of a political enigma. He emerged, with limited political experience, to become Conservative Leader and Prime Minister in 1990, successfully fighting off many political opponents; whereas Thatcher gained experience as the opposition leader. In the shadow of Thatcher's confrontational and intransigent attitude (especially over the issue of Europe) Major had been the consensus candidate for the leadership of the Conservative Party. Following the shell-burst of Thatcherism, Major represented the 'fair minded integrity and civil service attributes of being able to assimilate contrasting positions within a single brief that allowed him to preside through ambiguity and nuance' (Foley). Thatcher was known for being unconventional and innovative when it came to her policies but her disregard for personal relationships led to her resignation. Major was traditional and sought to make changes that would appease the public as to not cause riots.

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### **3.6.Conclusion**

Due to a combination of media distortions and the personal behavior of some of his own parliamentarians, this oratorical strategy famously rebounded on him. His political skills were distinct from other leaders and he was viewed as a successful leader expect for lacking the key skill of persuasion. Major's policy vision was questioned by party members in a number of occasions where it seems that they were betrayed by their own expectations since he always worked towards maintain neutrality with regards to conservative's values.

## **General Conclusion**

This research discussed the nature of comparative politics by exploring the notion of political leadership related to it. Essentially, the assessment of political leadership is expected to be based upon psychological, contextual and historical notions. However, while there is no clear definition of leadership, it is common that it does abide by certain notions such as power, authority, influence and followers. Aristotelian perspective underlines a trajectory of a trio rhetorical techniques named ethos, pathos and logos; the Machiavellian perspective of it is mainly based on virtue and fortuna which entails the need to preserve the political persona and pay regard to surrounding circumstances. Weber focuses on authority and the need for followers and people's confirmation for the rule. Leaders are judged by the eyes of the public which stresses the need to sustain their image. Leadership carries in definition depending on the author's perspective and the related position. Therefore, assessment of political leadership varies depending on the researcher and the use of criteria since the focus is different for each. Circumstances, however, is something of high value to regard since the leader's response differs from a person to the other.

Major appealed to the public and his party by being the anti-thesis of Thatcher for the first six months and then it deteriorated. He did not live up to the expectations of both wings and left them delusional with his neutrality. He was not a good public communicator and failed at the organizational capacity of operating his own cabinet departments'. He was known for being a good negotiator, his networking abilities played a major role in getting his policies through even though some were against his procedure's agenda, and most of them were Thatcherite policies. Thatcher, however, was a great orator and innovator, she used television and media to promote herself and her policies. Margaret was crystal clear when it came to her path "Thatcherism". Margaret was a strategist and good communicator,

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she managed to inspire her cabinet and gain authority with her visionary long term goals, agenda control and innovative policies.

Thatcher and Major are both similar and different on various levels; nevertheless, the notion that both of their strength turned to weakness is of high importance. Some may argue that Thatcher was a radical reformer but she managed to rejuvenate the economy; and others may say that Major was the post-Thatcher phase but he had different approach to his surroundings even though he kept implementing her policies.

The finding confirmed the hypothesis that the rating differs based on the author but Thatcher was mainly regarded as successful because her strength overshadowed her weakness. And Major was regarded as failure due to the fact that his weakness overshadowed his strength but he lacked a valuable skill which is persuasion. Nonetheless, the fact both of their strengths turned to weaknesses is a valuable notion that should be address in the future.

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## ملخص

خضع أداء القيادة السياسية البريطانية للنقاش بين علماء السياسة والمؤرخين والنقاد منذ الأربعينيات. يركز الكثير من المؤلفات على القيادة الأمريكية وعملية صنع القرار التي حظيت باهتمام عالمي. بالإضافة إلى ذلك ، أثارت الطبيعة "الاستثنائية" لنهج مارغريت تاتشر "المتشدد" في الحكم نقاشًا حول أسلوب القيادة وأهمية الشخصية القيادية في النظام السياسي البريطاني العام. الفكرة بسبب التقدم المحرز في تقييم القيادة السياسية والقيادة السياسية المقارنة للقيادة هي أهمية صنع القرار في السياسة العالمية اليوم. عادة ما يتم تصنيف رؤساء الوزراء بناءً على صنع القرار السياسي والقيادة. ومع ذلك ، هناك حاجة إلى تقييم نقدي وعلمي ، وقد ساهم العديد من العلماء في الأدبيات الحالية في التقييم المنهجي لقائد النخبة الناجح. يهدف هذا البحث إلى فحص طبيعة أسلوب القيادة والأداء السياسي لرئيسي وزراء بريطانيين ، مارغريت تاتشر (1978-1990) وجون ميغور (1990-1997). علاوة على ذلك ، فإنه يتساءل عن طبيعة القيادة للفشل جون ميغور والناجحة مارغريت تاتشر. علاوة على ذلك ، فهي تنظر في مساهمة الاختلاف الرئاسي لغرينشتاين (2000) لتقييم القيادة السياسية في بريطانيا. وبالتالي ، فإن هذا البحث يتبع طريقة مقارنة بمعنى أنه يتعامل مع عملية مقارنة ظروفهم ، وصنع السياسة ، والسلطة والتأثير. علاوة على ذلك ، يعتمد البحث على تحليل محتوى السير الذاتية المتاحة ووثائق تقييم القيادة ومصادرها الأولية والثانوية ذات الصلة. وخلص البحث إلى أن أساليب التقييم الحالية تقوض من إنجازات القادة البريطانيين لأنها لم تعط الأهمية المناسبة للظروف ؛ ومع ذلك ، فقد قدموا تحقيقًا صالحًا مع الموجود المتاح.