

Post-Behaviouralism

Behaviouralism rose to be prominent during mid-1960s as a dominant approach in the methodology of political science. However, it was not free from criticism. One of its prominent critics Leo Strauss in his article 'What is Political Philosophy?', published in *Journal of Politics* (1957), argued that the rise of behaviouralism was symptomatic of a crisis in political theory because of its failure to come to grips with normative issues. Another political scientist Sheldon Wolin in the article 'Political Theory as a Vocation', which was published in *American Political Science Review* (1969), pointed out that preoccupation of political science with method signified or abdication of true vocation of political theory. Another prominent thinker Thomas Kuhn in his celebrated work, *The Structure of Scientific Revolution* (1962), outlined that significance of scientific methods lies in its capacity of problem solving and crisis-management, and not in methodological sophistication. Gradually after 1960s, even the exponents of behaviouralism realized the drawbacks of behaviouralism. They realized that behaviouralism's strict adherence to 'pure science' was responsible for its failure to attempt to the pressing social and political issues of the period. David Easton, in 1969, in his presidential address to the American Political Science Association announced a new revolution in political science, a post-

behavioural revolution that represented a shift of focus from strict methodological issues to a greater concern with public responsibilities of the discipline and with political problems. Thus, post-behaviouralism is concerned with the reality of human life. The post-behaviouralism gave two slogans: relevance and action. However, it did not completely depart from behaviouralism; rather it stood for consolidating its gain and applying them from problem-solving crisis management. Easton lamented the over-reliance of behaviouralists on methodology. He says that intellectuals have a great role to play in protecting the human value of civilization. He emphasized that behaviouralists should not ignore this role. He reminded them of their responsibility to reshape society. He argued that scientists could adopt a rational interest in value construction and application without denying the validity of their science. It placed less emphasis on the scientific method and empirical theory, and laid more stress on the public responsibilities of the discipline. In a nutshell, post-behaviouralism seeks to reintroduce a concern for values in the behavioural approach itself.