**BEHAVIOURAL APPROACH TO POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY**

The behavioural approach is a very broad approach. It covers all the approaches which rejects the normative approach and advocate an empirical scientific study of politics as an aspect of human behaviour. The primary focus in the behavioural approach is on the study of human political behaviour. It advocates the use of empirical-scientific methods of study. Its objective is to build a scientific theory of politics capable of explaining and analysing all aspects of Politics.

**Characteristics of behavioural approach**

David Easton identifies eight major assumptions or characteristics of Behavioural Approach.

1. **Regularities –** Behavioural approach holds that there are discoverable uniformities in human political behaviour. These can be expressed in generalizations or theories with explanatory and predictive values.
2. **Verification –** The validity of such generalizations has to be testable with reference to relevant behaviour. Only empirically tested and verified generalisations about politics are to be admitted as valid.
3. **Technique –** Means for acquiring and interpreting data cannot be taken for granted. Several different techniques can be found or formulated for observing, recording and analyzing behaviour.
4. **Quantifications –** Precision in the recording of data and the statement of findings require measurement and quantification, not for their own sake, but only where possible, relevant and meaningful in the light of other objectives. Use of mathematical and statistical methods of data analysis has to be made.
5. **Value-free study or Value Neutrality –** Study of politics has to be empirical and value-free. Values have to be kept out of empirical study of facts.
6. **Systematization –** Research ought to be systematic. It means that, theory and research are to be seen as closely inter-twined parts of a coherent and orderly body of knowledge
7. **Pure Science –** The application of knowledge is as much a part of the scientific enterprise as theoretical understanding. It admits and advocates a link between theoretical understanding and practical application of knowledge.
8. **Integration –** Recognition of inter-relationship between Political Science and other social sciences can provide immense help to bring political science back to its status of earlier centuries and ensure its return to the main fold of the social sciences. In other words, behaviouralism accepts interdisciplinary focus.

With these basic features, the Behavioural Approach places emphasis on the study of politics as the study of human political behaviour and interactions. It emphasizes the study of the incumbents of political roles. Study of behaviour of legislators, voters, decision-makers, policy-makers, elites, leaders, political parties, interest groups, bureaucracy and all political structures and processes with the help of the scientific-empirical methods together form the core of Behavioural Approach to politics.

**Criticisms/ Limitations of Behaviouralism**

1. Behavioural approach is not a very set and definite approach.
2. Difficulties in the study of Human behaviour.
3. All aspects of human behaviour do not admit empirical methods.
4. Politics can lose its autonomous status.
5. Study of facts without study of values is neither possible nor desirable.
6. Big differences among the behaviouralists reflect its weakness.
7. A biased approach.
8. Behaviouralist have made simple things complex.
9. Limitation of use of scientific methods in politics.
10. Behaviouralist’s obsession with methods and technique leads to failure in the concentration upon the study of the real substance of politics.
11. Value-neutralism is short-sighted.
12. Study of history, law and philosophy is useful and necessary.
13. Little progress in scientific theory- building.