

**PUBLIC POLICY AND
ADMINISTRATION IN INDIA**

“शिक्षा मानव को बन्धनों से मुक्त करती है और आज के युग में तो यह लोकतंत्र की भावना का आधार भी है। जन्म तथा अन्य कारणों से उत्पन्न जाति एवं वर्गगत विषमताओं को दूर करते हुए मनुष्य को इन सबसे ऊपर उठाती है।”

— इन्दिरा गांधी



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“Education is a liberating force, and in our age it is also a democratising force, cutting across the barriers of caste and class, smoothing out inequalities imposed by birth and other circumstances.”

— Indira Gandhi

PUBLIC POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION IN INDIA

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July, 2021

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ISBN: 978-93-91229-98-6

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Further information on the Indira Gandhi National Open University courses may be obtained from the University's Office at Maidan Garhi, New Delhi-110 068 or visit our website: <http://www.ignou.ac.in>

Printed and published on behalf of the Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi, by Registrar, MPDD

Laser Typeset by : Tessa Media & Computers, C-206, Shaheen Bagh, New Delhi

Printed at: Nova Publications and Printers Pvt. Ltd., Plot No. 9, Sector 59, Phase-II, Faridabad.

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COURSE INTRODUCTION

Each organisation, public or private, small or big, new or old, aims at achievement of pre-fixed goals in a manner whereby the maximum positive outcome is assured. Expediency, efficiency, quality, innovativeness, etc., are the watchwords of any organisation or system. A policy is a definite course of action, which is adopted for ensuring expediency and net-result. A policy document is the one that embody a contract. In simple words, a policy is a course of action as well as guiding principle along with a procedure considered to be expedient, beneficial or fruitful. Likewise, an analysis is an act of determinacy. It is a statement about a given object wherein the essential nature of the object is expressed. Analysis means action to describe, explain or make the given object clear as well as definite.

Public policy has been referred to as ‘a goal of action’; ‘the relationship of the government unit to its environment’; ‘it is not a decision, it is a course or pattern of activity’; ‘it is a proposed course of action of a person, group, or government within a given environment providing opportunities and obstacles which the policy was proposed to utilise or overcome in an effort to reach a goal or realise an objecting or purpose’; ‘it is whatever the government chooses to do or not to do’.

Public policies depict the overall functioning of a political system, which is a set of interactions abstracted from the totality of social behavior. A political system does affect and in turn gets affected by the economic, social and administrative system within the internal jurisdiction of the system and also has influence of external forces and environment. It brings to light the fact that the operational area of public policy is vast and has wide range and scope. It leaves a number of concerned parties to interpret a given decision reflected through a policy in accordance with own preferences or likings, which brings forth an element of subjectivity in the interpretation of a policy. By all means, public policy has political, social, scientific and professional objectives.

Public policies are goal oriented. A public policy is positive in the sense that it depicts the concern of the government and involves its actions to the given problem. It has the sanction of law. Public policy stems from a well-defined procedure wherein the power/control, governing and bargaining concepts play a significant role. Public policies are those which are formulated by the governmental bodies and officials and the non-governmental agents and actors also play an important role in this direction. Public policies are the governmental rules and programmes, considered individually or collectively, that is, the authoritative decisional output of a political system. Public policy may be expressed in a variety of forms, including laws, local ordinances, court decisions, executive orders, decisions of administrators, or even unwritten understanding of what is to be done. Policy without the modified public is sometimes regarded as synonymous with governmental decision, but it is often treated as embracing a set or sequence of decisions rather than a single decision about a specific governmental action. Policy is also termed by some to distinguish decisions about goals or preferences from decisions relating to the means of achieving goals. Others, however, may treat policy as embracing both ends and means.

Policy in some contexts refers to decisions about long-range objectives or general directions of governmental action, which serve as guides to short-run action in

specific cases. Policies are the goals or purposes of government programmes, for example, the eradication of poverty, better employment opportunities, fool proof safety measures, etc. Policy does include the implementation of intentions and rules. It can be termed explicitly in rules or implicitly in actions and schedules. Policies do provide the standard guides, which facilitate planning and acting in line with legal requirements to realise the predetermined goals and objectives. The executive in political system is helped by the policies in keeping its activities within the prescribed framework of action. There is a close relationship between politics and policy. It is the politics only which leads to the enactment of policies. When the political system is viewed from the politics point of consideration, one finds the demands made by the masses upon the government officials or the party in power. These demands bring out the emergence of the policies. Policies have a substantial bearing on the minds of the people. Supposing the policies of a government are not in tune with the demands of the time, the people who enjoy the ultimate power of electing the government in democracies can change the party in the next elections.

An emerging interdisciplinary field of inquiry concerned with the application of scientific methods and insights to the improvement of public policy making and the solution to public problems is Policy Science. It represents primarily the applied as contrasted with the pure science aspects of relevant disciplines. Given the wide range of public problems, policy scientists may be drawn from almost any discipline – social, biological, or physical. The disciplines most directly concerned with the Policy Sciences approach have been Political Science, Economics, Sociology, law, Business management, History and Public Administration, etc. Policy Sciences also utilise insights drawn from such fields as systems analysis, operation research, cybernetics, game theory, general systems theory, which cut across traditional disciplinary boundaries. Policy scientists are particularly concerned with the process of clarifying goals, evaluating alternatives, identifying trends, and analysing the policy situation. It does not posit basic values, but rather is concerned with factual propositions that are subject to empirical inquiry.

The Core Course on Public Policy, which seeks to provide an introduction to the interface between public policy and administration in India, aims at familiarising the students with the governmental rules and programmes, that is, the authoritative decisional outputs of a political system, known commonly as public policies. The essence of public policy lies in its effectiveness in translating the governing philosophy into programmes and policies and making it a part of the community living. Public policy is expressed in a variety of forms', including laws, local ordinances, court decisions, executive orders, decisions of administrators, and even unwritten understandings of what is to be done, being duly ratified by the governmental policy making agencies. It equips the learners with the concept of public policy; various models of public policy; formulation and implementation of public policy in India. It deals with issues of decentralisation, financial management, citizens and administration, etc. The Course familiarises the students with the concept and approaches of Social Welfare and Social Welfare Policies besides Education Policy, Health Policy, Food Policy, Employment Policy and Environment Policy. Various significant facets of the overall process of public policy, by and large in the context of India, have been discussed in the course which has five Blocks comprising 14 Units.

Block 1 Public Policy

The first Block of the Course has three Units and attempts to explain the introduction to public policy. It aims to clarify the meaning, nature, models and policy process. There are three Units in the Block.

Unit 1 Public Policy: Definitions, Nature, Significance and Types

This Unit aims to explain the meaning of the term public policy, its idea, nature, significance and role. Besides discussing different types of policies categorised as Distributive policies, Redistributive policies, and Regulatory policies, it focuses on Constituent policy issues, Conflict policy issues and Bargaining policy issues.

Unit 2 Public Policy: Models

In this Unit an attempt is made to examine public policy-making models which have been developed over the years. Since it discusses public policy from the perspective of models, the meaning of model has been explained. There is detailed analysis of various major models of public policy namely Systems model, Institutional model, Rational policy-making model, Incremental model, Elite model and Public choice model.

Unit 3 Public Policy Process in India: Formulation and Implementation

The Unit familiarises the students with the policy process as a system, describes the policy-making process in India, highlights issues related to policy formulation, and discusses the problems of implementation of public policy. In keeping with it, the stages in public policy have been explained. Accordingly, the focus has been on identifying underlying problem, determining policy alternatives, forecasting and evaluating alternatives policy selection, policy implementation, policy monitoring policy outcomes, policy evaluation, and design of evaluation. The discussion in the Unit is also on policy formulation, policy implementation and policy-making process in India.

Block 2 Decentralisation

A single Unit Block has focused on decentralisation, which is a bulwark of governance and democracy. It advances the cause of self-rule at the local level by the people.

Unit 4 Decentralisation: Meaning and Significance; Rural and Urban Local Self-Governance

Effective governance is essential for the delivery of goods and services to the masses. This could better be realised when the powers of the governments (from state to district, from district to block and from block to village levels) are decentralised. Thus, the focus in the Unit is on meaning and significance of decentralisation. It has traced at length the evolution of rural local governance in India since independence. It brings to light the major characteristics of 73rd Constitutional Amendment and also the weaknesses of the panchayat system. Besides discussing the brief historical context of urban local government and the constitutional status of municipalities, the focus in the Unit is on the features of the 74th Constitutional Amendment. Major issues relating to the functioning of Urban Local Bodies in India have also been examined.

Block 3 Budget

Budget is the main instrument for implementing government activities. It is a work plan and an evaluation tool that gives direction to the implementation of public policies and programmes. The said Block consists of two Units dealing with different facets of Budget.

Unit 5 Concept and Significance of Budget and Budget Cycle in India

Budgetary provisions are required for carrying out Government functions, policies and programmes. It is a work plan that gives direction to the implementation of policies and programmes. The Unit has examined the meaning, concept and significance of budget. It also contains a brief description of the major actors or agencies (Parliament, Political Executive, Audit Department, and Parliamentary Committees) involved in the budgetary process at the union level. It also discusses Principles of Budget-making besides reviewing various stages in the budgetary process in the parliament.

Unit 6 Budgeting: Types and Approaches

This Unit will enable students understand different types of budgeting namely line-item budgeting, performance budgeting, planning-programming-budgeting, zero-based budgeting, gender budgeting, and target-based budgeting. It also explains two principal approaches to budgeting viz Incremental and Rational. It also contains Public Administration's perspective of the budget.

Block 4 Citizens and Administration Interface

Government functions for the ultimate welfare of the citizens. It is obligatory on the part of the public authorities to carry out all such activities that lead to the development of the polity and economy. Administrative actions, to this effect, can be performed effectively and efficiently through citizens' administration interface. Both the Units included in this Block focus on different facets of this interface.

Unit 7 Citizen and Administration Interface-I-Public Service Delivery and Redressal of Public Grievances

The objective behind the citizen-administration interface is to place the citizen at the centre of administration. Good governance is dependent essentially on the quality of service from civil servants and satisfaction of the citizenry. The focus in the Unit is on the meaning and nature of citizens-administration interaction. It brings to fore major categories of such interaction and discusses the objectives and features of Public Service Law at the state level. Besides, the meaning and coverage of grievance redressal as well as machinery for redressal of public grievances at the Union level have been thoroughly explained.

Unit 8 Citizen and Administration Interface-II-Public Service Delivery and Redressal of Public Grievances

The growing discontentment and disenchantment with the functioning of government and its arm, bureaucracy, during the 1960s and 1970s sparked a reform movement aimed at empowering the citizens. The present Unit deals with some significant dimensions of the interface between citizens and the

administrative aspects of government. To mitigate citizens' dissatisfaction regarding corruption in India, laws have been enacted creating institutions such as the Lokpal and Lokayukta. The Unit explains at length the significance and salient features of the RTI besides examining the strengths and weaknesses of the Lokpal institution. It focuses on Citizens' Charter, a document specifying certain aims to be achieved for improving the quality of public services to the citizens of India. The importance and characteristics of e-Governance have also been highlighted in the Unit.

Block 5 Social Welfare Administrations

The concept of social welfare and its scope of operation vary from country to country, depending upon their stage of historical development, the degree of prominence given to development and welfare goals and the evolution of state structures for delivery of services. Social welfare, in theoretical and operational terms has a long tradition in India. The concept and approaches of social welfare along with major policies paving the way for social welfare are included in this Block.

Unit 9 Social Welfare: Concept, Approaches and Policies

India, being committed to the welfare of its people, seeks to provide to its citizens a wide range of services to meet their social, economic, and educational and health needs. The focus in the Unit is on the meaning, concept and approaches of social welfare. It highlights various reasons for strengthening of the social welfare system. The discussion in the Unit is on Family-centric approach, Residual approach, Mixed-Economy approach, and Institutional approach. The Unit contains the constitutional provisions with regard to weaker sections of society in India besides and the main policies and legislation relating to women and children in India.

Unit 10 Education Policy and Right to Education

High Quality education is the foundation of new knowledge, innovation and entrepreneurship that lead to country's development and prosperity. Education plays a significant and remedial role in balancing the socio-economic fabric of our country. The Unit brings to light the significance and meaning of Education Policy and describes developments in National Policy on Education. It also lays emphasis on the problems in implementation of the National Policy on Education and appraises the importance and features of the RTE, 2009.

Unit 11 Health Policy and National Health Mission

Health is human beings greatest possession and nothing is of higher significance than the health of the people. The present Unit discusses the significance of Health policy. It also traces the evolution of the Health policy, 1983. The contribution of the National Health Policy, 2002, has also been included in the Unit besides referring to the goal, objectives, principles and appraisal of the National Health Policy 2017. The principles and priority areas for improving health care under NHP 2017 have also been discussed in the Unit.

Unit 12 Food Policy and Right to Food Security

In keeping with the fact that attainment of food security is a big challenge for

India, food and agricultural policies in the country have aimed at reducing hunger, food insecurity and poverty. Besides, attention has also been on raising food grains production and maintaining adequate stocks of food grains as a measure of food security. The Unit discusses the measures accorded top priority in the Food policy to cope up with the demand of food grains in India. Besides, National Food Security Act, 2013, has been critically examined in the Unit.

Unit 13 Employment Policy (MGNREGA)

The term 'Employment Policy' has been explained in the Unit that also analyses various initiatives on Employment policy and programmes in India. These include Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Protsahan Yojana, Child Labour Prohibition, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana, Rural Self Employment Training Institute, Pradhan Mantri Yuva Yojana, etc. the significance and salient features of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act have also been highlighted.

Unit 14 Environment Policy

India is one of the few countries of the world that refer specifically in their constitutions the need for environmental protection. In keeping with it, the focus in this Unit is on the importance and scope of environment policy besides constitutional provisions pertaining to environment protection. It discusses the challenges faced by the Environment policy and also brings to light the role and objectives of Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change in environmental conservation.

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BLOCK 1
PUBLIC POLICY

UNIT 1 PUBLIC POLICY: DEFINITIONS, NATURE, SIGNIFICANCE AND TYPES*

Structure

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Definition of Public Policy
- 1.3 Nature of Public Policy
- 1.4 Significance and Role of Public Policy
 - 1.4.1 Theoretical and Scientific Reasons
 - 1.4.2 Political and Administrative Reasons
 - 1.4.3 Representing Powerful Approach for Improving Economic and Social System
 - 1.4.4 A Tool for Shaping Future
- 1.5 Policy Types
 - 1.5.1 Distributive Policies
 - 1.5.2 Redistributive Policies
 - 1.5.3 Regulatory Policies
 - 1.5.4 Constituent Policy Issues
 - 1.5.5 Conflict Policy Issues
 - 1.5.6 Bargaining Policy Issues
- 1.6 Conclusion
- 1.7 Glossary
- 1.8 References
- 1.9 Answers to Check Your Progress Exercises

1.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this Unit, you should be able to:

- Understand the meaning and nature of public policy;
- Describe the significance of public policy in a globalising world; and
- Describe the types of public policy.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Within the social sciences, the study of public policy acquired a great deal of importance during the second half of the last century. However, a few writers on public policy suggest that modern policy studies began in the early 1920s. The classic literature that laid foundation of policy studies dates back to the year 1950 with Harlod Lasswell's call for the development distinctive policy science (Lerner & Lasswell, 1951). Therefore, it is fair to argue that public policy, as an academic pursuit, emerged during the middle of the last century and since then, it has been acquiring new dimensions, and is struggling hard to achieve the status of a discipline. As a study of the processes of government, policy forms a significant component in many a course and academic programme in numerous

* Contributed by Dr. R.K. Sapru, Professor of Public Administration (Retired), Panjab University, Chandigarh

disciplines such as political science, public administration, economics and business management. So rapid is its development that many researchers, academics and practitioners feel that the field is becoming more and more unmanageable. The disciplines required to comprehend public policy cut right across the conventional academic lines of demarcation. Indeed, it is its interdisciplinary nature which makes the field of public policy interesting and thought provoking.

According to Thomas Dye (1978), in the past, study of public policy was dominated by researchers and students of political science who largely concentrated on the institutional structure and philosophical justification of the government. The focus was rarely on the policies themselves. Political science was to some extent preoccupied with the activities of the various political institutions and groups in relation to their success in the pursuit of political power. It hardly recognised the role which those institutions played towards the formation of a policy as one of its main concerns. Yet public policy is an important element of the political process. Dye further observes that of late the focus of political science has been shifting to public policy – “to the description and explanation of the causes and consequences of government activity”. While the concern of political science about the process by which public policies are formulated has increased, most students of public administration would acknowledge that the public servants themselves are intimately involved in the shaping of the policies.

The study of public administration has also been focusing on the machinery concerned with the implementation of policies. It has addressed issues regarding organisation of public authorities, the behaviour of public servants and increasingly, the methods of resource allocation, administration and review. With such an approach, it is difficult to determine much about the way policies are formulated, although it is generally contended that the experience of policy implementation contributes in a significant way for the policy-making process. But the subject of public policy is more political in nature than public administration. It is an effort to apply political science to public affairs, but it also has concerns with the process in the field of public administration. Presently studies on public policy have been mainly dominated by scholars of policy analysis and public administration and have tended to concentrate more on the content of policy, the process of its formulation and its implementation.

1.2 DEFINITIONS OF PUBLIC POLICY

The concept of public policy presupposes that there is a domain of organised life which is not private or purely individual, but held in common. The point for discussion is to understand what we mean by the idea of ‘public policy’. The term public policy comprises two words: Public and Policy.

Idea of Public: In the first place, it is important to understand the term ‘public’. We often use such terms as ‘public interest’, ‘public sector’, ‘public opinion’, ‘public health’, and so on. Therefore, ‘Public Policy’ has to do with those spheres which are labelled as ‘public’, as opposed to spheres involving ‘private’. Public dimension is generally referred to ‘public ownership’ or control for ‘public purpose’. The word public also subsumes all the dimensions of human activity requiring governmental intervention or social regulation. However, there has always been a conflict between what is ‘public’ and what is ‘private’.

It is argued that public administration emerged as an instrument of the state for securing public interest rather than safeguarding private interests. While the political economists contend that only markets could balance private and public interests, the new liberalism is based on a belief that public administration provides a more rational means of promoting the public interest. For Max Weber, the emergence and growth of bureaucracy was due to the process of rationalisation in the industrial society. The civil servant was conceived as a rational functionary whose main task was to carry out the will of the elected functionaries. Public bureaucracy was, therefore, different from that which existed in the private sector because it was motivated to serve the public interest. This viewpoint, based on rationality, on ensuring public interest, became much less fashionable after the Second World War. Moreover, the distinction between the public and private sectors is getting blurred due to a number of reforms made within the public sector. With the result, these two sectors overlap so much that they cease to be well-defined independent categories.

Idea of Policy: Like the idea of ‘public’ the idea of ‘policy’ is also not precisely defined. Policy denotes, among other things, ‘guidance for action’. It may take the form of:

- authoritative decision;
- principle or a rule;
- purposive course of action;
- expression of considered judgement; and
- action of government.

Unfortunately, the term policy is defined in different ways by writers on public policy. David Easton defines policy as the ‘outputs’ of the political system and public policy as ‘the authoritative allocation of values for the whole society’ (Easton, 1953). Henry defines public policy as “a course of action adopted and pursued by government” (Henry, 2012). Anderson suggests that policy be regarded as ‘purposive course of action followed by an actor or set of actors in dealing with a problem or matter of concern’ (Anderson, 1975). To Dye, “public policy is whatever governments choose to do or not to do”. Similarly, Lineberry says that “it is what governments do and fail to do – to and for their citizens” (Lineberry, 1977). For Parsons “a policy is an attempt to define and structure a rational basis for action or inaction” (Parsons, 1975). In brief, ‘policy’ is a purposive course of action taken or adopted by those in power in pursuit of certain goals or objectives. It should be added here that public policies are the policies adopted and implemented by government bodies and officials.

1.3 NATURE OF PUBLIC POLICY

Public Policy is made by the government (even if the ideas come from the non-official pressure groups or political parties) in response to the public problems but it is implemented by both government and non-government actors. For understanding public policy, it is important to analyse its nature. A policy may be general or specific, broad or narrow, simple or complex, public or private, written or unwritten, explicit or implicit, discretionary or detailed, and qualitative or quantitative. Understanding public policy is an art as well as craft. It is an art as it requires insight and creativity in identifying societal problems, in devising

public policies that might alleviate them and in finding out whether these policies lead to a better quality of life.

Public policy is a craft because these tasks often require some knowledge of social sciences. Here, the emphasis is on the 'public policy' (government policy) which a government chooses as 'guidance for action'. However, instead of specific or definite some policies may suffer from vagueness or riddled with inconsistencies. It is invariably found that a government rarely has a set of guiding principles for all its activities. Important public policies are often made more explicit, particularly where the issue of a law, a regulation, or a plan and the like is involved. The Supreme Court of a country like India may, through its decisions, give new interpretations to some of the articles of the Constitution which may amount to a new policy. Judicial decisions are also policy statements.

As noted earlier, public policies may be too vague or too general and may not always be consistent with each other. In a turbulent environment, government departments often have to take immediate action without reference to any specific policy. Also, sometimes for the sake of political expediency, or for other reasons, a government may announce a specific policy without any intention of carrying it out. Therefore, it is possible to have an action without a policy, or to have a policy without an action. Public policies, because of their 'public' nature, are mostly adopted formally by the government authorities, that is, those with the power to give them a legal sanctity.

A public policy may cover a major portion of its theme/content, such as a development policy, with specified thrust areas. Therefore, a single policy may be found in a number of written documents. A public policy may also be narrow, covering a specific activity, such as family planning, confined to a section of the people or age group, or it may spread to a wider range applied to all people in a State or country. For example, it may have specific policies dealing with specific marginalised groups of people or persons residing in a flood-prone area. Further, public policy is a field which is generally defined by policy areas such as health, education, environment, housing, economic, social and transport). It is largely in this setting that interdisciplinary interactions take place. Besides, each level of government – the Central, the State and the local – may have its specific or general policies. Then, there are the 'mega policies', with general guidelines to be followed by all specific policies. According to Dror, 'megapolicies' act as a kind of a master policy, distinct from concrete or discrete policies, and involve the establishment of overall goals to serve as guidelines for large sets of concrete policies. The broad policies which are an expression of national goals in broad spheres such as economic growth, environment and the like) are examples of megapolicies (Dror, 1968).

Problem solving is the crux of public policy. An important question is whether a policy should contain a definite goal or an objective. By goal or objective we mean the end towards which any action is directed. Since a policy is a guidance for action, it is essential for the public policy to have a goal, an objective or a purpose. All megapolicies, in particular, are purposeful and goal-oriented. But it is conceivable that a government can have a policy without any clear objective or purpose. It can also adopt a policy without specifying what the purpose or goal is, even if it does have one. Even though the goal or objective of a policy is explicitly stated, the policy by itself may be so vague or so general that it may become susceptible to various interpretations. A government may deliberately

adopt vague, inconsistent, or even contradictory policies in order to satisfy all pressure groups and political parties or multiple groups of people. The diversity in public policies is, therefore, a striking characteristic.

As already indicated, a public policy is a purposive course of action. The course of action may be either positive or negative in form. In its positive form, it may involve some form of overt government action to deal with a particular problem. Negatively, it may involve a decision by public servants not to take action on some matter. Public policies sometime have a legally coercive quality that citizens accept as right and proper. For example, taxes must be paid unless one wants to run the risk of fines or imprisonment. This legally coercive nature of public policies makes public organisations distinct from private organisations. Policies ultimately gain considerable support so their repeal is unlikely, as with education or health policies. They may be modified or expanded with certain changes.

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) Explain the meaning and nature of public policy. What is the role of public policy for developing countries?

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- 2) “Public policy is the authoritative allocation of values” (Easton). Discuss.

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1.4 SIGNIFICANCE AND ROLE OF PUBLIC POLICY

Public policy is an important area of government activity. It is an area which has to do with those spheres which are so labelled as public. The concept of public policy presupposes that these are a domain of life which is not private or purely individual, but held in common. As such, public policies have important purposes to serve in the democratic society. Following are some of reasons advanced in favour of the study of public policy.

1.4.1 Theoretical and Scientific Reasons

Anderson (1975), for instance, argues that one studies public policy so that one can know more about the process, both in pursuit of knowledge to pure science

and the practitioner orientation to applied science. It enables one to gain greater knowledge and understanding of the causes and consequences of policy decisions. Public policy may be regarded as either a dependent or an independent variable. When it is viewed as a dependent variable, our focus of attention is on environmental factors that help shape the content of policy. For instance, how do environmental protection and industrialisation help shape the content of policy? On the other hand, if public policy is viewed as an independent variable, our focus of attention shifts to the impact of a policy on the environment. For example, what effect does a specific economic policy have on the labour class? By raising such questions, we can improve our understanding of the linkages between environment and public policy, which in turn, contributes to the development of policy analysis. Not only this, an understanding of the causes and consequences of public policy helps us to apply scientific knowledge to the solution for practical social problems. In other words, the study of public policy helps the development of professional advice on how to achieve particular goals. The professionals, if they understand and know something about public policy, will be in a position to suggest something useful concerning how governments or public authorities can act to achieve their policy goals. Such advice can either be on what policies can be pursued for achieving particular goals or what environmental factors are conducive to the development of a given policy. Beyond this, it is indeed the factual knowledge which is a prerequisite to solving the problems in the public domain.

These days a good deal of attention is being paid to policy analysis. It is contended that the success of policy formulation, execution and evaluation ultimately depends on the success of policy analysis. Conversely, students of public policy derive theoretical knowledge by observing the collective activity of the formulators and implementers of public policy.

1.4.2 Political and Administrative Reasons

There are also political reasons for studying policy. People with political goals study public policy to learn how to advance their preferred policy alternatives. The knowledge which they have acquired through study of policy analysis will enable the administration to engage in such issues as are of public importance and are concerned with the transformation of values into public-making.

Students and scholars of political science and public administration are concerned about what governments should do with appropriate public policies. They contend that the disciplines should not be 'silent' or 'impotent' on current social and political problems, and that they have a moral obligation to put forward a particular policy on a given problem. They should advance a high level of expertise to improve the quality of public policies in whatever ways they think best, regardless of possible disagreements over what constitutes appropriate policies.

1.4.3 Representing Powerful Approach for Improving Economic and Social System

Public policy, as we have analysed, is an important component of the democratic government and its focus is on the public and its problems. It is an area which has to do with the protection and enhancement of the public interest. The major function and role of public policy is to shape the society for its betterment. Wide ranging policies were formulated in the areas of socio-economic development.

Many policies were converted into statutes like Industrial Development and Regulating Act or Land Policy (abolition of the zamindari system in 1961). The state undertook similar responsibility in the social sphere. Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 (with rules notified in 1977); Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Amendment Act, 2016; Forest Rights Act, 2016; National Policy for Older Persons (1999); The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 (as amended in 1986); The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 (as amended in 1986); The Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987; The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 (amended in 2007); Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 National Youth Policy (2014); Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act and Rules, 2012; National Health Policy (2017) and so on, are examples of this type. Recently, the Union Government issued an ordinance providing for death penalty to a person convicted for raping a girl under 12 years (2018).

There were also problems of external aggression and national integrity. The external environment was a source of threat and the country had to develop suitable policies to defend itself. Apart from this, there have been internal challenges. Regionalism has given rise to fissiparous tendencies that have to be countered in the long-term perspective. These would include not only defence policies but also similar efforts at decentralisation that create greater national cohesiveness. Thus, since independence, public policies in India have been formulated with a view to achieving socio-economic development and maintaining national integrity.

1.4.4 A Tool for Shaping Future

Public policy as a field is an important mechanism for shaping the future. It is conditioned by the past and concerned with shaping the future for societal betterment. The study of the past is very important as it helps in explaining the present policy system. The past policies perpetuate themselves into present and future policies. The study of public policy is of vital importance even for the present, as it deals with defining policy problems. Thus, present policy-making can be thought of as a problem-solving method, realising that the definition of the alternatives is the supreme instrument of power.

We can understand the future by extrapolation of the present trends. The idea of projecting some key social trends into the future may be of great help in this regard. Our collection of data for these purposes may include changes in population growth rates, education, public health and the like. We can carry the process further by forecasting what these projections might look like after a decade. People cannot avoid being concerned with the consequences of public policies.

1.5 POLICY TYPES

Public policy is one of the components of the government action. This section describes how policies can be categorised by type. Lowi (1972) has persuasively argued that there are three primary types of policies – distributive, redistributive and regulatory. All public policies, according to Lowi, are coercive because they seek to alter individual and societal conduct.

1.5.1 Distributive Policies

Distributive policies are, in general terms, policies that are intended to grant some sort of benefit to a particular interest group or other well-defined relatively small groups of beneficiaries. Examples of distributive policy include food relief, farm subsidies, and scholarships to students belonging to weaker sections of the community, and so on.

Legislation regarding implementation of any policy or scheme is likely to be quite specific, and allows little administrative discretions.

1.5.2 Redistributive Policies

Redistributive policies are characterised by actions “intended to manipulate the allocation of wealth, prosperity, personal or civil rights, or some other valued item among social classes or racial groups”. Examples of redistributive policies include welfare for persons with disabilities (Disabilities Act, which was enforced in February 1996, deals with both prevention and promotion aspects of rehabilitation for persons with disabilities), civil rights (Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 provides punishment for the practice of untouchability) for social minorities, aid to poor schools, and so on.

1.5.3 Regulatory Policies

Regulatory policies generally are policies that are intended to govern the conduct of business. They seek to alter individual behaviour directly by imposing standards on regulated industries, and are much more likely to arouse controversy. Private interests may be significantly constrained or have compliance costs imposed upon them by regulatory actions. Organisation like the Competition Commission of India (CCI), the Bar Council of India, the Pharmacy Council of India, and the Nursing Council of India are examples of regulatory agencies intended to protect the standards of the respective professions. The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), and so on are engaged in regulatory activities.

1.5.4 Constituent Policy Issues

Later, Lowi (1972) added another type: Constituent Policy issues – the setting-up or reorganisations of institutions. Each of these policy issues forms a different power arena. However, it may be mentioned here that Lowi’s view of politics as a function of policies has been criticised as over-simplistic, methodologically suspect, and prone to testability (Cobb and Elder, 1972).

1.5.5 Conflict Policy Issues

In place of Lowi’s four policy types, Cobb and Elder propose an alternative classification of policy issues in terms of conflict rather than content. Their focus is on the way in which conflict is created and managed. To them, a conflict may arise between two or more groups over issues relation to the distribution of positions or resources, and may be created by situations such as: (i) Unfairness or bias in the distribution of positions or resources; (ii) Framing of an issue for personal or group gain; (iii) Unanticipated human events, natural disasters, international conflict, war and technological changes.

1.5.6 Bargaining Policy Issues

There are other exponents who have categorised the policy issues on the basis of costs and benefits. For example, Hogwood (1987) and Wilson (1973) use the criteria of costs and benefits from the point of view of the possibilities of different outcomes, forms of bargaining and conflict, and a range of other alternatives. There are redistribution or cuts issues which involve bargaining over who gets what, who gets more, and who gets less. For Wilson (1973) criteria of costs and benefits may be concentrated or dispersed. An issue which may have very concentrated benefits to a small section of society, but whose costs are widely dispersed, is of a different kind to the one that may be for “the greatest happiness of the greatest number”. However, such types involving costs and benefits exclude important dimensions of complexity and technical knowledge.

Lowi’s ideas of policy types are quite influential because he approaches policies not merely as outputs of government but as something that shapes and is shaped by political conflicts.

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) Discuss different types of public policy.
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- 2) On the basis of typologies of policies, explain any three categories of policy issues with examples.
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1.6 CONCLUSION

Public policy is an important area of study and practice. Since the emergence of public policy as a field of enquiry, it has expanded in theoretical scope and application. A significant part of the study of public policy consists of the development of scenarios and extrapolations of contemporary trends. Public policy is not only concerned with the description and explanation of the causes

and consequences of government activity, but also with the development of scientific knowledge about the forces shaping public policy. The study of public policy helps us to understand the social ills of the subject under study. Policies do more than effect change in societal conditions. They also hold people together to maintain orderliness in the State. Public policies of a democratic country are important devices and mechanisms for moving a social and economic system from the past to the future.

1.7 GLOSSARY

Classical liberalism: The ideological system that emphasises “individual liberty, and the ownership and acquisition of private property as a means to improve overall wealth and happiness and discourages social strife”.

Public interest: A term which is hard to define, but broadly it refers to needs of the public in whose name policy is made.

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1.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

- 1) Your answer should include the following points:
 - The Meaning, definitions and concept of Public Policy.
 - Theoretical and Scientific Reasons
 - Political and Administrative Reasons
 - Representing Powerful Approach for Improving Economic and Social System
 - A Tool for Shaping Future
- 2) Your answer should include the following points:
 - Idea of Policy: Like the idea of ‘public’ the idea of ‘policy’ is also not precisely defined. Policy denotes, among other things, ‘Guidance for action’. It may take the form of:
 - Authoritative decision;
 - Principle or a rule;
 - Purposive course of action;
 - Expression of considered judgement;
 - Action of government;
 - ‘Policy’ as a purposive course of action taken or adopted by those in power in pursuit of certain goals or objectives. It should be added here that public policies are the policies adopted and implemented by government bodies and officials.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

- 1) Your answer should include the following points:
 - Distributive Policies
 - Redistributive Policies
 - Regulatory Policies
- 2) Your answer should include the following points:
 - Conflict Policy Issues with examples
 - Bargaining Policy Issues with examples
 - Constituent Policy Issues with examples

UNIT 2 PUBLIC POLICY: MODELS*

Structure

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Systems Model for Policy Analysis
- 2.3 Institutional Model and Public Policy
- 2.4 Rational Policy - making Model
- 2.5 Incremental Model
 - 2.5.1 Two Models of Decision-making
 - 2.5.2 Features of Incremental Model
 - 2.5.3 Criticism and Conclusion
- 2.6 Elite Model of Policy Process
 - 2.6.1 Propositions and Implications of the Elite Model
 - 2.6.2 Criticism and Conclusion
- 2.7 Public Choice Model
 - 2.7.1 Introduction
 - 2.7.2 Major Contributors
 - 2.7.3 Critical Observations
- 2.8 Conclusion
- 2.9 Glossary
- 2.10 References
- 2.11 Answers to Check Your Progress Exercises

2.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this Unit, you should be able to:

- Understand the Systems model for policy analysis;
- Highlight the Institutional approach, which addresses the role that state and social institutions have in defining and shaping public policies;
- Discuss the Rationality model for policy-making;
- Describe Lindblom's Incremental approach to policy-making; and
- Examine the Political Public Policy approach.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Before we examine and discuss public policy from the perspective of models, it is good to know as to what we mean by model. In general terms, a model is a representation of a person or thing. When one is considering political systems or elitism in terms of public policy, one is abstracting from the real situation in an effort to simplify and identify significant aspects of public policy. In other words, in the field of public policy, models help to classify our ideas about public policy environment. They not only identify issues but also suggest explanations for public policy and its effects. In this Unit an attempt is made to examine public policy-making models which have been developed over the years.

* Contributed by Dr. R.K. Sapru, Professor of Public Administration (Retired), Panjab University, Chandigarh

2.2 SYSTEMS MODEL FOR POLICY ANALYSIS

The Policy-making process has been regarded by David Easton as a 'black box', which converts the demands of the society into policies. While analysing political systems David Easton (1965) argues that the political system is that part of the society, which is engaged in the authoritative allocation of values. Inputs are seen as the physical, social, economic and political products of the environment. They are received into the political system in the form of both demands and supports. Demands are the claims made on the political system by individuals and groups to alter some aspect(s) of public policy.

The supports of a political system consist of the rules, laws and customs that provide a basis for the existence of a political community and the authorities. Support is rendered when individuals or groups accept the decisions or laws. Supports are the symbolic or material inputs of a system (for example, obeying laws, paying taxes, or even respecting the national flag, etc.) that constitute the psychological and material resources of the system.

At the heart of the political system are the institutions and actors for policy-making. These include the chief executive, legislators, judges and bureaucrats. In the system's version they translate inputs into outputs. Outputs, then, are the authoritative value allocations of the political system, and these allocations constitute what is called public policy or policies. The system theory portrays public policy as an output of the political system. Thus, in brief, the systems model relies on information from feedback, inputs and outputs as being cyclical. Policy is originated, implemented, adjusted, and readjusted.

Limits of Systems Model

The systems model is a useful aid in understanding the policy-making process. However, its use is limited owing to several factors. It is argued that this input-output model appears to be too simplistic to serve as a useful aid to understanding the policy-making process. This model is accused of employing the value-laden techniques of welfare economics. Another shortcoming of the traditional input-output model is that it ignores the fragmentary nature of the 'black box'. Lineberry (1984) observes that political decision-makers are often constrained by economic factors in the environment in the political system. The Estonian model also ignores the fact that the policy-makers (including institutions) have considerable potential in influencing the environment within which they operate. Easton considers his model operating in a neutral structure, but critics argue that structural variations in the systems do have direct causal effects on public policy.

Further, it is argued that both the political and bureaucratic elite fashion mass opinion more than masses shape the leadership's views. Although it is acknowledged that the bureaucracy has become a powerful institution, and plays a critical role the bureaucracy in formulating policy, inputs by way of demands and supports tend to be equally important in a democratic context. Finally, it is stated that it is difficult to pinpoint the extent to which different inputs such as the demands & supports of the public, the influence from the environment and the values and perceptions of the policy makers (the political elites and the bureaucracy in particular) influence the outcomes, i.e., public policy.

On the whole the work of David Easton (1965), although not regarded as primarily 'public policy', has made a vital contribution to the establishment of policy approach in that it provided a systems model for policy analysis.

2.3 INSTITUTIONAL MODEL AND PUBLIC POLICY

Institutional model focuses on the government as an institution for policy analysis. It covers the realms of key government institutions – Parliament, Executive (including government departments) and Judiciary. In other words, a policy does not take the shape unless it is adopted and implemented by governmental institutions. The government institutions endow public policy with three distinct characteristics. Firstly, the government invests legal authority to policies. Secondly, application of a public policy is universal. Only public policies extend to all citizens in the state. Thirdly, public policy involves coercion. It is applied to the acts of government in backing up its decisions. A policy conveys the possibility for imposing penalties, through coercion, if necessary. Only the government can legally impose negative sanctions on violators of its policies. As such, there is a close tie-up between public policy and governmental institutions. The institutional approach to public policy, which depends on the interactions of those institutions created by the constitution, legislature or government, has gained significance.

In policy-making, different individuals and groups, such as, the Executive or Cabinet, the Prime Minister, Members of Parliament, bureaucrats, or leaders of interest groups exercise power. Each exercise of power constitutes one of the influences, thus becoming an input to the policy-making process, generally consisting of a series of related decisions often made under the influence of political elites and powerful groups. The institutional approach is also concerned with explaining how social groups and governmental institutions bring influence to bear on those authorised to take and implement legally binding decisions. Such decision-makers include those who hold office within the formal/constitutional system of rules and regulations, which give formal authority and power to them.

Institutionalism, with its focus on the legal and structural aspects of institutions, can be applied in policy analysis. According to Thomas Dye (2004), governmental institutions are structured pattern of behaviour of individuals and groups, which persist over a period of time. Traditionally, the focus of study was the description of governmental structures and institutions. The approach did not, however, devote adequate attention to the linkages between government structures and the content of public policy. Further, the institutional approach was not backed by any systematic enquiry about the impact of these institutional characteristics on public policy decisions. The study of linkage between government structures and policy outcomes, therefore, remained largely unanalysed and somewhat neglected.

Despite its narrow focus, the structural approach is not outdated. Government institutions and structures, in fact, have enormous influence on decision-making and the content of public policy. The institutional approach suggests that government institutions may be structured in such ways as to facilitate certain policy outcomes. These patterns may give an advantage to certain interests in society and withhold this advantage to others. Rules and institutional arrangements

are usually not neutral in their impact. In fact, they tend to favour some interests in society over others. Some individual groups may enjoy, therefore, greater power or access to government power under one set of structured patterns than under another set. In other words, institutional characteristics have an impact on policy outcomes. Under the institutional approach one can study the relationships between the institutional arrangements and the content of public policy. Therefore, specific policy issues can be examined in a systematic fashion with a focus on institutional arrangements. Carl J. Friedrich's *Constitutional Government and Democracy* (1941) is a representative work on the institutional approach.

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. However, it would not be right to assume that a particular change in institutional structure would automatically bring about changes in public policy. Without investigating the underlying relationship between structure and policy, it is difficult to assess the impact of institutional arrangements on public policies. In this context, Thomas Dye says, "both structure and policy are largely determined by environmental forces, and that tinkering with institutional arrangement will have little independent impact on public policy if underlying environmental forces – social, economic, and political – remain constant" (Dye, 1980).

2.4 RATIONAL POLICY-MAKING MODEL

The idea of 'rationality' has an important place in the study of policy and decision-making in the post-World War II era. Two sources are mainly responsible for this rational approach: (i) the idea of economic 'rationality' as it grew in economic theory, and (ii) the idea of 'bureaucratic', rationality, as advocated in sociological theories of organisation.

The concept of rationality, as it has been applied in public policy, has its roots in the construction of 'economic man', a 'calculating self-interested individual'. The Weberian model (formulated by Max Weber, a German Sociologist) of the rational imperative, or the choice of the most appropriate means to achieve the desired ends, has transformed the analytical approach to decision making studies. This approach emphasises that policy decisions involve a choice among policy alternatives on rational grounds. Rational policy-making is "to choose the one best option" (Dror, 1968). Thomas Dye equates rationality with efficiency. "A policy is rational when the difference between the values it achieves and the values it sacrifices is positive and higher than any other policy alternative". He further observes 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.

Conditions and Stages for Rational Analysis

Rational decision-making model is a "model of decision-making in which it is assumed that decision-makers have nearly all information about a problem, its causes, and its solutions at their disposal, whereupon a large number of alternatives can be weighted and the best one selected" (Birkland, 2011).

Thomas Dye prescribes a few requirements to policy-makers in selecting a rational policy. They must:

- i) know all the society's value preferences and their relative weights,
- ii) know all the policy alternatives available,
- iii) know all the consequences at each policy alternative,
- iv) calculate the ratio of benefits to costs for each policy alternative, and
- v) select the most efficient policy alternative" (Dye, 2004).

Rational policy-making is a very difficult exercise. It requires capacity to know the consequences of alternative policies, and the intelligence to calculate correctly the ratio of costs to benefits. Herbert Simon further notes, "although individuals are intendedly rational, their rationality is bounded by limited cognitive and emotional capacities". Rational policy-making, thus, requires making hard choices among policy alternatives. It entails a sequential approach of many stages before the most efficient policy alternative is selected.

Once a policy choice is selected, the rational policy-maker is required to monitor its implementation systematically to ensure the accuracy of the expectations and estimates. If necessary, the policy-maker may modify the policy or give it up altogether. This is called 'the feedback stage' of rational policy-making.

Constraints to Rationality

The concept of rationality is bandied about so much and so indiscriminately that it threatens to lose its value. It is more widely found in theory than in practice. Some of the important constraints to rational policy-making are:

- i) **Accomplishing Goals:** Rational policy-making is a very difficult exercise. The expectation that a rational policy will always emerge is limited. By the time the policy-maker recommends a rational policy, the problem in question may, at times, become so complex that the prescriptions become decisions that are made on the basis of other goals. It is also possible that the decision makers try to maximise their own rewards, such as power, status, money and prospect of re-election. Therefore, rational policy-making might turn out to be more an exercise than the actual realisation of a set a goals.
- ii) **Securing Optimisation:** The rational policy-making model is expected to produce optimal results. But in reality, it does not always happen. The public interest is considered to be more important than being merely the sum of individual interests in the policy. If air pollution control is a public interest, because all share in its benefit, then the strategy might require that every automobile sold is to be fitted with an expensive set of anti-pollution emission control devices, making it to cost more. Yet, few citizens are willing to pay more from their pockets to reduce automobile emissions. Thus, the motivation for various stakeholders in a policy to try to maximise net goal achievement is not always uniformly present. Further, policy makers in government merely try to satisfy certain demands. They do not strive to search until they find the one best way or the most efficient alternative.
- iii) **Conflict between Rational Choice and Need for Action:** There is often a conflict between the search for rational behaviour and the need for action. As already stated, policy-makers are not motivated to make decisions on the basis of rationality, but try instead to maximise their own rewards. Secondly, the time for a thorough analysis of impending legislation may be short. In an

emergency situation, action is sought immediately. There is also no consensus on the societal values. The prevalence of any conflicting values among specific groups and individuals make it difficult for the policy-maker to compare and weigh the available alternatives before taking a decision.

- iv) **Dilemma of Political Feasibility:** The dilemma of political feasibility also confronts every policy maker. The best decision may not be politically desirable. It may not be a vote-getter. Politicians too often resolve the dilemma of political feasibility by avoidance of conflict, a safe bet for them. Uncertainty about the consequences of different policy alternatives may also force politicians to stick to previous policies. Elected officials do not want to sacrifice their chances of re-election at the cost of rationality in policy-making.
- v) **Problem of Cost-Benefit Analysis:** It is difficult for the policy-makers to calculate the cost-benefit ratios accurately when many diverse social, economic, political and cultural values are at stake. Apart from these, policy-makers have personal needs, inhibitions and inadequacies, which render them incapable of assessing all possible alternatives to arrive at a rational decision.
- vi) **Segmented Nature of Bureaucracy:** Another important obstacle to rational policy-making is what Thomas Dye refers to as the segmented nature of policy-making in large bureaucracies, which “makes it difficult to coordinate decision-making so that the input of all of the various specialists is brought to bear at the point of decision.” Fragmentation of authority, satisfying personal goals, conflicting values, limited technology, uncertainty about the possible policy alternatives and consequences thereof, and other factors limit the capacity of bureaucracies and other public organisations to make rational policies.

The pursuit of a rational model by analysis would often be undemocratic. Denhardt observes that policy analysts typically apply technical solutions to the immediate problems. Under such circumstances, Denhardt notes, “technical concerns would displace political and ethical concerns as the basis for public decision-making, thereby transforming normative issues into technical problems”. For-example, on 7 July 2015 the National Green Tribunal banned all commercial activities including horse-riding, snow biking and paragliding at Rohtang, Solang and Marhi. It was not a wise decision. It stands to reason that the rational policy-making model sets up goals and procedures involving a very difficult exercise. It is not always an impossible exercise, at least in some policy arenas. Indeed, it is desirable in the public interest that policy makers attempt to maximise the outcomes. As such, this model remains one of critical importance for analytic purposes as it also helps to identify the constraints to rationality.

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) Outline the characteristics of the institutional approach to policy-making and point out its shortcomings.

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- 2) Critically examine the policy-making models and suggest best suitable model/ models for a democratic country.

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2.5 INCREMENTAL MODEL

Charles Lindblom (1917- 2018) is a critic of the traditional rationality model. In criticising the rational model as advocated by Simon and others, Lindblom rejected the idea that decision-making was essentially something which was about defining goals, selecting alternatives and comparing alternatives. Lindblom wanted to show that rational decision-making was simply “not workable for complex policy questions”. To Lindblom, constraints of time, intelligence, cost and politics prevent policy-makers to identify societal goals and their consequences. He drew the distinction between Herbert Simon’s concept of comprehensive (or root) rationality and his own idea of ‘successive limited comparisons’ (or branch decision-making).

2.5.1 Two Models of Decision-Making

The incremental approach (branch method) of decision-making involves a process of “continually building out from the current situation, step-by-step and by small degrees”. Noted below is a detailed comparison of the Rational and Incremental approaches:

Rational Approach (Root)	Incremental Approach (Branch)
(i) Identification of societal values or goals is necessary to empirical analysis of alternative policies.	Selection of values or goals and empirical analysis of the needed action are interlinked.
(ii) Policy-making is approached through means-ends analysis.	Means-ends analysis is often inappropriate.
(iii) The test of a ‘good policy’ is that it is a means to an agreed end.	The test of a ‘good policy’ is that various analysts find themselves directly agreeing on a policy.
(iv) Analysis is comprehensive involving every relevant factor.	Analysis is limited.
(v) Theory is often heavily relied upon	Successive limited comparison reduces dependence on theory.

Source: Lindblom, 1959.

In contrast, the ‘root’ approach as favoured by the policy analysts was to start from “fundamentals anew each time, building on the past only as experience embodied in a theory, and always prepared to start from the ground up”. According to Lindblom, the method of “successive limited comparison” is both more relevant and more realistic in a situation of “bounded rationality”. To Simon’s problem, Lindblom’s answer is that we do not need to search out new techniques; we need to be more appreciative of the benefits of ‘non-comprehensive analysis’.

Lindblom calls the rational comprehensive method of decision making the ‘root’ method, because decisions start from the “root” of the issue or problem. Incrementalism is the “branch,” he argues, because it uses and builds on what is already known, without relying on reanalysing everything about what is currently being done. In this way, the incremental method allows the decision maker to take a fair number of shortcuts: it eliminates the need to explicitly separate means from ends, to pick the analytically “best” policy, and to rely heavily on theories that the decision maker may have neither the time nor the inclination to use.

2.5.2 Features of Incremental Model

The following features characterise the decision-making in terms of ‘muddling through’. First, it proceeds through a succession of incremental changes, often to the existing policies because of the uncertainty about the consequence of new or different policies. Second, it involves mutual adjustment and negotiation. The test of a good decision is agreement rather than goal achievement. Agreement tends to be easier in policy-making when the items in dispute increase or decrease in budgets, or modifications to existing programmes. Thus incrementalism is significant in reducing political-tension and maintaining stability. Third, incremental approach involves trial and error method. It is superior to a “futile attempt at superhuman comprehensiveness”. Human beings rarely act to maximise all their values; on the contrary, they act to satisfy particular demands. They seldom search for the “one best way”, but instead search to find “a way that will work”. In his subsequent writings Lindblom develops his theory further. In this, he notes that there are three main forms to incremental analysis: (i) Simple incremental analysis, (ii) Strategic analysis, and (iii) Disjointed incrementalism.

- i) **Simple Incremental Analysis:** It is a form of analysis in which only those alternative policies which are marginally different to the existing policy are analysed.
- ii) **Strategic Analysis:** Lindblom suggests reliance on “informed thoughtful” use of methods to “simplify problems” so as to make better choices. These methods include: “trial and error learning; systems analysis; operations research; management by objectives; programme evaluation and review technique”.
- iii) **Disjointed Incrementalism:** It is an analytical strategy which involves “simplifying and focussing” on problems by six methods: (i) the limitation of analysis for a few familiar alternatives; (ii) intertwining values and policy goals with empirical analysis of problems; (iii) focussing on ills to be remedied rather than on goals to be sought; (iv) trial-and-error learning; (v) analysing a limited number of options and their consequences; (vi) fragmenting of analytical work to many partisan participations in policy-making.

2.5.3 Criticism and Conclusion

Since 1959, when Lindblom advocated incremental decision-making, there had been shifts in his arguments. He began as a pluralist, but two decades later, he attacks the idea of pluralism, offers a radical critique of the business, and believes that there is a need for drastic radical change in a whole range of policy areas, and that the whole world is in dire need of more than simply incremental change. Such statements contradict his earlier idea of the impossibility of drastic change. Lindblom also turned out to be a critic of incrementalism as a 'political ideology'. He has almost discarded many of his earlier ideas about the policy-making process.

Both Y. Dror and A. Etzioni, are not convinced that incremental model is either realistic or a satisfactory normative account of decision-making. To Dror, this model is profoundly conservative and is suitable in those situations where policy is deemed to be working or is satisfactory where problems are quite stable over time, and where there are resources available.

Taken as a whole, the central concern of Lindblom's work has been to explore the constraints that shape decision-making in the modern policy process. At best, he is a critique of Simon's rationality model. One should appreciate Lindblom's concern that the policy-making process can be improved and that we have to find ways for effective policy making.

2.6 ELITE MODEL OF POLICY PROCESS

In political science there is a widely shared view that the policy-making process is dominated by the most powerful elites. Elite theory of the policy process is based on the proposition that power is concentrated in the hands of a few elites. Policy-making, according to the elite theory, is a process which works to the advantage of these elites. The theory holds that in the real world there are those at the top with power and others at the bottom - the mass - without power. The theory also contends, that the elite whose members share common values and have more money, education and power, governs the masses who are apathetic and ill-informed about public policy. In an environment, which is characterised by apathy and information distortion, elites influence mass opinion on policy issues more than masses influence elite opinion. In this framework policy flows downward from the elite to the mass. Thus, public policy is viewed as "the preferences and values of governing elite". Public officials and administrators merely implement the policies decided on by the elites

The theory has its origins in the work of Mosca and Pareto. They argued that, contrary to Marx, elitism is inevitable and that classless society is a myth. Later Mosca modified his view and argued that democracy could be viewed as a form of politics in which elites compete for the people's vote in order to secure legitimacy for the elite rule. Drawing upon Mosca's ideas, Robert Michels, in a study of political parties, argued that there was an iron law of oligarchy which operated in organisations (Michels, 1915). Joseph Schumpeter observed that elitism would be legitimated in a democracy by a political market composed of competing parties and rival elites. To the development of the elite theory, Lasswell's contribution is significant. He took the view that: "the study of politics is the study of influence and the influential.... The influential are those who get

the most of what there is to get... Those who get the most are elite, the rest are mass” (Lasswell, 1936).

2.6.1 Propositions and Implications of the Elite Model

A brief summary of the propositions of the elite theory is as follows:

- 1) Society is divided into (1) the elites who govern and have the power to decide on public policy, and (2) the masses who are governed and do not have power to decide on public policy.
- 2) Elites share common values and have money, education and power whereas the masses are apathetic and ill-informed. Elite members are drawn disproportionately from the higher socio-economic strata of the society.
- 3) Public policy does not reflect the demands of masses, but rather the preferences and values of governing elite.
- 4) The bases of elites, who share consensus on the basic values of the social system, are the sanctity of private property, limited government and individual liberty.
- 5) Elites shape mass opinion on policy issues more than masses shape elite opinion.
- 6) Elite theory recognises the possibility of elite-mass conflict.

2.6.2 Criticism and Conclusion

First, decision-making, according to the elite theory, is a process which works to the advantage of elites in whom power is concentrated. As such, public policy seldom reflects the demands of the masses as it does of the elite. Therefore, changes in public policy occur as a result of redefinitions by elites of their own values and choices. Because elite share a consensus in preserving the social system, changes in the public policy are brought about through reforms (incremental in nature) when events threaten the system. The stability of the system, therefore, depends on elites sharing in a consensus about fundamental values underlying the system, and only policy alternatives that fall within the shared consensus would be given serious consideration.

The values of elites may be oriented towards the welfare of the public. The welfare of the masses may be an important element in elite decision-making, but the responsibility for the welfare rests on the shoulders of elites rather than masses.

Second, elite theory purports that masses are apathetic and ill-informed about public policy, and that elites manipulate mass opinion and sentiments on policy flows downward to the disadvantage of the mass. Therefore, policy questions are seldom decided by the masses through popular elections or through the presentation of policy options by political parties. For the most part, elections and political parties play symbolic roles. Elitism views the masses as largely apathetic having at best an indirect influence over the policy-making process of elites.

2.7 PUBLIC CHOICE MODEL

2.7.1 Introduction

Public choice and political economy are terms coined by scholars that became popular in the literature of social sciences since the early 1960s. It has its base in the rational choice theory. It is oriented towards an understanding of the realm of public choice, that is, politics and bureaucracy. D Mueller defines the public choice approach as "... simply the application of economics to political science. The subject-matter of public choice is the same as that of political science... The methodology of public choice is that of economics, however (Muller, 1979).

The origins of this approach may be found in the works of Gordon Tullock, Anthony Downs and William Niskanen. Public choice theory rejects the traditional idea of policy as the search for public welfare. Like private entrepreneurs, who are intent upon maximising profits, politicians are guided by private concerns to the same extent in their roles in public policy. A maximisation of politician's objectives results in the selection of those policies that tend to meet citizen's expectations. The intent of the politicians is to maximise the likelihood of winning elections. In the political business cycle model, it predicts that the politicians in governments will attempt to manipulate and stimulate the economy before an election and deflate the economy after the election. Often the government spending on programmes would be huge, highly attractive and visible to the people before an election, only to impose more taxes or bring down deficits after the election.

2.7.2 Major Contributors

Anthony Downs, in his book *Inside Bureaucracy*, assumes that decision-making in bureaucracies is based on the pursuit of self-interest. Downs argues that the motivations of individual officials are diverse such as power, money, income, prestige, personality, loyalty, security, etc. Different types of bureaucrats may have different motivations and approaches, but they have a common goal - maximisation of self-interest. One common result is increase in the size of their respective Departments.

William Niskanen, in his book, *Bureaucracy and Representative Government*, observes that those who work in bureaucracies seek to maximise their budgets and the size of the Departments or offices under their control. He contends that it is only by increasing the budget that they can maximise their self-interest. He also argues that like markets the Departments allocate resources and make decisions.

Buchanan, another Public Choice theorist, notes, instead of committing themselves distributional ideals, persons in the decision making system "...are likely to seek to further their own well-defined interests". Gordon Tullock's work is considered to be amongst the earliest contributions to the Public Choice approach. For him the study of politics, policy-planning and bureaucracy should be based on the same assumptions which might be used to explain the behaviour of firms, business people and consumers in a market economy. The following set of generalisations emerges from Tullock's studies:

- i) Political parties contesting elections make excessive promises to get votes.
- ii) Politicians in power maximise the likelihood of winning elections through manipulating the economy.
- iii) The power of bureaucracy has increased by serving itself rather than the public interest.
- iv) The political processes of liberal democracy are failing to supervise and control the growth of political and bureaucratic power.

These propositions emphasise the importance of market forces in exercising control over political and bureaucratic power. Tullock, in common with other advocates of public choice theory, recommended the introduction of competition into bureaucracy through contracting-out, privatisation and increasing competition between government departments by rewarding performance.

2.7.3 Critical Observations

There is a lot of criticism about the basic assumptions on which public choice models are built. Public choice models score low on moral attractiveness as public policy is modified as being only rent-seeking behaviour from special interest groups.

The main weakness of these models lies in the lack of empirical validation as the evidence is mixed. The view that bureaucratic decision-making is prompted by the pursuit of self-interest which can only find expression in increased budgets and bigger bureaux or Departments needs empirical support. Moreover, we know little about the utility of personnel who work in government offices in contrast to those who work in profit maximising firms. The size of bureaux or Department was also questioned. The experience of the 1990s in many developed and developing countries was that there was no reduction in the number of civil servants when a number of activities were transferred from government bureaucracy to private agencies. It is, therefore, argued that the public choice approach scores low on objectivity as it is primarily oriented towards market values.

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) Differentiate Lindblom’s incremental approach from comprehensive Rationality.

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- 2) Critically examine Elite Model of the Policy Process.

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2.8 CONCLUSION

The Unit dealt with the various approaches and models of public policy. It emphasises public policy as an important area of politics and public management. As a separate approach it is useful in studying the interaction between government that produces policies, and its people for whom the policies are intended. There are now two public policy approaches, each with its own methods and emphases. The first is labelled as 'Policy Analysis'; the second, 'Political Public Policy'.

From a policy analysis perspective, Putt and Springer (1989) argue that the function of policy research is to facilitate the analysis of public policy process by providing accurate and useful decision-related information. The skills required to produce information, which is technically sound and useful, lie at the heart of the policy research process, regardless of the specific methodology employed. Attempting to bring modern science and technology to bear on societal problems, policy analysis searches for appropriate methods and techniques that help the policy-makers to choose the most advantageous action.

There is another approach (Lynn) that emphasises on political interaction from which policy is derived. Here, it is rather more difficult to separate public policy from the political process and sometimes it becomes difficult to analyse whether a particular study is one of public policy or politics. Public Policy, in this sense, is seen to be different from the traditional model of public administration. Public Policy is, therefore, more 'political' than 'public administration'. It is an effort to apply the methods of political analysis to policy areas (for example health, education, and environment). But this approach cannot escape from an analysis of the processes inside the bureaucracy. As such, it is also related to public administration. The policy analysts use statistical methods and models of outcomes of public policy. Whatever may be, both public policy and policy analysis remain useful in bringing attention to what governments do, in contrast to the public administration theorist's concern with how they operate, and in applying empirical methods to aid policy-making. Public policy-making, as distinct from its study, now seems to be a mixture of both of these perspectives.

2.9 GLOSSARY

Black Box: It is a model of systems analysis popularised by David Easton (1965). It is suggested that within the black box the processing of inputs takes place to produce outputs/outcomes. David Easton, like other positivist thinkers, assumes and believes that there is a definable cause and effect relationship between supports, demands, and outputs. However, critics argue that the approach is too mechanical and rigid.

Incrementalism: A model of decision-making in which policy change is accomplished through small, incremental steps that allow decision makers to adjust policies as they learn from their successes and failures.

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2.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

- 1) Your answer should include the following points:
 - Definition of institutional approach
 - Perspective of institutional approach
 - It's characteristics
- 2) Your answer should include the following points:
 - Systems model
 - Rational policy making model
 - Best suitable Model

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

- 1) Your answer should include the following points:
 - A brief about Incremental Approach
 - Differences between Incremental and Rational Approach (both root and branch)
- 2) Your answer should include the following points:
 - Brief about elite model
 - Propositions and implications

UNIT 3 PUBLIC POLICY PROCESS IN INDIA: FORMULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION*

Structure

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Stages in the Policy Process
 - 3.2.1 Identifying Underlying Problem
 - 3.2.2 Determining Policy Alternatives
 - 3.2.3 Forecasting and Evaluating Alternatives
 - 3.2.4 Policy Selection
 - 3.2.5 Policy Implementation (Policy Action)
 - 3.2.6 Policy Monitoring
 - 3.2.7 Policy Outcomes
 - 3.2.8 Policy Evaluation
 - 3.2.9 Design of Evaluation
- 3.3 Formulation of Public Policy
 - 3.3.1 Constitutional Framework for Policy-making
 - 3.3.2 Institutional Factors
 - 3.3.3 Non-governmental Institutions
- 3.4 Policy Implementation
 - 3.4.1 Importance and Meaning
 - 3.4.2 Implementers
 - 3.4.3 Conditions for Successful Implementation
- 3.5 Policy-making Process in India
- 3.6 Conclusion
- 3.7 Glossary
- 3.8 References
- 3.9 Answers to Check Your Progress Exercises

3.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this Unit, you should be able to:

- Understand the policy process as a system;
- Describe the policy-making process in India;
- Discuss the problems of implementation of public policy; and
- Highlight issues related to policy formulation.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Policy-making is a continuing process. It does not come to an end once a policy is approved or adopted. As Anderson observes: “Policy is being made as it is being administered and administered as it is being made” (Anderson, 1975). Yet,

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each stage or phase of the policy process -formulation, implementation, evaluation-differs from the other.

The policy process consists of stages of policy activity such as formulation, implementation and evaluation. Birkland observes that ‘policy process’ is a “system that translates policy ideas into formulation, implementation, evaluation actual policies that are implemented and have positive effects” (Birkland, 2011). For example, the main characteristics of the Eastonian (systems) model is that of viewing policy process in terms of received inputs (demand, support), in the form of flows from the environment, mediated through input channels (interest groups, media); demands within the political system (with inputs) and their conversion into policy outputs.

3.2 STAGES IN THE POLICY PROCESS

Thomas Dye (2004) sets out the following stages in his analysis of the policy process:

- 1) Problem Identification: The identification of policy problems through demands for government action.
- 2) Agenda Setting: Focusing the attention of the mass media and public officials on specific public problems as a prelude to decision making.
- 3) Policy Formulation: The development of policy proposals by interest groups, officers of the chief executive’s office, committees of the legislature, think tanks, etc.
- 4) Policy Legitimation: The selection and enactment of policies through political actions by the executive, the legislature, and the courts.
- 5) Policy Implementation: The implementation of policies through organised bureaucracies, public expenditures, and the activities of executive agencies.
- 6) Policy Evaluation: The evaluation of policies by government agencies themselves, outside consultants, the press, and the public.

Hogwood and Gunn (Policy Analysis for the Real World, 1984) have identified nine important stages in the policy process: deciding to decide (agenda setting), deciding how to decide (issue filtration), issue definition, forecasting, setting objectives and priorities, options analysis, policy implementation, monitoring and control, evaluation and review and policy maintenance, succession and termination.

The policy cycle of May and Wildavsky (1978) includes agenda-setting, issue analysis, implementation, evaluation and termination. Similarly, James Anderson has also dealt with description of the policy process. His model of the policy process has five stages: (i) problem identification, and agenda formulation (ii) formulation, (iii) adoption, (iv) implementation, and (v) evaluation (Anderson, 1984).

There are basic linkages in a policy framework for the systematic analysis of information and its use in a policy-related context. The basis to the framework is information for policy analysis, which is derived from system or programme performance in terms of interaction among:

- inputs, which indicate needs and demands
- processes concerning the provision of services for long-term care
- outputs in terms of the use of services and cost of care
- outcomes, which identify the end results of certain courses of action.

For example, in the context of the National Health Policy (2017), the inputs (in terms of need and demands) comprise health, illness, and the quality of life, expressed in physical, psychological, social, and environmental terms. Needs are the conditions that call for action. They are among the most important predictors of utilisation, and are mostly described in terms of diagnosis, functional limitation, perceived illness, symptoms, or poor health status. On the other hand, demands are expressed as desires in relation to the services sought, whether they are needed or not. Other inputs include resources, such as manpower (doctors, nurses, and para-medical staff) hospitals, primary health centres, medical equipment and facilities, medicine, and performance standards.

On the process linkage, it is concerned with the delivery of services to meet the needs and demands of clients and professionals. Services are described in such terms as their types, delivery, management and controls of cost and quality. Other services include supports such as legal aid, income support, consumer education, and professional development. The outputs of service related programmes are described in terms of the use of those services, the costs and the quality of care. Finally, the outcomes are the responses to the services expressed in terms of the levels of well-being and health, and client and professional satisfaction that are attained as a result. The foregoing analytical framework facilitates programme evaluation, which is expected to lead to rational policies and decisions about health services. In the next section, we will describe the various stages in policy process.

3.2.1 Identifying Underlying Problem

For an analytic approach, the first step is to identify whether and why there is a problem at all. Defining the problem involves moving from mundane descriptions to a more abstract, conceptual plane. Here, an attempt is made to diagnose the form of market failure that is confronted. For example, an environmentalist who is investigating alternative pollution control measures for the Ganges will find that the water is being polluted by the dumping of industrial wastes and untreated sewage into the river. Having identified the context of the problem, the next step is to determine what objectives are to be achieved in tackling the issue. Too often, we lose sight of the basic objectives. Paying careful attention to the objectives is, therefore, important. For example, the provision of the services of doctors is merely a means to the end of improving people's health.

3.2.2 Determining Policy Alternatives

The next step is to determine alternative courses of action. Government intervention can take any form. It is important to determine which kind of intervention is most positive in a given situation.

In the case of pollution of the Ganges, consider the following possibilities:

- i) Abutters in some catchments or adjoining areas of the river might be put under an obligation by the government to clean water. The government would then have the right to sue a polluter.

- ii) The government may require the industrialists concerned, and urban dwellers concerned to stop dumping waste and untreated sewage into the river. It may otherwise impose restrictions on them on the quantity of dumping. The government may permit polluters to purchase rights to discharge a certain amount of pollutants. Polluters may be required to pay effluent charges and to install pollution control devices.
- iii) The state government or the local authority itself can directly undertake the work of cleaning and removing the pollutants that others dump.

These are some of the alternatives for pollution control. As difficulties are identified and additional information becomes available, refinement of alternative courses of action will continue throughout the analysis. Determining alternatives for policy choice generally requires expertise or special knowledge in the relevant areas.

3.2.3 Forecasting and Evaluating Alternatives

Having identified the underlying problem and having determined the alternatives for policy choice, the policy analyst evaluates the consequences of each of the alternatives. For this, he will turn to a relevant model for forecasting consequences. In the case of the pollution control problem, the models needed would be far more complex. It is necessary here to predict all the effects of the proposed policies, not just the economic effects desired by the decision-maker.

If the consequences of an alternative course of action are uncertain, and especially if the possible outcomes differ widely from one another, the analyst may wish to develop a decision tree and evaluate the probability of each outcome. Very often it is difficult to have a rational policy choice unless the relative merits of alternative options are analysed systematically. The costs involved in regulation and administration needs to be evaluated. Evaluation of the outcomes is of great importance as it reminds us to look carefully at the cost-benefit analysis of a particular policy choice.

3.2.4 Policy Selection

The next step in policy analysis relates to making the preferred choice (course of action). The situation may be so simple for the policy-maker that he can simply look at the consequences predicted for each alternative and select the one that is best. In contrast, it may be so complex that the policy analyst will have to set out the order of preferences among the various possible outcomes, that is, in terms of how different sets of stakeholders might respond to the possible choices and their outcomes.

It has been observed that countless policy studies have led nowhere. Sometimes the fault is attributed to the public decision-makers who do not take advantage of readily accessible data. Too often, it is the analysts themselves who have to share a major portion of the blame when things go wrong. But, by enhancing the capability of the analyst to forecast the consequences of the alternative courses of actions, and providing a framework for evaluating those consequences, the techniques of policy analysis lead to better decisions and policies.

3.2.5 Policy Implementation (Policy Action)

In the final analysis, the success of public administration can be measured only in relation to the implementation of policies. Policy implementation is of critical importance to the success of government. However good the political system, however noble the goals, however sound the organisational system, no policies can succeed if the implementation is poor.

In its most general form, implementation is a phase between a policy statement and operation. It seeks to determine whether an organisation is able to carry out and achieve the stated objectives of its policies. The exercise involves developing and pursuing a strategy of organisation and management to ensure that the policy process is completed with the minimum of delays, cost overruns and problems. More specifically, the task of implementation is to form a bridge that allows the objectives of public policies to be achieved as outcomes of governmental activity. It involves the creation of a policy delivery system in which specific mechanisms are designed and pursued in the hope of reaching particular ends.

Constraints in Policy Implementation

Policies can become very difficult to implement if the implementers are not given sufficient autonomy and flexibility in carrying out their tasks. Political pressures in a democratic context constitute a major constraint. A third constraint is that the bureaucracy does not have the necessary professional skills needed for the implementation of the policies. Lack of resources, such as personnel, financial and technical, also becomes a hindrance in the implementation of public policy. Another problem in policy implementation might arise due to lack of response from the target groups. Sometimes, people do not evince adequate interest in the implementation of a programme; because they may not be aware of the objectives and goals of a programme. Lack of people's participation often upsets implementation.

3.2.6 Policy Monitoring

Monitoring is essentially a subset of the implementation process. It is an activity which occurs in the course of implementing a policy or programme. It is in the process of monitoring that the implementer actually gets to begin seeing the results of policy. The objective of policy monitoring is to ensure through the policy implementation process that resource inputs are used as efficiently as possible to yield intended results. The standards which are used for both efficiency of resource utilisation and effectiveness of policy implementation are inherent in the policy-making process. The monitor has to be able to appraise resource use, technical activities and policy implementation results with an amount of detail which permits him to make changes or corrections when necessary.

An effective monitoring of public policies aids in cost reduction, time saving and effective resource utilisation. The key issue in monitoring is to create an information system that enables policy makers and policy implementers to make timely decisions and policies. Therefore, it is important that monitoring and control processes should be given due importance and be designed properly.

One of the serious problems in monitoring relates to poor design of the implementing system. Second, time is a constraint for policy monitoring. Too

often, the implementing staff feels so pressed to achieve results that they take shortcuts and avoid monitoring and control. Third, a common constraint for the policy implementation manager is the shortage of corrective actions, which would be applied when the programme is found to be deviating in some respect from projected performance. Fourth, a pervasive obstacle to policy monitoring is ignorance about its role and methods. This is often due to lack of requisite skills on the part of the key functionaries.

3.2.7 Policy Outcomes

The next stage in the policy cycle is the policy outcomes. They are different from outputs. Policy outputs are the actual decisions of the implementers. The concept of outcomes lays stress on what actually happens to the target groups intended to be affected by the policy. If the intended changes on target groups do not occur, something is wrong. State housing schemes for the poor may be used to illustrate this point. Although one can find the fulfilment of targets, including the physical presence of houses, it was observed that in a majority of the instances the beneficiaries chose not to occupy them because they were not to their liking in terms of the size, ambience or quality of construction or some other deficiencies. The policy outputs were achieved, but not the outcomes.

3.2.8 Policy Evaluation

The final stage of the policy process, in the sequential pattern of activities, is the evaluation of policy. Evaluation is concerned with what happens, once a policy has been put into effect. It is an assessment of the overall effectiveness of a programme in meeting its objectives, or assessment of the relative effectiveness of programmes in meeting the expected objectives.

Evaluation performs several functions in policy analysis. In the first place, it provides reliable information about policy performance. It measures the impact of policies on society. It reveals the extent to which particular goals have been achieved (for example, increase in the life expectancy at birth). It also helps us to understand the degree to which policy issues have been resolved. Secondly, evaluation helps clarify the values that underline the selection of goals and objectives. Thirdly, evaluation may result in efforts to restructure policy problems. It may also contribute to the emergence of new goals and potential solutions. Evaluation during the implementation process of a policy might suggest its termination of the political together. In short, evaluation is primarily an effort to analyse policy outcomes in terms of the set objectives. It is, therefore, helpful in bringing out the utility of the policies under consideration.

3.2.9 Design of Evaluation

Evaluating a public programme involves the listing of the goals of the programme, measuring the degree to which these goals have been achieved, and finally, suggesting changes that might bring the performance of the organisation more in line with the intended purposes of the programme. Evaluation has a sensitive side of it. It may sometimes become a point of conflict or reinforce pre-existing conflicts. Negative evaluation of the performance of a public programme may result in its termination. The content of an evaluation, the goals that are contained in it, and even the organisation performing the functions, all of them will affect the final assessment. Therefore, there is a need for a careful design of evaluation

work by competent persons. This requires adequate information feedback, resources and political will.

3.3 FORMULATION OF PUBLIC POLICY

3.3.1 Constitutional Framework for Policy-Making

Policy-making in India is shaped within the framework of the constitutional system, of which four features stand out most prominently: democratic and sovereign republic, parliamentary system, the federal character of the Constitution and a broad socio-economic philosophy - reflected especially in the preamble, the chapters on Fundamental Rights and the Directive Principles of the state policy.

3.3.2 Institutional Factors

In addition to these four constitutional factors there are other factors that govern policy-making in India.

Legislature

Parliament in India is the supreme public policy-making body. It reigns supreme because the council of ministers headed by the Prime Minister is dependent upon the support of a parliamentary majority to remain in force. It enacts laws which will bring the policies into effect. It also legitimises the policy decisions of the government.

In reality, however, it does not reign supreme. It does not determine policies except in a formal sense. It influences public policies through general discussions and debates. Most of the legislation in India is prepared within the executive and introduced in the legislature by the minister concerned. The executive is assured of a legislative majority for the policy proposals it presents.

Executive

It is the constitutional task of the executive to decide the policies which are to be submitted to Parliament. The executive at the Union level in India consists of the President of India, the Council of Ministers and the machinery of government. The main bodies engaged in policy formulation in the executive are:

- i) **Cabinet:** The real executive is the Council of Ministers consisting of the Prime Minister, cabinet ministers, ministers of state and the deputy ministers. It is well-known that the Council itself hardly meets, and all the policy functions are performed by the Cabinet.
- ii) **The Prime Minister:** Within the Council of Ministers in general and the cabinet in particular, the Prime Minister enjoys a special position in the realm of policy-making. The Prime Minister is expected to exercise control over the cabinet decision-making process.
- iii) **Secretariat-Department and Ministry:** The secretariat is an administrative organisation to assist the government in the discharge of its executive and legislative responsibilities. It is a complex of departments and ministries whose administrative heads are known as secretaries and whose political

heads are the ministers. The secretary acts as the chief adviser to the minister. He assists the minister(s) in the formulation of public policies. As policies can be framed only on the basis of availability and adequacy of data, the secretariat makes relevant information available to the minister, thus helping him to formulate policies.

Judiciary

The judiciary in India also plays a constructive role in shaping and influencing public policies in two ways: a) by its power of judicial review, and b) judicial decisions.

The Constitution empowers the Supreme Court, and High Courts at the state levels to exercise a judicial review of legislation. Judicial review is the power of the courts to determine the constitutionality of actions of the legislature and the executive. They are not only specifying the government's limits with regard to certain actions, but also stating what it must do to promote public interest. Besides, the higher judiciary is also exercising its influence through its decisions in Public Interest Litigation cases.

3.3.3 Non-Governmental Institutions

Some non-governmental organisations such as political parties, pressure groups, media and citizenry are also informal participants in the policy process. Their views and influence are of critical value to the policy-making process.

Political Parties and Pressure Groups

The pressure exerted by pressure groups and political parties is an important factor in the making of policies. The political parties provide impetus to policies through their election manifestoes, and by enlisting support at the time of elections. Pressure groups strive to influence the decisions of the government in manifold ways. Often, these groups are found to have conflicting values on a particular policy issue. Obviously, well-organised and active pressure groups have more influence than groups whose members are poorly organised and inarticulate.

The Individual Citizen and the Media

The people initiate the process of legislation and policy-making by voting for candidates with specific policy preferences. A democratic government is supposed to reflect the wishes of the people. Yet, in reality citizen's participation in policy-making is very negligible. Acting alone, the individual citizen is rarely a significant political force. The media can also influence public opinion in a situation. Media influence, however, depends upon the level of responsiveness from the government.

External Agencies Influencing Policy

External agencies and non-state actors are an important source in the initiation of new public policies or modification of pre-existing policies, especially in Third World countries like India. They include agencies such as the United Nations and its allied agencies (WHO, ILO, UNEP, UNDP, etc.) the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and other multilateral agencies is of critical importance in shaping policy outcomes.

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) Explain major stages in a policy cycle.

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2) Bring to light major constitutional factors governing policy-making.

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3.4 POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

3.4.1 Importance and Meaning

In the final analysis, the success of public administration for development can be measured only in relation to the implementation of policies. Implementation determines the extent to which an organisation is able to carry out and achieve the stated objectives. It involves developing and pursuing a strategy to ensure that the policy process is completed with the minimum of delays, costs and problems. Implementation involves the “creation of a policy delivery system in which specific mechanisms are designed and pursued in the hope of reaching particular ends”. Thus, public policies in the form of statement of goals and objectives are put into action-programmes that aim to realise the ends stated in the policy.

Putting policy into effect involves not the end of policy-making, but a continuation of policy-making by other means. At the minimum, implementation requires:

- 1) adequate personnel and the financial resources to implement the policy;
- 2) the administrative capability to achieve the desired policy goals; and
- 3) support from the legislative, executive and judicial wings of the government for the successful implementation of policy.

3.4.2 Implementers

Public policies in India, as in other countries, are implemented by a complex system of administrative organisations and agencies. The main agency which implements government activities and public policies is the bureaucracy. This is

an important institution which performs most of the day-to-day work of government. It is the bureaucracy which controls the personnel, money and other resources of the government, and has legal authority for their deployment. Since so much power and control over implementation is held by the bureaucracy the legislature, the chief executive and judiciary set limits to its discretion and indirectly control its excesses, if any. Though discretion and delegation are inevitable in a complex policy apparatus specific strategies exist to exercise control over bureaucracy's operations if things go wrong. In the process the legislature and the judiciary tend to participate in policy implementation.

3.4.3 Conditions for Successful Implementation

Implementation is seen varying along a continuum ranging from most successful to failure. Successful implementation involves many operations and procedures as well as time and resources. Sabatier and Mazmanian (1979) identify five conditions for effective policy implementation. These are:

- 1) The programme is based on sound assumptions relating changes in target group behaviour in consonance with the programme objectives.
- 2) Unambiguous policy directives and structures of the implementation process to enable target groups to maximise their performance.
- 3) The leaders of the implementation agencies possess substantial managerial and political skill and are committed to statutory goals.
- 4) The programme is actively supported by organised groups and by a few key legislators (or the chief executive) throughout the implementation process, with the judiciary being neutral or supportive.
- 5) The relative priority of statutory objectives is not significantly undermined over time by the emergence of conflicting public policies or by change in relevant socio-economic conditions.

Policy-making does not end once a decision is reached. The implementation of a decision is just as important as the policy itself. No policy formulator can assume that decisions will automatically be implemented as envisioned. Policy implementation requires a wide variety of actions, including,

- a) issuing policy directives that are clear and consistent;
- b) creating organisational units and assigning personnel with the information and authority necessary to administer the policies;
- c) coordinating personnel resources and expenditures to ensure benefit to target groups; and
- d) evaluating implemental actions of the personnel.

None of these steps is easy. The implementation of policy thus involves not the end of policy-making, but a continuation of policy-making by other means.

3.5 POLICY-MAKING PROCESS IN INDIA

Policy-making is a vital function at all levels of government in India. For the conduct of government business, certain rules have been framed under Article

77(3) of the Constitution. The Rules of Business govern the procedure for decision-making and within the ambit of these rules, policy decisions are taken by the Council of Ministers, particularly by the cabinet. But nowhere in the rules does there seem to be any distinction drawn between those decisions which are concerned with policy and those that are not. Policy and administration are intimately related and are an integral part of executive government. Indeed, it may be said that some important decisions on policy are often taken informally. The Prime Minister or a particular colleague, if he is confident of being able to carry a particular policy through, may announce a decision, either in parliament or in public. However, this is not frequent, especially in a coalition government.

The cabinet makes use of the committee system to facilitate decision making in specific areas. Depending upon the membership of any cabinet committee, its decision is either final on behalf of the government, or its decision may be placed before the full cabinet committee for ratification. A vast number of decisions are, of course, taken by individual ministers within the ambit of the rules for the business of the government and these are considered as authoritative decisions of the government. It often depends upon the personality and political image of a minister as to what matters he will decide, and what he will refer to the Prime Minister or to the cabinet. But the cabinet as a whole has to be persuaded of the rightness of such decisions. It is, therefore, observed that cabinet decisions are taken by the Prime Minister together with the minister concerned.

Technically speaking, most of the decisions on various matters involving policy issues of less importance are taken by the administrative secretaries or committee of secretaries some of which service a cabinet committee. The secretary to government in the particular ministry, senior civil servants of the ministry, heads of government departments and other officials at levels below the departmental heads are vested, in specific matters, with delegated authority. For the conduct of government business, there are large volumes of departmental rules of procedure and of guidance in the making of decisions in each particular agency. Where a matter is seen to be of concern or interest to a ministry or department other than the one in which it is being considered, it is incumbent upon the former to consult the affected ministry or department at the appropriate levels.

This is a somewhat sketchy account of the policy making process and decision-making procedures. In a complex system such as the Union government or that of a State government in India, a vast number of social, political, economic and administrative factors influence the choice of a policy. The election manifesto of the political party in power, interest groups, political parties, the administrative and judicial courts, the NITI Aayog, the Goods and Service Tax Council, a system of centre-state consultations, international agencies or other non-state actors and many other institutions have functions with a direct or indirect bearing on policy-making. Thus, within the constitutional ambit, these institutions or their decisions may exercise influence on government policy. The extent of influence may vary, depending upon a wide range of contextual factors. The policy-making process has, to a large extent, been regarded, by David Easton, as a 'black box' which converts demands into policies but whose structure is seen to be unknown and inaccessible to observation.

Policy-making is "an extremely complex analytical and political process to which there is no beginning or end and the boundaries of which are most uncertain" (Lindblom, 1968). Somehow, a complex set of forces engage in 'policy-making',

and taken as a whole, produce effects, called policies. The Parliament is empowered by the Indian Constitution with the function of representing the people in making policy through the passing of laws. The legislative process is, therefore, a fundamental mechanism for expressing public policy. At the same time, legislation permits more specific policy-making by the executive branch of the government within the legislative and constitutional framework, and the review functions of the judiciary.

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) Discuss major conditions identified for effective policy implementation.

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2) Describe the policy-making process in India.

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3.6 CONCLUSION

The use of the policy process can bring benefits to the analysis of public policy. Perhaps more attention could have been paid to implementation and policy evaluation. As with any set of headings, it can guide or suggest things to be looked at, in an orderly manner, when someone in government is faced with a particular policy problem. It is even possible that the results of the analysis, based on a policy cycle, may be better than without one. In methods according to the steps in analysis is more than a method or techniques. It is a way of thinking about problems, of organising data, and of presenting findings. Policy analysis develops their own styles and their personalised ways of orchestrating information. However, we believe beginning analysts can develop a set of basic skills and a general approach that will provide a foundation for analytical development”.

Policy-making in a federal system like ours often tends to be complex. The constitutional order sets the parameters of the policy-making process. The Constitution asserts that policy-making should be deliberative. Federalism makes sweeping national changes in policy decisions more arduous lengthy constitution and the maze of laws are mainly responsible for litigation as well as slowness with regard to policy making and implementation.

3.7 GLOSSARY

Problem: The term usually refers to an undesirable situation that according to people or interest groups can be alleviated by government action.

Policy analysis: Policy analysis as a data-based technique, which is put to use in estimating and measuring the consequences of public policies. Its purpose is two fold: it provides maximum information with minimal cost about i) the likely consequences of proposed policies; and ii) the actual consequences of the policies already adopted. The dictionary of Public Administration defines policy analysis as a systematic and data-based alternative to intuitive judgements about the effects of policy or policy options. It is also used for problem assessment and monitoring, as a 'before the fact' decision tool, and for evaluation.

Policy Implementation: Implementation is a process of interaction between the setting of goals and actions geared to achieve them. In simple words, it is putting policy into effect.

Public Interest: Broadly it refers to broader desires and needs of the public in whose name a policy is made.

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3.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

- 1) Your answer should include the following points:
 - Problem Identification
 - Agenda Setting
 - Policy Formulation
 - Policy Legitimation
 - Policy Implementation
 - Policy Evaluation
- 2) Your answer should include the following points:
 - Legislature
 - Executive
 - Judiciary

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

- 1) Your answer should include the following points:
 - Programme based on sound assumptions
 - Unambiguous policy directives
 - Substantial managerial and political skills of the implementers
 - Active support of organised groups
 - Relative priority of statutory objectives
- 2) Your answer should include the following points:
 - Formulation and implementation process
 - Constitutional implications