**Question: Define empirical approach. Discuss the features of empirical approach.**

**Empirical Approach:**

**Meaning:**

The exponents of Empirical Approach were Graham Wallas, George Catlin, Arthur Bentley, Charles Merriam, Davit Easton, Catlin, and Robert .Dahl etc.

Since the period of Plato and Aristotle till 19th century, the Political approaches were value oriented. The goals of political scientists were to establish ideal state. Stress was given on the values like “what should be done” or “what ought to be done” by the state. But in modern times the political scientists began to study political science with new scientific approaches. These approaches are known as Empirical approaches.

The aim and objective of contemporary political theory is to understand the reality of political phenomena, to discover the general principle of political facts. Contemporary political tresses the inter-disciplinary study. It has borrowed various aspects from both social as well as natural science. According to contemporary political thinkers without having proper knowledge of other social science, it is not possible to study political science. They want to link political science with other social sciences.

**Features of Empirical Approach:** There are some features of empirical of Empirical Approach. These features are given as follows:

1. The scope of Empirical Approach is wide. It includes all socio-political aspects of either developed or underdeveloped states. The subject matter of Empirical Approach is both formal as well informal institutions.
2. Another significant feature of Empirical Approach emphasis the value neutral study of political science. The studies of political events are done using scientific methods.
3. The Empirical Approach gives stress on the inter-disciplinary studies. According to the exponents of this approach it is not possible to understand the political facts without study of other social sciences.

1. Another feature of Empirical Approach is that the supporter of this approach importance on the theory building.
2. Unlike traditional approach the empirical approach is not descriptive in its nature. This stress is fully analytical.
3. This approach is more flexible and dynamic in nature. The method of study changes according to the demand of time and situation.

**Question: Define empirical approach. Discuss the merits and demerits of empirical theory.**

**Merits of the Empirical Approach:**

**b. Informal structures:** The Modern approach has embraced within its jurisdiction the informal structures i.e. the pressure groups, the interest groups, political parties, the NGOs, etc. These informal institutions have a great impact on the formal structures i.e. legislature, executive and judiciary.

**c. Helps to comparative study:** The modern approach helps the students’ of political science to study the comparative political systems. The comparative study helps the Third World countries to take some effective measure to develop their socio-economic and political conditions.

**d. More scientific and biasfree:** Another important contribution of this approach is that, this approach is more scientific and biasfree

1. **Use of new Innovative method:** The Modern Approach shapes the political science to be a practical science. This approach evolves new and innovative methods to the study of political science.

**Demerits:**

Though this approach is scientific in character, yet the political thinkers; particularly the traditionalists criticized the approach from different angles:

1. **Blindly follows the methods of natural sciences:** Applying the scientific methods and techniques the exponents of the modern approach try to develop the political science into natural science
2. **State and other formal institutions are neglected:** The modern approach totally ignores the study of the state and the formal institutions i.e. the legislature, executive, judiciary, bureaucracy etc. as the subject matter of political science.
3. **Too much dependent on other social sciences:** The contemporary political approach in the name of inter- disciplinary study of the social sciences, makes the political science much dependable on other social sciences
4. **Creation of new complex terms:** In the name of scientific analysis, the contemporary political scientists have used new complex terms to the study of political science and these are political process, political modernization, political culture, political socialization etc. which have created complexity to the discipline.
5. **Too much stress on the collection of data:** The contemporary political scientists give much importance on the collection of data to analyze the political events. To solve the political crises it is more important to understand the situation than collection of data.
6. **Ignores value oriented study:** The contemporary political theorists, emphasis the objectivity and value neutral study. But it should be remembered that the political is a social science and fully value neutral study is not possible. The value oriented study has much significant in political science.
7. **Unsuitable for the third world countries:** The socio- economic and the political phenomena of the third world countries are not similar with the First World countries. The thinkers of the contemporary approach opine that this approach is ideal for all countries of the world and try to impose this on the third world countries.
8. **Conservative in nature:** But the contemporary political thinkers do not support any change in the political system. The aim of modern approach is to preserve the western liberal democratic system. They do not want any change to the existing system.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion it can be said that the Modern Approaches are scientific in nature. These approaches help to find out facts of socio-political events existing in society. But it should be remembered that political science is a social science not a natural science and therefore, the value oriented study cannot be fully discarded to study of political science.