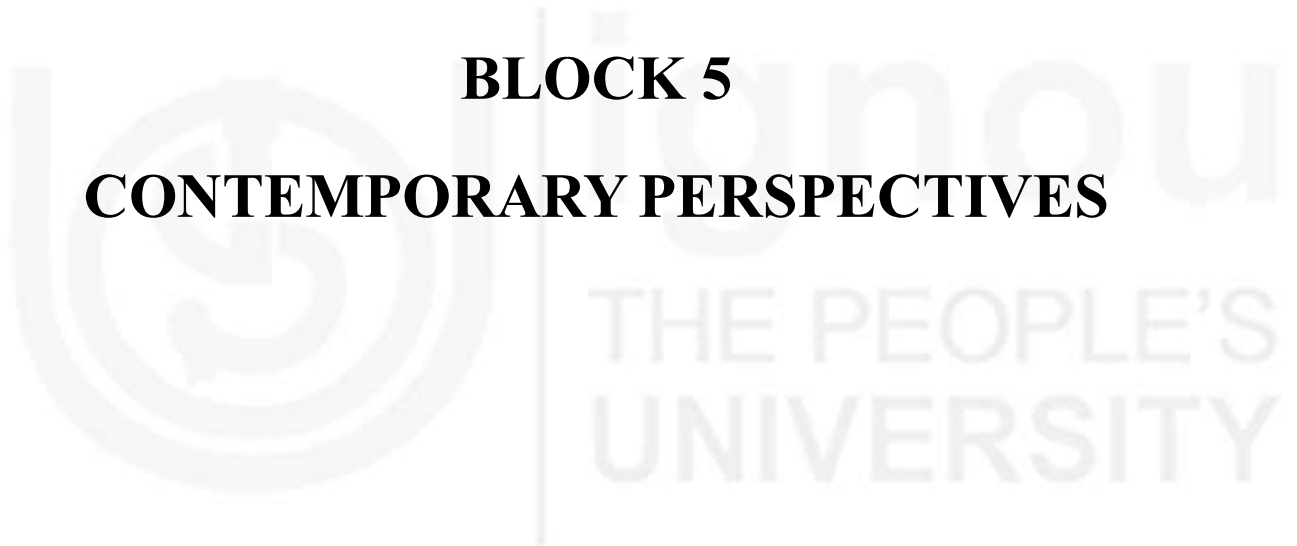# BLOCK 5

CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVES

UNIT 14 NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT APPROACH*

Structure

14.0 Objectives

14.1 Introduction

14.2 Changing Role of the State and Evolution of New Public Management (NPM)

14.3 Impact of New Right Philosophy

14.4 Conceptual Framework of NPM

14.5 Reinventing Government

14.6 Impact of NPM Reforms

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14.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this Unit, you should be able to:

● Explain the evolution and nature of New Public Management or NPM;

● Examine the conceptual framework of NPM;

● Discuss the concept of Reinventing Government; and

● Examine the impact of NPM Reforms.

14.1 INTRODUCTION

Public administration has undergone a substantial transformation in the political, social, economic and cultural spheres across the world. A host of factors including the development of information technology,telecommunications, computing, liberalisation of trade, deregulation of financial and banking systems, growth of transnational corporations and so on, has given impetus to globalisation. As a consequence, there has been a spurt in the spread of goods, services, technology, processes and practices across the globe. It has led to new societal expectations and is also changing the value systems that are altering the nature of the State and governing systems.

Globalisation is affecting the public administrative system, as it is *embedded* in the framework of the State. The pressures exerted by global institutions are also immense. The aid provided by these institutions, especially to those in developing countries, has wider repercussions, as it increases the dependency (*financial*, *military*, *political*) of developing countries on the West. The developments also render the people, in these countries, without a choice; making them unable to determine their own priorities and policy preferences. This has consequences for the local democracy and effective governance.

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Globalisation, is pushing the 'State' towards adherence of global standards and behaviour. On the one hand, a new paradigm called the New Public Management or NPM has emerged as a result of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) followed by UK and US to make their administration efficient and effective. Simultaneously, on the other hand, the internal social and political pressures are attempting to assert that the role of the State and its powers in protecting the interests of the governed needs to be strengthened. This Unit will try to explain the changing role of State and public administration in the globalisation context. It will examine the genesis of NPM as a new administrative model, and also critically evaluate its relevance and characteristics.

14.2 CHANGING ROLE OF THE STATE AND EVOLUTION OF NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT (NPM)

The State has always been at the centre-stage of governance. Traditionally, many countries embarked on the concept of Welfare State – a political system with high degree of responsibility for the welfare of the population. The spread of globalisation and its influence on various fronts in the 1980s and 1990s brought out significant transformation in this role of the State. The impact of international economic forces has changed the complexion of State, transforming it into a 'Competition State' that favours deregulation, privatisation, irrespective of the local, political and administrative cultures.

The belief in 'government by the market' rests upon the proposition that the market system is inherently a better method of satisfying human wants and aspirations than recourse to government. The *first* objective of this thinking was to slim the State and liberate the market forces in a variety of ways such as *deregulation,* as well as through suitable monetary and fiscal policies. The *second* objective was to import *market* concepts and *incentives* into the operations of the government itself. The *third* objective was to take measures to *reduce* the relative size and growth of public expenditure and to cut down a range of functions performed by the government.

The changing complexion of the State also brought in new structures and features. A pro-market and anti-state philosophy of 'private good' and 'public bad' came to prevail during 1980s and 1990s in the UK and USA. It saw the rise of a new central actor, in the form of New Public Management (NPM). The influence of, New Right Philosophy, Neo-institutional Economics and Public Choice Approach on NPM has been evident.

Public administration, traditionally speaking, has always had a major obligation towards promoting public interest, assuring equity, representativeness and responsiveness to the citizens. But its excessive reliance on bureaucracy, hierarchy, rules and regulations, in course of time, put a question mark on its efficacy and effectiveness. This coupled with the dismantling of Soviet Union, increasing levels of public expenditure and taxation, and dissatisfaction with the functioning of bureaucracy strengthened the notion that the 'traditional' State model had failed to implement appropriate policies and deliver effective services. Thus, a need for an *alternative* model was strongly felt. This model, with stress on political economy of development based on 'market' instead of the 'State' as the managerial orientation,was termed as New Public Management or as we mentioned NPM.

NPM aims at making public administration market-based, committed to the *three*

prime goals of Economy, Efficiency and Effectiveness (3'Es'). NPM denounces the traditional public administration as a failure. It starts from the premise that the traditional, bureaucratically organised public administration is "broke" and "broken" and consequently the public has lost faith in government (Gore, 1993).Thus, the orthodox public administration has found a new reform replacement in the form of NPM. The complexities and intricacies of the traditional model of public administration have paved the way for a new thinking that focuses on:

● The present changing scenario, which needs government reforms.

● The public organisations that need to undergo a change in mindset from mere execution of tasks to performance orientation.

● The need for risk-taking, mission-orientation and service-orientation in public organisations.

NPM has thus emerged as a major manifestation of Competition State. This new paradigm, which gained wider usage, with varied labels – reinventing, reengineering, quality management and performance management, focuses basically on changes in the structure and processes of government.The hierarchy laden, rigidly structured and inflexible Weberian bureaucracy has given way to flexible organisational structure, decentralisation, goal achievement, efficiency and effectiveness.Managerial improvements have aimed at ushering in business management techniques and market mechanisms.Competition and client-orientation have begun to gain prominence, under the rubric of 'New Public Management'. Let us now discuss the impact of New Right Philosophy on NPM.

14.3   IMPACT OF NEW RIGHT PHILOSOPHY

The New Right, since the 1950s, attacked the Welfare State and the social programmes. It propagated the cause of free markets as effective social market economy with privatisation of social security system, replacing government subsidies towards education, public housing through loans and cash grants. The traditional Welfare State supposedly served the interests of middle class, while this Model was said to promote economic interests of the poor.

The New Right ideas of restricting the scope of government were propagated because the government was considered an ineffective mechanism to realise the goal of Welfarism. Friedrich Hayek, Robert Nozick and Milton Friedman rejected the basic idea of government intervention in the economy. The group of influential neo-liberal economists criticised 'big' government and was of the opinion that only free markets could put together the incongruent elements in a society. Any efforts on the part of the State to influence the market was said to destroy freedom and prosperity.

The period during mid-70s witnessed a favorable climate towards formulation of policies, aimed at reducing the size of the government. The influence of economic thinking was quite visible, as evident from the views put forth by conservative market economists such as Hayek and Friedman. The Public Choice Theory (PCT) proponents such as Gordon Tullock, William Niskanen, James Buchanan and Patrick Dunleavy assumed prominence. Their propositions on the reduction of government and bureaucracy, reliance on market structures with flexible structure and incentives, reduced the role for public sector and restricted it to provision of bare minimum functions. This gave a theoretical foundation to bureaucrat bashing, reduction of government activities and designing market-based public policies. Let us now look at the approaches under New Right philosophy, which have impacted NPM:

● *Public Choice Approach*

Public Choice is considered to be an *application* of the theory of economics to understand politics. In USA and Britain, during 1940s, various writings attempted to apply economic methodology to the study of political processes and institutions. Public Choice attempts to explain and predict political behaviour on the assumption that an individual is a utility maximiser. Public Choice methodology basically comprises *two* related elements *First* is 'methodological individualism' that considers individual instead of society as the unit of analysis. This approach does not take cognizance of the organic view of the society. The *second* element is application of rational-choice in taking decisions from an 'individual gain maximising' perspective rather than from public interest view.

The basic premise of the Public Choice Approach or Theory (PCT) is that the individuals are utility maximisers; thereby politicians are vote-maximisers and bureaucrats are *self-aggrandising* and hence maximise budget. Government tends to function not in the interests of public, as it expands to meet the preferences, interests of politicians, bureaucrats and other interest groups. PCT assumes individuals as egoistic, self-regarding and those who seek maximum possible benefits or personal gains from the decisions they take involving least costs. Their choice of decisions to a great extent depends on the consequences ensuing from the decisions.

Public Choice theorists make the assumption that individuals; who could be voters, politicians, bureaucrats and lobbyists are guided by 'self-interest'. The absence of appropriate rewards and incentives in public sector, to a large extent is said to demotivate the bureaucracy and politicians. This often results in bureaucrats not showing any inclination to reduce costs, and regulate expenditure thereby leading to inflated budgets. Public Choice, thus gives primacy to market forces and arrogate a minimal role for government.

Markets are considered to be more accountable than bureaucracy and importance is given to privatisation, outsourcing of services and contracting, to free the State from fiscal burden and lessen the dependence on public provision of services. A more sophisticated Public Choice model of bureaucracy has been developed by Patrick Dunleavy referred to as 'bureau shaping' model. This Model refutes the earlier thinking that bureaucrats attempt to maximise budgets. Rather it says that apart from managing a large organisation, bureaucrats tend to maximise their status by rendering advice to the politicians.

● *Principal-Agent Approach*

Traditionally, economics has focused on voluntary exchange among consenting parties, which could be individuals, organisations or even nations. The information available with different parties such as buyers and sellers about the features of transactions in a 'contract' or exchange is varying. The analysis of such situations of asymmetric or imperfect or incomplete information and situations of repeated transactions or relationships among economic agents has come to be known as economics of information. Within this format lies the Principal - Agent Approach.

The Principle-Agent Approach attempts to understand the *dynamics* of the relationship between the 'Principal' and the employee or the 'Agent'. The Agent is said not to act in the best interests of the Principal, especially in a situation where the employee has the advantage of possessing information and has diverse interests from the Principal.

The Approach is based on the premise that there are two persons involved in provision of a service and they are not on an equal standing in legal terms. The party who is

engaging the other is called the 'Principal' and the party that is getting engaged is called the 'Agent'. These two are involved in provision of a service,but are not on equal standing in legal terms. This Approach basically focuses on the issues that arise when the Agent carries on the work on behalf of the Principal and promises to deliver the services mutually agreed upon by both the parties.

The relationship between the Principal and Agent is said to be perfect when there is free flow of information and the Principal is able to monitor the performance of the Agent and design a set of sanctions and incentives. But due to lack of information, some problems of monitoring are likely to arise. An effective contract between the Principal and Agent needs distribution of risks between the two in an efficient and mutually acceptable manner.

- *Transaction-Cost Approach*

The other key economic approach, which has had some influence on the current managerial changes, is Transaction-Costs. 'Transactions' include those costs that are incurred in the process of execution of transactions where there is exchange of goods and services involving payments for the performance. Transaction-Cost Approach outlines the need to compare the transaction costs of internal and external provision of services and then determine the necessity of outsourcing. The chief proponent of this Approach is John Williamson.

In an extensive work, Williamson and Ouchi (1983) argue that the make or buy decisions should be determined by the comparison of the transaction-costs of internal versus external provisions. According to Williamson, the firms work towards minimising the costs of transactions, as this is essential for their efficiency and profitability. This framework is useful for evaluating the efficiency of alternate governance structures and institutional arrangements.

The application of Transaction- Cost framework enables the governments to minimise problems arising out of contracting. It helps in choosing the contractors, contract design, and specifications determining the quantity and quality of services. The contracting process can suitably be reviewed and restructured to derive benefits of contracting and reducing the opportunistic tendencies of contractors.

NPM attempts to emphasise efficiency and uses contracts as important institutional variants in public service delivery. These models help in assessing the efficacy of use of alternate institutional arrangements, comprehending the inherent dilemmas and intricacies involved in contractual relationships and balancing the efficiency and accountability aspects of contracts.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answers.

ii) Check your answers with those given at the end of the Unit.

1) Discuss the factors that led to the evolution of NPM.

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2) Examine the New Right Philosophy and its impact on NPM.

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14.4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF NPM

The Neo-liberal ideas gained prominence because of the economic crises in the West, which followed the massive increase in oil prices in the 1970s. The United Kingdom in 1976 went ahead with the SAP. It borrowed loan from the International Monetary Fund and had to introduce divestiture of public enterprises, public expenditure cuts and so on. Gradually, other countries followed suit. It was increasingly felt that the poverty and economic stagnation, especially in the developing countries was the result of State undermining the operation of market forces. The need for structural adjustment and reduced role of State in economic development was considered indispensable.

This led to the emergence of Washington Consensus. It basically comprised the reform measures promoted by Bretton Woods's institutions, US Congress and Treasury and several think tanks, which aimed to address the economic crises, especially by Latin American countries in the 1980s. This was also termed as Structural Adjustment and Stabilisation Programme (SA and SP). It emphasised the need for sound macro-economic and financial policies, trade and financial liberalisation, privatisation and deregulation of domestic markets.

Gradually, this became integrated with the Neo-liberal policies of NPM, which emerged out of an *interplay* of several reasons. It attempted to provide a mix of policy and administrative solutions. It was of strong belief that the government has to bring reform through adoption of business practices and procedures. As *conglomeration* of managerial and economics-based precepts, techniques, and practices, NPM assumed a form of administrative improvement suited to each country. In the process, it resulted in a myriad of organisational and structural changes globally. It encompassed several policy areas such as education, health, communication etc., making a dent in the complexion of the discipline and practice of public administration.

The NPM doctrine termed by Christopher Hood (1991) and labeled variously as Managerialism (Pollitt, 1990), Market-based approach to Public Administration (Lan and Rosenbloom, 1992), Entrepreneurial / Reinventing government (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992), Post-bureaucratic paradigm (Barzaley, 1993) is marked by certain distinct features. From these works we can deduce the following *distinct* characteristics of NPM:

● Complementing managerial along with policy-making skills.

● Disaggregating public organisations into separate self-contained units having their own goals, plans and requisite autonomy.

● Adopting private sector managerial practices by the public sector.

● Setting explicit measurable performance standards for public organisations.

- Controlling the performance of public organisations by pre-determined output measures.

- Contracting out, private ownership and competition in public service provision.

- Promoting competition both among public sector organisations as well as public and private sectors.

- Making services more responsive to the needs of the customer and ensuring value for money.

- Using information technology to facilitate better service delivery.

- Focusing on achieving results rather than primarily conforming with processes.

- Introducing market principles, such as competition, and contracting out in the provision of goods and services.

- Making public administration customer-driven to enhance service ethic and efficiency.

- Assigning the role of steering activities to the government rather than rowing, relying on third parties such as non-profit organisations and other levels of government in implementation of policies.

- Deregulating the government activities to make it result-oriented.

- Empowering the employees to serve the customers as it promotes team work; and

- Changing the overall public administration culture towards flexibility, innovation, entrepreneurship, enterprising as 'opposed to rule-bound, process orientation' and focusing on inputs rather than results.

A prominent issue is whether NPM is a distinct *variant* of public administration or are there some points of commonality between the *two*. There is an academic debate that is on claiming NPM to be a dynamic new approach *without* sacrificing the best of the old values. It has been expressed that on the intellectual front, NPM, like traditional public administration borrows ideas from business management, and has been influenced by writings of Taylor, Fayol, Gulick etc. Also, both are said to share a *common* core of specialised areas such as organisation theory, decision making theory, financial management, systems analysis, economics, and sociology.

While public administration is based much more on political science and law, NPM draws heavily on economics and business administration. NPM is a reform strategy encompassing a series of methods and techniques that aim at government reforms. In contrast to routine tasks, functions and activities, it gives emphasis to jobs, missions, and processes. It focuses at debureaucratisation and delivering of tasks in organisation through decentralisation, delegation of authority and responsibility to various teams. Its focus is on customer orientation and satisfaction. It gives primacy to identification of customers, assessing their needs, and choices and devising ways of meeting their requirements.

14.5 REINVENTING GOVERNMENT

The Management Approach to public administration in USA assumed pace in the 1990s, with liberalisation of economies. It gained momentum due to the policies initiated in 1980s by Margaret Thatcher in UK and Ronald Reagan in USA. The

transformation of governmental systems received a new turn in 1992, with the propagation of the concept of "Re-inventing Government" by David Osborne and Ted Gaebler. In their work *Reinventing Government, How the Entrepreneurial Spirit is Transforming the Public Sector*, they made an elaborate case for transforming the bureaucratic government into an 'entrepreneurial' one.

Their prescription is not for abolishing government but *reinventing* it. The concept of enterprising government is one which is never static, but adaptable, responsive, efficient and effective. This enables the government to produce quality goods and services and be responsive to the citizens. Osborne and Gaebler (*op.cit.*) envisaged the need for a particular type of government, which is essential for a developed society. The enterprising government that they prescribed is not so much concerned with what government does, but how it does it. They emphasised that:

a) Government cannot simply be like a business "because government and business serve different purposes, both of them valuable and necessary", and

b) The question is not how much government we have, but what kind of government we have. Hence they made a case for government undergoing a change or reinventing itself.

The model, they conceptualised has the following *ten* forms:

1) **Catalytic Government:** Providing not only services, but also catalysing all sectors into action in the solution of problems.

2) **Community-oriented Government:** Empowering of citizens in service delivery.

3) **Competitive Government:** Promoting competition amongst various service providers.

4) **Mission-driven Government:** Being driven by missions and not rules and regulations.

5) **Result-oriented Government:** Measuring the performance of organisations on the basis of their outcomes than on inputs.

6) **Customer-driven Government:** Redefining clients as customers and offering them choice in service delivery.

7) **Enterprising Government:** Mobilising efforts towards earning money instead of just spending.

8) **Anticipatory Government:** Being proactive in the sense of preventing problems before they emerge.

9) **Decentralised Government:** Resorting to decentralising authority with a view to taking decision making close to the citizens.

10) **Market-oriented Government:** Relying on market mechanisms in the provision of services rather than bureaucratic mechanisms.

Osborne and Gaebler consider that these fundamental changes are *necessitated* by crisis situations, which require people with vision, leadership qualities and support of business, government as well as societal organisations. The reinventing government model presented by Osborne and Gaebler is a wider exercise in the NPM perspective. It reaffirms the reform agenda of increased efficiency, decentralisation, accountability and marketisation.

14.6 IMPACT OF NPM REFORMS

NPM attempts to create a new entrepreneurial and user-oriented culture in public organisations, with emphasis on performance measurement and autonomy to organisations and individuals. Though the focus appears to improve government functioning, doubts arise regarding the divergence between market economy's interests and pursuance of social concerns.

NPM has a very apolitical dimension, which has given rise to certain implications such as:

- Clash of values between traditional and New Public Administration.

- Contradictory nature of factors underlining Reinventing Government.

- Managerial predominance over policy capacity.

- Reinforcement of politics-administration dichotomy.

- Absence of clear-cut concepts of accountability.

- Rendering citizens as customers.

- Providing only managerial solutions to public sector problems.

NPM has broadened the managerial choices in public sector. As it has not been applied extensively outside the Commonwealth countries, its impact especially in developing countries has not been adequately examined. The most comprehensive overview of NPM type of reforms has been offered by Batley (1999). He observes that the effect of NPM reforms has been a mixed bag, at best, with some improvements in efficiency and diverse effects on equity. On the downside, he notes that the transaction costs of radical reforms to autonomise service delivery agencies have tended to outweigh the efficiency gains of unbundling, and that reforms that seek to separate purchasers from providers sometimes reduce accountability.

Also, failure to evolve proper indicators of measurement of reforms has been another problem. Generally, the implementation of any reform is considered to be the key indicator of success. The acid test of any administrative reform programme, NPM or otherwise is the achievement of its promised outcomes. This has been a major lapse in this entire exercise.

It is difficult to assess the impact of NPM in purely quantitative and qualitative terms. There are methodological problems pertaining to examining what and how to measure, especially relating to public service performance. Whether reforms in developing countries produce the desired results, it is difficult to provide a definite answer to this.

We can, however, say that these reforms have developed a new vocabulary of reform strategies such as marketisation, corporatisation,managerialism, privatisation, emphasising efficiency, productivity, rationality, value for money and so on. But, despite their vast reach, there appears to be inconsistency and incoherence in the reforms. It has made public sector complex, created more hybrid structures, multi-structured public apparatus. In this process, the distinct features of public organisations seem to be fading away.

The focus of NPM is on efficiency as we all know. However, this is considered by many, as *negation* of values of social justice and equity. The anti-State ideology the

NPM pursues, some feel could lead to a decline in basic social services provision, creating a host of inequities. The reigning themes of reform are targeted towards achievement of objectives such as economy and efficiency. However, the issues of social equity, justice, accountability, and participation are equally important to be taken cognizance of by any system.

The countries, which embarked upon the public management reforms since 1980s had career-based public administration *rooted* in certain values of ethics, commitment, accountability, and neutrality. In an attempt to give prominence to efficiency and economy; public management was envisaged as a way to deliver improved public services, instead of institutionalising certain governance values, practices, and strategies. Hence, some of the reforms appeared to be technical and scientific without having much of the needed impact.

The public sector enterprises, which are generally loss making, have not been able to attract private buyers, and also there has been a stiff resistance by the labour unions. The developing countries, which are already grappling with unemployment, economic inequalities and absence of a developed capital market through which funds can be mobilised, have not gained much with the privatisation initiatives. The strikes that have been resorted to by trade unions in the banking and insurance sectors in India reflect their apprehensions and problems encountered with the process. There are no clear-cut policy guidelines or political will to make provisions for alternative employment opportunities.

Privatisation methods are also said to have been less transparent and they appear to be an exercise in redistribution of economic power. Some enterprises have been privatised hastily under the influence of political pressures. The disinvestment process in India has also lacked a holistic perspective. Though the various committees that examined this process have recommended ways of improving the performance of public enterprises, the implementation of the strategies has been devoid of zeal and commitment.

In India, the public management reforms, which were introduced as part of Structural Adjustment Programme or SAP, assumed several forms such as liberalisation, deregulation, privatisation, and disinvestment. These were to a large extent due to the aid conditionalities of the donor agencies such as World Bank, IMF etc. The situation on the domestic front in the 1990s was such that the country had to go in for a different economic development model. The changes had to be introduced in financial, banking and regulatory sectors, and the economy had to be opened upto the market forces.

However, we cannot make generalisations on the basis of these examples. It is because there has not been much of *research* on the impact, focusing on the successes and failures of NPM reforms. According to Pollitt (1995) much of the scholarly research thus far has been at the micro-level and is 'highly context specific'.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: i)   Use the space given below for your answers.

ii)   Check your answers with those given at the end of the Unit.

1)   Explain the distinct features of NPM.

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2) What do you understand by Reinventing Government?

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14.7 CONCLUSION

The public sector reforms that were ushered in globally in the last two decades and were labeled as NPM, have been the outcome of several changes embedded in the social as well as political context in the western democracies. The very rationale of the public sector has been questioned and the functioning of the Welfare State has come under cloud. NPM, drawing on the principles of economic theories/approaches positioned itself as an alternative paradigm. It is reflected in the primacy it accorded to satisfaction of individual needs, self-actualising behaviour of bureaucracy, dismantling of public monopolies and promotion of competition.

International experience indicates that the trend of privatisation of services was not successful everywhere. NPM reforms in developing countries did give a jolt to monolithic bureaucratic administration and propelled the State in these countries to adapt to values of marketisation, competition, efficiency and productivity. However, NPM focused more on internal organisational mechanisms and processes. Juxtaposing this type of managerial model within the framework of State and governance system has been its major flaw.

The model or paradigm, as many call it, has been rather ambiguous in its attempt towards restructuring administration. In a way, a 'borrowed' model was sought to be imposed out of context in different countries. A complete disclosure of the proposed reforms, mechanisms for evaluation, involvement of public, market mechanisms, alternative solutions for effective public service delivery, and so on could never be made. It appears that to a large extent, it is the common citizen who has been the *casualty* in this entire process.

We need to look *beyond* New Public Management reforms, in order to strive towards blending of economic and social values. In evolving and adapting a new administrative framework, it is necessary that each country examines its feasibility as per clearly formulated reform objectives, examine suitable prerequisites for reform and create a conducive atmosphere for its implementation. The citizens as a constituent of the democratic process have certain expectations from the State and government in the resolution of their problems.

The reforms need to fit into the apparatus of the State and its mechanisms. New Public Management, as a framework of administrative reforms can at best solve not

all but a few specific problems. In the present globalisation scenario, a balance needs to be maintained between managerial reforms and governance challenges, as NPM can only be but one strand in the entire process of change. The feasibility of installing the reform processes, which are imposed as packages from other countries, needs to be examined in the perspective of the socio-economic and political milieu of the recipient country.

14.8 GLOSSARY

Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP)	:	Structural Adjustment Programme consists of loans provided by Bretton Woods Institutions like International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank to countries undergoing economic crises in expectation of implementation of certain policies identified by them for these countries. The IMF usually implements stabilisation policies and the World Bank or WB is in charge of adjustment measures. Such loans are criticised for promoting free-market irrespective of recipient countries' Socio-economic growth rate and development patterns.
Deregulation	:	It is a process of reducing State regulations in economic field. It believes that fewer and simpler regulations will lead to raised levels of competitiveness and eventually higher productivity, cost-effectiveness, higher efficiency and lower prices. The process of deregulation is accompnied by regulatory reforms.
Disinvestment	:	The term was first used in the 1980s to refer to the use of concerted economic boycott to put pressure on government in South Africa. It means the withdrawal or reduction of an investment.

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14.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress 1

1) Your answer should include the following points :

- Spread of Globalisation in 1980s and 1990s.

- Rise of Competition State with manifestation in NPM.

- Hierarchy–laden, inflexible bureaucracy made way for flexible organisational structure .

- Business management and market mechanisms got a boost with managerial improvements.

- Neo-institutional economics attempted to apply market framework to institutions and organisations.

- Structural Adjustment Programme and collapse of Soviet Union precipitated the reforms.

2) Your answer should include the following points.

- New Right attacked Welfare State and social programmes.

- New Right was criticised by government.

- It attacked the bureaucracies and governments through its Public Choice, Principal-Agent, and Transaction-Cost Approaches.

- It aimed at the use of alternate institutional arrangements, efficiency and customer-drawn governance processes.

- NPM assumed prominence because of New Right Reforms.

Check Your Progress 2

1) Your answer should include the following points:

- Disintegration of public organisations.

- Adoption of private sector managerial practices.

- Setting measurable performance standards.

- Contracting out.

- Making services more responsive.

- Enhancing service ethic.

- Assigning the role of steering activities.

- Empowering employees.

2) Your answer should include the following points:

- Reinventing government gained momentum due to the policies initiated in 1980s by Margaret Thatcher in UK and Ronald Reagan in the USA.

- It focuses on catalytic government.

- Community-oriented government is laid emphasis on.

- It promotes competitive government.

- Other focus points are Mission-driven government, result-oriented government and customer-driven government.

- Reinventing government also includes enterprising government, anticipatory government, decentralised government and market-oriented government .

UNIT 15   GOOD GOVERNANCE APPROACH*

Structure

15.0   OBJECTIVES

After reading this Unit, you should be able to:

● Explain the meaning of the concepts of State, and government, and bring out the distinction between the two;

● Examine the transition from government to governance;

● Discuss the concept and significance of governance and good governance;

● Describe the characteristics of good governance; and

● Identify the important issues and challenges facing good governance.

15.1   INTRODUCTION

In order to understand the concept of Good Governance, we must be clear about the wider concept of State, which encompasses government and governance. Government is a major constituent of State, as it is an instrument through which the State strives to accomplish its goals and objectives. Governance, in simple terms, implies the process of decision making and its implementation. It is broader in nature and has social, political and economic dimensions. As a process too, it is more comprehensive, as it includes along with the government, the private sector and civil society organisations. It is the overall responsibility of the State to protect the life and property of citizens. The State through the instrument of government and process of governance strives to provide suitable living environment, maintain law and order and establish social justice and equality in society. The process of governance within a framework of open policy making, rule of law, transparent processes, accountability framework and a strong civil society is together considered as Good Governance.

The last two decades have witnessed far-reaching modifications in the State structure and dynamics. The impact of global forces on polity, economy and administration has been phenomenal with the State, societies and issues concerning the division of responsibility within and beyond government undergoing a metamorphosis. As we have discussed in Unit 14 of this Course on New Public Management, there have been structural adjustments or readjustments at the global level.

The citizens are also becoming conscious of their rights and responsibilities. There is an increase in the level of their expectations and as a result, the need for good governance has become crucial. In this Unit, we shall discuss the concepts of State, government and the changing nature of tasks of government, which has led to the changing nation of 'governing to governance'. The concept and significance of governance as well as its characteristics shall be dealt in the Unit. We shall also discuss the concept of Good Governance and its features. An attempt shall be made to focus on the significant issues and challenges that are crucial for promoting Good Governance.

15.2   FROM GOVERNMENT TO GOVERNANCE

The society functions within the boundaries of a State. A State is a political institution that has sovereign jurisdiction within defined territorial borders and exercises authority through a set of permanent institutions including parliament, judiciary, bureaucracy and so on. The government is one of the key institutions of State and society, entrusted with production and provision of goods and services. It is liable for ensuring equity through appropriate policies and programmes, regulating the activities of private sector and so on.

The government, as we have discussed, has been entrusted with wide-ranging functions. In several countries, to accomplish this, systematic planning has been adopted by the governments and many enterprises have been set up to carry on commercial activities to earn profits. For example, in India after independence, public sector enterprises in certain core areas such as civil aviation, coal, steel, etc., have been set up. These include the Steel Authority of India Limited, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation of India Limited, etc.

Over time, however, the activities of government have expanded to such an extent that certain problems have emerged which include mounting fiscal deficit, wasteful expenditure in state-owned enterprises, decrease in revenue and so on. Also, in general, citizens' dissatisfaction with the government's provision of services has been on the rise and alternative mechanisms for delivery of goods and services are being considered. These developments have led to the thinking that the government should move away from the direct provision of services and allow private sector to enter the uncharted areas. Private markets have been considered efficient as they promote competition and provide effective and prompt services to the people.

Another important development that we can witness is the onslaught of the globalisation phenomenon. The present day economies are undergoing a significant transformation and the boundaries across nations are disappearing leading to excessive interconnectedness. Developments, such as the collapse of Soviet Union, increasing dominance of the USA at various fronts including political, economic, military and so on, expansion of telecommunications and information technology, removal of restrictions on trade, investment, and entry of multi-national corporations, are exerting pressure on the governmental functioning. We have already discussed this in detail in Unit 14 of this Course on New Public Management.

The role of the State in core-areas is also being questioned due to the failure of government in tackling some priority areas. Hence, this has resulted in government, which has all along been the major provider of services, to withdraw from certain areas enabling the private sector, as well as people's initiatives in the form of civil society organisations to expand their areas of operation. For instance in India, we find the key role being played by private sector, as well people's associations in many spheres of activity. Rajendra Singh of Tarun Bharat Sangh in Rajasthan won the prestigious Magsaysay Award in 2001 for his efforts in tackling the drought situation by reviving the rain water harvesting techniques. Many corporate enterprises such as the Tatas and Infosys are working towards upliftment of disadvantaged sections. There are many such initiatives which are gaining momentum and recognition.

The practice of public administration, which has hitherto been dominated by the government, is giving way to a networking between government, market and collective groups of people commonly referred to as 'civil society'. There has been a gradual shift from a narrow view of governance that has relied excessively on bureaucracy with emphasis on hierarchy and rules and regulations; and with citizens as mere passive acceptors or recipients of goods and services towards networking amongst several stakeholders including government, markets and civil society. Governance is not governor-centric now, with power and authority moving from governors to the governed. The task of governance has widened with many other actors coming into the field, blurring of boundaries between public and private sectors with lesser control exercised by government. The present concept of governance looks at government interacting with various segments of society and economy to arrive at mutually acceptable decisions. We shall discuss the concept, significance and features of governance in the next Section.

15.3 GOVERNANCE: CONCEPT AND FEATURES

Development, in present times, in being looked at from a holistic perspective. The term, which earlier referred primarily to economic development, achieved by any country now accords importance to creating an environment in which people can lead productive lives. The wealth of any nation is its people. Hence, governance systems and processes, which foster the development of people assume importance. As we have discussed in the preceding Section, the term governance has gained a broader connotation. In this Section, let us discuss the evolution of the concept as well as features of governance and its significance.

The term 'governance', technically speaking has been derived from the Greek word 'Kybernan' which means 'to steer and to pilot or be at the helm of things'. It was first used by Harlan Cleveland in mid-1970s, when he said 'what the people want is less government and more governance'. He used in the sense of blurring of distinctions between public and private organisations, multi-organisational systems etc. It has acquired a complex connotation in the later years.

There are international organisations such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund etc., which are involved in providing financial assistance for fostering development, especially in developing countries. During 1980s, the financial aid provided by them had various conditionalities, which prevailed upon the developing countries for lowering or doing away with trade barriers, withdrawing the subsidies and price controls, minimising the provision of social welfare measures, privatising the commercial activities of public or State-owned enterprises, encouraging the entry of market-forces in several areas, fostering competition and so on. The financial assistance was linked

to the market-oriented reforms that these countries were expected to bring about. India was also one of the countries that attempted to implement some of these measures in 1991.

Before we discuss the concepts of governance and Good Governance, there is a need to understand the various phases of reforms introduced world-wide as a result of globalisation. The first phase of reforms are considered the first generation reforms, which was a package of reform measures provided by World Bank, IMF and other international organisations during the 1980s. These basically aimed to address the economic crises faced by the developing countries during that period. These reforms included free trade,deregulation of markets etc.

Then came the second generation reforms in the form of 'governance'. Over the course of time, it was observed by the international organisations that the market oriented reforms introduced did not yield the desired results and the growth in many of the countries became slower than was originally anticipated. This made the World Bank examine and publish its first major analyses based on its experience of Sub-Saharan Africa in 1989. The Bank published its Document titled *'Sub-Saharan Africa: from Crises to Sustainable Growth',* which identified certain key factors that came in the way of implementation of market-oriented reforms. The major reason for it was considered to be the failure of public or government institutions to perform their tasks in an efficient and effective manner.

The Bank, hence, for the first time emphasised the need to give importance to governance. According to their interpretation, governance has *four* main components:

i) Public Sector Management;

ii) Accountability;

iii) Legal Framework for Development; and

iv) Transparency and Information Accessibility.

Governance, as per these components, basically implies the proper formulation and implementation of policies by government agencies, within well-defined legal framework. It also emphasises on people getting the necessary information, fostering openness in the system and ensuring accountability on the part of politicians and bureaucrats or administrators.Governance is very important in any political system, as it is the process through which the policies of a State that effect the public are implemented.

Governance depends upon the *three* pillars of the Constitution, namely, the executive, legislature and judiciary. The legislature formulates the laws, the executive (including political and permanent) implements the laws, while the judiciary interprets the laws, For instance, the provision of adequate health, education, housing facilities, infrastructure to the citizens requires effective governance. Now, it must be clear to you that the concept of governance, which implies processes and mechanisms of policy formulation and implementation, is quite wide in nature. It includes government, private sector and the community as a whole.

For example, the government intends to pursue the policy of provision for education for all. The policy can be formulated only by the government, but its execution involves collective efforts. Governance basically attempts to promote collaboration, working together by the government, markets and people. It aims at maximum good for the maximum number of people, which cannot be achieved only by the government,

but also other public as well as private organisations, and even civil society organisations. Let us now discuss the concept and key characteristics of good governance.

15.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

In many countries, governance problems initially were not considered so important for hindering the development process. The Washington Consensus also did not give significance to reforming State institutions, to help policy makers to perform their role in a market-oriented environment. Gradually, it was recognised by donor agencies that governance issues are important for sustained development and systematic transformation,and need to be incorporated in aid policies. Multilateral agencies initiated the provision of aid that was supposed to be linked with improvement of the countries' governing systems.

As we have discussed in preceding Section, the World Bank also used the concept of governance for the first time in its Report *Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth* (1989). In this Report, the Bank termed the crisis confronting the region as a 'crisis of governance'. The Bank identified certain phenomena such as widespread corruption, excessive personalisation of political power, neglect of human rights and persistence of non-accountable and non-elected governments as key impediments to sustainable development. The crisis of governance was said to be responsible for inefficient Structural Adjustment Programme.

Gradually, the World Bank widened the governance agenda by qualifying it with certain characteristics and terming it as 'good governance'. The World Bank (1992) in its subsequent document titled '*Governance and Development*' defined governance as 'the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development'. Governance depended on: (a) the form of political regime (parliamentary or presidential, military or civilian, authoritarian or democratic); (b) the process by which authority is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources; and (c) the capacity of government to design, formulate and implement policies.

The Bank identified some major problems of governance, which included improper implementation of laws, delays in implementation, absence of proper accounting systems, defective procurement systems that encourage corruption, distortion in public investment priorities, failure to involve beneficiaries in the design and implementation of projects. The Bank indicated symptoms of poor governance. These encompassed failure to establish a predictable framework of law and government, which is conducive to development, regulatory rules that impede the functioning of markets and also non-transparent decision-making.

The World Bank considered Good Governance as 'epitomised by predictable, open and enlightened policy making, a bureaucracy imbued with a professional ethos, acting in furtherance of the public good, the rule of law, transparent processes and a strong civil society participating in public affairs. Participation underlines the need for good governance, which is necessary for sound economic, human and institutional development. The promotion of this requires efforts on the part of the citizens also. *Four* key dimensions of governance were emphasised. These are: (a) public sector management (capacity and efficiency), (b) accountability, (c) legal framework for development; and (d) information and transparency.

The World Bank also outlined certain *basics* of Good Governance. These include:

- Operation of Rule of Law that involves adequate laws to ensure personal security and facilitate the functioning of markets, which are adequately enforced through an independent and predictable judiciary and the absence of official corruption.

- A policy environment, which facilitates economic growth and poverty reduction. This includes sound macro-economic and fiscal policies, budgetary institutions and predictable and efficient regulation of the private sector, including the financial sector.

- Adequate investment in people (particularly through public expenditures on basic health and education) and in infrastructure, involving good allocation of public expenditures between and within sectors.

- Protecting the vulnerable through affordable and targeted safety nets and generally ensuring an appropriate "pro-poor" emphasis in public expenditures.

- Protecting the environment by assuring that economic growth does not cause environmental degradation.The policy makers, researchers and international institutions attempted to conceptualise Good Governance and postulate its basic characteristics. These include:

Participation: This is considered to be the core of Good Governance. Governments need to ensure the requisite freedom to the citizens to participate in the decision making process, articulate and represent their interests that can get reflected in the policies and programmes. Participation boosts the independence, confidence, autonomy and self-reliance of citizens. It enables them to influence the decisions and actions of those who are governing them. It fosters responsiveness of policies to the needs of beneficiaries.

Rule of Law: Governance does not imply arbitrary use of authority. Any governance to be effective needs to be supplemented by a fair legal framework. This should be supported by appropriate law enforcement machinery, independent judiciary that can instill confidence in the people.

Transparency: This is based on the premise of free flow of information and its accessibility to those affected by the decisions, which are taken in the governance process. The information provided has to be understandable and of relevance to the concerned. The provision of information within reasonable limits, to the people enables them to comprehend and monitor governmental, private sector and non-governmental sectors' activities.

Responsiveness: The earlier governance mechanisms failed to bring all the stakeholders in their ambit. Presently, the emphasis is more on institutions being responsive to the needs of all those who are likely to be affected by their decisions.

Equity: Since the governance structure and mechanisms, aim at participation, they need to promote equity. A society's well-being and development depends on ensuring that all the members have stake and role in it and are not excluded from the mainstream of activity.

Effectiveness and Efficiency: Good Governance, also similar to New Public Management, aims at effectiveness and efficiency in usage of resources in consonance with the societal needs and demands. Result orientation needs to be the key concern.

Accountability: It has to ensure answerability as well as proper enforcement for violating certain laid down norms. It involves making the politicians, administrators, other governmental, non-governmental organisations, and private sector accountable for their activities.

Predictability: This entails presence of clear-cut laws and regulations that regulate the society and economy.

In a UNDP Workshop on *Governance for Sustainable Human Development* (1997), certain characteristics of Good Governance were identified. These include:

- Participatory in nature.

- Responsive to people.

- Able to develop resources and methods of governance.

- Operates by Rule of Law.

- Enabling, facilitating and regulating rather other controlling.

- Service oriented.

- Sustainable.

- Acceptable to people.

- Fostering equity and equality.

- Promoting gender balance.

- Accountable (Sobhan, 1998).

Bovaird and Loffler (2003) bring out *ten* characteristics of 'good governance' which have recurred frequently both in the literature and in political and practitioner debates on the subject:

- Citizens' engagement.

- Transparency.

- Accountability.

- The equality agenda and social inclusion (gender, ethnicity, age, religion etc.).

- Ethical and honest behaviour.

- Equity (fair procedures and due process).

- Ability to compete in a global environment.

- Ability to work effectively in a partnership

- Sustainability; and

- Respect for the Rule of Law.

Good Governance aims at:

- Improving the quality of life of citizens.

- Enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of administration.

- Establishing the legitimacy and credibility of institutions.

● Securing the freedom of information and expression.

● Providing citizen-friendly and citizen-caring administration.

● Ensuring accountability.

● Using information technology-based services to improve citizen-government interface.

● Improving / enhancing the productivity of employees; and

● Promoting organisational pluralism – State, market and civil society organisations for governance.

Good Governance aims at achieving much more than efficient management of economic and financial resources or public services. It is a broad reform strategy to make government more open, responsive, accountable, and democratic, regulate private sector and strengthen institutions of civil society. Good Governance is the qualitative dimension of governance. A governance system, that enables all-important stakeholders participate in governing mechanisms, processes and institutions emphasising decentralisation, participation and responsiveness is considered to be good or effective. Good Governance is a combination of efficiency concerns of New Public Management and accountability concerns of governance.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answers.

ii) Check your answers with those given at the end of the Unit.

1) What do you understand by the concept of governance?

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2) Elaborate the characteristics of Good Governance.

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15.5 BEYOND GOOD GOVERNANCE

The emergence of the concepts of Governance and Good Governance have triggered several debates and discussions. It is an ongoing process involving multiple actors and institutions. It also calls for radical transformation of the mindset in taking appropriate measures in bringing and sustaining institutional reforms. Hence, it is a gigantic task that calls for replacing as well as revitalising existing institutional processes

and mechanisms. Also, each country is set in a particular socio-political and economic milieu and therefore adhering to a blue print of governance, without taking cognisance of historical, cultural variations could prove counter-productive.

The *Report on Human Development in South Asia* (1999) gave a new dimension – 'Humane Governance'. The Report indicates that South Asia's colossal human deprivation is not just due to economic reasons. The social and political factors are also equally responsible for such a state of affairs. The ultimate goal of development, it observes, is to build human capabilities and enlarge human choices to create a safe and secure environment, where citizens can live with dignity and equality. It makes a case for humane governance, with emphasis on good political, economic and civic governance.

Certain conceptualisations emerged during the course of time, to provide a different orientation, Grindle (2004), provides a model of 'good enough governance' by establishing an interconnection between the form of governance and socio-economic and political milieu. According to this, there cannot be a perfect design of governance.Grindle argues that the Good Governance agenda is 'unrealistically long' and there is little guidance about what is essential and what is not, what should come first and what should follow, what can be achieved in the short and long run and what is not. Hence, she calls for 'good enough governance', which refers to the condition of minimally acceptable government, performance and civil society engagement that does not significantly hinder economic and political development and which permits poverty reduction initiatives to go forward.

There is a need to search for best ways to move towards better governance within the available resources of money, time, knowledge and human and organisational capacities.There is increasing realisation that along with governance agenda, poverty reduction measures, social safety nets, anti-corruption measures and so on have to be taken cognisance of for implementation. Held *et al.* (2005) consider this as the 'Augmented Washington Consensus'. This new model aims to establish a close relationship between the State, economy and civil society.The new approach to governance intends to integrate political, social and economic dimensions to make development sustainable. A Good Governance system encompasses the whole gamut of public policy formulation and implementation involving formal and non-formal actors, and functioning in a transparent, accountable, democratic and participatory manner.

15.6 GOOD GOVERNANCE: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Governance and Good Governance, as we have discussed,occupy an important place in the current scenario. It aims at the maximum welfare of citizens. It involves government, private sector and people's associations or civil society. The important challenge facing the governance process is to build a framework or system that can promote an appropriate balance between these three constituents. Good Governance is an ongoing process that has to be sustained. But it is a gigantic task which involves a multipronged strategy.

The important issues and challenges pertaining to Good Governance include:

● *Strengthening the institutions of governance*: Parliament is the supreme representative institution in India. The political representative represents the electorate. Many a time, concerns are expressed on various fronts about the

falling standards in the quality of participation, conduct of proceedings and soon. Hence, there is a need to develop good practices and procedures of parliamentary functioning and make Parliament a dynamic institution in tune with the changing times.

- *Improving the functioning of civil service and bureaucracy*: Ultimately, it is the permanent executive that is responsible for policy implementation. It is necessary to develop a responsive civil service that is professional, energetic and caters to people's needs.

- *Reassuring the citizens with establishing an independent and accountable judiciary*: The judiciary is to be seen as an effective instrument of maintenance of Rule of Law and upholding of social justice.

- *Making the private sector accountable:* This can be done through adopting sound business practices, adhering to rules and regulations and protecting the interest of consumers.

- *Educating the citizens about their rights and obligations:* This can be ensured by making them partners in all development activities.

- *Good Governance has to pay attention to several key issues in political, economic and civil spheres:* Political governance needs to be strengthened through ensuring appropriate decentralisation measures, making elected representatives responsive and accountable to citizens, strengthening their capacities through education, awareness and training, conduct of regular, periodic and fair elections, impartial judiciary, and improving the functioning of the civil service.

- *Economic governance needs to be given importance:* This can be ensured through sufficient budgetary allocations to social sector priority areas such as education, health, housing, appropriate taxation and subsidy systems. This also requires government to promote private sector development through sound business practices, creation of stable economic environment, appropriate regulatory framework, and protection of the interests of all concerned including employees, consumers and society at large.

- *Civic governance includes harnessing of the self-initiatives of people:* Focus should be on improving their capacities to govern their lives creating awareness in them and enabling them to take up active role in democratic governance processes.

The issues and challenges that confront Good Governance require effective functioning of three wings of government namely executive, legislature and judiciary and building appropriate linkages amongst the organs. Governance has to strike a suitable balance between parliamentary supremacy and judicial independence. As the State, private sector and civil society have an important role in governance process, there is a need to assign clear-cut roles and responsibilities to these components to enable them to work towards genuine people-oriented development activities.

Governance, is a model as well as a process involving multiple stakeholders, institutions and interactions between them. Good Governance focuses on making the process smooth with sound policy framework, efficiency, accountability and transparency in all activities promoting sound socio-political, economic and civic governance. It is a continuous process through which conflictual and diverse interests are accommodated, cooperative action is fostered, and formal and informal institutions are empowered

to promote public good. In India, the formulation of citizens' charters, redressal of public grievances, Right to Information, people's participation and so on are initiatives in this direction.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: i)   Use the space given below for your answers.

ii)   Check your answers with those given at the end of the Unit.

1) Explain the model of 'good enough governance'.

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2) Identify the key issues and challenges pertaining to Good Governance.

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15.7   CONCLUSION

The transition from government to governance involves a shift from the top down political set up to multiple agencies, institutions and systems with interlinkages. It has beyond doubt widened the scope of public administration by recognising the role of multiple actors in public decision making. The excessive managerial orientation accorded to public administration during 1980s seemed to affect the concerns of democratic polity. Governance and Good Governance with importance given to transparency, accountability, rule of law, ethics, integrity, have gained supremacy over time, as widely discussed approaches to public administration. This Unit has discussed the meaning of the 'governance' It has examined the transition from Governance to Good Governance. The characteristics and features of Good Governance have been described. The Unit has also brought out the issues and challenges for sustaining Good Governance.

15.8   GLOSSARY

Civil Society   :   As per Wikipedia, it is the 'aggregate of non-governmental organisations and institutions that manifest interests and will of citizens'. It is considered as a community of citizens linked by common interests and collective activity.

Citizen's Charters	:	Citizen's Charters came into being in the UK in 1991 to make administration more accessible, responsive, transparent and efficient. The aim of the Charter is to make available all the relevant information about the public institutions providing services to the citizens. Since citizens have a right to demand accountability, services offered by government departments, and the charters promote the citizens' entitlement to easy, unhassled, qualitative, efficient access to good and services.
Social Safety Nets	:	These refer to a collection of services provided by the State or other institutions with the primary goal of reducing poverty.
Washington Consensus	:	The term coined in 1989 by John Williamson, refers to the policy advice provided by the Washington based institutions such as International Monetary Fund, World Bank to the Latin American countries. It stresses on corporate governance, flexible labour markets, trade agreements, anti-corruption devices etc.

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15.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress 1

1) Your answer should include the following points:

- The term 'Governance' is derived from the Greek Word 'Kybernan' implies Steering.

- It is broader than government and includes processes and mechanisms of policy formulation and implementation.

- Governance is the process through which the policies of a State that effect the public are implemented.

- It emphasises on collaborative efforts by government, private sector and community in implementation of policies and programmes.

2) Your answer should include the following points:

- The characteristics of Good Governance include:
    a) Participation
    b) Rule of Law
    c) Transparency
    d) Responsiveness
    e) Equity
    f) Effectiveness and efficiency
    g) Accountability
    h) Predictability

Check Your Progress 2

1) Your answer should include the following points:

- The model of 'good enough governance' was propounded by Merryl S. Grindle.

- It establishes an interconnection between the form of governance and socio-economic and political milieu.

- The Good Governance agenda is quite elaborate and hence a condition of minimally acceptable governance is propounded.

- Each country within the framework of its available resources of time, money, knowledge, human and organisational capacities has to determine the governance agenda.

2) Your answer should include the following points:

- Strengthening the institutions of governance including parliament and judiciary.

- Improving the functioning of civil service and bureaucracy.

- Ensuring the private sector accountability.

- Educating the citizens about their rights and obligations.

- Revitalising political, economic and civic governance.

UNIT 16   POSTMODERN APPROACH*

Structure

16.0   OBJECTIVES

After reading this Unit, you should be able to:

● Explain the concept of modernity;

● Examine the prevailing orthodoxies in traditional public administration;

● Discuss the key ideas behind Postmodernism; and

● Describe the postmodern trends in public administration.

16.1   INTRODUCTION

Ever since the Age of Enlightenment of the eighteenth century to the Age of Industrialisation of the twentieth century, attempts were made to transform society by applying 'science' and 'reason'. Especially, in the nineteenth century social sciences have been profoundly guided by 'reason' with the influential writings of Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim and Max Weber. In their Article on 'Reason and Postmodernity', White and Adams (1995) point out that the elites and intellectuals of the modernist paradigm believed that *"science would free us from natural and social constraints on our development"*. In the context of public administration, the practices of hierarchy, expert dominance, secrecy, and passivity of citizens, however, came under severe criticism for being restrictive of the human behaviour that eventually resulted in increased contradictions, inequalities, and social conflicts. Sadly, the ideas of civic engagement, citizens' empowerment, deliberation, and democratic process became secondary to public administration.

Therefore, a search for alternative approach to public administration was carried out by challenging the ideas of the modernist paradigm through Postmodern lens.

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* Contributed by Dr. R. Anitha, Former Faculty, RGNIYD, Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu.

With the hope to build alternative approaches that are sensitive to values and subjective to human behaviour, the proponents of Postmodern perspective emphasised the *'public'* part of public administration. In this Unit, we shall discuss the concept of modernity. We will examine the idea of Postmodernism and its intersection with public administration. It will also explain the Postmodern alternative within public administration.

16.2 A BRIEF UNDERSTANDING OF MODERNITY

Modernity is a product of the Enlightenment Age of the eighteenth century Europe,which inspired the philosophers, theorists, and scientists for a society laden with universal truth and justice. As it is commonly understood, modernisation is a process of development, which implies advancement through progressive changes. Worrall (1974) quotes Samuel P. Huntington's observations on modernisation as: *"a multifaceted process involving change in all areas of human thought and activity"*.

One can find the roots of modernisation or modernity (terms used interchangeably) in the domains of art, natural sciences, law, economics, and government wherein the old values of 'superstition' and 'instinct' were replaced by *'science'* and *'reason'*. White and Adams (1995) describe this powerful combination of science, instrumental reason, and technological progress as the *"hallmark of technical rationality"*. Scholars observe that technical rationality anchored the progress in a wide spectrum vis-à-vis social, political, and economic contexts.Consequently, the period of modernity powered by 'technical rationality' prompted professionals, such as, scientists, social scientists, and managers towards a universal view in which all human conflicts were perceived as problems limited to scientific solutions.

The post-industrial revolution had been the arena of 'industrial reforms', wherein different strategies were adopted to bring about maximum 'productivity' and 'efficiency'. The period from early 1900s to the early 1960s was highly influenced by Taylor's Scientific Management, Weber's Bureaucratic Model, Wilson's Politics-Administration Dichotomy, and Simon's Organisational Rationality, and these models proved efficient in those days. However, in the late 1960s, these models received criticisms from the scholars for being restrictive of the human behaviour and of less relevance to the issues and concerns of the society. To illustrate, the logic of modernity can be best described in Simon's words (1983): *"It cannot tell us where to go; at best it can tell us how to get there"*.

The perils of public administration can be understood from organisational and societal perspectives, *firstly* in the context of public administration, Bogason (2005) finds the period of modernity is *"characterised by rationalisation, centralisation, bureaucratisation, specialisation, and industrialisation"*. *Secondly* owing to the social problems in terms of ill-health, unemployment, social insecurity, and environmental degradation in the developed as well as developing nations, Traditional Public Administration (TPA) was countered on a wide range of issues like legitimacy, transparency, mainstreaming gender, administrative responsibility etc.

Scholars, such as Waldo, Golombiewski, Frederickson, etc., countered the prevailing ideas of TPA as being insensitive and disconnected from social reality and hence, explored alternatives to breakdown organisational systems and rigid patterns of thinking. In this line of thought, the objective to bridge the gap between theory and practice opened the door for more people-centric perspectives which eventually came under the rubric of Postmodernism.

16.3 PREVAILING ORTHODOXIES IN TRADITIONAL PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, scholars in public administration challenged the mainstream ideas of 'Organisational Rationality' to the changing political, economic, social, cultural and technological contexts. Scholars often had trouble in conceptualising the approach to knowledge acquisition that underlay the prevailing Rational Model of public administration. Herbert Simon, the foremost advocate of Rational Model, hypothesised that in the study of administrative behaviour, individual or group preferences may not be considered 'scientific' and organisationally 'efficient'. Hence, Simon argued for 'positivist approach' and called for an empirically based organisation theory that focused on concepts, such as decision, role and group theory. To put it succinctly, the Positivist Approach looked for commonalities of behaviour in all organisation settings irrespective of its nature whether public or private or voluntary.

With the ambition to achieve a scientific status of the discipline of public administration, the proponents of Positivist View appreciated the knowledge acquisition processes in natural sciences and justified its relevance in social sciences vis-à-vis *'observability'* and *'measurability'*. However, the critics of Positivist View have pointed out that describing human behaviour by mere observation could undermine the meaning of human experiences in terms of intuition, emotions and feelings. The principles of economy and efficiency no longer appeared to be relevant to organisational life during the post-second world war period. The prevailing view on 'one best way' of doing things was replaced by multiple ways of organising, formulating, and reformulating programmatic goals.

To substantiate, Caiden (1991) while reflecting on rigid bureaucracies identified chronic problems like inordinate delays, non-availability of officials at all levels to individual citizens, lack of concern to the grievances of citizens or groups, and lack of humane approach. On the other hand, the value-neutral instruments, such as rational choice, efficiency, and centralised planning were referred by scholars as 'professional bias', since it had the tendency toward shielding bureaucratic power in the society. Therefore, scholars looked for an alternative approach to counter the inadequacies posed by TPA. In the following Section, we will try to understand the conditions under which people questioned the certainties as prescribed by the modernist paradigm.

16.4 FACTORS FOR THE RISE OF POSTMODERNISM

According to Rosenau (1992), *"Postmodernism rejects epistemological assumptions, refutes methodological conventions, resists knowledge claims, obscures all versions of truth, and dismisses policy recommendations"*.Box (2004) attributes the reasons for the rise of Postmodernism as, diminishing trust in science and government, social fragmentation, vanishing norms, scepticism, local affairs, and the paradox of globalisation. Let us now understand why Postmodernism challenged the ideas of modernity vis-à-vis positivist, empiricist, legal-rational etc:

Declining Trust in Science and Government

Despite the success of scientific culture and secular humanism, the quest for achieving certainty did not solve the social mysteries. For instance, public administration scholars observe that by the late 1960s, since the modernisation drive failed to remove poverty and social inequity, the optimism of people in government started waning and

subsequently, signs of apathy were displayed. The enduring problems of unemployment, environment degradation, inadequate healthcare and education, plus the complexities of public systems (rigid, cumbersome rules etc.) made it difficult to resolve. This scenario eventually challenged the popular belief that science and technology will be a panacea for all human and societal evils.

Social Fragmentation

With increasing magnitude of global capitalism, there has been the widespread issue of social fragmentation within communities, ethnic groups, cultures, and regions. As a result, the social divide at multiple levels leads to *'unpredictability'*. On the contrary, one of the affirmative characteristics of social fragmentation as pointed out by Box (2004) is, people around the world are more interested in expanding their networks through technology and associations at the neighbourhood and community levels. Bogason (2005) describes that such networking trends lose their national focus and replace the values of modernity vis-à-vis centralisation, collectivism, and nationalisation with *'decentralisation'*, *'individualisation'* and *'internationalisation'*.

Contextuality

With increase in social fragmentation and greater people's voice and choice, scholars observe a trend of 'relativism' and 'uncertainty' in the society. Box (*op.cit.*) describes that there is *"uncertainty about the values that underlie morality and decisions about ethical conduct"* on the *"nature of the family, what sort of education is best, which occupations are most desirable, the role of science and technology in human life and so on."* The context of change in norms, habits, political and cultural attitude in turn affects the public sector in terms of uncertainty, ambiguity, and multiplicity. Although, these perspectives are culturally embedded and legitimate individualism, their success lies in facilitating the *'process'* in which public systems could work. To illustrate, Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS) spearheaded the Right to Information (RTI) movement in India and facilitated the local people to ensure transparency and accountability in local administration. Equally, the people were empowered to raise locally relevant issues. Such social mobilisation efforts culminated in the passage of (Right to Information) Act in 2005.

Scepticism

Postmodernism is sceptical about modern political representation and elitist culture on the grounds that they are arbitrary in promoting vested interests and in excluding the complexities of the society. Rosenau (1992) points out that Post-modernists view modern representation as *"fraudulent, perverse, artificial, mechanical, deceptive, incomplete, misleading, insufficient, and wholly inadequate for the post-modern age"*. Agger (1990) describes that Postmodernism resists elite culture and encourages writers and intellectuals both to communicate their ideas in *"a new voice"* in an easily understandable language so as to broaden the democratic public sphere. For instance, the Green Revolution in Asian countries, which eradicated widespread famine has also been widely criticised for causing environmental degradation, income inequalities and undermining local socio-economic conditions. Such negative occurrences made Postmodernists sceptical about the legitimacy of imported policies and their impact on native population.

Preference for Small and Local

Given the scenario of social fragmentation and widespread scepticism over imported policies and ideologies from the West, Box (*op.cit.*) has opened that people display

less interest in national and international events and demonstrate natural inclination towards what is closest to them, such as local associations or community affairs. In less developed countries, a classic example is the presence of community radio. For instance, in Assam, *'Jnan Taranga'*, the first community radio station of the North East, serving as an inclusive platform for women, children, senior citizens, marginalised people, differently-abled, youth, tribal, rural and urban people.

Community Radio Compendium (2016) mentions that *'Jnan Taranga'* conducts innovative programmes on folk arts, women's issues and marginalised people. In line with Postmodern perspectives of being 'small and local', in the year 2002, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, decided to include civil society for greater participation in empowering local communities through community radio stations. Some of the other examples may include: marathons for social cause, volunteering for environmental conservation, neighbourhood crime watch, residents' welfare associations, community radio, etc.

The Paradox of Globalisation

Although the proponents of 'globalisation'advocate for a'singular worldview', its impact on local cultures, values, and commitments is indeed chaotic and contradictory in reality. Box (*op.cit.*) refers to Barberon these lines: *"such trends lead people to abandon traditional values and beliefs of their societies in favour of lifestyle consumerism"*. For instance, the media coverage in advertising and celebrating western lifestyle to a great extent brings a shift in the attitude of people to feel inferior about their tradition and culture.

In sum, Postmodernism did not arise as an event or individual occurrence; rather it emerged out of cumulative effects of the above mentioned reasons in the late twentieth century.Postmodern ideas are wide ranging and hence, it is impossible to condense the basic tenets of Postmodernism in a particular way. Cunliffe (2008) points out the key ideas that underline Postmodern Approach as follows:

- No fixed and commonly understood external social reality; Postmodernism only depicts images, fragmented views and performances.

- Organisations are created and maintained by a minority of individuals who have power over the majority.

- Postmodernists believe that knowledge does not lead to enlightened civilisation and progress rather it only lead to domination and marginalisation of groups.

- Meanings are not fixed in words, but depend on how they are used in particular contexts; and

- We need to deconstruct texts to uncover different assumptions, hidden power relations, and how groups are marginalised and suppressed.

As referred in Section 16.3, in search for an alternative to Traditional Public Administration, scholars have relied on Postmodern Approaches to knowledge acquisition which emphasised on understanding the meanings that people bring to their experiences. This development has been referred by McSwite (1997) as *"to open ourselves to one another"*. The Postmodern theorists believe in the idea of 'discourse', the notion that common problems are more likely to be resolved through the process of discussion and consensus building. In the next Section, we will understand the role of Postmodern Approach in the context of public administration.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answers.

ii) Check your answers with those given at the end of the Unit.

1) What is meant by modernity?

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2) Give a brief account of the prevailing orthodoxies in public administration.

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3) What are the reasons behind declining trust in science and government?

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4) What do you understand by the term 'scepticism'?

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16.5   THE POSTMODERN ALTERNATIVE WITHIN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

There are many Postmodern trends in public administration theory. Let us discuss some of them:

Organisational Humanism

Frederickson *et.al.* (2015) finds that the ideas and concepts that we put together as Postmodern Theory had its origin in the writings of Elton Mayo (Hawthorne Experiments) and Chester Barnard. To illustrate, F.W. Taylor in his Scientific Management Approach argues for *"one best way of doing things"* in organisation

to achieve maximum efficiency and describes organisations as highly mechanical environments, where workers are interested in salary and favourable working conditions. Unlike F.W. Taylor, Barnard describes organisations as highly social environments in which workers are equally interested in recognition and psychological support, besides salary and favourable working conditions.

This line of thought was further simplified by Douglas McGregor who advocated for a participatory management style, where the incumbents like their job and seek responsibility in what they do. Notably, thinkers like Abraham Maslow, Frederick Herzberg and Rensis Likert focused their attention on the role of individual, organisational leadership, group dynamics, motivation, and satisfaction. Similarly, Elliott Jaques advocated for a humanising bureaucracy based on the principle of employee consensus. By the mid-1960s, reiterating the Human Relations movement, Organisational Humanism perspective in public administration started emerging.

New Public Administration (NPA)

In 1968, a group of scholars led by Dwight Waldo, with the objective to revamp the scope of public administration from the existing orthodoxies met at the Minnowbrook Conference Centre, Syracuse University, New York. The scholars reinforced the need for being sensitive to values and responsive to the realities of the environment. The deliberations carried out by the scholars reacted critically to the Positivist tradition and proposed for New Public Administration (NPA). Frederickson *etal.* (2015) writes that the core ideas of Postmodern public administration can be traced in NPA and summarises them in the words of Marini (1971) as follows:

● Public administrators and public agencies are not and cannot be either neutral or objective.

● Bureaucratic hierarchy is often ineffective as an organisational strategy and technology is often dehumanising.

● Cooperation, consensus, and democratic administration are more likely than the simple exercise of administrative authority to result in organisational effectiveness; and

● Modern concepts of public administration must be built on post-behavioural and post-positivist logic, that is, more democratic, more adaptable, and more responsive to the changing social, economic and political contexts.

Stillman (1995) has observed that the scholars advocated for fresh perspectives in public administration grounded "on the ideals of citizen's participation, sharing ideas, building consensus and mutual trust, and even *love of mankind*". On the whole, the tenets of NPA gave a clarion call for a radical orientation of public administration in terms of relevance, innovation, personal morality and ethics, and reconciling public administration and democracy. Like the scholars of Minnowbrook Conference, Postmodernists rejected the grand narratives of the discipline, such as Weber's Bureaucracy, Wilson's Politics-Administration Dichotomy, Taylor's Scientific Management, and Herbert Simon's Decision-Making Model. For the Postmodern scholars, it becomes essential to link the core concerns of values and morality with relevance and social equity.

Public Administration Theory Network

Following the Minnowbrook discussions held in 1968, some of the scholars with humanistic-orientation continued to deliberate through informal networks in USA.

Consequently, this led to the evolution of Public Administration Theory Network (PATnet). Frederickson (2015) describes that two books deserve special mention in this evolution, namely, Thomas S. Kuhn's *'The Structure of Scientific Revolutions'* (1962) and Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann's *'The Scientific Construction of Reality'* (1967). This academic rigour stimulated the scholars of social science in general and PAT net in particular to build NPA as an undeniable paradigm for improving its administrative practices. Secondly, based on the theme of social constructivism, the scholars aspired to make sense of social realities constructed by human beings in their everyday experiences, stories, conversations, written texts etc. Unlike TPA, the focus of public administration gradually shifted from organisational structure to organisational realities. In the ensuing sub-section, let us discuss the prominent traits of Postmodern theory as referred in public administration.

Traits of Postmodern Theory

Postmodernism challenges the traditional approaches to thinking and knowledge acquisition. Hence, they rely on multiple methods to capture the social and cultural construction of realities. Postmodern scholars criticised the positivist paradigm for being one-dimensional and argued that the foundations of public administration have been built on faulty beliefs and interpretations. Hence, they followed a host of qualitative methods like dialectic, historical analysis etc. Bogason (2005) presents the traits of Postmodern public administration theory as: dialectic, deconstruction, deterritorialisation, imagination, and alterity:

i) Dialectic

Denhardt (2011) has argued that owing to Positivism trends, we had lost the capacity to tell what is real. In this line of thought, the scholars advocate to explore the possibilities and relationships that the administrators encounter in their everyday experiences vis-à-vis language, culture, discourse, local knowledge with citizens. In these lines, the dialectic nature of public administration stresses the importance and responsibilities of incumbents to be self-reflective and facilitative as they operate in uncertain conditions. According to Jun (2006), 'dialectic' is a method for humanising and democratising organisational processes by recognising the participation of individuals in interpreting the meaning of the content. In this regard, Jun (2006) applies this method in the context of public administrators, as they may be able to construct dialectical possibilities by placing their accountabilities into the larger contexts of society, citizens, and ethics. Thus, Dialectical Approach provides opportunities to explore alternatives to overcome the limits of institutional dysfunctions. We shall see the example of dialectic approach in Section 16.6 vis-à-vis dialogue and participatory governance.

ii) Deconstruction

Deconstruction is a Postmodern method of analysis that intends to critically analyse the centralising tendencies of TPA as well as to understand the changing nature of diverse society. Based on the works of Jacques Derrida and Jean-Francois Lyotard, Deconstruction has been used as an alternative perspective in public administration for critically interpreting the text, that is, the grand narratives of Weber, Taylor, Wilson etc., to uncover its contradictions and hidden assumptions. The Postmodern scholars were not interested in advocating for a unified theory rather they supported in accommodating fragmented and diverse perspectives in promoting creativity. In the context of public administration, the administrators and citizens could play an active role in deconstruction process.

iii) Deterritorialisation

According to Bogason (2005), Deterritorialisation negates modern understandings of representations, which claim scientific propositions. Unlike TPA which focuses on symmetrical, homogeneity, and universal knowledge, the central elements of postmodernists include 'reality' in terms of asymmetrical, heterogeneity, and local knowledge. The presence of community radio station, as mentioned in sub-section 16.4.5, is an appropriate example for Deterritorialisation.

iv) Imagination

According to Frederickson (2015), imagination is an important element of Postmodern public administration because of its usage of metaphor, images, allegory, stories and parables. This aspect enables people to find alternate ways of thinking instead of generalising. Scholars perceive that what 'rationalisation' is for TPA, 'imagination' is for Postmodern analysis. For instance, in the year 2015, the district administration of Calicut, Kerala initiated an innovative project called 'Compassionate Kozhikode' to help institutions, such as, mental health care institutions, old age homes etc. With the aim to bring together people with a motive of altruism, this project received international accolades including the Social Media for Empowerment Award in 2016.

v) Alterity

According to Bogason (2005), the term 'Alterity' means a moral stance that counters the concept of standard bureaucratic efficiency. It implies that every act of administration directly or indirectly affects another person, whether beneficiary or official or any other stakeholder. Secondly, it prefers diversity of opinions, attitudes, and assumptions and avoids any form of stereotyping administrators (service provider) and citizens (receiver). Some of the characteristics of alterity include: openness to one another, opposing injustice, and helping service-orientation.

Postmodern Ideas and Practices

● **Phenomenological Approach**

With the efforts of PATnet, public administration, which was erstwhile ridden with identity crisis resumed its steering by the advocates of Phenomenological Approach. Phenomenology is a philosophy, which holds that 'reality' consists of the lived experiences of the individuals, of the meanings individuals attribute to specific objects. Lynn Jr. (2011) while referring to Michael Harmon describes that the Phenomenological Approach is related to a class of approaches vis-à-vis Hermeneutics, Ethnomethodology, Symbolic Interactionism, Feminist Epistemologies, and Post-structuralism. Another scholar Frederickson (2015) classifies the genres of scholars as interpretive theorist camp and critical theorist camp.

He further adds that while the former was represented by Michael Harmon, the latter was represented by Robert Denhardt and Ralph Hummel. Lynn Jr. in his Essay on *'Public Administration Theory: Which Side Are You On?'* (2011) opines that the Phenomenological Approach along with interpretive and Critical Theory could be regarded as 'Postmodern' or 'Postpositive' Approach. In a way, the interpretive and critical approaches to the study of public administration, organisation and theory provide an alternative way of understanding the complexities of the society.Unlike TPA, the interpretive and critical approaches do not include a set of unified constructs and assumptions that aims to explain and predict social phenomena.

● **Interpretive Theory**

According to Jun (1997), the interpretive and critical perspectives in public administration was highly influenced by William Dilthey and Edmund Husserl. The Interpretive Theory encountered Herbert Simon's Decision-Making theory on the pretext that while making decisions, accurate representation of reality can seldom be separated as facts and values. It asserted that any such efforts to distinguish realities may only reflect the convenience of the decision makers and not the meanings attached by those who implement the decisions.

Postmodern scholars viewed the fact and value dichotomy as a derivative of natural sciences, which when applied to social context has led to self-defeating consequences at the expense of citizen welfare. Lindblom (1965) describes that *"the dichotomy between facts and values and the dichotomy between means and ends were dismissed long ago"*. The Postmodern scholars, thus, deny the existence of independent reality in social context and emphasises the reflection of local culture and ethos in determining the content of our experiences.

One of the reasons for the failure of TPA was that it isolated administrative organisations from the social context, hence, the postmodern scholars were apprehensive in verifying empirical facts and inclined more towards understanding meanings that were embedded in the experiences. In fact, Jun (1997) observes that qualitative research methods like "ethnomethodology, participant observation, and conversation analysis, aim to learn from social contexts, which involves human actions, symbols, communications, experience, values, emotions, history, tradition, culture, language, and so on".

● **Critical Theory**

The roots of Critical Theory can be traced in the writings of Marx's views on power, conflict, and control. Critical theorists like Robert Denhardt, etc., challenged the contradictions posed by the capitalist mode of production. Much of its contributions provided an insight of public organisations could be attributed to the writings of Jurgen Habermas, Denhardt etc. To some extent, the Postmodern view of questioning all assumptions and constructs of modernity owes to the critical perspective.

Therefore, Critical Theory, according to Box (*op.cit.*), *"provides an opening for conceptualisation and practice that acknowledges the value-base, normative character of public administration"*. Hummel's (1994) approach to Critical Theory raises a series of questions in terms of organisational structure, culture, psychology, speech, and politics: *"Is top-down command really necessary? Is efficiency and control the only values to be pursued by bureaucracies at the cost of human purpose? Do we need to accept the destruction of self when we enter employment? Is the atmosphere of fear the only tool for getting things done? Did the political domain lose any sense of imagination in the pursuit of efficiency and control?"*

The critical perspective is evident in Postmodern arguments against modernity in terms of its narratives related to workers' issues and concerns. For example, Cunliffe (2008) has observed that the work is simplified and routinised in rigid organisations so that work and workers can be easily controlled and if workers resist against hegemony they can be replaced. Denhardt (1981) opines that through this analytical lens, the limitations of the existing society would give way to more democratic ways of governance and management. In an attempt to understand the relationships between power and dependence, critical theorists made an attempt to improve the quality of organisational life.

● **Discourse Analysis**

Fox and Miller's (2007) approach to Postmodern public administration encompasses the development of an authentic discourse within society. Based on the writings of Jurgen Habermas, they envision for a proactive participation of public administrators, non-profit groups, citizens, and all those who have engaged in policy networks. Fox and Miller (2007) have put forth that the goal of the proposed discourse will not be to determine what is 'true', rather to answer the question *'what should we do next?'*

● **Feminist Discourse**

Frederickson (2015) observes that there is a close connection between Postmodern public administration theory and feminist perspectives in the field. Although Mary Parker Follet is considered as the earliest proponent of gender-orientation in organisations, it is Camilla Stivers who has written extensively about the dynamics of gender in public administration. In her Book 'Gender Images in Public Administration' (2002), Stivers has described that women have been paid less, struggled to accommodate themselves to the organisational practices, and fought to balance her job both at the organisational and domestic front etc. Hence, the core of Postmodern discourse seeks to understand the image of gender in public organisations.

Stivers' (2002) arguments reveal that bureaucratic functioning tends to repress women. Stivers' propositions could be best understood in the following words: *"public administration is not only masculinist and patriarchal, it is in fundamental denial as to its own nature and as a result it is conceptually and practically impoverished"*. Stivers describes that the images of public administrator as guardian, hero or high-profile leader are thought to be masculine, whereas the application of fairness, compassion, benevolence, and civic mindedness are considered feminine.

Frederickson (2015) has observed that of all the Postmodern dialectic perspectives, the most developed ideas could be attributed to the Feminist Perspective. Since Postmodernism comprises of various approaches and follows divergent thinking in its discourse, there is no one acceptable definition of Postmodernism as different things providedifferent meanings to people. The Postmodern perspective, thus, is a theoretical endeavour on its own which reiterates that human understanding and action cannot be reduced to merely scientific inquiry.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answers.

ii) Check your answers with those given at the end of the Unit.

1) What were the reasons for the rise of Postmodernism?

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2) Briefly explain the application of Phenomenological perspective in Postmodern Approach to public administration.

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3) What do you understand by the term 'deconstruction'?

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4) Explain the traits of Postmodern Theory.

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16.6 MAJOR FOCUS OF POSTMODERN APPROACH TO PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Dialogue and Participatory Governance

Postmodern scholars support action research frameworks in public administration that promote dialogue, learning, sharing, and participation like Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA). It is an approach that provides a platform to the village population vis-à-vis women, poor people, school teachers, volunteers, youth, farmers, etc., to represent their problems visibly on the ground or on paper either in the form of maps or symbols or any three dimensional models. Such practices have also been provided to the officials associated with villages; say for example, for organising a baseline survey on farmer's details, crop pattern, nature of soil, details of farm tools etc.

Direct Citizens' Participation

Grassroots campaigners in India use social audit as a tool to fix the problems of corruption by the beneficiaries in the rural employment sector. Due to the pioneering efforts of MKSS, social audit was successfully incorporated into the statutory provisions under National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) and citizens

keep track of misappropriation of funds. Thus, the rise of civil society as agents and partners of development opened up avenues for more transparent and accountable governance.

With the implementation of 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts, the local governments could constitute *gramsabha*, that is, village council meetings, in their villages to ensure people's participation in village-level planning. To illustrate,in 2014, Gariphema village in Nagaland (*Times of India, 2014*) was declared as the country's first tobacco-free village. The village council passed a resolution that a penalty of Rs. 1000 will be imposed on whoever sells tobacco and alcohol and a penalty of Rs. 500 will be imposed on those who consume in public places.

From Nation-building to Networking

If nation-building was for Traditional Public Administration, networking forms the key characteristic feature of Postmodern public administration. Frederickson (2015) has observed that nation-building could be effectively replaced by societies that find meaning in connections and associations where the networks become as significant as the individual. He has further stated that in a Postmodern world even the most powerful countries will not have the capacity to serve its citizens. With the inclusion of information and communication technologies, the time and space is compressed, which eventually stimulate for finding new ways of communication networks.

To illustrate, when the Bhuj earthquake struck Gujarat in 2001, there was no social media like facebook, twitter, whatsapp etc., for providing news updates. By the time the Uttarakhand cloudburst happened in 2015, social media became an integral part of disaster response vis-à-vis from locating resources to loved ones, from notifying authorities to expressing support. In the areas where cell phone towers collapsed, social media filled the void and thus, worked along with the government to identify the victims. Such episodes provide fresh lease of ideas around networked governance.

16.7 BEYOND POSTMODERNISM IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

We can certainly say that the discipline of public administration can never be reduced to certainties as those found in natural sciences due to the interaction of humans with the society. It can be construed that the scholars of Postmodernism disagreed for a unified theory and recommended the future scholars not to look for one appropriate methodology. They were of the view that there cannot be a single dominant paradigm or norm to anchor a complex discipline. White (1999) guided public administration scholars to apply appropriate methodologies based on the research questions that they look forward.

Firstly, he states that if the research question pertains to 'why' things have occurred in such a way and looks for explanation of events and predicts 'how' it would occur in future, *'explanatory research'* could be utilised. *Secondly*, if the research is about 'what is going on here', then *'interpretive research'* could be used. *Thirdly*, critical research could be used if the researcher is faced with ideological or psychological or historical ambiguities. In sum, White (1999) recommends as *"whatever question we face, we must properly align an approach that will address the question most appropriately"*. Indeed, the general agreement among the Postmodern scholars has been that the discipline of public administration in the present as well as in future, will revolve around practical applications of solving problems in a highly volatile and fragmented situation.

16.8   CONCLUSION

Scholars have viewed that the methodologies of the natural sciences cannot be enforced in the context of social sciences as policies and decisions. With the prevailing orthodoxies of Traditional Public Administration(TPA) and increased rise in social problems, scholars who lost faith in the so-called 'modernity' proposed an alternative approach to public administration under the broad phenomena of 'Postmodernism'. Postmodernism or Postmodernity is not a separate theoretical approach, rather, it evolved as a critique to TPA.

Given the situations of diminishing trust on science and government, fragmented ideas and society, and the emphasis on deconstructing the grand narratives of Weber, Taylor, Wilson etc., Postmodern public administration has insisted on accommodating multiple cultures, ethos, and values. In their search of qualitative inquiry, postmodern approaches have adapted different methods like dialectics, phenomenology, discourse analysis, feminist epistemologies. In practice, Postmodern public administration relies on direct citizen's participation, participatory governance, networking and intends to accommodate greater tolerance towards the diversity in research traditions as well as in government-citizen-stakeholder interface.This Unit attempted to explain the Postmodern alternative to (TPA). It discussed the evolution of Postmodernist Theory and brought out its major focus.

16.9   GLOSSARY

Ideological   :   It is a system of idea or ideals that are concerned with polity, economy, society etc.

Masculinist   :   It denotes attitudes or values that are held to be typical of men.

Organisational Silos	:	It is a situation in organisation where the organisation is less likely to share resources or ideas with other groups.
Patriarchal	:	It is a system of a family or society or institution, where the eldest male member holds power. It ensures that women are excluded from taking decisions, and are rendered powerless.

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16.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress1

1)   Your answer should include the following points:

- Modernity is a product of the Enlightenment age.

- It is a process of development which implies advancement through progressive changes.

- The old values of 'superstition' and 'instinct' were replaced by *'science'* and *'reason'*.

- All human conflicts were perceived as problems limited to scientific solutions.

2)   Your answer should include the following points:

- It undermines human experiences in terms of intuition, emotions, and feelings.

- There is no one best way of doing things.

- It led to professional bias and shielded bureaucratic power from society.

3)   Your answer should include the following points:

- It did not solve social mysteries.

- It failed to remove poverty and social inequity.

- There were signs of citizen apathy.

- It challenged the popular belief that science is a panacea for all evils.

4)   Your answer should include the following points:

- It is critical about modern political representation.

- It is critical about elitist culture.

- It promotes vested interests.

- It challenges the legitimacy of imported policies.

Check Your Progress 2

1)   Your answer should include the following points:

- Declining Trust in Science and Government.

- Social Fragmentation.

- Preference for Small and Local.

- Contextuality.

- Scepticism.

- The Paradox of Globalisation.

2)   Your answer should include the following points:

- It provides an alternative way of understanding the complexities of society.

- It is a philosophy which holds that 'reality' consists of the lived experiences of the individuals.

- It is related to a class of approaches vis-à-vis Hermeneutics, Ethnomethodology, Symbolic Interactionism, Feminist epistemologies, and Post-structuralism.

- It denies the existence of independent reality.

- It helps to understand the relationships between power and dependence.

- Feminist discourse is one of the developed dialectic perspectives.

3)   Your answer should include the following points:

- It is a Postmodern method of analysis.

- It critically analyses the centralising tendencies of TPA.

- It understands the changing nature of diverse society.

- It intends to uncover the contradictions and hidden assumptions of the grand narratives.

4) Your answer should include the following points:

- Dialectics

- Deconstruction

- Deterritorialisation

- Imagination

- Alterity

Check Your Progress 3

1) Your answer should include the following points:

- It promotes dialogue, learning, sharing, and participation.

- It is an approach that provides platform to the village population.

- It serves as an essential tool for administrators, citizens and stakeholders.

2) Your answer should include the following points:

- Networking is the key characteristic feature of Postmodern public administration.

- Networks become as significant as the individual.

- Inclusion of information and communication technologies stimulate new forms of communication networks.

UNIT 17   FEMINIST APPROACH*

Structure

17.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this Unit, you should be able to:

- Get an insight into the Feminist Perspective of public administration;

- Understand the basic components of Feminist Approach;

- Evaluate the concepts of gender and gender equality in public administration;

- Assess if public institutions are gendered or not;

- Appreciate the relevance of Feminist Approach to public administration; and

- Appraise the administrative concepts of ethics, expertise and leadership from Feminist Perspective.

17.1 INTRODUCTION

The last decade of the 20th century, which was marked by a great transformation in various fields of science and social sciences such as sociology, economics, demography and anthropology seemed to have found a new direction with social equality issues of men and women as the centre of attention. Likewise, public administration too has come to be redefined in the light of feminist exploration of the subject resulting in expansions of its boundaries and reassessment of its norms.

Feminism is a methodology of investigation. It is more likely a theoretical method trying to explain/ re-describe the reality. When we talk of feminist perspective of public administration, three factors become pertinent: *first*, inclusion of women-friendly policies in governance; *second*, participation of women in public administration and

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third, a change of attitude to the issue of gender in administration. The third factor is most crucial and is thus the central theme of this Unit.

This Unit would explain the Feminist Approach to public administration. It would deal with issues concerning the role of gender in governance by highlighting the parameters of gender analysis in governance. Finally, the Unit would look into the direction in which the allegedly 'hostile Administrative State' must head so as to be equally hospitable to both men and women.

17.2 UNDERSTANDING THE FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE

The Management Approach to public administration with its prescription of 'reinventing government' made an elaborate case for transforming the bureaucratic government into an entrepreneurial one. The reinvention project is significant in that it challenges the Weberian model of bureaucratic organisation as the taken-for-granted reality of administrative life. It further suggests that administrative structures, practices, principles and values are neither permanent nor unalterable. However, what is amazingly even more significant is the fact that feminist scholars have long imagined alternatives to bureaucratic model, much before the 're-invention project' became fashionable with the publication of the Report of the National Performance Review in 1993 under Clinton administration.

Unfortunately, feminist theorising did not have a hospitable environment. Alternative theories of power, virtue, nature of organisation, and of leadership and professionalism based on feminist research and women's organisational experiences failed to capture the attention of policy makers and citizens. Few of these ideas made their way into conversations in public administration which continued to be rooted in an ostensibly neutral, but overtly male, upper class, white mentality.

Feminists note that thus far the project to reinvent government ignores the gender dimensions of administrative life and feel that women's experiences are no more a part of the new entrepreneurial government than were a part of the old bureaucratic government. These scholars seek to render women's experiences visible and argue for a development of Feminist Perspective on public administration, which constructs the administrative reality in gender-inclusive rather than gender-neutral terms.

There are several dimensions to the Feminist reappraisal of public administration. While supporting the cause of a gender- inclusive public administration, this Unit would first define Feminist Theory and try to investigate the concept of 'gender of governance', i.e., explore the extent of how administrative power, institutions and policies are organised around femity and masculinity, male dominance and female subordination. Attempt will also be made to investigate the 'governance of gender' concept i.e., see the extent to which administrative policies set the rules and circumstances that not only regard and reward, but also produce and position women and men as different and unequal. The crux of the argument is that gender relations cannot be understood apart from the Administrative State; Administrative States influence gender relations and are in turn influenced by gender relations.

17.3 FEMINIST APPROACH

A 'feminist' is someone who identifies with gender as a crucially useful category of analysis, who takes a critical perspective on women's current status and prospects,

to use Gerda Lerner's words "believes in a system of ideas and practices, which assumes that men and women must share equally in the work, in the privileges, in defining and dreaming of the world".

Feminism is not one unitary concept, but instead a diverse and multifaceted grouping of ideas and actions. Despite the fact that the feminist movement encompasses different and even contradictory political viewpoints – Liberal, Marxist, Socialist, Radical, Post-modern to name a few, nevertheless all have a firm faith in the equality of men and women and are committed to the elimination of 'gender-based injustice'. Gender is a part of the organisational fabric of society based on perceived differences in accordance with one's biological sex and socio-economic identity. The focus of gender is not on women per se but on power relations between men and women, their access to resources and decision-making power.

Feminism is all about creating a space for heterogeneous gendered perspective; about perceiving and working to change gendered power relations. It is like using a 'gender lens' to view things. Anyone who wears glasses knows that a lens provides a powerful corrective and can completely change the way you view things. Given the fact that both the theory and practice of public administration have long been notoriously masculine, corrective endeavours to change it are vital. Therefore, using a gender lens means 'working to make gender visible in social phenomena, asking if, how and why social processes, standards and opportunities differ systematically for women and men'.

17.3.1 Gender of Governance

A mere glance at the history of social sciences would reveal that all over the world, the public political domain has been, and continues to be defined and controlled by men. Male dominance/ patriarchy is considered to be normal, neutral and universal. Women have been as Sheila Rowbotham (1973) has put it, 'hidden from history'. Concerned about the absence of women from established political structures, feminist scholars have tried to account for this phenomenon. Many believe the "macho" tradition of conceptualising politics to be responsible for the exclusion of women from politics.

The central mechanism by which this exclusion is realised is the assumption of a natural separation between the public and the private (Squires, 1999). It is assumed that the political is public and that the private realm of the domestic, of familial and sexual relations lies outside the proper concern of the study of politics. In other words, with politics restricted to the public sphere of human life and perceived as an arena of male activity, the private or personal realm, by contrast, has come to be seen as a sphere reserved for women. Women are, by and large, being excluded from defining their activities as political.

Feminist theory in the latter half of the 20th century began to realise how potent this duality was for the ways in which male and female roles are constructed and the means by which women, from the very understanding of what is 'political' may be excluded or simply made invisible.

Thus, began a re-evaluation of many male-created theories, principles, concepts and institutions including those of politics and administration. By claiming that 'the personal is the political' they challenged the traditional views on family and personal life as outside the remit of 'politics' and argued that the private sphere was in fact a primary site of power relations and of gendered inequality. They emphasised the

way in which personal circumstances are structured by public factors. Women's lives are regulated, and conditioned for example, by the legal status of wives by government policies on child care, by the allocation of welfare benefits, by labour laws and the sexual division of labour, and by laws on rape, abortion, sexual harassment. 'Personal' problems can thus be solved only through political means.

The essence of their argument is that gender is about power. Through gender relations, people recreate and reinforce the distinction between masculinity and feminity. Gender also organises power at the level of complex institutions. It saturates different spaces – even the Administrative State. In simple words, the gender lens reveals how male dominance organises/ constitutes the Administrative State.

17.3.2 Governance of Gender

The Feminist writers not only expose the male bias of the Administrative State; they also assess the effect of such an Administrative State and its policies on men and women. They try to show that an Administrative State, which is a gendered hierarchy produces inequality and assigns different life chances to men and women and reinforces material realities that oppress women. A Feminist Approach to public administration includes calling those shaded boundaries into question that differentiate capabilities/ potential qualities on the basis of gender, giving preference to males over females. It also means exploring the implications of these attitudes in governance.

This becomes apparent when we see that the conventional understanding of public administration is rooted in the images of expertise, leadership and a form of virtue which can be identified as culturally masculine (although, of course this masculinity is not overtly acknowledged). This peculiar nature of the public – organisational reality where links are drawn between ideas of masculinity and public administration norms of professionalism, leadership and neutrality; where working women bear the double burden of housework and paid employment; are relegated to lower bureaucratic ranks; and a glass ceiling blocks their access to the position of greatest power and monitory reward are declared misfit with organisational expectations about professional and managerial behaviour, harms women and restricts their political and social freedom.Such a culturally dominant masculine modes of thought and action privilege men and their interests by establishing boundaries that exclude all but a few exceptional women from positions of authority. A Feminist Approach to public administration theory entails questioning of these boundaries.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i)   Use the space given below for your answers.

ii)   Check your answers with those given at the end of the Unit.

1)   What do you understand by Feminist Perspective?

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2) Bring out the difference between the terms 'gender of governance' and 'governance of gender'.

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17.4 PARAMETERS OF UNDERSTANDING GENDER IN ADMINISTRATION

The analysis of the extent to which gender is embedded in the very structures of organisation (gender of governance) and the extent to which it figures in the world view/ policies of administrators (governance of gender), has exposed the exclusion of women from the political world. The feminists, however, argue that true equality cannot be achieved by just 'adding in' women to traditional theories, but that the very basis of the theories must be challenged. Accordingly, they examine and analyse several issue areas in public administration that call for a new configuration and offer a new version of the spectrum of the feminist opinion, which promises to be fruitful in shaping administrative theory and practice.

17.4.1 Ethic of Justice

Public realm, of late, has been systematically denuded of public moral values and the public morality of justice has been overtaken by the forces of power, coercion and violence. Politics has come to be understood as power politics – conflictual rather than consensual. Not surprisingly ethics has emerged as a significant research concern for public administration scholars. Their response is to reassert the integral relation between politics and ethics in creating an ethical polity. The ethical discourse within public administration, however, would be both broader and deeper if ethics from a Feminist perspective were to be included.

Ethical reasoning usually equated with an 'ethic of justice'/ idea of impartiality or a universalistic morality is considered impersonal, gendered and limited. The feminists argue in favour of extending the range of moral reasoning so as to include another form of reasoning called an 'ethic of care', which ought also to be recognised. It is said that women are more likely to adopt this ethic of care than men and that to privilege only the ethic of justice is to silence women's distinctive moral voice. It is claimed that women's experiences as mothers within private spheres provide them with certain insights and concerns,which are valuable to the public sphere of the Administrative State, but are currently absent from it.

In Carol Gilligan's (1982) view, women have a different conception of morality, a morality of responsibility, whereas men have a morality of rights. Very early in life, men's individualism and separation from the feminine gives them an ethic of justice, while women's affiliation with mothers and others teaches them an ethic of care (White, 1999).

Feminist scholars like Gilligan nowhere endorse the rejection of the ethic of justice in the favour of an ethic of care. Rather they want the ethic of justice to be tempered

by an ethic of care. Their belief is based on the conviction that the recognition and acceptance of 'a different voice' is crucial to the transformation of public bureaucracies.

17.4.2 Expertise

Feminist theorists have drawn upon and contributed to the debates about the image of expertise in public administration. Historically, the need for expertise has been the central tenet of the Wilsonian–Weberian paradigm of public administration. Classical public administration grounded in politics–administration dichotomy was based on the assumption that public administration was legitimate because it was manned by expert professionals. The Wilsonian -Weberian model of professional expertise with an implicit emphasis on objectivity, assertion of autonomy and hierarchy is considered inconsistent with the widely accepted notions of womanhood.

Feminists regret that generally speaking, there has been a tendency to banish norms, which are culturally recognised as 'feminine'– such as passivity, compliance and vulnerability – from public life, thus creating an approach wherein public administrators, both men and women, seek ways to appear technically expert, tough and heroic; in other words, to project a more masculine 'competent image'.

The conventional idea of expertise also privileges a notion of autonomy over and above the public servant's obligation to be politically responsive. From the Feminist Perspective, such ideas of expertise block connectivity and affiliation of the administrator with the world around him. They not only separate the individual from the field, but they also raise the administrator above the field. Professional competence reduces those over whom authority is exercised.

The recognition that the perspectives of all the parties to the situation – clients, citizens, and workers are important in ascertaining genuine public interest, made the feminists campaign for a form of professional competence that is non- hierarchical. They also argue for a form of competence in public administration that moves beyond the myth of heroic male professional who sacrifices 'selfish' family concerns in a single-minded fashion to his career. The central theme of Stivers' account also is her assertion that not only do most women find it difficult or impossible to live upto such an ideal, but that the ideal itself is flawed, in that it compartmentalises life and the men and women who live it, relegating the family to lesser status and the performance of its responsibilities to lesser people. From the Feminist Perspective, the legitimate public administrator will be a whole person, one who is understood to have developed in and to be a continuing member of a family; the work of agencies will be seen as supporting and supported by the wider dimensions of its member's lives, and agency personnel policies will reflect this understanding. Policies such as parental leave and on-site day-care facilities will be seen as in the public interest because they promote the development and the nurturing of children; they will not be viewed solely as meeting the needs of individual employees.

Although the feminists are disturbed by the fact that only a very small percentage of top jobs in business and public administration are held by women in most countries, they are not sure, if simply adding women in key positions will be enough to bring about so fundamental a change. They also want to raise another pertinent question; whether we need leaders at all. Conventional administrative theory sees hierarchy as the inevitable 'given'. Feminists like Stivers, however, see the perceived need for leadership as a function of hierarchy, which socialises those in lower ranks to believe that they are incapable of taking decisions. Widespread dissatisfaction with hierarchy

and control, led women organisations to experiment with non- hierarchical forms of organising, which is a more participatory, flexible, group-oriented style of management. The feminists are not arguing that all women are interactive leaders or that it excludes men. The feminists simply want a shift in the norms of leadership such that feminist leadership is viewed as a compliment, not as a replacement to traditional leadership forms.

The feminist position on the above mentioned themes raises questions that bear directly on organisation theory. The feminists are developing alternative models of organisation, based primarily on their experience in the women's movement. They are experimenting with new patterns of group activity, which substantially depart from the rational model of administration. They also challenge domination by superior through hierarchical patterns on the grounds that it restricts the growth of individual members. They propose the adoption of fluid, temporary, more flexible and egalitarian forms of organisation. The potential impact of the feminist critique of the key concepts in public administration prompted Robert Denhardt and Jan Powell to predict the demise of 'the administrative man' and urge the adoption of an alternative model based on the organisational values of women's movement.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: i)   Use the space given below for your answers.

ii)   Check your answers with those given at the end of the Unit.

1)   Distinguish between 'Ethic of Justice' and 'Ethic of Care'.

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2)   Discuss the parametres of understanding 'gender' in administration.

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17.5   CONCLUSION

In this Unit, we have made an attempt to explore the Feminist Approach to the specific aspects of administration. Feminist Perspective of public administration till today remains shamefully neglected and has not received the enthusiasm it warrants. Providing insights into the issues of gender equality, Feminists ask provocative questions such as what it means to be a man or a woman in various cultures, economic or social systems. They believe, women have always been at the receiving end and subjected to various negative stereotypes, also that women have not got a fair share in governance. They challenge the prevalent paradigm of bureaucratic culture and

Administrative State. They describe the Administrative State as patriarchal and gendered. They systematically explain the manner in which the Administrative State reinforces women's subordination and marginalisation.

Feminist scholars seek to overcome this masculinist bureaucratic culture which had been technicist in orientation. Based on their experience, they have developed an alternative perspective of public administration and provided a re-appraisal of administrative concepts such as ethics, expertise, and leadership etc. It has been observed that the objective of Feminist scholarship is to reshape dominant paradigm to give greater priority to women's needs and concerns as well as to sensitive methodologies.

The idea of Feminist ethic, expertise, leadership styles of women, organisation theory and their impact on the way administration have been examined. This is by no means an exhaustive list of avenues of Feminist theorising on public administration. The effort has been very simply to build a persuasive case for a Feminist Perspective to public administration.

17.6 GLOSSARY

Feminism	:	Advocacy of women's rights for their equality, empowerment and upliftment.
Gender	:	State of being male or female with reference to social and cultural ambience rather than biological being.
Glass Ceiling	:	An unseen barrier in the form of overt or covert discrimination against women which blocks their career advancement.
Patriarchy	:	A system where descent is through male line. A system where men hold the portion of power and control, excluding women completely.

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17.8 ANSWER TO CHECKYOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress 1

1) Your answers should include the following points:

- A Feminist Approach to public administration includes calling those shaded boundaries into question that differentiate capabilities/ potential qualities on the basis of gender, giving preference to males over females. It also means exploring the implications of these attitudes in governance.

- Feminists note that thus far the project to reinvent government ignores the gender dimensions of administrative life and feel that women's experiences are no more a part of the new entrepreneurial government than were a part of the old bureaucratic government.

- These scholars of Feminist Perspective seek to render women's experiences visible and argue for a development of feminist perspective on public administration, which constructs the administrative reality in gender-inclusive rather than gender-neutral terms.

- Feminists campaign for a form of professional competence that is non-hierarchical and does not compartmentalise life. Leadership skills have a masculine sub-text.

- Feminists reject stereo-types and attack glass ceilings.

- The Feminist Perspective campaigns for new integrative model of leadership with interactive and indirect leadership.

- It attempts to construct administrative reality in gender- neutral terms.

2) Your answer should include the following points:

- Many believe the "macho" tradition of conceptualising politics to be responsible for the exclusion of women from politics.

- The State bestows political and economic privileges on the culturally masculine qualities at the expense of feminine ones.

- Gender is a part of organisational fabric of social economy.

- It is a socially imposed division of sexes.

- Gender identities are constituted differently according to social and historical context.

- Differences between men and women are socially produced and are therefore changeable.

- Administrative State is insensitive to gender.

- Its features are commonly associated with masculinity.

- The Feminist writers not only expose the male bias of the Administrative State.

- They also assessed the effect of such an Administrative State and its policies on men and women.

- They try to show that an Administrative State, which is a gendered hierarchy produces inequality and assigns different life chances to men and women and reinforces material realities that oppress women.

Check Your Progress 2

1) Your answer should include the following points:

- Ethic of justice is associated with the idea of impartiality or universalistic morality.

- It means taking a detached and dispassionate view.

- Feminists consider it a product of male psyche, and hence gendered and limited.

- Ethic of care is the alternative moral orientation centred on emotional relationships.

2) Your answer should include the following points:

- Parameters include ethics, governance and expertise.

- Feminists are experimenting with new patterns of group activity, which substantially depart from the rational model of administration.

- They also challenge domination by superior through hierarchical patterns on the grounds that it restricts the growth of individual members.

- They propose the adoption of fluid, temporary, more flexible and egalitarian forms of organisation.

- Feminists project needs to take its rightful place among theorists and practitioners of public administration.

- Gender is a useful category of analysis.

- Need to take a critical perspective on women's current status.

- Feminists make persuasive arguments in their re-appraisal of administrative concepts such as ethics, expertise and leadership.

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