Public	Policy
Perspe	ective

2)	Discuss the Rational Policy Making and Group Models to Policy Analysis.

8.5 SELECTED MODELS / APPROACHES TO PUBLIC POLICY

Since the 1960s many scholars in political science and policy theorists have developed a number of policy models and approaches to help as understand politics and policy process. Specifically, here an attempt is made to examine public policy from the perspective of the following models and approaches:

Institutional Approach to Public Policy Analysis

In a democratic society, the State as a web of government structures and institutions performs many functions including formulation, implementation and evaluation of public policies. The government institutions give public policy *three* different characteristics. *Firstly*, the government gives legal authority to policies. Public policy is the outcome of certain decisions and is characterised by the use of legal sanctions. *Secondly*, the applications of public policy is universal. Only public policies extend to all citizens in the state. *Thirdly*, public policies involve coercion. A policy conveys the ideas of a capacity for imposing penalties, through coercion of a kind usually reserved to the government itself. Only the government can legally impose sanctions on violators of its policies. Since the government has the ability to command the obedience of all its people, to formulate policies governing the whole country and to monopolise coercion, the individuals and groups generally work for the enactment of their preferences into policies.

The institutional study has become a central focus of public policy. Thus, one of the models of the policy-making system might be called the Institutional Approach because it depends on the interactions of those institutions created by the Constitution, government or legislature. The Institutional Approach is also concerned with explaining how social groups and governmental institutions bring influence to bear on those entitled to take and implement legally binding decisions. Such decision-making includes those who hold office within the formal and Constitutional system of rules and regulations, which give formal authority and power to the various positions within the governmental structures and institutions. The Institutional Approach attempts to study the relationship between public policy and governmental institutions.

According to Thomas Dye, governmental institutions are structured pattern of behaviour of individuals and groups, which persist over a period of time. The value of the Institutional Approach to policy analysis lies in asking what relationships exist between institutional arrangements and the content of public policy, and also in investigating these relationships in a comparative fashion.

Rational Policy Making Model

Rationality and rationalism are words too often found and used in the literature of social science, but they are more widely espoused than practised in policy-making. However, rationality is considered to be the 'yardstick of wisdom' in policy-making. This Approach emphasises that policy-making is about making a choice among policy alternatives on rational grounds. Rational policy-making is "to choose the one best option."

Thomas Dye (2004) equates rationality with efficiency. In his words, "A policy is rational when it is most efficient, that is, if the ratio between the values it achieves and the values it sacrifices is positive and higher than any other policy alternative". He further observed that the idea of efficiency involves the calculation of all social, political, and economic values sacrificed or achieved by a public policy, not just those that can be measured in monetary terms.

A policy-maker wedded to rational policy-making must:

- Know all the society's value preferences and their relative weights.
- Clarify the goals and objectives and rank them.
- Know all the policy alternatives available.
- Compare the consequences of each policy alternative.
- Calculate the ratio of achieved to sacrificed societal values for each policy alternative; and
- Select the most efficient policy alternative that matches with the goals.

In a rational decision-making process, instead of making an "ideal" decision, as Simon observes, policy-makers will break the complexity of problems into small and understandable parts; choose the one option, that is, best and satisfactory; and avoid unnecessary uncertainty. Herbert Simon further notes, "although individuals are intendedly rational, their rationality is bounded by limited cognitive and emotional capacities.

Group Model: Policy as Group Equilibrium

The Group Model of public policy-making is based on the "hydraulic theory of politics" in which the polity operates as being a system of forces and pressures pushing against one another in the making of public policy. A Group is a collective of individuals distinguished by some common attributes or shared relationship. As per this Theory/Model, public policy is the product of group struggle. Individuals having common interests and demands join hands with each other as a formal or informal group to get the policies made by the governments as suitable to their ends.

In Group Theory, policy formulators are often seen succumbing to pressures of groups through bargaining, negotiating and compromising. Another important dimension of the group struggle is the maintenance of equilibrium in the system. The competition among groups does not permit any group to become absolutely powerful in a system for all times. Public policy is, in such a context, some sort of an equilibrium reached in the group struggle at any given moment. The interests of dominant groups are usually reflected in public policy at any point of time.

Elite-Mass Theory: Policy as Elite Preference

C. Wright Mill (1956) is, perhaps, the leading representative of the Elite-mass Model. According to this Theory, public policy is the product of elites, reflecting their preferences and values. Elite Theory or Model contends that the people are apathetic and ill-informed about public policy. Elites actually shape mass opinion on policy questions more than masses shape elite opinion.

Elite-Mass Theory has been summarised briefly by Dye (2004) as follows:

- i) "Society is divided into the few who have power and the many who do not. Only a small number of persons allocate values for society; the masses do not decide public policy.
- ii) The few who govern are not typical of the masses who are governed. Elites are drawn disproportionately from the upper socio-economic strata of society.
- iii) The movement of non-elites of elite positions must be slow and continuous to maintain stability and avoid revolution. Only non-elites who have accepted the basic elite consensus can be admitted to governing circles.
- iv) Elites share consensus on behalf of the values of the social system and the preservation of the system. In America, the bases of elite consensus are the sanctity of private property, limited government, and individual liberty.
- v) Public policy does not reflect the demands of masses but rather the prevailing values of the elite. Changes in public policy will be incremental rather than revolutionary.
- vi) Active elites are subject to relatively little direct influence from apathetic masses. Elite influence masses more than masses influence elites".

One implication of the elite mass theory is that innovations in public policy come about as a result of redefinition by elites of their own preferences and values. But with a view of preserving the system, elite decision also reflects what is important for the welfare of the masses. Elitism does not mean that public policy will be hostile toward mass welfare.

Political Public Policy Approach

A significant departure from the rationality model is the Political Policy Process Approach espoused in policy-making. Writers, such as, Laurence Lynn and Peter deLeon have advocated this Approach. As policy analysis is a rational process, it cannot resolve value conflicts. On the other hand, politics is the management of conflicts. People have different ideas about what are the major concerns and problems confronting the society and about what the government should do about them. Therefore, policy-makers must rely on political process. A Political Approach to policy analysis lays emphasis on:

- i) Identification of societal problems that need government action.
- ii) Reasonable trade-offs among conflicting values at the policy-making process level.
- iii) The search for common beneficial outcomes for diverse groups.
- iv) Compromise, conciliation and bargaining among participants to win allies.

In this Political Approach, policy analysis plays a secondary role in the policy-making process. Charles Lindblom (1998) explains: "Strategic analysis and mutual adjustment among political participants, then, are the underlying processes by which democratic systems achieve the level of intelligent action that they do."

Strategic Planning Approach of Policy Making

Strategic Planning is an attempt to combine the Incremental and Rational Approaches to public policy-making. This Approach has the feature of reconciling the day-to-day demands with long-range strategies for the future. Strategic Planning concentrates on making decisions but blends rational analysis with economic and political analysis. But the success in strategic planning by governments "is not achieved mechanically", as governments are unable "to follow the linear, sequential planning models of the business policy textbooks."

8.6 LIMITATIONS OF PUBLIC POLICY APPROACH

The approaches and models discussed in the Unit are mental abstractions of what are considered to be the mechanics and processes of policy-making. These are explanatory devices seeking to represent the realities of the policy-making process. In the development of Policy Sciences, the models are extremely useful methodological tools. At the same time, it needs to be acknowledged that administrative reality is too complex to be amenable to complete capture in a system of modelling. Accordingly, it has been discussed in the Unit that each model has its own angle of vision, and no single model is comprehensive enough to embrace all the complexities and subtle nuances of the policy-making process.

It must be admitted that public policy is desirable, particularly if it can eliminate poverty, end racism, ensure peace, prevent crime, clean the air and water and so on. But any serious study of public policy must also recognise the limitations of the policy approach in adopting the right policies. Some societal problems continue to persist because of the way in which they are defined. For example, if the poverty line is defined as the line that places one-third of the population below it, poverty cannot be eliminated. Similarly policies that solve the problems of one group in society may create problems for the other groups.

Second, expectations may always outrace the capacity of the political system. Moreover, it is quite possible that some economic and social forces cannot be harnessed by governments, even if it is desirable to do so. For example, some children may not be able to learn much in public schools no matter what the government tries to do so. In other words, governments may not be able to bring about social reforms in the society. Moreover, societal problems may have abnormal causes and consequences and a specific policy may not be able to uproot the problem.

Third, the solutions to some complex societal problems may require policies that are more costly than the problems. For example, civil disturbances, riots and occasional violence cannot be eradicated without the adoption of very repressive policies which would prove too costly in democratic values such as freedom of speech and press, and right of assembly.

And *fourth*, the democratic set up of the country is not structured for completely undertaking rational policy-making. But solution of societal problems generally implies a Rational Approach. Instead the democratic set up may reflect elite preferences,

group interests, incremental changes or mass influences more than rationalism. As such the possibility always exists that Rational Approach to public policy may not be adopted. Presumably, a democratic system is not structured for a complete rational policy-making.

Check Your Progress 3		
No	te: i)	Use the space given below for your answers.
	ii)	Check your answers with those given at the end of the Unit.
1)	Bring	out the features of Elite-Mass Theory and Strategic Planning Approach
	•••••	
2)	Exam	ine the limitations of Public Policy Approach.
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8.7 CONCLUSION

This Unit dealt with the meaning and significance of public policy. It also dealt with various approaches and models of public policy. As a Public Policy Approach, it described the interaction between government that mainly produces public policies and the people for whom the policies are intended. It is observed that the function of the modeller is to facilitate public policy process by providing a theoretical model or approach. Certainly, the usefulness of an approach or model lies in its ability to simplify the really significant aspects of people's problems. Attempting to bring modern science and technology to bear on societal problems, Policy Approach searches for good methods and techniques that help the policy-maker to choose the most advantageous action. Thus Public Policy Approach is a study of government and its people. It underlines the idea that government could, by making policies solve problems of the people.

8.8 GLOSSARY

Bounded Rationality

: The concept appears in Herbert Simon's *Administrative Behaviour*. According to Simon, human behaviour is neither totally

rational nor totally non-rational. It has its limits. Hence, decisions are never the 'best possible' outcomes in choice behaviour on the part of decision-makers, but are solutions that 'satisfice'.

Enlightenment

This term is used "to describe a philosophic movement of the early eighteenth century, in which numerous theorists and philosophers developed new political and social philosophies based on reason and on insights from that of natural sciences".

Policy Environment

: Policy environment has come to mean that the public process is a product of a system that is influenced by and influences the environment in which it operates.

Satisficing

: It means making the best possible decision under related constraints of time, information and other resources.

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8.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) Your answer should include the following points:
 - Public' comprises that aspect of human activity which requires governmental intervention towards public interest.
 - Policy is made on public's behalf.
 - Policy is made by governments.
 - Policy is made to address on issue and look for solution.
 - Policy is what government chooses to do or not to do.
 - Policy is a study of government.
- 2) Your answer should include the following points:
 - Approach is a broad method for understanding a subject.
 - Approach provides a set of intellectual tools for understanding a phenomenon.
 - Approach assimilates broad themes of a phenomenon into a set of welldefined concepts.
 - An approach could be a major part of theory.
 - A model is a simplified representation of some aspect of real world.

- Model directs our attention away from irrelevant variables.
- Models are intellectual constructs used to organise and direct research.
- Model include sets of categories and postulates which are used to sort out data.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) Your answer should include the following points:
 - Simon sets out two tasks in decision analysis.
 - For Simon, analysis involves the study of the limits of human rationality.
 - Simon observes that policy analysis involves designing the organisational environment.
 - Lindblom rejects Simon's Rational Approach to policy or decisions.
 - Lindblom takes account of power and power interaction.
 - For Lindblom, policy gradually evolves including variations on the past and develops incrementally.
 - Easton views policy process in terms of received inputs related through input channels and converted into outputs.
- 2) Your answer should include the following points:
 - As per the Rational Approach, policy making is a choice among policy alternatives on rational grounds.
 - Rational policy making is to choose the one best option.
 - Rational policy is designed to maximise 'net value'.
 - Rational policy involves weighing value preferences, clarifying goals, comparing consequences and selecting the most efficient policy alternative.
 - Group Model is based on the hydraulic theory of policies.
 - As per Group Theory, public policy is a product of group struggle.
 - Policy formulators prepare policies keeping a particular group and their demands, bargaining and struggle in mind.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) Your answer should include the following points:
 - As per Elite-Mass Model, public policy is the product of elites reflecting their preferences and values.
 - It believes that elites shape mass opinion on policy more than masses shape elite opinion.
 - Innovations in public policy come about as a result of redefinition by elites of their own preferences and values.
 - Strategic planning entails the Incremental and Rational Approaches to public policy making.

- Strategic approach blends rational analysis with economic and political analysis.
- 2) Your answer should include the following points:
 - Definition of an issue may come in the way of policy success.
 - Some economic and social forces cannot be harnessed by governments.
 - Societal problems may have abnormal causes and consequences and a specific policy may not be able to uproot them.
 - Policies could come into conflict with freedom of speech and press.
 - Rationality cannot be practiced every time during policy making



UNIT 9 POLICY SCIENCES APPROACH*

Structure

- 9.0 Objectives
- 9.1 Introduction
- 9.2 Nature of Policy Sciences Approach
- 9.3 Lasswell's Vision of Policy Sciences
 - 9.3.1 Multidisciplinary Perspective
 - 9.3.2 Contextual and Problem-oriented Perspectives
 - 9.3.3 Explicitly Normative Perspective
- 9.4 Scope and Expansion of Policy Sciences Approach
- 9.5 Appraisal of Policy Sciences Approach
- 9.6 New Directions and Perspectives
- 9.7 Conclusion
- 9.8 Glossary
- 9.9 References
- 9.10 Answers to Check Your Progress Exercises

9.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this Unit, you should be able to:

- Discuss the significance and nature of Policy Sciences;
- Explain the meaning and scope of Policy Sciences Approach;
- Analyse the Policy Sciences Approach; and
- Describe the new directions and perspectives on Policy Sciences Approach.

9.1 INTRODUCTION

Theories, models and approaches of the policy process continue to remain influential because scholars have found them to be useful for explaining important aspects of the public policy. However, like most social science theories, public policy approaches and models fail to explain all the phenomena that comprise the public process. Heineman *et. al.*(2002) and his colleagues have observed "...despite the development of sophisticated methods of inquiry, policy analysis has not had a major substantive impact on policy makers. Policy analysts have remained distant from power centres where policy decisions are made."Lasswell (1951) has stated: "We can think of the Policy Sciences as the discipline concerned with explaining the policy-making and policy-executing process, and with locating data and proving interpretations which are relevant to the policy problems of a given period."

Policy Sciences is an important area which has received wide attention from the

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policy community as a term, 'Policy Sciences' is a systematic and scientific study of public policy. It is a contemporary adaption of the general approach to public policy. Historically speaking, 'Policy Sciences' is very old when seen in terms of general approach to public policy and public advice. Its historical progression has depended on the complex interaction of social scientists and socio-political events.

There has been now a growing scepticism and criticism of the credibility of Policy Sciences to produce 'objective, empirical and normative truths'. Scientific rationality, which was once its emphasis, is being replaced by 'a broader theory of reason to society'. Today the Policy Sciences have gone far beyond new and naive aspirations for societally relevant knowledge.

Policy Sciences, like many social sciences has not built up what McCool (1995) calls a "dominant theoretical tradition", or what Thomas Kuhn (1970) would call, in the natural sciences, a 'paradigm'. The point is that it is difficult to develop a Policy Sciences Approach because of the wide variation in terminology in the various texts and policy study. For example, McCool notes that "the conceptual distinction between terms is indistinct". But acts of developing and testing approach are important because they are the very tools that help us to understand the broader question of public policy.

Therefore, the Policy Sciences scholars should remain vibrant in theory building on scientific lines on how public policy is made. It is one of the most challenging tasks in the sphere of public policy. This Unit examines Harold Lasswell and other public policy scientists' ideas and approaches on Policy Sciences. Besides, it discusses the nature and role of Policy Sciences. It also critically examines the challenges to Policy Sciences and proposes ways in which Policy Sciences could be amended.

9.2 NATURE OF POLICY SCIENCES APPROACH

The concept of 'Policy Sciences' was first formulated by Harold Lasswell, in 1951, in his work on 'The Policy Orientation', co-edited with Daniel Lerner. This work is regarded as the first systematic effort towards building a new field of enquiry to deal with social problems. Lasswell in his essay 'The Policy Orientation' (1951) has acknowledged Dewey as a policy scientist, more interested in "evaluating and reconstructing the practices of society than in higher ratiocination about the higher abstractions from which his values are derived".

Lasswell (1951) describes Policy Sciences as the culmination of efforts to define a discipline for producing and applying "societally relevant knowledge". Lasswell's vision of Policy Sciences is multidisciplinary, contextual, problem-oriented, and explicitly normative. Realisation of these ambitious goals became the concern of the Policy Sciences community in the second-half of the 20th century. The contributions of various scholars, though with different emphases, have an explicit impact on the evolution and acceptance of Policy Sciences. Brooks (1983) adds, "Policy Sciences is the most recent, and certainly the most explicit manifestation of this quest for an independent vantage point, above the political fray, affording objective criteria upon which policy decisions can be made".

Policy Sciences is a rational approach to the processes of policy making. V. Subramaniam (1980) characterises Policy Sciences as "the practical application of all relevant knowledge in the social, physical and natural sciences, to specific policy problems identified well ahead of time". The rationalist model involves a "commitment to scientific planning. This means an overhaul of the traditional approaches to making

Policy Sciences Approach

of decisions. However, the spectre of Duncan MacRae is warded off by the suggestion that a policy analysis culture be created in order to achieve greater rationality in policy-making. This policy analysis culture has *three* main features, as found in Dror's pioneering writings:

- i) Technical experts who are sensitive to the ethical implications of decisions;
- ii) Close cooperation between researchers in government; and
- iii) An informed citizenry to fend off the anti-democratic spectre of an expert ruling class.

From Lasswell to Dror, the central idea in Policy Sciences is that it entails a 'theory of choice', an approach to the determination of policy choice. As Nagel (1980) has expressed "As social science does more analysis of hypotheses, predictions, causation, and optimising, there develops a body of potential premises that can be used in deducing conclusions, just as chemistry was able to deduce the existence of new elements before they were empirically discovered".

A large number of articles and books devoted to the teaching of policy studies and the training of policy analysts reveal the fact that Policy Sciences is a scientific approach centering around the development of professional analysts who are expert in rational decision-making. The evidence for the orientation of these professionals can be found in Nagel's discussion of the methods of policy analysis, which consists mainly of a review of the principles of optimisation of decision theory. Nagel advocates the development of a code of ethics, professionalism, and institutionalised checks.

Y. Dror (1971) and most writers on the subject seem to agree on the fact that Policy Sciences constitutes an interdisciplinary approach, which is mainly concerned with improving the policy process through the use of systematic knowledge, structural rationality, and organised activity. What Dror emphasises is that the Policy Sciences "is not directly concerned with the substantive contents of discrete policy problems, but rather with improved methods of knowledge, and systems for better policy-making".

In a similar way, Lasswell (*op.cit.*) also stresses: "Knowledge of the decision process implies systematic and empirical studies of how policies are made and put into effect". While most authors on the subject seem to agree on the basic aims of Policy Sciences, they generally do not provide an operational definition of the concept due to the cross-disciplinary nature of knowledge involved in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of policy issues. Its boundaries are not precisely delineated. They cut across such disciplines as sociology, psychology, political science, public administration, management sciences, etc.

Some writers on the subject argue that Policy Sciences, like physics and chemistry, is a science. The empirical aspect of Policy Sciences is stressed by Lasswell thus: "... to insist on the empirical criterion is to specify that general assertions are subject to the discipline of careful observation. This is a fundamental distinction between science and non-science". The term 'model' is commonly used in physical sciences and Policy Sciences. This term is used to "as a simplified representation of some aspect of the real world"(1972).

Like other social sciences, Policy Sciences is also not an exact science because substantive science is concerned with the pursuit of truth which it seeks to understand and predict. Most writers are of the view that policy sciences is merely an approach

which is concerned with improved methods of knowledge and systems for better policy-making. It is a technique which helps the decision-maker to take decisions with improved methods of knowledge. Carol Weiss (1977) describes Policy Sciences as a decision-driven model of research use. This sequential model has the following stages:

- Definition of the social problems.
- Identification of missing knowledge.
- Acquisition of the relevant data using social research techniques.
- Interpretation for problem solution.
- Policy choice.

Policy Sciences may contribute to the selection of policy options, As conceptualisation, it has *two* thrusts:

- i) It contributes to the way in which policy-making is done; and
- ii) It's policy options may percolate into society, influencing "the way that a society thinks about issues, the facts of the issues that are viewed as susceptible to alteration, and the alternative measures that it considers".

In sum, Policy Sciences can have an influence upon the political agenda through sensitising both policy-makers and the mass of people. Nagel also argues that policy analysis provides 'new insights' and enables policy-makers to make better-informed choices and by implication, better policy. Stokey and Zeckhauser also declare that "no sensible policy choice can be made without careful analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of each course of action." These statements echo Dror's belief that institutionalised Policy Sciences would result in improved policy options.

Check Your Progress 1		
Note: i)	Use the space given below for your answers.	
ii)	Check your answer with that given at the end of the Unit.	
1) Exam	nine the nature of Policy Sciences Approach.	
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9.3 LASSWELL'S VISION OF POLICY SCIENCES

In the context of the development of the Policy Sciences Approach, its advoctes, especially Lasswell, have deliberately distinguished themselves from early scholars in political science, public administration, psychology, jurisprudence and sociology by posing three defining characteristics. These are discussed in the subsequent subsection:

9.3.1 Multidisciplinary Perspective

The Policy Sciences are distinctively multi-disciplinary in their intellectual and practical approaches. This is because almost every social or political problem has multiple components closely linked to the various academic disciplines without falling clearly into any one discipline's exclusive domain.Lasswell's work and approach are multi-disciplinary in nature. In the words of Lasswell: "A policy orientation has been developing that cuts across the existing specialisation. The orientation is twofold. In part, it is directed towards the policy process, and in part towards the intelligence needs of policy.

According to Lasswell ,the "Policy Sciences" are not to be equated with "applied social science" or "applied social and psychological science". Nor, he admonished, "are the 'Policy Sciences' to be thought of as largely identical with what is studied by the political scientists". The stress in this Approach "is upon the fundamental problems of man in society". Social scientists have argued that the roots of the policy sciences laid within economics.

It may be noted that with the advancement of knowledge on Policy Sciences, focus on uni-disciplinary approaches was de-emphasised. As of the tendency of these theories and programmes to exclude normative considerations, such as equity, was not taken very well by policy makers. Growing awareness and sensitivities led policy analysts to propose new conceptual paradigms and methodological approaches.

Y. Dror (1971) has emphasised: "Policy Sciences must integrate knowledge from a variety of branches of knowledge into a supradiscipline focusing on public policy-making". However, it may be noted that these efforts were quietly given up for two reasons. *Firstly*, the nascent field as a discipline lacked the theoretical ground and empirical stance to support such an enterprise. *Secondly*, there was the problem of a consensual set of foci as to definition and goals of Policy Sciences. *Finally*, emphasis on meta theory (as advocated by Y. Dror) at this stage would have deflected the Policy Sciences from other central features, such as, the attention and applications to real-world social problems. Therefore, to gain a complete appreciation of the phenomenon, many relevant orientations must be utilised and integrated.

9.3.2 Centextual and Problem-oriented Perspectives

The Policy Sciences were consciously framed as being problem-oriented, quite explicitly addressing public issues and posing recommendations for their relief, According to Lasswell, Policy Sciences were problem-oriented and adopted broad contextual approaches. Regarding problem-oriented and contextual policy orientation, Lasswell's idea was double-fold; in part it is directed toward the policy process, and in part toward the intelligence needs of policy. Later in 1971, Lasswell identifed *two* separate approaches to the Policy Sciences: one emphasising knowledge of the policy process and another emphasising knowledge for use in the policy process. Lasswell's chosen phrase was "the Policy Sciences of democracy."

While distinguishing between 'analysis of policy' and 'analysis for policy', Ham and Hill (1993) observed that the distinction is important in drawing attention to policy analysis as an academic activity concerned primarily with advancing understanding; and analysis for policy as an applied activity conerned mainly with contributing to the solution of social problems. The Policy Sciences were to integrate both the approaches.

This vision of scientific method and democratic humanism, however, proved

operationally difficult as the Policy Sciences moved to realise status and gain academic recognition during the 1960s and 1970s. These two approaches – process and content – strengthended their respective identities, each claming some sort of conceptual superiority. Operationally, the *two* approaches are: Policy Analysis and Policy Process.

• Policy Analysis

Those models emphasising policy analysis have been dominant among economists, operation researchers and public administrationists who assumed that policy problems and their solutions could be defined with rational accuracy and subjected to empirical analytical precision. Stokey and Zeckhauser in their work, "A Primer for Policy Analysis" (1978) have provided analysis with models and techniques ranging from differential equations to queuing models to linear programming and cost-benefit analysis. Their prescription was to choose the right technical model for doing analysis. Clearly, Policy Analysis is concerned with knowledge in and for the Policy Process.

Edward Quade, a pioneering proponent of the Policy Analysis Approach, in his analysis for public decisions, (1975) saw both operations research and systems analysis as synonyms for policy analysis. He identified *five* elements of policy analysis as:

- i) Identification of objectives.
- ii) Specification of alternatives.
- iii) Recommending policy action.
- iv) Monitoring policy outcomes; and
- v) Evaluating policy performance.

• Policy Process

Policy Analysis was criticised as being unworkable and dangerous. The critique of Policy Analysis focused on constraints of human and particularly institutional rationality that prevent legitimate claims to knowing all possible alternative solutions or being able to forecast specific policy effects. In place of rational and scientific ideals, democratic and pluralist norms were suggested. It is observed that scientific rationality is being replaced by a broader theory of reason in society. In comparison to Quade's model, May and Wildavsky(1979) have described a policy process cycle in which they include: agenda setting, issue analysis, implementation, evaluation and termination.

Although these *two* approaches –Policy Analysis and Policy Process – have their own utilities and constraints, it would be unrealistic and harmful to isolate them. Simon has outlined a theory of decision – making bounded by notions of 'satisficing' and 'bounded rationality' one in which policy – making was constrained by imperfect and incomplete information. To Etzioni both these approaches are necessary. Lately, efforts have been made to reach a synthesis of the two and is characterised by the phrase "Post-positivism."

9.3.3 Explicitly Normative Perspective

The Policy Sciences Approach is deliberately normative or value-oriented. This value orientation was largely in reaction to behavioralism, i.e., "objectivism" in the social sciences, and in recognition that no social problem nor methodological approach is value free. As such, to understand a problem, one must acknowledge its value components. Similarly, no policy scientist is without her/his personal values.Lasswell

and Kaplan (1950) define the Policy Sciences as providing "intelligence pertinent to the integration of values realised by and embodied in interpersonal relations", one which "prizes not the glory of a depersonalised state or the efficiency of a social mechanism, but human dignity and the realisation of human capacities".

The emphasis on values has remained the cornerstone of the Policy Sciences Approach. But in spite of clarification, the normative aspects of the Policy Sciences were neglected mainly for three reasons. *First*, some argued that government programmes basically contained normative postures. *Second*, some claimed that quantitative techniques, such as operations research, were essentially value-free and had nothing to do with concerns of ethics or values. Explicit beliefs in Dewey's pragmatism and Weber's 'bureaucracy' underlay this assumption. And *third*, some policy analysts argued that values were the exclusive domain of the policy maker and that for analysts to interject their values would be uncalled for and against their professional competencies. No doubt these arguments have some merit. They clearly go beyond the original explanation and enunciation of the Policy Sciences. Without consideration of the normative aspects of the policy process, analysis would be incomplete.

However, this narrative pays scant attention to three hallmarks of the Policy Sciences Approach: there is little direct attention to the problem orientation of the activity, the multidisciplinary themes are largely neglected, and the normative groundings of policy issues (and recommendations) are often overlooked.

9.4 SCOPE AND EXPANSION OF POLICY SCIENCES APPROACH

Through the 1970s, the Policy Sciences approach addressed mainly *four* topics: Evaluation; Utilisation; Implementation; and Termination. Let us discuss them now:

Evaluation: The obvious purpose of Policy Sciences was to learn from public programmes so that the social objectives could be met with new and effective programmes. In many aspects, evaluation was considered to be the policy analysis *sine qua non*.

Utilisation: An important issue that was addressed by Policy Sciences was related to the aspect of utilisation. The likelihood of success for policy analysis in alleviating policy problems was the utilisation of policy research.

Implementation: It was felt in the 1970s that the real culprit of policy failure was the

administrative delivery system. Policy Sciences advocates, therefore, proposed implementation strategies that could help policy-makers appreciate implementation problems.

Termination: In the 1980s and 1990s, the Policy Sciences advocates focused on programme termination under such labels as 'Cutback Management', 'Sunset Legislation' and 'Fiscal Retrenchment'. This was in response to the demands for a greater economy and a reduction in government expenditure.

It may be noted that emphasis on programme implementation, evaluation, utilisation and termination studies largely failed to provide a solid programme advice. However, the expanding scope of Policy Sciences Approach remains the issue of intellectual pursuit.

Check Your Progress 2		
No	te: i)	Use the space given below for your answers.
	ii)	Check your answers with those given at the end of the Unit.
1)	Bring	out Harold Lasswell's views on Policy Sciences.
2)	Exan	nine the scope of Policy Sciences Approach.
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9.5 APPRAISAL OF POLICY SCIENCES APPROACH

It is to be noted that the challenges to the Policy Sciences are not unexpected. The contemporary Policy Sciences, which emerged in the 1990s have a short history. As an academic pursuit, Policy Sciences continue to be echoed even today in every major policy text book. Today, the Policy Sciences have gone far beyond naive aspirations for 'societally relevant knowledge". However, the credibility of Policy Sciences has been increasingly questioned for its failure to produce empirical and normative truths. Scientific rationality which was once its base is being replaced by a broader theory of reason in society.

Some scholars like Kenis and Schneider acknowledge that there is a shift from the Policy Sciences through policy inquiry to policy networks. In policy-making, Kenis and Schneider observe that network is regarded as an arrangement characterised by a predominance of informal communicative relations, a horizontal as opposed to a hierarchical pattern of relations and a decentralised pattern of actors' positions.

Schneider *et. al.* argue that policy networks have the ability to increase the likelihood and scope of policy agreements "by increasing available information about potential agreements and enhancing the credibility of commitments to fulfil the agreements." The likelihood of successful policy-making can be increased by spanning organisational boundaries, exploring the details of organisational decision-making, and discovering barriers to implementation.

As already mentioned, the credibility of Policy Sciences has been increasingly questioned. The *first* dilemma is reflected in what Douglas Torgerson (2005) has argued: "The dynamic nature of the (Policy Sciences) phenomenon is rooted in an

internal tension, a dialectic opposition between knowledge and politics. Through the interplay of knowledge and politics, different aspects of the phenomenon become salient at different moments." In other words, there is conflict between politics and science as knowledge.

Second, Policy Sciences are faced with dilemma of methodological problems. Scholars like Dryzek and Fischer (1993) argue that since positivist methodologies (based on tenets of social welfare economies, e.g., cost-benefit analysis) were fundamentally flawed, as such, it should not be astonishing that resulting analyses were also flawed. Referring to Positivism as 'instrumental rationality' which, Dryzek claims, "makes effective and appropriate policy analysis impossible ... (and, most critically) is antidemocractic". According to Hajer and Wagenaar (2003), rationality, which is a destructive feature of the Policy Science Approach, "destroys and represses individuals" and is "ineffective when confronted with complex social problems".

Third, Lasswell's idea of democratic values was to be realised through citizens' participation in the policy analysis. However, this participatory policy analysis has also been severely criticised by some theorists as being "too cumbersome" or demanding too much or including too many participants to move toward policy closure, especially today's mega-policies. Some have characterised it as little more than a publicity exercise.

9.6 NEW DIRECTIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

Although policy research still continues to produce the most systematic and critical analyses of complex social problems, it is also true that Policy Sciences represent only one of the several "rational ideologies" competing for social and political acceptability. Pursuing a pro-active approach, a few scholars of the Policy Sciences revisited, in the 1990s and in the first few years of the 21st century, some of the old themes in an effort to reconcile long-pending conflicts. They have also moved away from adherence to a simple theory of rational choice to a theory of reason in society, and from Policy Sciences to 'policy inquiry.' Two items have remained prominent on the agenda for the Policy Sciences since 1990s. *First*, the Policy Sciences were to become normative; and *second*, Policy Sciences were to be related to the emerging field of public management.

Continuity of Values in Policy Sciences

Ethical values are important for governance in government and society. Keeping politics and administration separate, it is argued, would theoretically prevent political power from corrupting bureaucracy. Similarly, introduction of measures to ensure public accountability of higher bureaucracy would provide the moral safeguards against ethical transgressions. Under ethical and social morality approach the individuals and groups both inside and outside public service are forced to make concrete ethical and value judgements on a regular basis. In a developing country like India where policy-making and policy implementation is a serious concern, much work remains to be done on methods and procedures for ethical analysis and this can be on the top of the policy agenda in the first decade of 21st century.

Focus on Public Management

During the 1970s, the Policy Sciences addressed topics of evaluation, utilisation, implementation and termination. To some extent, each of these topics have focused on moving from strategic policy analyses and advicing to practical operations and

organisation. A policy remains just a policy statement unless it is implemented. Public management, like policy, shared a general disdain for traditional objective, discipline-bound, social science inquiry and preferred the multi-disciplinary, problem-oriented, and explicitly normative nature of its policy-oriented kin. The public manager is concerned with the specific functions necessary to the organisation and implementation of public policy, that is, planning, organising, directing, and controlling. Public policy and public management, that is, are partners, convergent in outcome, but with different focus. Managing public policy, according to Lynn, is "the result of executive effort directed at affecting governmental outcomes by influencing the processes that design and carry out governmental activity".

Continuity of Relevance

It may be argued that Policy Sciences has achieved a great deal in altering the landscape of academic and public organisations. As an approach, it is relevant for resolving complex social and political issues. Social and economic policies are the issues of public concern that would largely benefit from the systematic lenses of the Policy Sciences. The Policy Sciences appear to hold an implicit assumption about the benefits of government intervention.

Emphasis on Policy Enquiry

The modern theory of policy analysis, instead of emphasising the traditional rational approach relies more on a "polity of rational ideologies "in which policy inquiry replaces the "objective" model of the Policy Sciences. A reasoning approach has the added advantage of furthering 'the context-oriented and explicitly normative nature of the Policy Sciences'. Fischer and Forester (2012) are of the view that future of policy analysis depends on moving towards a broadened conception of reason in society that accounts for social, political, legal, moral, and ethically based rationalities. New approaches in the Policy Sciences appear to be based on the theory of applied reason and communication in society. The method of policy inquiry or argumentation promises not only to meet the goals set out by a theory of reason in society, but also to integrate the process and content divisions that have arisen within the policy sciences. The policy inquiry might represent a new advance, but it is neither free of problems nor a definite answer.

Democratisation of Policy Sciences

As already mentioned, scientific rationality is being replaced by a participatory policy analysis and post-positivist model. There is a greater concern for values, as they exist. Further, in the first quarter of the 21st century much attention is being attached to public participation in the policy process. It appears necessary for the Policy Sciences to achieve their Lasswellian goal of the "Policy Sciences of democracy" because the human condition is often temperamentally beyond quantitative capture. But this Post-positivist approach, combined with participatory policy analysis, is not without shortcomings but it promises a new vision for the future.

Social Network Analysis

Hanf and Scharpf have viewed the policy network approach as a tool to evaluate the "large number of public and private actors" from functional areas of government and society. The traditional forms of policy research have largely focused on the hierarchical policy process. On the other hand, the network approach looks at the policy process in terms of the horizontal relationships that tend to define the

developments of public policies. Although there are certainly some problems, in many ways social network analysis provides the Policy Sciences with a methodological approach that is convenient with the wide range of institutional actors who form the policy process. Thus, a network approach is useful, but Carlsson has claimed that, as of now, it is not a viable approach for Policy Sciences.

9.7 CONCLUSION

Although, Policy Sciences as a discipline or an area of study has achieved success in altering the landscape of academic and public organisations, yet its credibility has been challenged for its failure to produce 'societally relevant knowledge'. Some scholars saw policy science approach as a substitute for politics. Brooks has observed (1993): "While not anti-democratic, the analytical approach to public policy-making aspires to the de-politicisation of the policy process". Although the term 'Policy Sciences' is mostly associated with works of Lasswell and Dror, a policy orientation was evident in work of America's first social scientists.

Highlighting the value of 'policy sciences'. Brooks (*ibid.*) has written: "These visions of a new politics share a conviction that the institutionalisation of scientific analysis into the policy-making process is a necessary condition for the attainment of democratic government in a modern society". But to reinvigorate the Policy Sciences Approach. The traditional analytic toolkit is, at worst, "ineffective and anti-democratic." One obvious requirement is that "policy researchers will need to acquire a new set of analytic skills dealing with public education and negotiation and mediation, that is, helping to foster new policy design models that are less hierarchical than has been the case, rather than simply advising policy-makers".

DeLeon and Vogenbeck (2007) have suggested that "the policy scientist should become more fluent and practised in addressing the potential effects of decentralised authority", for it is observed that most governments are "moving at the moment toward a more localised, state-centred form of government". It may be added here that the future of policy science approach (although presently faced with numerous crises of identity and being at crossroads) will depend less on its adherence to scientific rationality and more on its ability to serve the knowledge needs of the administrative and political community in the form of directed policy inquiry and social network analysis.

Check Your Progress 3			
Note: i) Use the space given below for your answers.			
ii) Check your answers with those given at the end of the Unit.			
1) Describe the new directions and perspective in Policy Sciences.			
2) Examine the shortcomings of Policy Sciences Approach.			

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9.8 GLOSSARY	
Behavioural Sciences	: The Behavioural Sciences study human behaviour by scientific means as a preliminary approximation.
Empirical	: It refers to collection of data or facts based on inductive methods of enquiry.
Normative	: Relating to or establishing a norm; normative analysis emphasises on human dignity, democratic values.
Scientific Method	: It involves identifying a problem, gathering data and testing hypotheses.
Paradigm	: A broad theoretical framework or model about phenomena that guides research.
Policy Community	: It refers to a group of actors, such as interest groups, government agencies, the media and elected officials, who are actively involved in policy-making in a particular domain.
Policy Tool	: According to Lester Salamon and Michael Lund, it is "a method through which government seeks a policy objective".

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9.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) Your answer should include the following points:
 - Policy Sciences concept was formulated by Harold Lasswell in 1951.
 - Policy Sciences is much-disciplinary, contextual, normative and problem oriented.
 - Policy Sciences includes choices, prediction, and optimisation.
 - It is mainly concerned with improving policy process.
 - It represents the real world by defining social problems and interpreting solutions to problems.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) Your answers should include the following points:
 - In Lasswell's view, Policy Sciences are multi-disciplinary.
 - Policy Sciences focus on multi-disciplinary perspective, contextual and problem-oriented perspective as well as policy analysis, policy process and explicitly normative perspective.
 - Roots of Policy Sciences lie within economics.
 - Sensitive and aware policy scientists propose new conceptual paradigms and methodological approaches.
 - Lasswell indentified two approaches to policy sciences on focusing on knowledge of policy process and second on knowledge for use in policy process.
- 2) Your answer should include the following points:
 - Scope and expansion of Policy Sciences Approach include evaluation, utilisation, implementation and termination.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) Your answer should include the following points:
 - Policy Sciences represents only one of the several rational ideologies competing for social and political acceptability.

- Continuity of values in Policy Sciences is still there.
- There is a poignant focus on public management in Policy Sciences.
- As an approach it is important in solving complex social and political issues.
- There is a focus on Policy Enquiry.
- Policy Sciences is focussing on democratisation and participation.
- Policy network approach is gaining value.
- 2) Your answer should include the following points:
 - Policy Sciences are not unexpected or have a short history.
 - Policy Sciences have gone far beyond naive aspirations for societally relevant knowledge.
 - There is a shift from policy inquiry to policy.
 - Policy Sciences have been criticised for their inability to produce empirical and normative truths.
 - Dynamic nature of Policy Sciences is rooted in internal tension.
 - Policy Sciences are faced with dilemma of methodological problems.





BLOCK 4 POLITICAL AND SOCIAL PERSPECTIVES



UNIT 10 ECOLOGICAL APPROACH*

Structure

- 10.0 Objectives
- 10.1 Introduction
- 10.2 Concept of Ecology
- 10.3 Agraria and Industria Models
- 10.4 Fused-Prismatic-Diffracted Model for Developing Societies
- 10.5 Bazaar-Canteen Model: The Basis of Prismatic Economy
- 10.6 Evaluation of the Riggsian Model
- 10.7 Conclusion
- 10.8 Glossary
- 10.9 References
- 10.10 Answers to Check Your Progress Exercises

10.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this Unit, you should be able to:

- Examine the concept of ecology;
- Examine the Agraria and Industria Models given by Riggs;
- Discuss the Model of Fused-Prismatic-Diffracted societies;
- Bring out the characteristics of the Bazaar Canteen Model; and
- Analyse the Riggsian Model of economy.

10.1 INTRODUCTION

With Globalisation in its full bloom, the face of modern governments has undergone several structural changes. Public administration has acquired a multi-faceted approach towards meeting the roles and goals of any progressive society. Consequently, various theories have become important in understanding the problems that are prevalent and are being faced by the modern governments in today's world. One of them is the Ecological Approach. This Approach came into existence when Western Approaches were found to be inadequate in addressing problems of the developing nations and simultaneously many scholars were of the view that the Western Models and Theories were a complete misfit in the Third World countries.

After the second world war, many countries in Asia, Africa, which got liberated from Colonial Rule got more concerned with the task of nation building and social transformation. Most literature on development centered on development of first world countries. This realisation resulted in the conceptualisation of new concepts and approaches, which would serve the requirement of the Third World or developing

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countries and this paved the way for the Ecological Approach, which focused on studying the ecology of various environments of countries and designing conducive policies thereof. This Unit will explain the concept of ecology. It will bring out the nature of Agraria and Industria Models that preceded the Riggsian Fused-Prismatic-Diffracted Models. It will also examine the characteristic features of Prismatic societies.

10.2 CONCEPT OF ECOLOGY

The word 'ecology' has been borrowed from biology, which connotes the relationship between animal species and the natural environment. John.M.Gaus stressed on the need to study the concept of ecology to study the relationships between bureaucracy and its environment (*Cited* in Arora, 1984). The Ecological Approach is the forerunner of the General Systems Approach, which was given by Talcott Parsons in sociology. Fred Riggs being a sociologist himself developed the concept of Ecological Approach, which studied dynamic interactions between administrative system and its environment. Riggs was of the opinion that an administrative structure cannot function in isolation of its existing environment and that is how he assumed that the administrative system is a sub-system of society, which is influenced by other sub-systems and in turn influences them. Ecological Approach, therefore, states that administrative system exists in a cultural context, which has a two-way communication.

Riggs believed that a society has to perform certain functions and these functions compel the individuals to form structures, which may be social, economic, political, communicational and symbolic. Therefore, administration is culture-bound. Fred Riggs in his Book entitled "The Ecology of Public Administration" (1961) has explored the dynamics of interaction between public administration and its external environment. However, the adoption of this Approach was first suggested by Dwight Waldo in 1955. To understand the Ecological Approach in a larger perspective, it is important to study the *two* important categories of models of Riggs and these are the Agraria and Industria Models and the Fused-Prismatic- Diffracted Models.

10.3 AGRARIA AND INDUSTRIA MODELS

Riggs classified societies into agricultural and industrial societies i.e., the Agraria and the Industria. The Models were developed to study the political and administrative transition in these societies. China and America are examples of Agraria and Industria Models respectively. Riggs assumed that all societies transformed from Agraria to Industria at some point of time in history.

The features of the Agraria Model are as follows:

- Predominant ascriptive, particularistic and diffused patterns.
- Limited social and spatial mobility and stable local groups.
- Relatively simple and stable occupational differentiation.
- Existence of differential stratification system.

Similarly, the characteristics of a "modern industrial society" i.e., Industria were given as follows:

- Predominantly universalistic, specific and achievement norms.
- Higher social and spatial mobility.

- Well-developed occupational system insulated from other social structures.
- "Egalitarian" class system based on generalised patterns of occupational achievement.
- Prevalence of "associations", i.e., functionally-specific, non-ascriptive structure.

Soon the realisation dawned that these Models were two extremes of prevalent societies and were not helpful in studying the transitional societies i.e., the societies, which were not yet fully industrialised, but far more industrialised compared to the agrarian economies. Therefore, to address this problem, Riggs developed an equilibrium model 'Transitia' for the transitional societies which were less developed. The 'Agrarian-Industria' Model was criticised on the grounds that the 'Industria' does not exist in isolation, but has 'Agraria' included within it. Therefore, two separate polar type of societies could not exist. This Model assumed a unidirectional movement of the agrarian society to the industrialised society. The classification of the societies into two types of societies proved to be too abstract and general.

The analysis of the administrative sub-system was not dealt with in detail.On the contrary, the environment of the administrative sub-system was explained more extensively. Therefore, it was realised that the transitional societies could not be studied with the help of these Models.Riggs soon abandoned these Models and developed the concept or Model of 'Fused-Prismatic-Diffracted' for developing societies.

Check Your Progress 1		
Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.		
ii)	Check your answer with that given at the end of the Unit.	
1) Explain the features of Agraria-Industria Model.		
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10.4 FUSED-PRISMATIC-DIFFRACTED MODEL FOR DEVELOPING SOCIETIES

The ideal models of Fused, Prismatic and Diffracted societies aimed at studying the pre-historic, developing and developed societies. While explaining the concept of Structural-functional Approach, it was mentioned that social structures may perform a large number of functions in some societies. This was called 'multi-functionality' and such social structures were called 'functionally diffused'. On the other hand, 'functionally specific' social structures performed only prescribed limited functions. Riggs called functionally diffused societies as 'Fused' and the functionally specific societies as 'Diffracted'. The society that was intermediate of these types of societies was called 'Prismatic'. Prismatic society had features of both Fused and Diffracted societies. Riggs emphasised that all societies are generally Prismatic and no society

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could be called purely Fused or Diffracted. It is to be noted that Riggs developed Fused-Prismatic-Diffracted models only as parameters, and their exact characteristics are not found in any actual society.

Now, if we look at the Prismatic societies, they had the following features, which stood between those of Fused and Diffracted societies: The focus of Riggs's Model was the study of administrative sub-system, which he termed 'Sala'. He studied the interaction of Sala Model with other social structures. The primary concern of Riggs was the study of administrative problems of the developing or transitional societies. The basic characteristics of the Prismatic societies were:

Heterogeneity

Heterogeneity refers to the simultaneous presence of different kinds of systems, practices and viewpoints. It means presence of features of both Fused and Diffracted societies e. g., presence of sophisticated intellectual class in urban areas, while in rural areas, traditional rural elders still have many political, religious, administrative roles etc. This may happen due to uneven social change. Similarly, the administrative sub-system of prismatic societies *Sala* exists along with modern 'bureau' and traditional 'courts' or 'chambers'.

Formalism

Formalism refers to "the degree of congruence between the formally prescribed and the effectively practiced i. e., between the norms and the realities." (Arora, 2008, op.cit.). Opposite of Formalism is called Realism. For example, government officials are bound by certain rules and regulations in any given organisation. However, they act in a different way considerably. The Diffracted and Fused societies have a high degree of Realism. Due to Formalism, the public officials have a lot of discretion in implementing the laws. The broad reason why such Formalism develops in a prismatic society is due to lack of ability of the society to guide the performance of the institutions respectively, i.e., lack of awareness in public, lack of commitment towards the societal objectives etc. This type of formalistic behaviour encourages corruption in a Prismatic society.

Due to such a 'Formalism-Realism' dichotomy between the Prismatic and Diffracted societies, administrative reforms can be brought out in Diffracted societies, which may lead to the desired changes in administrative system. However, in the Prismatic societies as the public officials indulge in behaviour, which is quite different from the officially prescribed one, administrative reforms have only a superficial impact.

Overlapping

This refers to "the extent to which formally differentiated structures of a Diffracted society coexist with the undifferentiated structures of a Fused type" (Arora, *ibid.*). In a Diffracted society, there is no overlapping as the various structures of the social system perform the specific functions in a more or less autonomous way, while in a Fused society all the functions are performed by the same social structures. There is no scope of overlapping in Fused societies as well. However, in a Prismatic society though new social structures are created still the society is dominated by the undifferentiated structures. In the administrative sub-system *Sala* overlapping means that the actual administrative action is determined by 'non-administrative' criteria such as social, cultural, political, economic or religious factors etc. Overlapping is manifested in a Prismatic society by many features e.g., Nepotism, Poly-communalism