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BUREAUCRATIC CULTURE AND NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT:
A CASE STUDY OF INDIRA MAHILA YOJANA IN UTTAR
PRADESH

Alison Julia Quirk

College of St. Hild and St. Bede

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

October 2002

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- 9 JUN 2006

Bureaucratic culture and new public management: A case study of Indira Mahila Yojana in Uttar Pradesh

Alison Julia Quirk

Abstract

The IMY scheme may be atypical within Uttar Pradesh, but it does demonstrate the importance of supporting institutions and the potential value of bureaucratic reform for provoking positive change and development.

During the 1990s there has been a notable shift in governance debates from what has been termed the 'Washington' to a post-Washington Consensus. Put simply, this shift has involved a move away from the old agenda of state 'versus' market to a new discourse based on the notion of state 'and' market. A parallel shift has occurred within public administration, from a focus based on reducing the role of the state to a reconsideration of the way in which the state performs its roles. The Indian state has initiated administrative reforms influenced by new public management (NPM) following the adoption of a new economic policy in 1991. The case of northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, is particularly significant as administrative reforms there have been developed in association with the World Bank. Through the case study of the *Indira Mahila Yojana* programme (for women's empowerment), I consider how government officials at the various administrative levels, have engaged with the processes of change associated with new public management. Despite popular criticism of the bureaucracy in India, this study suggests that the adoption of specific elements of NPM in specific institutional environments can empower government officials, and help facilitate development. The case study of the *Indira Mahila Yojana* scheme demonstrates both the importance of supporting institutions and the potential value of bureaucratic reform for provoking positive change and development.

Acknowledgements

This thesis would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of so many people, and a few lines at the beginning of this work cannot even begin to suggest how grateful and lucky I am. Financial support came from the University of Durham in the form of a studentship and from the Access Fund, supported by the College of St. Hild and St. Bede. I would like to thank my supervisors, Drs. Liz Oughton and Emma Mawdsley, who from the outset have given me so much inspiration, friendship and guidance.

My fieldwork in India was successful due to the generosity and helpfulness of so many, and I would specifically like to thank the following; the Rao family for their hospitality, Uma Shanker, for finding me a place in a hostel when there was none, Durgesh Hukku, for her endless enthusiasm, Rakesh Nautiyal, for his patience when I was learning Hindi and the IMY groups without whose participation and input this thesis would not have been possible.

During my time at the University of Durham, I have enjoyed support from colleagues throughout the Geography Department, and I particularly thank the members of the Development Studies Research Group, and the department's administrative staff.

A special thank you needs to be made to those people who have been with me for the duration of this PhD, and also those friends who have been there for a lot longer. Whether in Durham, or further afield, your friendship has been there through good times and bad! Bev, Dan, Fiona, Laura, Susan and Suzi.

Finally, I would like to thank my family. This is for you. Mum, Dad, Andrea, Amy and Jon. Your love, support and understanding have made all of this possible. Thank you so much for everything.

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Glossary

<i>Adivasi</i>	The original inhabitants of India, also referred to as Tribals
<i>Adhikari</i>	Officer
<i>Anganwadi</i>	<i>Village Level Officer</i>
<i>Arrack</i>	Country liquor (sometimes used to describe both legal and illegally distilled alcohol, other times restricted to legal as opposed to illegal – hooch).
<i>Babu</i>	Respectful address; sir
<i>Babri Masjid</i>	The mosque at Ayodhya demolished by right-wing Hindu vandals
<i>Bahujan</i>	Masses, common people. Often used to refer to lower castes
<i>Bare log</i>	Literally Big people (important)
<i>Bidis</i>	Rolled leaf cigarettes
<i>Brahmin</i>	Traditionally the priest caste. Tends to specialise in the knowledge based businesses and professions.
<i>Chowkidar</i>	Guard, watchman.
<i>Chuprassi</i>	Office messenger (especially in government service)
<i>Crore</i>	Ten Million
<i>Dalit</i>	Literally ‘oppressed’. The term is used by and of people who belong to the castes formerly known as ‘untouchables’
<i>Grameen Bank</i>	A network of local women’s run credit associations. Established in Bangladesh but much imitated in India.
<i>Gram</i>	Village (as in <i>gram panchayat</i> - village council)
<i>Hawala</i>	Money laundering
<i>Hindutva</i>	Hinduism as a way of life. Hindu culture. Supporters of Hindutva say that it applies to the Indian way of life, regardless of religion. Others see it as a form of religious chauvinism similar to the idea of fundamentalism in other religions.
<i>Jati</i>	A hereditary corporate group associated with traditional occupations. Acts as a community/ interest group; likely to have a strong political identity. In theory, hierarchically arranged according to degrees of ritual purity. The term is generally implied when the term caste is used.

<i>Kayastha</i>	Traditionally <i>kshatriya jati</i> which specialised in keeping records and accounts for the landlords
<i>Kshatriya</i>	Traditionally the category of castes of landowners, rulers and warriors.
<i>Lakh</i>	100 Thousand
<i>Lok Sabha</i>	Lower House of Parliament
<i>Mahila Mandal</i>	Women's organisation or club
<i>Mandalization</i>	The implementation from 1990 onwards of the recommendations of the Second All-India Backward Classes Chaired by B. P. Mandal and known as the Mandal Commission. Reserves a varying proportion of jobs in the state sector for 'backward classes' in addition to those already reserved for Scheduled Castes and Tribes. Prompted an upper caste backlash.
<i>Mandir</i>	Hindu temple
<i>Masjid</i>	Mosque
<i>Panchayat</i>	Literally a group of five people. Means a local council (can be any number of members).
<i>Panchayati Raj</i>	Literally, rule by the council. Means a system of local government introduced by the 73 rd Amendment to the Constitution whereby authority is transferred from the bureaucracy to locally elected representatives.
<i>Parivar</i>	Family
<i>Purdah</i>	Literally, veil; seclusion of women
<i>Raj</i>	Regime, authority, rule. Often used to refer to the British colonial period.
<i>Rupee</i>	<i>The unit of currency. It is divided into one hundred paise. (Colloquially, some people still divide the Rupee into sixteen annas). At the time of research one British pound was equal to around seventy rupees.</i>
<i>Sadhu</i>	Holy man who has taken a vow of poverty
<i>Samiti</i>	Association, council
<i>Samu</i>	Group, club

<i>Sanskrit</i>	Ancient language of northern India, no longer spoken. The language of the scriptures and, thus the Brahmins. (Roughly the same status as Latin in Europe. Until recently members of the lower castes were forbidden to learn it.)
<i>Sanskritization</i>	Term generally attributed to M.N.Srinivas to describe the process whereby <i>jati</i> could attempt to negotiate an improvement of status by emulating the behaviour of <i>Brahmins</i> (typically through ritual observances and becoming vegetarian and teetotal).
<i>Sangh Parivar</i>	The association of right wing Hindu organisations
<i>Sarpanch</i>	Head of the local council
<i>Senas</i>	Heads of criminal protection gangs
<i>Swadeshi</i>	Support for nationally produced goods and avoidance of imports. Originally an important part of the Independence movement, associated with Gandhi, whereby British goods, particularly cloth, were boycotted. It has become associated with modern Hindu nationalism as one of the planks of resistance to the westernisation of culture.
<i>Tahsil</i>	Administrative division below the district.
<i>Taluqdars</i>	Rent collecting landlords
<i>Vaishya</i>	The category of castes traditionally associated with taking profit from trade or usury.
<i>Varna</i>	A hierarchical group category (but not group) taking its justification from Vedic scriptures. Literally means 'colour', but this should not be interpreted as implying historic racial differentiation. Varnas have no corporate identity. Often translated as 'caste'.
<i>Zamindar</i>	Feudal Landlord.

List of Abbreviations

ALSA	Avadh Lok Sewa Ashram
ATI	Administrative Training Institute
AW	Anganwadi Worker
BDO	Block Development Officer
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party (national political party)
BSP	Bahujan Samaj Paty
CARE	Co-operative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere
CBI	Criminal Bureau of Investigation
CM	Chief Minister
CPI(M)	Communist Party of India (Marxist) (national political party)
CREME	Credit and Micro Enterprise Development Training Course
CSR	Civil Service Renewal/ Reform
DfID	Department for International Development
DM	District Magistrate
DRDA	District Rural Development Agency
DUBS	Durham University Business School
DWCD	Department of Women and Child Development
EPW	Economic and Political Weekly (journal)
FMR	Female to Male Ratio
GDI	Gender-related Development Index
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOI	Government of India
GoUP	Government of Uttar Pradesh
GP	Gram Panchayat
HDI	Human Development Index
IAS	Indian Administrative Service. Elite administration in India.
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Services
ICS	Indian Civil Service. Elite groups of civil servants replaced by the IAS
IDA	International Development Association
IMF	International Monetary Fund

IMR	Infant Mortality Rate
IMY	Indira Mahila Yogana
INC	Indian National Congress
IRD P	Integrated Rural Development Programme
JD	Janata Dal
JP	Janata Party
JRY	Jawahar Rojgar Yogana
LBSNAA	Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration
LLF	Low Level Functionaries
MLA	Member of Legislative Assembly
MP	Member of Parliament
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPM	New public management
NRI	Non-Resident Indian
NSS	National Sample Survey
OBC	Other Backward Classes
PCT	Public Choice Theory
PDS	Public Distribution System
PHC	Primary Health Care
PR	Panchayati Raj
PRI	Panchayati Raj Institutions
PWD	Public Works Department
SC	Scheduled Caste
ST	Scheduled Tribes
RMK	Rashtrya Mahila Kosht
RSS	Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (right-wing Hindu organisation)
SHG	Self-help groups
UP	Uttar Pradesh
VLW	Village- level Worker (also known as anganwadi)
VHP	Vishwa Hindu Parishad (Right-wing Hindu organisation)

PREFACE:

In March and April 1999, I visited India for the first time in order to do some preliminary research that considered how ways of 'doing development' had changed in the wake of the New Economic Policy and Civil Service Reform. I was particularly interested in the ways in which government officials were engaging with the ideas of 'new public management' (NPM) and the how aspects of the discourse were being adopted and adapted by bureaucrats.

I had already met a number of government and non-government personnel who had been trained through the Credit and Micro Enterprise Development Training Course, (CRÈME) in Durham who were enthusiastic about the new ways of working but who also had reservations about the relevance of new public management in the Indian context. Some of these men and women were involved in the delivery of a centrally sponsored government programme called Indira Mahila Yogana (IMY), which aims to achieve women's empowerment through educational as well as economic means. The scheme incorporates many aspects of work culture associated with NPM, namely localisation, debureaucratisation and externalisation.

When I arrived in Delhi I spoke to academics, government officials and non-government representatives to see whether the project would make a viable case study. Though I was told the scheme was having some success, it did not, I was told 'represent anything more than a token gesture' and that there was neither financial nor political commitment behind administrative reform or in 'social sector schemes'. When I met the Director of the Department of Women and Child Development, Sarojini Thakur, on the other hand, she assured me that some notable changes were being made in the bureaucratic culture. Though, she also said the grass roots realisation of such changes take time and therefore may not be easy to detect. She commented that even in a '*bimaru*' (sick) State like Uttar Pradesh (UP) some sizeable achievements were in fact being made.

The overwhelming perception of the bureaucracy in India is of a self-seeking network of politically affiliated individuals, who wield considerable power. Bardhan (1989)

famously described government officials as one of the three 'dominant proprietary classes' along with the agricultural and political elites. The Indian civil services vary considerably in authority, autonomy and prestige. Chatterjee (1993) and Kaviraj (1991), amongst others, have argued that there is a dichotomy between the elite languages and outlooks of higher ranked officials, and the vernacular languages and outlooks of those lower down the administrative hierarchy. If this assertion is correct the way in which these different parties understand and engage with the process of change associated with NPM are likely to be very different.

In contrast to dominant preceptions of Indian bureaucratic culture, Peter Evans (1996a, 1996b) Merlie Grindle (1996) and Judith Tandler and Sara Freedheim (1994a, 1994b) who suggest that in cases where development projects are doing well, an effective and efficient bureaucracy is a primary factor. In such cases, they argue, selective adoption of the working practices of the private sector firms, notably flexible working arrangements, innovative practices and customer orientation, have contributed to governance successes. But these authors did not associate their findings with the new public management discourse, which has its origins in the 1980s shifts towards a 'slimming of the state'. Tandler in fact criticised the ways in which NPM had been used to reduce the autonomy of the state, whilst the direct opposite approach was being taken in the private sector.

During the 1990s however there has been a notable shift in governance debates from what has been termed the 'Washington Consensus' to a Post-Washington consensus. Put simply the shift has involved a move away from the old agenda of state *versus* market to a new discourse based on the notion of state *and* market. A parallel shift has occurred within public administration, from a focus based on reducing the role of the state to a reconsideration of the way in which the state performs its roles. The shifts away from domination of the discourse by public choice theory to more institutional forms have led Desai and Imrie (1998: 464) to argue that it may be possible to conceive of an emergent 'post-managerial phase'.

Through this thesis I consider how the government officials involved in the IMY programme have engaged with the processes of change associated with the discourse of new public management. My research began at the national level, where the IMY

scheme was developed, to the State level of Uttar Pradesh, to one District (Rae Bareli) within the State, and to six administrative Blocks in the District in which the scheme is being implemented. Uttar Pradesh was chosen for several reasons. Whilst I was told that Uttar Pradesh was achieving little in development stakes (an argument supported by statistical evidence) this was not the impression given by those who co-ordinate the scheme at the State level. I was interested to see why this was apparently possible in the face of so many development failures in the State. Uttar Pradesh also has a close relationship with the World Bank (one of the main proponents of NPM) which offers an interesting additional dimension to the national issues of bureaucratic reform.

In order to get a balanced range of opinions, following Kabeer and Subrahmanian (1999: 353), I accessed 'agency', 'expert', and 'beneficiary' perceptions of the nature of bureaucratic culture and change through a variety of methodological techniques, including interviews, focus groups and work-shadowing.

The central research questions for this thesis were:-

a) How have the government officials at different levels experienced change associated with NPM?

b) How have 'outsiders' associated with the scheme experienced these changes?

By researching these questions, I am able to reflect on several areas of wider interest and debate within geography, particularly the role and nature of the state in development and the hegemony of western ideas in governance, issues to which I return in chapter 7.

Thesis Outline:

In the first chapter I look at the global 'emergence' of a Post-Washington Consensus over the past few years, and consider why this has come about. I then examine the implications this has had for the discourse of NPM. I focus specifically on the case study of India, looking at the extent to which the New Economic Policy (NEP) was adopted and the implications of this for administrative reform. I then briefly outline the extent to which India (and UP) have attempted to adopt a form of NPM through its civil service reform and in the UP case, 'Renewal'.

The Indian bureaucracy has a rich and varied history, which I outline in chapter 2. After considering its origins through the East India Company and changes with Independence, I discuss the various roles involved within the different ranks of the service. I then use Esman's (1997) identification of three bureaucratic types, the 'legal-rational', 'the vested-interest' and the 'entrepreneurial' to discuss conflicting perceptions of the Indian bureaucracy, paying particular attention to Uttar Pradesh. The aim of this chapter is to argue that elements of continuity as well as change are important in the culture of the Indian bureaucracy, and that element of all three types of 'culture' are likely to be present at any one time, though in changing intensities.

Chapter 3 outlines the rich history and geography of the State of Uttar Pradesh. As later chapters make clear, knowledge of these details not only provides a backdrop to the study, but is also essential in understanding the essential factors that either restrict or promote bureaucratic change. Particular attention is paid to the low economic and social status of the region (and in particular gender inequalities), and the perpetuation of a *Ma Bap* culture throughout much of the area is seen as a key restriction on change. The politics of the region and particularly the Gandhi family legacy and influence in the Rae Bareli and (adjoining) Amethi constituencies is highlighted.

In chapter 4 I discuss the different research methodologies that I employed for this study, concentrating on the six months intensive fieldwork period I undertook. In particular, I show how I sought to ally material at the national, State and District and Block levels, to explore whether government officials at different levels had different understandings of, and approaches to, bureaucratic change.

Chapter 5 is the first of two substantive analytical chapters. It discusses the perceptions of 'insiders' of the nature of change in bureaucratic culture by examining those individuals working on the case study IMY programme. Interviews were conducted at national, State, District and Block level, in order to assess the various understandings and interpretations of bureaucratic change at the various administrative levels. Though bureaucratic change has not been uncontested or complete, I argue that, according to those involved in the scheme, there has been

considerable change. In this regard, I concentrate on the issues of training at all levels, the structure of the scheme, and the nature of accountability and monitoring.

In chapter 6, I offer an alternative perspective of bureaucratic change as perceived by 'outsiders'. These outsiders were grouped in two categories. First the 'elite', consisting of academics and NGO workers. These individuals had similar education, language and understandings of the influences of western discourses on administrative working in India. The second group the *anganwadi* (village level workers) and the self-help group members, provided a vernacular interpretation of bureaucratic change, at the District and Block implementation levels. Whilst their reasoning for change varied considerably, the majority of those interviewed in these groups had also noted change within the bureaucracy. Whilst their understanding of NPM varied enormously, there was a feeling that whilst cultural elements have the potential to have positive results, other elements of the discourse have the potential to threaten the role of the state in development.

Chapter 7 brings together the main descriptive and analytical themes of the study in two concluding arguments. The first debate relates to the phenomenon of social capital, one of the main elements incorporated in the post-Washington Consensus recommendations. I focus particularly on the recent critique by John Harriss. Whilst I am sympathetic to certain elements of his argument, I feel that he focuses too heavily on research conducted in the late 1980s and early 1990s whilst largely ignoring the shifts associated with the 'good governance' agenda of the late 1990s onwards. The second section in this chapter considers the extent to which the adoption of elements of the new public management discourse in India represents neo-imperialism based on the hegemony of western 'truths'.

As I have indicated above, there does appear to be a change in bureaucratic culture in the case of IMY along NPM lines. This change though, is negotiated and incomplete and has taken a piecemeal and selective approach. My research suggests that though NPM is frequently considered to be a western neo-liberal discourse, it can and does have the potential to be empowering, particularly in relation to changing attitudes and working practices within the bureaucracy. My experience of IMY however, suggests there is nothing structural that enforces change - it has to come from the individual.

The inescapable conclusion within this work is that key women have played a crucial role in empowering lower level officials, and developing a culture of trust within this particular scheme. The social sector, and this scheme in particular, are neither prestigious nor financially lucrative departments. Many men in the department consider postings in this sector as a 'punishment' to be escaped as quickly as possible. It is perhaps this very fact that has left those working within the scheme relatively free of transfer and political interference, and that has enabled individuals to concentrate on their role as 'civil servants'.

Declaration

This thesis is the result of my own work and contains nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration. It does not exceed 100,000 words.

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Alison Quirk
November 2003

CHAPTER 1: THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS OF RESEARCH

1.1: Introduction

It was not long ago that the collapse of communism and the supposed triumph of a new world order were described by Fukuyama (1992) as representing ‘the end of history’. The ‘Washington Consensus’, in favour of the market and sceptical of the role of the state, had become the order of the day in the late 1980s (Cornia and Helleiner, 1994; Gore, 2000). Endorsed by the IMF, World Bank¹ and G-7 countries, the precepts of the Washington Consensus were adopted, more or less willingly, by a significant number of countries (Singh, 2001). However, the neo-liberal Washington Consensus has been seriously challenged not only from outside these international development organisations, but also more recently, from within (Fine, 2001). Following the Asian crisis, rifts in thinking both within and between the IMF and the World Bank have been exposed (Lo, 2001). The World Bank’s chief economist, Joseph Stiglitz, has been at the forefront of those questioning the legitimacy of the conventional wisdom of structural adjustment imposed by the IMF in East Asia² (Rigg, 2002; Stiglitz, 2002), under the auspices of the Washington Consensus.

Within the first section of this chapter, the ideas behind both the Washington Consensus and the changes leading to the ‘Post-Washington Consensus’ are outlined. The latter include moves to incorporate civil society, institution building, safety nets and (especially important for this thesis) ‘good governance’ into the conventional ideology of open markets, deregulation, liberalisation and structural adjustment. At its most simplistic, the shift has involved moves away from the old agenda of state *versus* market to a new discourse based on the notion of state *and* market (Singh, 2001). Central to this shift has been a focus on people’s participation, civil society and an attention to institutional strengthening (WDR, 1997; Philips and Higgott, 1999; Gore, 2000).

¹ In this chapter I refer to the IMF and World Bank as single institutions, dominated by neo-liberal ideas. This is of course an oversimplification as Sender and Smith (1985) have noted, and which has made too many critics ready to dismiss the work of the Bank.

² Within this chapter I refer to the ‘East Asian experience’, but recognise that the experiences of development has varied between and in countries. Singapore for example has relied heavily on foreign capital, whereas South Korea has not. However, although the role of the state has varied, as a regional group they are distinguishable from the neo-liberal approach (Schiffer, 1991).

One important element of this change has been the changing role of public bureaucracies, and it is this that provides the main focus of this thesis. Over the last twenty years numerous reforms have swept the public sectors of developed and developing countries, prompting a range of observers to herald the emergence of ‘a new public management revolution’ (Clarke and Newman 1993, 1997; Stren 1991). The alleged revolution has been based on attempts to redefine the relationships between state, market and society in the process of governance. In its earliest forms this included an active agenda to slim down the state, reduce high levels of public expenditure, increase efficiency in public service provision, and extend the role of non-state functionaries in social provision (Hicks, 1991). In recent years the contours of the traditional debate have begun to shift. No longer is the World Bank arguing solely in favour – if it ever did - of the neo-liberal elements of new public management. As the World Bank has argued, ‘there is no unique model for change’ nor does managerial governance ‘lend itself to clear unambiguous solutions’ (1997:3) (See Mawdsley and Rigg, 2002). Today the focus of NPM has shifted from the pure ‘New Right’ prescriptions to a form allied to a much greater concern for reforming the institutions of the state, one of the most important being the bureaucracy. In the second part of this chapter, therefore, I discuss the influences on and origins of new public management (NPM), before analysing the discourse in light of the Post-Washington Consensus and exploring the ways in which it has been altered.

Desai and Imrie (1997) have suggested that NPM does not exist as some end-state, but as a complex of interrelated processes that interconnect historically and geographically specific socio-institutional, economic, and political structures. As such, they suggest further research needs to consider,

‘the different ways in which state and/or governance structures are being recast, and to document the role and importance of locally embedded socio-political and institutional structures and systems in framing governance outcomes. It would also be interesting to explore the precise transmission mechanisms which lead to the adoption and/or adaptation of managerialist ideas from one country to another. Moreover, as our paper suggests, the complexities and variations within and between bureaucratic-professional regimes are clearly important in interpreting and shaping the ways in which the new (governance) arrangements are being constructed. Given this, one research task is to explore the contrasts between the old bureaucratic-professional approaches, and the new managerialist ones, in ways which seek to highlight the differences in the old as well as the new. These, and related

ideas, provide possibilities for further research into the changing nature of governance systems' (1998: 647, emphasis added).

India offers an excellent case study of a country that has engaged with the processes of bureaucratic change associated with new public management. Following a key transition towards liberalisation in 1991, through the adoption of a New Economic Policy, the role of the Indian state³ in development has changed, involving, amongst other things, a redefinition of the role of government officials. It was not until 1997 that the government's commitment to managerial governance was officially publicised in the discussion note for 'Responsive and Effective Administration' (GoI, 1997). In the final section of this chapter, I consider the nature and extent of economic reform in India, and then analyse the Indian state's adoption of NPM, and discuss the implications for the bureaucracy within the case study State of Uttar Pradesh.

1.2: The Washington Consensus

For much of the 1980s and 1990s the Washington Consensus dominated 'mainstream' development theory and practice (Cook, 1997). The term was coined in the late 1980s by John Williamson (Williamson, 1990), and denotes a series of measures that it was presumed would lead 'developing' countries to greater economic growth. These prescriptions derived from the neoliberal policy framework that already held sway in much of the developed world, notably the USA and UK. They included fiscal and monetary austerity, reduction in government subsidies, moderate taxation, freeing of interest rates, lowering of exchange rates, liberalisation of foreign trade, privatisation, deregulation and the pursuit of foreign direct investment (World Bank, 1991).

Fine argues that two factors supported the global legitimisation of the Consensus (Fine, 2001). First, the global demise of development ideology and practice of the 1950s and 1960s provided space for the development of a new doctrine. In the 1970s and 1980s the leftist policies of government ownership and control of strategic industries, import substitution, five year plans, regulation of labour market and state control of saving and investment seemed less effective at delivering growth. For Paulson (1999) the negative impact of state-led development in relation to sub-

³ To distinguish between them, I use the upper case 'State' when referring to the federal units of India (e.g. The State of Uttar Pradesh), and the lower case 'state' when referring to the idea in the abstract (e.g. state-society relations, the Indian state).

Saharan Africa led to monopoly practices in resource allocation and distribution, distorted prices, lack of competition and neglect of the private sector. The policies that had gained inspiration primarily from Keynesianism and the Soviet model in the inter-war years had lost favour by the 1980s and led to a neo-liberal 'counter-revolution' (Toye, 1987, 1993, 1994). The final collapse of the Soviet Union appeared to symbolise the 'triumph of capitalism' and the 'free market'. Fine (2001) contends that Washington was, for many, the undisputed political, economic and ideological centre of the world (as the home of the World Bank and the American government).

The second factor legitimising the Consensus for Fine, was its promotion by the International Financial Institutions (IFIs), above all the IMF, the World Bank and bilateral pressures, that turned neo-liberal ideas into policy in the developing world. By the late 1980s, the Consensus had become the orthodoxy within these institutions, as well as for the mainly western and western-educated individuals who were designing policy for developing nations (Stirrat, 2000). If its intellectual superiority was not initially accepted by the developing nations, then aid conditionality would force compliance (Toye, 1994; Mkandawire, 1994; Morrison et al. 1994; Haggard and Webb, 1993; Wade, 1996). Bandyopadhyay (1991) notes that consensus implies choice whereas aid conditionality has forced many nations into adopting the dominant Washington Consensus agenda. He comments that,

'It is becoming an in-thing in recent development literature, assiduously crafted and hawked by the north, either to deny aid or to use it as leverage in securing changes in the system of governance in aid receiving countries' (p. 3109).

This process is described by O'Tuathail et al. as one whereby,

'national institutions, policies and practices become adjusted to the evolving structures and dynamics of a world economy of capitalist production'(1998: 13).

The debt crisis had seriously limited room for manoeuvre for many developing nations, so whilst in reality there may never have been a global *Consensus* there was certainly global *convergence* to the Washington model.

For Pereira (1995), the 1990s revealed flaws in the Washington Consensus. Fiscal and monetary conservatism might have been heralded as capable of securing greater

stability in some developing countries, but evidence of successful cases was limited (Simon, 1995; Wood, 1997). Critics have suggested that, at best, the benefits of privatisation policies have been greatly exaggerated (Cook, 1997; Cook and Kirkpatrick, 1995). De Vries argues that the institutions were failing to deliver in terms of economic development and stabilisation.

‘After more than fifty years of operations, the Bank still faces a world where over 1 billion people live in deep poverty, with per capita income of less than a dollar per day. Many countries suffer poverty rates between 25 and 50 per cent of their population. These conditions persist despite important improvements in critical social indicators such as life expectancy, infant mortality, access to safe water, primary school enrolment and immunisation’ (1996: 65).

Growth outcomes were both drastically lower than estimates had predicted and typically lower than those experienced in the 1950s and 1960s (Fine, 2001; Arrighi, 2002). Poverty reduction had been disappointing even by World Bank calculations. The elimination of restrictions on domestic finance and on international capital flows resulted in massive global crises, most notably in SE Asia (Rigg, 2002), but had not always increased the efficiency of productive investment. For Fine, the transformation of the eastern bloc countries into capitalist ones in particular had been an abject failure (2001; see also Stiglitz, 2002).

1.3: The Post-Washington Consensus

Several key events during the 1990s were fundamental in shifting policy debates from a Washington to a *Post-Washington* Consensus (Singh, 2001). For Arora, until the middle of 1997, the ‘East Asia Miracle’ (World Bank, 1993: 5) attracted little debate in public circles (Arora, 1999). Certain South-east and East Asian countries had apparently managed to deliver economic development in an impressive manner and they had also done well on the equity front. Their outward orientation had given them considerable strength to participate in an open international economy (Amsden, 1985). In theory, what had marked them out, apart from the sound policies they had consistently followed, was their superior *institutional* capacity. This capacity had been used to foster market opportunity that has in turn fostered rapid economic growth. The lesson of the ‘miracle’ was the fit between the market and strong institutional capacity. There were, however, some dissenting voices who saw instead a ‘miracle’ to

be emulated, a form of governance which centred primarily on the exploitation of labour power (Moore, 1993; Akyuz, Chang and Kozul-Wright, 1998)).

By the end of 1997 the situation had changed dramatically, and the original doctrine lost ground. Whilst previously the Bank had supported the East Asian route to development, with only a few fine adjustments recommended for better resource allocation, there now appeared to be a need to rethink this strategy (World Bank, 1997a; 1997b). Where institutional arrangements had elicited more or less uncritical acclaim, now scrutiny of the unhealthy nexus between top business people and rent-seekers seemed essential in order to bolster investor confidence (Jain, 1998a; Kaul, 1994). However, the shift was not as dramatic as may have been predicted with the scale of the 'crisis' in East Asia (Rigg, 2002; Wade, 1996). The Bank suggested that there had been insufficient interaction between the international financial markets and the economies in question. They argued for the need to assess where the balance should lie between what market participants could, or should, do and what the role of the state should have been. Today, according to the Bank, the question is not simply about state *or* market promotion, but fundamentally about balancing the roles of both (1997a).

If a single event can be seen to represent the shift from the old Consensus, it would be the speech given by Joseph Stiglitz (1998) in early 1998. In his talk, 'More instruments and broader goals: Moving towards the Post-Washington Consensus', Stiglitz was seeking to establish a new agenda for economic development. He argued that,

'Trying to get government better focused on the fundamentals – economic policies, basic education, health, roads, law and order, environmental protection – is a vital step. But focusing on the fundamentals is not a recipe for a minimalist government. The state has an important role to play in appropriate regulation, industrial policy, social protection and welfare. But the choice is not *whether* the state should or should not be involved. Instead, it is often a matter of *how* it gets involved. More importantly, we should not see the state and markets as substitutes... the government should see itself as a complement to markets, undertaking those actions that make markets fulfil their functions better' (1998: 25).

And indeed, during the late 1990s there was a notable shift away from both the intellectual and policy dominance of the Washington Consensus. The changes that were introduced were based on the idea that *institutions* (such as the government and

the various branches of the civil service, the legal sector and regulatory environment) and non-market factors more generally, are both important and necessary in facilitating information flows, lessening transaction costs and providing a stable environment for investment and growth (World Bank, 1997b). It should be noted, however, that the gradual development of the Post-Washington Consensus remains deeply conservative in fiscal and monetary matters; it does not in principle oppose liberalisation and deregulation, and it remains broadly in favour of free trade and privatisation (Aybar and Lapavistas, 2001). Within the Post-Washington Consensus, development for the majority of countries, has remained market led, albeit tempered by state regulation (Desai and Imrie, 1998). Changes have included the slimming down of the state, reduced levels of public expenditure, extension of private sector roles in governance and the focus on efficiency within the public sector (Polidano, 1998).

It is on changes within the public administration that the interest of this thesis lies. Since the 1990s there is much evidence suggesting a general trend towards the managerialisation of states. The UK, the US and New Zealand have, in particular, led the reform agenda, and adopted it to the greatest extent. However, this process is not universal (Desai and Imrie, 1998). Polidano suggests that in fact, most developing countries have typically retrenched their civil services and decentralised a range of peripheral service functions, but 'have stopped short of the rest of the [new public management] agenda' (1998: 9). Support for continued right wing methods of reform of the civil services remain (Batley, 1999). As late as 1997 for example, the IMF was arguing that there was 'still scope for further downsizing' (Leinart and Modi, 1997: 32).

The changes in public administration associated with the 'Post-Washington Consensus' parallel attempts made by Prime Minister (Tony) Blair and President (Bill) Clinton in the late 1990s to carve out a 'third-way' (Giddens, 1998), between the paths of Thatcherite economic liberalism and traditional bureaucratic interventionism, through a greater promotion of the role of state as a *facilitator* of economic reform (Minocha, 1999). In many respects the new frameworks promoted by international agencies like the World Bank reflect a desire to find a 'third-way' in international development (Fine, 2001). This is, of course, not surprising, considering

the influence of Thatcher and Reagan on the original Washington Consensus developments of the 1980s onwards. Similarly, the current changes in multilateral policy should be read in conjunction with the emphasis placed on domestic policy by the Blair and Clinton administrations in the 1990s⁴.

Two elements of the differences between the Washington Consensus and the Post-Washington Consensus are especially relevant to this study. They are governance, and how to foster it; and the promotion of social capital through civil society (taken to refer to the sphere of association, outside the state), in which people 'freely' participate. How these concepts are defined and understood has critical implications for the necessary role and nature of reform of the public bureaucracy.

Governance is notoriously difficult to define (Agarwal, 1998; Minocha, 1999; Abrahamsen, 2001), but Painter describes it as,

'the involvement of a wide range of institutions and actors in the production of policy outcomes, including non-governmental organisations, quangos, private companies, pressure groups, and social movements as well as those state institutions traditionally regarded as formally part of the government' (2000: 317).

He continues that,

'Most writers though go further than this and argue that the state has become less prominent and non-state organisations have become relatively more important within the overall process of governance' (p. 317).

Critically it encompasses the policy frameworks, rules and institutions that regulate the conduct of private and public activity and manage the role of the bureaucracy. Examples include financial and corporate accountability, an adequate legal system, judicial independence and transparent regulatory bodies. Most of these goals depend on building institutional capacity. Whereas the previous Washington Consensus demanded the 'shrinking' of the state (Bayliss and Cramer, 2001), the new policy agenda necessitates getting the right institutional mix for optimum functioning of markets.

⁴ With the recent change of administration in America under Bush it is possible that policy may shift slightly to a more Conservative stance.

One reason for the popularity of the idea of 'good governance' is the realisation within the World Bank, and increasingly within the IMF, that without institutional support, reforms are likely to fail (WB, 1997). In part this is due to the impact of 'new institutional economics'. The work of Douglas North has been particularly influential in this area. North argues that the market system and property rights do not arise spontaneously, but are in fact the creations of governments (1990). The implication of this was to focus attention on the 'supply' of market institutions by governments. One area where the emphasis on good governance is being reflected, is in the provision of regulatory frameworks in previously deregulated sectors of the economy. Where this framework has not been in place, power from the state has sometimes been transferred to influential networks of bureaucrats and private actors (including criminal networks) it is now argued, who have created cartels in the profitable sectors of the economy, derailing the reform programmes. An example often cited is that of Russia. (Stiglitz, 2002).

Some commentators have criticised the ambiguous nature of the concept of 'good governance' arguing that it can be manipulated to serve the needs of very different ideologies (Kiely, 1998). Whilst both the World Bank and UNDP have produced publications to highlight its strengths (World Bank, 1997b; UNDP, 1997a, 1997b), the phrase is very subjective. UNDP's former Administrator, James Gustave Speth, defines it as,

'participatory, transparent and accountable. It is also 'effective' and 'efficient' depending on how these terms are defined. And it promotes the rule of justice under law. Good governance ensures that political, social and economic priorities are based on broad consensus in society and that the voices of the poorest and most vulnerable are heard in decision making... (UNDP 1997b: 2)'.

The diverse range of goals outlined above are potentially contradictory. For example, if decision-making is participatory, accountable and transparent, it is likely to involve the often lengthy processes of negotiation and accommodation. These ends therefore do not necessarily fit with the idea of making governance more effective and efficient. Kiely (1998) has argued that it is the very ambiguity of the concept which has promoted its global ascendancy as various divergent actors are able to speak the same language whilst taking very different connotations from its meaning.

Though this dissertation does not aim to analyse the workings or policies of the World Bank in relation to their promotion of good governance, it is interesting to note a recent report on their Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) approach. Panos (2002) argues that the policies adopted by the Bank over the last three years as a condition for debt relief, loans or aid is seriously flawed. The NGO's report suggests that, despite the rhetoric, the policies of good governance are too closely related to those of Structural Adjustment and are used as a means to justify a reduction in government expenditure and the opening of the economies of the countries to which they lend.

The second element of particular note is the concentration on 'social capital' as the 'missing link' in development (Grootaert, 1997). Much discussion regarding social capital centres on the work of the economist Robert Putman (1993), though its antecedents can be seen in particularly in the work of Bourdieu (1980, 1986, 1987) and Coleman (1988, 1990). Putnam (1993), in his book, 'Making Democracy Work: civic traditions in modern Italy', defines social capital as,

'Features of social organisation, such as networks, norms and trust, that facilitate co-ordination and co-operation for mutual benefit' (1993: 167).

The thrust of Putman's argument suggests that if these norms and networks link large proportions of civil society, a critical condition for 'good government' is created. In short, he states that economic performance relates to the interactive effects of both social and economic capital.

Recently, John Harriss (2002) has produced a scathing critique of the idea of 'social capital' as developed by Putnam and employed by the World Bank. He argues that the idea of social capital focusing on 'local organisations' and 'self-help', is premised on the idea that the most disadvantaged can help themselves, and justifies large-scale public expenditure cuts. Harriss argues that Putnam's concept and use of social capital more or less ignores the role of public institutions and the lines of causality run only in one direction - from society, specifically horizontal voluntary associations, to government performance and presumably the functioning of democracy. He suggests that the 'society-centric' argument has come to lend power to the elbow of

conservative ‘rollers back of the state’⁵ both in the United States and in International Development. He uses a vast range of examples to suggest that rather than ‘civicness’ providing the ‘soil’ in which different state structures ‘grow’, causality runs in the opposite direction. Harriss presents evidence to suggest that state institutions can lay the basis for generalised trust, citing Brehm and Rahm who argue,

‘a stronger relationship running from trust in institutions to interpersonal trust than the other way round suggesting that more trustworthy governmental institutions make for greater social trust in society’ (cited in Foley and Edwards, 1999).

To support his thesis he draws on the work of Peter Evans (1992, 1995, 1996a) and Judith Tendler (1997), who both demonstrates that in cases where development projects have done particularly well, state institutions have played a pivotal role. He argues that such evidence would support the greater involvement of the state in development policy. He notes,

‘Where programmes have been made to work much more effectively than before – in the health sector, and in agriculture and drought relief – it has substantially been because of *changes in work organisations* and in the *commitment of government workers*. In many ways patterns have come to resemble those of successful private-sector enterprises: *flexible, involving team-work, and a client centred problem solving approach* (rather than the delivery of centrally determined ‘products’)... It has shown the public what should be expected of public employees, and publicity has been given, too, to the importance of complaints from members of the public about failures of performance (2002: 67, emphasis mine)’.

As Harriss contends, evidence does point to the fact that, in many cases, effective public bureaucracies can play a focal role in development policy. What Harriss appears to overlook is the changes that have been made over the last five years, particularly in relation to the good governance debates and the nature of bureaucratic reform (discussed in the next section). The research he cites was almost exclusively carried out in the 1980s or early 1990s, and is part of the body of work that has fed into the Post-Washington Consensus recommendations. It is interesting to note that when quoting Evans’ (1996a) observations regarding the lack of ‘embeddedness’ witnessed in the Indian administration, Harriss concedes that,

⁵ Other definitions of this phenomenon include: Rhodes (1992), *Hollowing out of the State*; Peter Self’s analysis of *Government by the Market* (1993); David Osborne and Ted Gaebler, (1992) *Reinventing Government*; also Peter Drucker, (1995) *Really Reinventing Government*.

‘It is possible that things have changed in India since he (Evans) did his research (before the introduction of the economic reform programme in 1991)’ (p. 131).

However Harriss, is unwilling to afford the same flexibility to the possibility that World Bank policies and practices may have changed over the same period. I would suggest that rather than the Bank focusing explicitly on the rolling back of the state there has, through the Post-Washington Consensus, been a shift in ideology refocusing on the nature of state institutions rather than their fundamental role, seen through the nature of NPM reforms recently initiated. Despite these specific changes from the earlier Consensus, it would be an error to read these as a strict departure from the past. The new Consensus can be more accurately understood as the political moderation of the earlier economic emphasis on structural reform based on open markets, deregulation and less government. Not all are convinced of the World Bank’s revisionist views, indeed for Kiely, the new views on governance are problematic as they,

‘retain commitment to a flawed neo-liberal paradigm which sees states as inherently inefficient economic actors and reduces development to a single process of technical policy making’ (1998: 81).

1.4: New Public Management

In the 1990s, NPM was, and some would argue still is, heavily influenced by public choice theory (PCT), and the belief in the efficacy of the market as the primary mode of production for economic development. The discourse rapidly acquired global dimensions during this decade with the diffusion of new public management reforms through foreign aid policies of Northern governments (mainly through multilateral and bilateral aid mechanisms) (Desai and Imrie, 1998).

Within this section, I outline the traditional conception of new public management (NPM) as adopted by one of its exemplars, the USA. I outline some key theoretical influences on public management before discussing critiques of new public management in practice. The final paragraphs of this section outline other more recent influences on NPM, aimed at cultural and institutional change within the administration.

Table 1.2: Key Features on New Public Management:

<p>The principal features of NPM include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An emphasis away from issues of policy to those of management;• A shift towards the disaggregation of administrative units;• The creation of explicit standards and measures of performance;• An emphasis on results rather than procedures;• The use of contract arrangements inside as well as outside the public sector; and• A general adoption of private sector corporate practices. <p>Massie, 1997: 8; Burns et al., 1994: 84.</p>

It is difficult to produce a definitive statement regarding new public management, as it has been given different emphases in different countries and has changed over time. Two of its leading proponents, Osborne and Gaebler, in their 1992 book 'Reinventing Government', describe a positive change in sprawling and wasteful bureaucracies of the past to a more streamlined and efficient service. They see new public management as enabling the creation of 'entrepreneurial governance' that consists of ten essential elements to 'reinvent' public sector organisations:

'Entrepreneurial governments promote *competition* between service providers. They *empower* citizens by pushing control out of the bureaucracy, into the community. They measure the performance of their agencies, focusing not on inputs but on *outcomes*. They are driven by their goals - their *missions* - not by rules and regulations. They redefine their clients as *customers* and offer them choices - between schools, between training programmes, between housing options. They *prevent* problems before they emerge, rather than simply offering services afterwards. They put their energies into *earning* money, not simply spending it. They *decentralise* authority, embracing participatory management. They prefer *market* mechanisms to bureaucratic mechanisms. And they focus on providing public services but on *catalyzing* all sectors - public, private and voluntary - into action to solve their community's problems (Ibid. 19-20)'.

The 'reinvention' case is that in order to respond creatively to problems, a changing perception of the role of state institutions is necessary. Osborne has argued that,

'many of the tools used to improve the performance of companies - employee empowerment, internal competition, and measurement can be marshalled to 'reinvent' government itself' (quoted in Posner and Rothstein, 1994: 133).

Exponents of new public management suggest that it can assist the large-scale transformation from unresponsive, paternalistic bureaucracies to customer driven, flexible, quality orientated and responsive organisations (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992).

The case of the United States in the 1990s exemplifies two important (and often contradictory) aspects incorporated in NPM - that of the neo-liberal privatisation agenda and the focus on administrative reform. Here change took place under Bill Clinton's administration, in the form of the National Performance Review (NPR) (Margetts, 1997: 47). During his election campaign, Clinton focused on the need for reform based on Osborne and Gaebler's (1992) *Reinventing Government*, through which 'entrepreneurial government' was envisaged. Following these suggestions Clinton initiated an intensive six-month study of the federal bureaucracy,⁶ carried out by 250 government employees under the leadership of Al Gore. Changes that followed the recommendations included increased competition in service delivery, devolved budgets allocated on the basis of outcomes, and community-oriented service provision. It was felt that in many cases, policy decisions could be separated from service delivery, and they used the metaphors of 'steering' as opposed to 'rowing' (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992). Government was to be reinvented as a catalyst, empowering communities to solve their own problems.

The NPR took the form of two distinct phases (Margetts, 1997), the first in 1993, the second in 1995. In the first phase, it focused primarily on the workings of government, rather than its fundamental role. It concentrated on three themes of putting the customer first, cutting red tape and empowering employees for results. Privatisation was noticeably absent in this instance. The second phase contrasts starkly, with privatisation and contracting out brought to the fore. This phase concentrated on 'Cutting Back to Basics', which has come to mean a refocusing and, importantly, a 'downsizing' of federal government activities (see footnote). The back to basics agenda was pursued through a range of measures including 'service termination', privatisation, the creation of quasi-government corporations and greater reliance on public private partnerships (PPPs). The belief here was that outsourcing and competition in service provision would improve services and efficiency.

⁶ The American strategy is based on the experiences from the United States' state and local governments - it does not tackle the problems found in the US federal government.

The experience of the United States highlights two variant foci of NPM. The first points to bureaucratic reform focusing on internal economy and efficiency. The second, however, envisages improved performance through the fundamental reordering of power equations between the providers and the recipients of public goods and services. Whilst couched in the language of ‘customer driven bureaucracy’ many aspects promoted in the US necessitate a fundamental rethink of the nature and scope of the public bureaucracy (Sharma, 2000).

As in the US case the NPM philosophy has been associated both implicitly and explicitly with a number of divergent approaches. Public choice theory (PCT), as its most contentious association, has perhaps received widest attention as a theoretical underpinning of the discourse. Niskanen’s (1971) foundational text on public choice theory suggests that ‘vote seeking politicians’ and ‘budget maximising bureaucrats’ produce excessive governmental structures. Public choice theorists suggest that state actors are rational self-seekers (Tullock, 1965, 1970; Buchanan et al 1980). These analysts promote a political agenda driven by the desire to free citizens from the ‘tyranny’ of public bureaucracy, and to make both politicians and civil servants responsive to the people they serve (Niskanen, 1971). Since politicians and bureaucrats are unlikely to promote a reduction in their own authority, so public choice theorists suggest, the pressure for reform should come from external forces. It aims to limit the damage the public sector can do and focuses on ‘externalisation’; namely the removal of ‘excess’ workers, contracting out of service production and delivery to non-public providers (or in the immediate sense to arms-length agencies within). In order to do this, it argues for a transformed working environment for public managers and employees so they operate under business style regimes, with incentives to perform⁷, both to increase efficiency and limit rent seeking opportunity.

⁷ This literature is now referred to as the ‘new political economy’ or, more narrowly, the literature of rational choice and rent seeking elites. The key text referring to developing countries is Krueger (1974); other more general work includes, Tullock (1965), Niskanen (1971), and Buchanan et al. (1980). More recent works include Lal (1983), Colander (1984), Bates (1988), Gelb et al. (1991), and Schwartz (1994). Critiques of public choice dominance of NPM in the developing world are offered by Samuels and Mercurio (1984), Grindle (1991), Fishlow (1989, 1991), Moore (1989), and Streeten (1993). For more general critique, see Starr (1988) and Kelman (1988).

While the experiences of new public management differ between and within countries there are key contradictory and problematic tendencies associated with the form of NPM promoted by PCT. First, contrary to its aim of increased efficiency, PCT-driven new public management has seen a proliferation of government and extra government agencies generating a potential crisis of governance in terms of accountability (Barberis, 1998). It has also been analysed to lead to the problems of re-bureaucratisation by the new governance agencies (Doig and Wilson, 1998); and problems in co-ordination and control of policy development and implementation by new managers. Indeed, far from the promise of streamlined, efficient services, some evidence suggests the reverse (Cochrane, 1993, Stewart, 1998). The second point relates to the idea of market provision of services. Public choice theorists suggest that basing the design and development of policies on the idea of market consumerism,

‘offers the possibility of services being more attentive to the issue of social diversity in the challenge that it makes to service-led structures of provision’ (Clarke and Newman, 1997, p.111).

This idea is potentially positive, as it attempts to move away from the idea of a single unified public towards a plurality of user interests and focuses on the notion that the specific needs of users will be diverse. Two points of contention, however, can be raised in this debate. First, this concept demands the presence of a ‘cultivated consumer’ who is able to demand and access their specific needs, or it is likely to descend into an environment in which democratisation of choice is more apparent than real (Hadley and Clough, 1996). This type of market provision necessarily involves public participation. For Desai this type of participation in India, represents little more than (official) rhetoric. In her research on slum housing in Bombay she argues relations between state institutions, NGOs and their beneficiaries/consumers are increasingly managed by the market in ways which excludes those without control over resources, or the ability to demand them (1995, 1996).

The second point relates to the nature of provision through market consumerism. For Potter (1994), this essentially necessitates an analysis of ‘how’ services should be provided rather than Clarke and Newman’s argument for a market that decides ‘which services should be provided’ (1997: 108). Further, just as state provision can be flawed, so can that by the market. Through market provision, opportunities have emerged for rent-seeking and corruption, whereby contracts may be given to a small

dominant elite who contain and maintain existing power structures (Harriss-White, 1996).

Clarke and Newman suggest that new public management is premised on the management of finite resources in a fragmented policy arena and a retreat from 'generic fields of public provision' (1997: 79). Through new public management under the influence of PCT, organisations outside the state are expected to fill the void left by the state in public provision. For Desai and Imrie this can lead to problems of 'policy gaps' or increased problems in policy implementation (1998). Hadley and Clough (1996), in their study of the British health care system, note problems of overburdened managers and systems highly controlled by central state directives through government attempts to oversee devolution of power to the local level. Similarly in India, contracting out to NGOs has been commissioned along the same strict and inflexible lines. Desai and Howes (1995) cite the example of Apnalaya, a Bombay-based NGO providing counselling services for addicts and their families, which depended on a central government grant to meet the running costs. The grant in turn depended on Apnalaya treating thirty people at any one time, a target set by officials who had not visited the Centre, when it only had the capacity to deal effectively with fifteen. This, along with other stringent conditions, eventually led to the closure of the centre (Desai and Howes, 1995).

Clarke and Newman refer to the logic of NPM as focusing on 'core business' with the 'effect of narrowing frameworks for the evaluation of services to assessment of their performance and efficiency as a business' (1997: 79). The assessment criteria, based on performance indicators, have the effect of providing only partial analysis of performance and encourage practices that feed assessment rather than broader policy concerns. In his analysis of new public management in the UK, Imrie (1999) suggests that 'auditing culture' has not only placed importance on narrow economic determinants at the expense of broader social issues, but that resources have been diverted in the processes and procedures of audit away from service provision.

Recently, commentators have begun to focus on the potential offered within NPM to alter the culture of public institutions without changing their fundamental role. Such authors suggest that neither bureaucrats nor politicians make simple profit maximising

calculations, though advantages may exist for these individuals in a number of ways. Benefits may be based on financial gain, but equally may be through job satisfaction created through a sense of empowerment, ownership or status. These NPM goals have been promoted through policy measures that include 'localisation' and 'de-bureaucratisation'.

Localisation stresses the dual processes of devolution and deconcentration. The immediately relevant implication of localisation is that the flow of power (in larger societal terms as well as intra-organisational ones) is directed downwards; so too is the flow of information. Through this, it is hoped, significant networks and expertise can be built up at the lowest practical level within the bureaucracy. These lower levels, through the process of power relocation, will gain in strategic importance. According to Dunleavy, it is precisely through this dispersal of power that the bureaucracy can become more responsive and effective service providers (1991).

De-bureaucratisation denotes a shift from the relatively rigid, hierarchical, homogenised bureaucracy of the Weberian (1964) idea, to a more fragmented, polycentric, fissiparous form⁸ (Fox and Miller, 1995). De-bureaucratisation has a number of (sometimes contradictory) connotations. In an attempt to reduce the amount of 'bureaucracy' in public administration, de-bureaucratisation has been used to promote delayering of the traditional hierarchy. Some of the possibilities include splitting up internally into more autonomous units, decentralisation designed to enhance the importance of lower level of the organisational pyramid, and empowerment of lower level functionaries (LLF). The term implies an attitudinal change, the removal of bureaucratic pathologies including red tape and delays, and attempts to open the forms of governance to be more simplistic and transparent. This idea of de-bureaucratisation highlights the divergent nature of managerial reform, as the term has also been used to advocate small government, devoted to policy management, with service provision controlled by non-public providers (Rhodes, 1994).

⁸ The extent to which a true Weberian bureaucracy can be said to exist is, of course, highly debateable (Esman, 1997).

For Sharma (2000) these three (non-exhaustive) influences of externalisation, localisation and de-bureaucratisation are important for several reasons. They show that the moves towards NPM are neither unidirectional nor a singular process, each element implies alternative types of reform for different administrations. Through these divergent changes it is clear that NPM is more than a current whim of individual nations, but a manifestation of deeper changes in ideas in national governments, international organisations, and in academic institutions (Hood, 1991, 1995, 1998). Furthermore the variety of influences on NPM, means the way in which it is realised differs between, and even within, countries. Polidano (1998) has argued that it can

‘be argued that such a thing as a unified coherent new public management model exists only in concept’ (p. 373).

As noted earlier, Desai and Imrie suggest that more research is necessary into the way in which new public management has been incorporated in different contexts. This thesis investigates the ways in which change associated with NPM has been assimilated and resisted in the Indian context. Within the next section I outline and analyse the major economic changes over the last decade that have led to the adoption of an adapted form of new public management by the Indian state.

1.5: Indian Economic and Administrative Reform

Cox (1987) has described an increasing ‘internationalisation of the state’, which refers to the growing influence of global forces on the working of individual states, through loan conditionalities, multinational companies, and the need of the individual country to be part of the global economic environment (p.2). But Clarke and Newman argue that whilst the influence of global forces on national systems of governance are considerable, shifts to new public management are more complex than the direct translation of dominant global agendas to the (sub)national level (Clarke and Newman, 1997). They argue in particular that change in local governance structure cannot be read off, as some seek to do,

‘as the local effect of a global set of ideas about how to run public organisations’.

They argue that it is possible to over-emphasise global forces in the logic of change,

‘seeing forces such as globalisation, institutional fragmentation, the adoption of business ideas and practices in public service delivery, as cascading down from the global level of new economic pressures to the world of individual

experience and action in a way which suggests simple linear sequences of cause and effect' (1997: ix)

The 1990s were marked by considerable change in India, notably following the adoption of a New Economic Policy (NEP) in 1991. Whilst events in India were certainly influenced by global agendas, they were not dominated by them, neither did India accept the neo-liberal agenda to the letter. Some have argued that the piecemeal and negotiated way India moved towards liberalisation has enabled it to avoid many of the pitfalls witnessed in other developing nations (Corbridge and Harriss, 2002).

Whilst it is frequently heralded as such, 1991 was not the beginning of the liberalisation process in India (Khilnani, 1997). Neither are current moves an 'all or nothing' process: confrontation and negotiation have been persistent phenomena throughout. The latest thrust however, has been greater in degree and scope than anything preceding it, and has shown striking qualitative differences. Despite notable achievements during the 'interventionist period',⁹ as early as the 1960s it was becoming evident that the goals of development with social justice had not been achieved via the quasi-socialist route. On the contrary, economic power and the distribution of economic growth had primarily benefited an elite minority. Poverty in India persisted in spite of the proclaimed goals of leadership to regulatory, bureaucratic and administrative state model of growth and justice. Roy has argued that 'trickle-down' theory had been falsified in the Indian situation (1995). The Congress party under Indira Gandhi first moved away from self-reliance in 1971 when it approached the IMF for a loan of US \$5 billion to stabilise fiscal reserves and support the Green Revolution strategy. However internal friction opposing the loans was so strong that the final instalment was rejected. Both Indira and her son Rajiv made efforts to open the Indian economy. They made some changes in licensing procedures, and delicensed some industries to provide increased flexibility and economic growth. Paranjape (1988) observes that Rajiv especially deployed tactics of a Janus-faced nature. On one hand he supported some aspects of the Nehruvian legacy whilst at the same time trying to reduce the powers and functioning of the powerful regulatory, bureaucratic, administrative state. Further, it is argued that Rajiv probably

⁹ Achievements under intervention include progress in regard to food production and distribution, industrial growth and diversification, self-reliance, poverty alleviation and regional balance (World Bank survey, 1989).

thought that his term would usher in the policy of liberalisation (Paranjape, 1988). Notwithstanding these moves, the model of development remained predominantly interventionist, due in no small part to the reaction by elite pressure to maintain the status quo. By the end of the 1980s, however, Bhagwati argues that cracks in the interventionist armour were becoming irreparable (1993).

In the summer of 1991, Finance Minister Manmohan Singh introduced reforms that have largely been continued by his successors of differing political affiliations. In India economic reform has dismantled major sections of industrial licensing, relaxed the provisions for the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act of 1969, provided incentives for foreign equity investment in high priority industries, encouraged joint ventures and drastically reduced import taxation. According to Stephen Radelet and Jeffrey Sachs, the reforms have dismantled ‘a considerable portion of the Licence Raj’, and that they observed ‘Nehruvian socialism succumbing to history in the same year as the Soviet Union’. As a result they contend that the actual growth rate of the Indian economy may have ‘increased to more than six per cent per year’ (Radelet and Sachs 1997: 57). Whilst changes have been substantial, they have not been entirely successful. The balance of payments crisis was still present in the late 1990s, and the incidence of rural poverty continued to rise despite an economic annual growth rate of around six per cent (Corbridge and Harriss, 2002). However, the 1990s did mark a substantial shift from the quasi-socialist path to development, previously pursued by the Indian government.

To go back a little, after gaining Independence in 1947, the Indian government pursued the Nehru-Mahalanobis model for structural transformation of the economy based on Five Year development plans. By 1970, critiques of the model were growing more acute, perhaps most notably in the work of Bhagwati and Desai on the industrial and trade policies of India since 1951 (1970; see also Bhagwati and Srinivasan, 1975). They argued, in agreement with other neo-liberal studies (see for example Little et al. 1970), that the focus on planned development and self-sufficiency neglected the ‘all important’ area of economic growth. Bhagwati and Srinivasan, and Roy, suggested that India’s political and bureaucratic elites, through their ‘rent-seeking’ practices, had allowed endemic corruption and the misallocation of economic resources. The

strength of the coalition between the various elites led Roy, as late as the mid 1980s, to suggest that the kind of reform which was soon to occur was all but impossible,

‘Even a limited liberal agenda would appear to be still born. Incumbent politicians, government officials and the public-sector unions in general would vigorously oppose any reduction in government intervention in the economy for fear of losing the rents and sinecures of the status quo’ (Roy 1984: 67).

Neoliberal analysis of the reform of the 1990s points to the fiscal crisis which deepened in the late 1980s and early 1990s, under the governments of Rajiv Gandhi, V.P. Singh and Chandra Shekhar. The extent of the economic crisis experienced in 1991 should not be underestimated. In June 1991, India faced a monumental foreign exchange crisis, its currency reserves having fallen to \$1.1 billion, representing enough for just two weeks of imports. In addition it was unable to service the \$70 billion foreign debt and had been refused further loans (Time Magazine, 1992). The situation was compounded by the deterioration of Indian finance from remittance payments following the Gulf Crisis (1990-1) and the rise of fiscal deficit to nine percent of GDP (Fernandez, and Mommen, 1998). Reform was encouraged despite the vested interests of elites. Singh chose currency devaluation and a bridging loan, with associated liberalisation and stabilisation conditionalities, from the IMF. Bhagwati’s analysis suggests both the inevitability and continuity elements of shifts towards a more open economy. He states,

‘Reform by storm has supplanted the reform by stealth of Mrs. Gandhi’s time and the reform with reluctance under Rajiv Gandhi’ (1993: 58).

For Deepak Lal the perpetuation of high budget deficits in the late 1990s necessitate further shifts to liberalisation, in what have been termed ‘a second round of reforms’. Such moves, including privatisation and labour market reform, have led Lal to maintain that in India, ‘globalisation is now an irreversible process’ (1999: 46).

Despite Lal’s analysis it would be inaccurate to perceive moves to liberalisation in the early 1990s, analysed with the benefit of hindsight, as inevitable. Whilst there was a clear liquidity crisis, it is not suggested that the Indian state was heading towards bankruptcy, or that the earlier planned development strategies had been a complete failure. Agricultural growth and industrial output remained largely the same as in previous years and inflation levels were not abnormally high during this period

(Ghosh, 1998). The World Bank, in its report 'India: An industrialising economy in transition', had declared,

'The 1980s... are showing that growth of at least 5 per cent a year is achievable. Investment is being sustained at nearly 35 per cent of GDP (and) a consistent 92-94 per cent of this investment is being financed by domestic savings, which have been growing' (World Bank, 1989: 1).

Successes within the economy at this time would suggest that reform was more complex than implied by the neo-liberal analysis of change. Corbridge and Harriss suggest that,

'Although stabilisation policies were required in 1991, it is not clear that these policies should have led on to structural adjustment... The reforms, in short, were engineered by and for certain interest groups in India, with the help, of course, of the recently elected (minority) Congress government of Narashima Rao and the IMF; they were not an inevitable or 'natural' response to the fiscal and payment 'shock' of 1991' (2002: 107).

Thus, a reading of history could suggest that India was forced to adopt liberalisation policies as a result of loan conditionality, but this is not the case. The government of India had, in fact, taken an IMF loan almost a decade earlier (1983) without adopting a more open approach to the economy (Surendra, 1999). According to Ashutosh Varshney (1996), pressures to reform had been building in India among the urban middle classes from the 1980s. However the Congress government of Rajiv Gandhi was either unwilling, or politically unable at that time, to push through the agenda of change. What differed by the early 1990s, was that the coalition government of Rao was able to pacify the opposition of the Communists and Janata Dal, in return for supporting them in their opposition to the BJP. Perhaps the most significant realisation of this support was seen in the adoption of reservation policy which would benefit the traditional lower caste support bases of both the Communist and JD parties¹⁰.

Rob Jenkins (1997) suggests that moves to reform have been more radical and continuous than some accounts suggest. He highlights the fact reforms have continued

¹⁰ In 1990, the National front government (under Prime Minister V.P. Singh) moved to adopt some of the recommendations of the Second Backward Classes (or Mandal) Commission. The government decided to increase the number of reserved education and government positions for the backward castes. Though the BJP has never publicly renounced India's system of reservation, its primary support comes from Forward Castes, and it has been reserved in its support for affirmative action. Concurrently it has attempted to create a single and undivided Hindu constituency (in line with the *Hindutva* ideology).

at both Central and State levels, even where reform would appear to threaten the interests of established elites, dominating what Varshney calls the arena of 'mass politics' (1996). Jenkins (1999) has identified three dominant sets of political tools, which he sees as having been fundamental in the adaptation and sustaining of liberalisation in India. *Political incentives*, Jenkins argues, were used in two ways. First, political and administrative elites were involved in the process of liberalisation from the outset, so they could shape reform to their benefit. Second, political incentives were used to 'divide and rule'. Incentives were used as a tool to manipulate individuals to change affiliations, magnifying the support from each group and intensifying what he terms the 'feedback of reform'. This analysis has also been suggested by Ravi Srivastava (1995), who links the growth of new political formations and increasing regionalisation of India's politics as regions press for favours from the Union Government or compete for foreign capital. Jenkins cites examples in Rajasthan, West Bengal and Orissa to suggest that reform is,

'Increasingly implemented in the form of successive micro-reforms in different States, at different times, and under different political circumstances' (1997: 160).

The manipulation of *political institutions*, Jenkins argues is the second factor in promoting and sustaining liberalisation. Opposition from formal political institutions, working within the federal system could be contained at the State level. He also claims informal institutions, representing networks of influence, were also identified and directly compensated in the process of liberalisation.

The third factor important in sustaining liberalisation, relates to the *political skill* of key individuals throughout the process. Liberalisation, Jenkins suggests, was not expressed as part of a radical transformation, but rather as both a 'natural', and necessary 'transformation' within the state. He says the process has been guided by politicians experienced in building coalitions, working behind the scenes in India's democratic polity to pacify opposition. He notes that,

'governing elites at many levels of the Indian polity were attracted by the potential of liberalisation to provide new sources of patronage to substitute for some of those forfeited by the shrinkage of the state's regulatory role' (1997: 6).

In Jenkins' view, the Indian state is at once a *democratic state* and a *dirty state*, and that is why it has been so effective.

1.6: New Public Management in India

Alongside the NEP, the government of India in the 1990s initiated a changing role for the state and its functionaries (Veron, 1999). The document for the conference of Chief Secretaries of the State governments' in 1996, somewhat coyly termed a 'Discussion Note', represents the most prominent early example of the direction of reforms (Government of India, 1996). The document, prepared by the Department of Administrative Reforms,¹¹ discusses the agenda for effective and responsive administration. It refers specifically to working in a context of economic liberalisation and argues that the state (and its functionaries) should now function as 'enabler' and 'facilitator', rather than as a direct provider of goods and services. It praises the merits of the private sector, and argues that an objective analysis should be made to identify the areas and activities that should be converted to autonomous entities, entrusted to the private sector, or shared with voluntary organisations and community organisations. An important recommendation concerned the separation of policy formulation from policy implementation, the implication being that whereas policy formulation was an essentially political process, the last word being with the political executive, policy implementation is as a techno-economic exercise for which new accountability mechanisms had to be devised. Major sections of the document were couched in the currently modish language of 'human rights', 'customer orientation', 'participation', 'democracy', 'the rights of citizens to information', 'ethics' in government, and the public services.

In its totality, the Discussion Note is a document that is important both for what it says, as well as for what it omits, claiming that the limitations of the Nehruvian state-led project of capitalist development had been exposed. As a consequence, a new role for the state, and the civil service as the indispensable institution of the state, had to be both formulated and made acceptable to different sections of public, political and administrative opinion. In order to achieve consensus, the document is deliberately vague. It leaves several statements in the air for the reader to interpret, for example, whom and for what purpose does the government enable and facilitate? There are hazy references to privatisation, to the objectives of deregulation, to whom to protect, how and to what extent. The study is deliberately ambiguous about how the civil

¹¹ This Department is part of the Ministry of Personnel that reports to the Cabinet Secretary. The Cabinet Secretary heads the civil service.

service is to be structured and equipped for its new role as an enabler and a facilitator. The document rather confusingly offers selective examples, drawing on the public administration experience of a range of developed and developing countries of enormously different historical and cultural backgrounds. It appears from the document that the administrators, as part of the ruling coalition, accept that something has to be done to help the faltering service, but cannot fully agree on what or why.

The diagnosis of the performance of the Indian state by the World Bank at this time was unambiguously clear; agreement on the treatment was more problematic (WB, 1997). A congruence of perspectives in regard to the basic functions of government had been developed, evidenced by language in both the World Development Report, (1997) and the report of the Fifth Central Pay Commission of January 1997 (GoI, 1997a). The Pay Commission is an advisory body, and does not purport to speak on behalf of the government. However, its opinions do influence political judgement inasmuch as it reflects the current trend of opinion in the Indian policy community. In addition to defining the core functions of government, the Commission proposed a four-fold test for more efficient organisation. It suggested that the following basic questions should be asked about any state activity:

- 1 Does the job need doing?
- 2 If so, does the government have to do it?
- 3 If so, does it have to carry out the job itself?
- 4 If so, is the organisation properly structured for the job? (GoI, 1997a: 127)

The Indian debate on state reform shifted focus from its original radical stance. Debate had begun by questioning the *raison d'être* of the state, arguing that as many functions as possible should be shifted away from public provision towards the private, non-government and community sectors. However, with time, the focus has swung back to the politically more acceptable debate of how to accommodate measures to reduce the estrangement of the people from the whole system of governance. Therefore, by the time of the 1997 Action Plan (GoI, May 1997a), rather than altering governance structures in their totality, politicians and administrators were looking at ways to regenerate the floundering bureaucratic state.

Whilst the radical suggestions of the Pay Commission have not been enacted in full, changes greater in extent and scope than anything previously witnessed in the Indian context have followed from the 1997 action plan. The title adopted at the Chief Ministers' conference was, significantly, the 'Action Plan for Effective and Responsive Administration'. Measures outlined in the Action Plan have since been adopted for implementation by both Union and State governments. The Administrative Reform package covers a diverse range of initiatives directed at achieving reform of the country's bureaucracy. Whilst there is an element of overlap between each, three sets of measures are discernible and provide a useful point of departure. These measures include, first, *accountability fostering measures*; second measures to *promote transparency and openness*; and finally those measures directed at *civil service performance and integrity*¹².

The first category, that of bureaucratic accountability, is comprised of the introduction of citizen's charters, measures to strengthen and streamline procedures for redressal of public grievance, and steps directed at reviewing the existing legislations, rules and procedures. These changes are essentially aimed at establishing or developing 'frameworks' for responsive government. In the pursuit of transparency and openness, 'freedom of information' legislation forms the cornerstone of reform. Whilst many of the States have enacted this legislation, it remains to be established at central government level.

Other initiatives undertaken by the government include the computerisation of departments, and measures to secure the wide dissemination of information. The aim of computerisation is to track receipts and files effectively, to enable easy access to information and to promote greater co-ordination between departments. Other means of increasing information include user-guides, notice board displays, publications and the creation of information and facilitation counters.

In order to increase civil service performance and integrity, a number of measures have been adopted. These include measures to curb corruption, efforts towards

¹² The description of 'initiatives' in the present section is based on the Government of India's best practice compendium. See GOI, Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, Initiatives and Best Practices (1997).

evolving a civil service code of ethics, contracting out of public services and steps towards simplification of procedures. Many important central government initiatives in the realm of corruption have been made since the 1996 Chief Secretaries Conference. These include the establishment of a unit to monitor agencies dealing with corruption, the initiation of steps to process the Vohra Committee report¹³ (1993), and vigorous monitoring of corruption cases. Further to this, time-limited completion for disciplinary proceedings, and special drives against corruption, including surprise-raids and trap laying, were also endorsed.

Regulations to govern the workings of the bureaucracy have always been in existence at the Central and State level, in the form of what should and shouldn't be done by bureaucrats, but these do not represent a positive statement of values and beliefs. The Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions have now developed a draft 'Code of Ethics' which, having been agreed upon at the Chief Ministers' conference, is undergoing legalities. The Code outlines the standards of conduct expected within the civil service.

Support for outsourcing government functions rest on the well-versed arguments in favour of the concentration of government on its core functions to help to 'right-size' a bloated bureaucracy and to bring about enhanced productivity. Areas recommended for outsourcing by the Fifth Central Pay Commission (1997) include construction and maintenance of government offices, residential colonies, factories and railway stations, housekeeping, sanitation, postal delivery, printing, computer-related services, and many others. However the restrictive nature of the 1970 Contract Labour (Regulation Abolition) Act, has limited the numbers of redundancies.

To try to make the system more transparent and to ensure enforcement of accountability, a comprehensive revamp of the existing procedures, including an

¹³ The seriousness of the problem of criminalisation of politics and of the nexus among criminals, politicians and bureaucrats was brought out by the former Union Home Secretary, N. N. Vohra, in a report submitted in October 1993. It contains several sensational observations made by official agencies including work on the network of the mafia virtually running a parallel government and on criminal gangs enjoying the patronage of politicians, cutting across party lines. It looked at the protection of government functionaries and on political leaders becoming leaders of gangs, armed Senas and, over the years getting themselves elected to local bodies, State Assemblies and Parliament. The unpublished annexures to the Vohra report were believed to contain potentially damaging material, and were suppressed by elements of the political elite.

exercise designed to achieve simplification of the different variety of 'forms' in use by various ministries has commenced. To ensure that the various ministry-level reviews of procedures were vigorous, the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances issued a set of guidelines in December 1996. These procedures are 'customer focused', including on-the-spot scrutiny of forms to ensure that the customer could be immediately advised of any deficiencies, informing the customer periodically of the status of the application, and review of working hours to ascertain if these are convenient for the customer.

Early reports would suggest that the Indian state has encompassed at least some of the new public management discourse Veron (1999) has traced the changing poverty discourses in India since Independence and argues that the government has moved from the broad role of 'provider', to one of 'supplementary provider' or 'facilitator' in the 1990s.

'[The Government in India] enables, or 'empowers', self-help groups and voluntary organisations to strengthen people's opportunities for development' (1999: 5).

He continues,

'The state defines its role increasingly as supplementary provider of services that are not offered by the private sector, voluntary organisations and the community. In line with current World Bank thinking, India's government is concentrating its efforts, besides promoting economic growth, on the provision of basic education and primary health care because in these areas, private initiatives and the market are unlikely to play a significant role... Development responsibility is shared with, and delegated to, other institutions such as community groups and the private sector. This also signifies the state's changing relationship to these institutions' (ibid: 10-12).

As stated earlier the aim of this project is to analyse the ways in which the bureaucracy in Uttar Pradesh have engaged with the processes of change associated with new public management. Change associated with NPM in Uttar Pradesh is of particular interest as, in 1997, it became the first State in India to take a sub-national single tranche adjustment loan for a Fiscal and Public Sector Restructuring Programme from the World Bank. This restructuring programme has focused heavily on the nature of the civil service (World Bank, 1997a). Alongside policies promoted by the Union government, Uttar Pradesh has developed its own 'Reforms in

Governance in the State of Uttar Pradesh' agenda, in direct conjunction with the Bank (U.P. Academy of Administration, 1999)¹⁴.

The discussion paper for 'Reforms in Governance in the State of Uttar Pradesh' (1999) was prepared on behalf of the Government of UP, with assistance from the World Bank, for its 'Programme on Economic and Fiscal Restructuring of Uttar Pradesh and Civil Service Renewal'. This was not a government document, but fed into the Civil Service Reforms (CSR) of the Government of UP 2000, and was a clear indication of the way in which government was thinking. Subjects covered in this paper include Public Enterprise Reforms, Deregulation, Participation and Information Technology for Improved Governance. However, in line with the interests of this thesis, two further issues, Civil Service Renewal and Anti Corruption Strategy are of particular note.

Civil Service Renewal (CSR) (GoI, 1999)

Clarke and Newman have suggested that one of the most important tools of NPM proponents is the use of specific language to promote the discourse (1997). This is apparent in the Indian case, as even the title of the paper implies the advancement or moving forward of the civil service, making criticism of the recommendations difficult. The introduction to the 'Civil Service Renewal' section of the reforms emphasises the importance of restructuring the lower levels of the bureaucracy,

'Civil Service, in the Indian context, has hitherto been normally associated with the superior civil services such as the All-India services¹⁵ ... However, if the subject of restructuring of the civil service is to be treated in its proper perspective, then the subject civil service must include not only the superior civil services but also the subordinate civil services. The cutting edge or the contact level between the government and others is the subordinate civil services, especially in the States. It is indeed very surprising to discern how little, if any, attention has actually been devoted to the issue of restructuring the bottom of the administrative pyramid ' (1999: 12).

This is particularly important, as it signals the importance of those individuals working at the implementation stage. This idea is one promoted through NPM in the form of localisation.

¹⁴ The Department of Personnel, Government of Uttar Pradesh have also published the 'Uttar Pradesh, Civil Service Reforms Policy', 2000

¹⁵ For discussion of the various elements of the Indian bureaucracy see chapter 2.

In the budget statement of June 1998, the Government of Uttar Pradesh (GoUP) stated its intention to improve the quality of governance in the State, increase accountability, and reduce the incidence of administrative misconduct or corruption. According to this section of the Reforms, in line with the promotion of 'de-bureaucratisation' and attitudinal change, the aim of the CSR is to improve,

'the delivery of services to the people, by energising the administration and development of a new *work-culture* in the civil services' (1999: 12).

The areas covered in the UP paper cover similar ground to that of the national discussion note including a) accountability, transparency and rule of law; b) management information systems and c) the need for downsizing and/or right-sizing. This last element is important as it supports the 'retrenchment/ redeployment' of staff. The WB language in this section is interesting because each of the two sets of words have different connotations. Whilst there are approximately one million state employees in Uttar Pradesh, compared with the size of the total population, per capita rates are relatively low. It could be argued, therefore, that to 'right size' (to the per capita rates of those developed nations they wish to emulate) would involve increasing the numbers employed rather than 'down-sizing' (Rowat, 1990). The 'retrench/redeploy' idea is of a similar ilk. If staff are redeployed this implies they are retrained and are used more effectively. Retrenchment, on the other hand, implies redundancy.

As with the national literature the role of bureaucracy as facilitators is promoted. It notes devolution to lower layers of the administrative hierarchy, but at the same time posits the idea promoted by Public Choice theorists of 'externalisation'. It suggests that at the level of the department,

'only such functions should remain as are concerned with policy work and *facilitating* role of the department. The option of removing such work from the department as can be done by private sector or non-government agencies may be considered seriously. Similarly, some work can be transferred to District level, *Kshetra Panchayat*¹⁶ level or village level under the decentralisation system (1999: 19)'.

¹⁶ *Kshetra* (also spelt *Kshetriya*) or Block level *panchayats*.

A commitment to 'sub-state' decentralisation is now prominent in state discourse, envisaged by the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments, which clearly demarcate certain functions and responsibilities as belonging to local bodies¹⁷. Those supporting decentralisation through the *Panchayati Raj* Act, which aims to vest more powers in the villages and municipal bodies of India, suggest that devolution of government authority to local levels will increase accountability and be more effective as participation grows (in relation to India see Mishra, 1992). David Korten has suggested that this may be achieved through a 'learning process approach' (1981). However, this idea is contested. Decentralisation can also serve the neo-liberal agenda of 'cutting back the state' and can be made to serve the interests of the power holding minority. This led Slater (1989: 519) to argue that the promotion of decentralisation is simply a means of pushing forward 'the angel of privatisation' under the guise of a people-friendly policy label. The way decentralisation works clearly depends on the interpretation and implementation placed upon it by the elected and non-elected institutions of the States (for critical analysis see Chambers, 1983, 1993), the regional parliament and importantly the bureaucracy itself. International research has shown that the outcomes of decentralisation are crucially influenced by the political relationship between the 'Centre' and the 'locality', and by configurations of power, which means that similar schemes can have dramatically different results (Tendler, 1997b; Crook and Sverrisson, 1999).

Other key elements included in the Uttar Pradesh reform focus on 'Training and Development' at 'all levels' and the need for 'capacity building'. The CSR suggests that complaints should be dealt with fairly and promptly, 'with a view to making government functioning people-oriented and beneficiary-centred' (1999: 24), and that departments should create 'citizen's charters' so that people know the roles and obligations of each department (to aid accountability). It stresses the need for innovation and that those who are innovators should be highlighted and praised. Examples are given of the World Bank funded programmes of Land Reclamation and Water Sanitation Projects (p.26) that have, according to them, been successful through the development of partnerships between government, non-government organisations

¹⁷ For recent work on the functioning of local government panchayata, see for example, Lieten, 1996; Lieten and Srivastava 1999; Williams, 1997; Webster, 1992.

and beneficiary groups. It also suggests that innovative programme, and financial management projects, be mainstreamed.

Whilst suggesting 'best practice' examples be followed, it also discusses problems of the bureaucracy that should be curbed. In particular the document, prepared with the World Bank, discusses problems associated with the rapid, and often politically motivated, movement of officers (discussed in detail in chapter 2). The paper suggests that,

'For ensuring improvements in the quality of governance and sustaining reforms, it is essential that civil servants be protected from capriciousness and arbitrariness in the matter of appointments, postings and transfers...Every year policy guidelines on transfers are issued but there have been cases where the instruments of transfer has also been misused. Very often, transfer is also used as an instrument of punishment' (1999: 27).

This is an important point, particularly in the light of the Bank threatening to withdraw funding from the State of Uttar Pradesh if the practice is not halted immediately (Financial Times, Nov 10th 2002).

These recommendations were officially incorporated into the Uttar Pradesh Civil Service Reforms Policy of 2000. However, the state often makes claims of commitment to various agendas, which are not initiated for a variety of reasons, including lack of political commitment, resources or resistance by the bureaucracy in the process of implementation. Over a decade ago, Nelson (1989: 9) identified the potential problems of reform, acknowledging both the 'anti-state nature of many of the reforms', and the irony that successful policy implementation, to a large extent, remains dependant on the bureaucracy. She refers to the dilemma as the 'orthodox paradox, whereby the aim of reform is to create a more skilled, motivated and effective civil service. It is the current bureaucracy that is expected to implement changes, that in many cases will lead to a reduction in their own autonomy.

1.7: Conclusions:

In this chapter I have tried to detail the major changes in development policy and debate that have influenced this research. There have clearly been significant changes in mainstream development theory and practice over the past two decades, notably the shift from a Washington to a Post-Washington Consensus. Building on the insights of

several key authors (notably Evans, Grindle, and Tandler) this has led to a focus on civil service reforms in order to promote a more professional and facilitating bureaucracy. The focus of this work is to investigate the impact of new public management discourses and practices on bureaucratic culture in Uttar Pradesh, with special reference to the Indira Mahila Yojana scheme. As already stated the key questions for this research are:

- a) How have the government officials at different levels experienced change associated with NPM?
- b) How have 'outsiders' associated with the scheme experienced changes?

Policy alone clearly does not determine outcomes. The structure of the implementing organisation and culture of the institutions and individuals within, are also fundamental in determining how policy is realised. The Indian bureaucracy, as one such institution, has been the subject of much negative press of late, particularly in the areas of corruption (Agrawal, 1996; Harriss-White, 1996; Jeffrey, 2002), inertia (Dhar, 1997), politicisation (Bhattacharya, 1998; Kashyap, 2001) and nepotism (Agarwal, 1995). But whilst it is true the public bureaucracy has often been a serious obstruction to development, it has also promoted and supported many achievements that are not reflected in the current dominant view (Joshi, 1997; Tandler, 1997). In the next chapter therefore I consider the various conflicting perceptions of the Indian bureaucracy and discuss how the various 'cultures' of the Indian bureaucracy may affect the way in new public management is adopted and adapted in reality.

A central perspective that informs this work is that the bureaucracy is not monolithic – it needs to be sectorally, hierarchically and even individually disaggregated. Moreover, different levels and sectors of the bureaucracy have agency – they will, within certain constraints and limitations, negotiate both 'external' impositions (including changing rules, norms and procedures) and 'grounded' demands and conditions.

CHAPTER 2: KAUN BANEGA KROREPATI¹? PERCEPTIONS OF BUREAUCRATIC CULTURES IN INDIA

2.1: Introduction

The thoughts and actions of 'development' bureaucrats are powerfully shaped by the world of acceptable statements and utterances within which they live; and what they do and do not do is a product not only of the interests of various nations, classes and international agencies, but also of a working out of this complex structure of knowledge (Ferguson, 1990: 18).

The previous chapter outlined shifts in development debates from a Washington to a post-Washington Consensus. This has involved moves from the promotion of state versus market, to being centred on the creation of an appropriate balance of state and market for effective governance with a focus on institutions. Paralleling this has been the shift of NPM from a form (almost exclusively) dominated by public choice prescriptions concerning 'rolling back the state', to a reappraisal of the nature of state institutions. India has initiated reform of its administration along NPM lines, following the adoption of a New Economic Policy in 1991.

Public Choice prescriptions for public administration in India have broadly been based on the perception that bureaucrats are a rent-seeking elite whose powers should be restricted. This is also a feeling evident in public opinion. However, this pejorative view of the public administration has been challenged by those who have seen the Indian bureaucracy as a 'steel frame' without which development achievements would not have been made; and those who have seen the opportunities offered by the entrepreneurial mould promoted in private sector firms. Clearly the 'nature' or 'culture' of the administration will have fundamental implications for the way(s) in which policy is adopted and adapted and in which change occurs. There is no doubt that the subjective *values* of government officials have impacted development policy in India from the point of inception through to implementation. The structure, norms and working practices of the bureaucracy all clearly contribute to this culture. It is perhaps the impact of these values at the implementation level, which are most important, as the values of the administrator can, and will, have an impact on the outcome for the beneficiary.

¹ Kaun Banega Krorapati? is the Indian Version of the British game show, 'Who wants to be a Millionaire?'

This chapter is divided into two substantive sections that together make up a critical overview of the Indian bureaucracy. The first part begins with a brief history of the Indian bureaucracy, analysing the implications of its structure for today's administrators. I examine who actually makes up the Indian bureaucracy, offer a detailed description of the various branches and hierarchical levels within the Indian administration, and discuss the way in which the system is organised. The second part of the chapter is concerned with the 'culture' of bureaucracy. Incorporating various interpretations of 'the bureaucracy', Milton Esman (1997) outlines three critical images of bureaucratic behaviour, which I present in this section.

The first type of the *rational-legal bureaucrat* conforms to the Weberian model that is marked by excessive formalism, hierarchical style of functioning and rule orientation, and seeks to preserve political neutrality. To classical scholars such as Adam Smith (1776, 1776: Book V, Chapter I) and J. S. Mill (1809, 1809: Book V), a well-organised state was a pre-requisite to the 'frictionless' market system. However, whilst the Weberian construct suggests government officials should be politically neutral, and follow rules, without concern to their own personal beliefs, for Public Choice theorists, the personality of government officials is based on selfish opportunism (Magill and Quinzii, 1995) leading to problems of corruption, nepotism and the like. This is the essence of Esman's second categorisation, the *vested interest image* bureaucrats, who act as 'maximisers of their self-interest in pursuit of security, income and power' (1997: 49). In this case, bureaucrats are more interested in self-service than public service and primarily operate as an interest group.

The vested interest model of the bureaucracy is flawed in several respects. Government officials in theory at least, must follow the rule of some higher authority. Furthermore, if public choice theorists are correct in assuming that corruption and self-benefit is standard practice in bureaucratic behaviour, it seems unusual that when cases of such corruption are highlighted, they are still referred to as 'deviant' as opposed to the norm. Bureaucratic culture is clearly more complex than public choice analysts suggest. It is necessary to consider the more flexible and complex concept of 'meta-preferences' and their change, in order to understand more deeply the values and behaviour of government officials. A third type of bureaucrat is therefore

highlighted by Esman - those who work like private sector employees in an entrepreneurial image.

The third type projects bureaucrats as innovative, flexible, service orientated and responsive to public needs and convenience. The ways in which government officials act is likely to be multi-causal, contradictory and negotiated, rather than the (relatively) straightforward result of cause and effect. Elements of each bureaucratic type are likely to exist at any one time, as Braibanti (1976) argues,

‘The enormity of the task of tracing the flow of values and the interaction of institution, structure, and participants...is immediately apparent’ (143).

Esman’s analysis of three bureaucratic types is used as a point of departure to discuss the contemporary traits and changes within the Indian bureaucracy. In its totality, this chapter aims to emphasise both elements of continuation and change within the Indian civil service in recent years and to suggest that an historical-managerial-evolutionary approach is essential to understand how NPM has, and can, be adopted and adapted in the Indian context.

2.2: The Indian Civil Services: Antecedents and Influences

The word *bureau* (French) literally means desk, and the word 'bureaucracy' was first coined in 1745 by M. de Gourney (Giddens, 1989) as a reference to rule conducted from a desk or office, by the preparation and dispatch of written documents - or, these days, their electronic equivalent. Not only government service but also political parties, churches, educational institutions, private businesses, and many other institutions have bureaucracies. That is, they all have a professional staff for keeping records and sending communications that will be regarded, at least by other staff of the same institution, as authoritative directions. However, in common parlance, bureaucracy is equated with public administration. Bureaucratic rule is of course not a form of government. Rather, as ‘civil servants’, bureaucrats provide a means by which government rules. Both in theory and reality, some higher force must provide direction and support for the bureaucracy. In this regard Weber noted, 'At the top of a bureaucratic organisation, there is necessarily an element which is at least not purely bureaucratic', (1947: 335 translation, Henderson and Parsons)

For many newly independent countries, the relative permanence of bureaucratic postings compared with the transient nature of political careers has meant the bureaucracy can, theoretically, provide stability in policy making and implementation (Zafarullah and Huque 1998). In India the dominant and most influential government officials belong to the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) (for details on the service, including the Indian Civil Service (ICS), its predecessor, see Woodruff (1964) and Taub (1969)). The ICS, the 'steel frame'² of the British Empire in India,

'began on the pattern established by the administrative system of the Moghul rulers, whom the British replaced in India', and 'enabled India's colonial rulers to maintain power in India with only a handful of men for more than 150 years' (Taub, 6: 1969).

The ICS was inherited by independent India and renamed the IAS. Usually, a country's public administration is an instrument designed by a political system with the object of executing that system's aims efficiently (Maheshwari, 1990a). At Independence, India was faced with an apparent imbalance between the new political framework, and the structure of its public administration. The British government had, during its rule, shaped the public administration in accordance with its own colonial needs and tasks (Rao and Sofi, 1990; Maheshwari, 1990b, 1990c). These included the maintenance of law and order, the collection of revenue necessary to meet its expenditure, perpetuation of power under the British and subservience of the administration to the needs of Britain³. This is not to say that the public administration is immutable or that it has remained static over the years, but rather that India's colonial history continues to influence the India of today (Maheshwari, 1996).

For one hundred and fifty years, the East India Company⁴ had a civil service responsible for carrying out commercial and control functions. This was not a 'public' administration, as these men did not work for an elected government and, whilst it did rule areas did not deal directly with the Indian population. The East India Company

² Lloyd George is accredited with this label, quoted in Maheshwari (1996).

³ This is not to suggest that the British *raj* was absolutely uninterested in developmental activities. It was to some extent particularly after the inauguration of the Government of India Act 1919. Elected ministers were given portfolios like education or health, agriculture etc, following which the intensity of development efforts increased. Rather the British government did not have an ideological priority to development and it was taken up only on a modest scale. The scale, range and intensity of developmental programmes have escalated in independent India.

⁴ For an excellent summary of the role of the East India Company, the role of Emperor of Delhi and the change to the ICS see E.P.Moon (1990) or Misra (1976).

was taken over by, and absorbed into the British government apparatus in 1860s. The earliest British civil service in India however, was part of a police state, its major task to carry out law and order functions. The system was disjointed, with no code of conduct, and had different civil services in the various provinces. Higher officials were able to choose appointees, from both military and civilian fields, and their pay and allowances were subject to the discretion of the Company. In the latter part of the nineteenth century the British government in 'The Punjab' used the term 'civil service' to distinguish between government and army officials. It was from this origin that the word entered the discipline of public administration (Maheshwari, 1994).

The British government set up the Indian Civil Service in 1911, to strengthen the administration of its colonial territories in India (Arora, 1996). Initially, the recruitment to the Indian Civil Service was confined to the British. The minimum age of entry was nineteen years and the maximum age, twenty-one years. From 1858, a new breed of civil servants, nicknamed in India as the *competition wallahs*, came into existence (Trevelyan, 1964). Examinations only took place once a year, in English, in London. However, due to pressures raised notably from the Indian National Congress, by 1921 Indians were allowed to take the exam (Potter, 1996). The first Indian entered the ICS the following year. Later, based on the recommendations of the Aitchison Committee (1929), half of all new recruits were to be Indian, with examinations held in India as well as London (Dwivedi and Jain, 1985).

In 1935 the British government established interim rule in various provinces of India. The Second World War (1939-45) followed shortly afterwards, leading to steep inflation and limited supplies of essential items like food-grains. As rationing was introduced, the public administration was given the task of regulating the supply and distribution of food grains. This role necessitated the rapid expansion of the administrative machinery and the mass recruitment of staff at short notice. Maheshwari (1996) argues that both the time span of change and the lack of training available to these individuals led to a fall in the calibre in public administration. He further contests that due to the shortages within the economy, corruption began to spread within the service.

At Independence, the IAS was retained to perform a wide range of tasks thanks to political support from both Patel (first Home Minister) and Nehru (first Prime Minister), and because there was no other institution available that was capable of fulfilling these roles. This meant that, not only did the IAS retain its pre-eminent position, but it was also able to penetrate new areas of influence, such as control over major public corporations. The dominant position of the bureaucracy at Independence was further enhanced by the weakness of the new pluralist democratic institutions, and the ability of government officials to persuade politicians to devolve responsibility for managing the economy to them. However Singh and Bhandarkar (1994) highlight the incredibly challenging role given to the, primarily senior, bureaucrats at Independence. Partition had led to widespread communal riots in many parts of the country that the administration had been required to quell. Concurrently, huge numbers of experienced personnel were leaving the administration, including most Muslims and a very large number of European civil servants who resigned (Misra, 1996). The strength of the ICS, which numbered 1064 civil servants in 1945, was reduced to only 422 after the gaining of independence in 1947.

The onset of economic planning in India in 1951, with the launch of its First Five-Year Plan, gave the Indian Civil Service the senior role in development administration⁵. In this new mould, they were expected to a) accept the ideological paradigm of development by the state, b) design appropriate policy, and c) implement policy. Cast in the Weberian model, the Indian bureaucracy was supposed to be neutral in the execution of their roles, but as Jackson (1983: 216) states, this is an, 'extremely romantic, idealised view of the bureaucrat and the bureaucratic process'.

Hirschmann called for reform of development bureaucracies in 1981, arguing that the situation had become 'deadlocked' (1981, 1999). However, attempts at reform of the Indian administration are not new. Over the years in India, many consultants' committees and commissions have been set up to revamp bureaucratic administration (Bhattacharya, 1997b). Even a century ago, The Viceroy of India, Lord Curzon, was

⁵ Schaffer (1973: 245) defines Development Administration as being, 'about development programmes, policies and projects, those conditions in which there are unusually wide and new demands and in which there are peculiarly low capacities and sever obstacles to meeting them'.

anxious to cut 'red tapism' within the service and reduce interdepartmental rivalries (Pachauri, 1997). Subsequent reforms under colonialism include parts of the 1909 Morley Minto reforms and the disastrous Montague-Chelmsford reforms (Pachauri, 1997). With Independence, reforms include the consultation with Paul Appleby and A.D. Gorwala in the 1950s; the Santhanam Report; the monumental Administrative Reforms in the 1960s which submitted 20 reports; L. K. Jha's report in 1983; the report of the National Police Commission; and the *Sarkaria* Commission report on Centre-State relations in the 1980s, which included a section on the bureaucracy. There have also been numerous studies by the Staff Inspection Unit, the Organisation and Methods Directorate, the Department of Administrative Reforms, the work study units and various ministries, as well as studies at the state level.

However many commentators maintain that only cosmetic changes have occurred, and that the bureaucracy still retained its structure, nature and overarching powers (Narain, 1990; Maheshwari, 1990)⁶. The Fifth Pay Commission noted that too many executive functions and tasks remained at the central government level that should otherwise be delegated to the State level. There were too many hierarchical levels through which to pass before decisions were taken, and final decisions were made at too high a level. There was, for them, too much bureaucracy in administration, meaning too little effective monitoring despite numerous audit reports and inspections and poor inter and intra-departmental coordination. As the Fifth Central Pay Commission noted,

'Organisational reforms have tended to be more in form than in real substance, leaving little impact on the efficiency of the system' (1997: 106).

However, it is the perceived decline⁷ of the public bureaucracy in the last two decades that has caused most debates, and on which the focus of this thesis lies. In 1982 Bhagwati (p. 217) described government officials as 'fictitious devices'. By this, he meant that the traditional perception of government employees, as 'servants of the people', had become fraudulent and that the majority of bureaucrats now worked in a self-serving manner. At the same time, the Indian state was experiencing a severe resource crunch that had deepened by the end of the 1980s. This helped prompt a new

⁶ For suggestions for change in India, see various chapters in Agnihotri (eds.) (1995)

⁷ Of course narratives of decline are very common. It is perhaps difficult to establish 'objective' decline.

economic policy in 1991⁸, which saw a rolling-back of the state in economic activities both at the macro and micro levels, encouraging private sector growth and contracting out of public services. Thus, by the 1990s, there were moves towards reorientation of the Indian civil services.

India remained until the 1990s, and some would argue still remains, a classic case of a bureaucratic and protectionist regime (Toye, 1993). It was a predominant example of rent seeking arrangements for vested interests, of the type which neoliberal structural adjustment policies were seeking to overturn (Bardhan, 1984; Toye, 1987). As a part of the new economic policy, the central government decided in 1991 to cut back the role of the bureaucracy to reduce costs (this included for example the reduction of the number of posts of Joint Secretary and above by 10%). The suggestions of the Fifth Pay Commission's report (1997) supported 'right sizing'⁹ the Indian bureaucracy, with a reduction of at least 30% of total staff. This massive cut back was suggested in response to analysis that the government had spent Rs. 10,000 crore (about \$3 billion) per annum as the pay and perks before 1997 (Mishra, 1997).

However, in the year following the report, total expenditure actually rose to around Rs. 15,000 crore (\$4 billion) or 1.5% of GDP, with the introduction of pay increases. The provincial governments also spend a comparable amount, which means civil-service pay alone accounts for about 3% of GDP. Despite 'right sizing' recommendations, the drastic cuts in total numbers of the bureaucracy are unlikely in the short-term, due to the restrictive nature of employment law in India. One of the solutions suggested is to reduce the number of permanent posts to the bare minimum and incorporate a provision for contract posts and the political pressures working against lay-offs – something that will be discussed in this thesis (World Bank, 1999).

With liberalisation and the subsequent adoption of new public management initiatives, the bureaucracy have, in theory, been apportioned a less powerful role in development and administration. Economic restructuring has meant the administration is increasingly seen as a *promoter* and *facilitator*, rather than direct *provider*, of goods

⁸ Detailed in chapter 1.

and services (Veron, 1999). In keeping with the philosophy of economic liberalisation, the Tenth Finance Commission has opined that,

‘Viable methods of reducing the strength of government employees must be explored, otherwise economic reform may lose its way in a new bureaucratic maze’ (quoted in *The Times of India*, November 15: 1995).

These changes have been adopted, rhetorically at least, by the government of India and implemented in the States, and at the Centre, to varying degrees. The structure of the Indian bureaucracy is diverse, with differing roles and status apportioned to officers at different levels, in different departments and fulfilling different roles. The make-up of the Indian bureaucracy is also interesting. It has a low percentage of women, as in many other countries both developed and developing, and an increasing number of recruits coming from the backward castes, following the adoption of the Mandal Commission recommendations in 1992. The next few paragraphs are therefore dedicated to an appraisal of the structure of the Indian bureaucracy, so that elucidation of change, or lack of it, made later, can be understood in relation to the nature and hierarchy of the system.

2.3: The Steel Frame? Structure of the Indian Public Administration

The Indian civil services are characterised by open entry based on academic achievement, exam performance and once recruited, elaborate training arrangements. There are both ‘generalist’ and ‘specialist’ posts at Central, State and District levels reserved for the IAS cadre alone. A regular graduated scale of pay with pensions and other benefits exist, together with a system of promotion and rapid transfers, based variously on seniority, merit and political considerations (Banik, 2001). The services are divided into three categories. First, the State services, whereby each State has its own administrative service, normally headed by the Chief Secretary to the State government. At the State level, there are also various technical, secretariat, and local government services. Second, there are the Central services, more than fifty in number, which include the Indian Foreign Service, the Central Secretariat Service, the Postal Service, and the Indian Revenue Service. Finally, the important All-India services include the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), the Indian Police Service

⁹ ‘Right sizing’ is a term popularised by the World Bank to mean the downsizing of an organisation to its ‘optimum size’. However, others have argued (Rowat, 1990) that in some cases this may actually mean expanding the public administration.

and the Indian Forest Service (IFS). The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) is responsible for the recruitment and service conditions of civil servants in India which are categorised as Group A, B, C and D¹⁰ (See Annex 1).

Out of more than 17 million government employees in India, the IAS comprises only five thousand officers (Thakur, 1995). Recruitment takes place on the basis of all-India competitive examinations followed by interview of short-listed candidates. Approximately ten thousand candidates appear for the Preliminary Examination each year, 10% of which appear in the Main Examination. About 15% of these candidates are selected to appear for the personal interview, half of which become recruits of the various Indian administrative and central services.

IAS officers occupy the highest administrative positions at the policy-making level and serve as administrative heads of ministries and departments. A few are also appointed as chief executives of public sector enterprises and Chairs of Statutory Boards. At the sub-State level, they are the chief executive officers (Collectors/District Magistrates/Deputy Commissioners) of the Districts. The IAS has been considered to be the only 'multifunctional' government service, as an IAS officer is in charge of running virtually every sector in the country. The emoluments and terms of service of the IAS are attractive in comparison with other services, with perks and fringe benefits including accommodation, holiday and travel costs being covered. The IAS is made up of State cadres and there is no Central cadre. Upon selection IAS recruits are assigned to a particular State. They may be deputed by their States to work for the Central government, but must return to their State at the end of their work in the Centre. The rationale for such an all-India Service is that, given India's federal set up, joint action, co-operation and co-ordination between Central and State governments will facilitate effective governance. Further, it is argued, officers with experience from the Districts can project grass-roots realities into the policy-making process. Half of the IAS cadre in each State comes from other States, and at least one fifth of the cadre must be recruited or promoted from within the State's own administrative service. Those who are promoted from the State civil service to IAS

¹⁰ The categories represent the relative skill and income of the administrators. D, the lowest category refers to non-skilled workers, B refers to mainly office workers, B and A are the higher civil servants,

ranks are popularly referred to as 'promotees'. They enjoy the same rank and theoretically the same status as IAS officers, although they normally achieve this at the end of their careers.

The head of all the civil services of the central government is the Cabinet Secretary. Between the Cabinet Secretary and the lowest ranking Secretaries, are the ranks of Under Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Director, Joint Secretary, Additional Secretary, and Secretary. In the Group A services of the provincial governments, the lowest rank is that of Assistant Collector and the highest rank is Chief Secretary. The functionaries in between include the ranks of Deputy Secretary, Joint Secretary, Secretary, Commissioner-cum-Secretary, Member of the Board of Revenue and Cabinet Secretary. The civil service officers belonging to the IAS start on a junior scale and move up to a senior scale, selection grade, super-time scale, Additional Secretary, and Cabinet Secretary. The relative size of the provincial cadre for each State is determined by their total population. Uttar Pradesh, as India's most populous State has 540 officers in the IAS, as compared to 41 in the least populous state, Sikkim (Government of India, 1996).

For the first four decades after Independence, the Civil Service was seen as an aspiration for many of the best educated young people in India (Shurmer-Smith, 2000). Traditionally in India the pay of civil servants has been high, both in terms of salary and perks, in relation to private sector employment. However, as multinationals have increasingly come to the region, the trend is changing. Despite generous pay revisions in 1998 through the Fifth Pay Commission, government officials are not as wealthy as they once were in relative terms. In the mid-1990s, senior management jobs in the private sector were commanding salary increases of an average of 17% per annum, and considerable perks. Das (1998: 165) suggests that graduates with an MBA can expect starting salaries two-and-a-half times that of government employees, and that at retirement, managers can be 200 times that of senior civil servants. Furthermore, preparation for the IAS exams can take in excess of a year, with no guarantee of success. With the numbers of total posts for the traditional IAS appointees from the high castes reduced through reservation policy, and opportunities

in the provincial and all-India services. After the Third Pay Commission Report, 1973 the categories of A-D, replaced the earlier I-IV classifications.

increasingly offered by multinational companies overseas, many of the urban middle and upper classes are choosing not to follow a civil service career route (Shurmer-Smith, 2000).

Restrictions on application to the civil services are two-fold. First that of age, applicants must be between 21 and 28 years of age¹¹. Second, candidates must have sat the examination no more than three times. As a result, the Indian civil service has the capacity, theoretically at least, to represent the diversity of the nation (Bhattacharya, 1989), and this is institutionalised through reserved places for tribal people, OBCs or backward castes and handicapped people.

Positive discrimination has existed in India since the 1940s, but it was the decision made by the government of V.P. Singh (1989-1990) to adopt some of the recommendations of the Second Backward Classes Commission (1979-1980: chairman B. P. Mandal) that is seen as a turning point for reservation policy. The Mandal Commission Report advised that the existing system of reservation in central government should be extended from just the Scheduled Castes and Tribes of India¹² to include a broader collection of Socially and Economically Backward Classes. By August 1990 it was politically viable for V.P. Singh to accept Mandal's recommendations that up to 49.5%¹³ of all jobs in central government services and public undertakings should be reserved for the Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs).¹⁴

¹¹ The upper age for open candidates (as opposed to reserved category entrants) is two years lower.

¹² These account for approximately 15 and 7.5% of the population respectively (Corbridge, 2000). Scheduled Castes legislation was first enacted in 1943; and for the Scheduled Tribes in 1950. This system was intended to provide economic 'uplift' to disadvantaged communities by 1960. However, this has arguably failed to materialise.

¹³ In the case of the various provinces of the Union, this figure varies from 50 to 69%.

¹⁴ 22.5% of these jobs were already reserved for the Scheduled communities. Singh's proposal suggested another 27% reservation for members of the Other Backward Classes. Among Hindu OBCs, caste or *jati* (sub-caste), defines membership of a 'class' grouping. Most Hindu OBCs come from the rural *Sudra* communities. In the 1980s and 1990s India's political landscapes were changed with the rise of power of political parties representing the OBCs. As I discuss in chapter 3, this phenomenon is most apparent in the north Indian States like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. However, it is not confined to these areas, see Brass 1994, Chandra (2000); Jaffrelot (2000); Yadav (1997). See also Shah, 1991. Educational concessions (but never reserved posts) for Other Backward Classes actually began in U.P. in 1948' (Galanter 1991, 161) and the Government of Bihar issued a list of Backward Classes as early as 1951.

Singh's Janata Dal party had considerable political support behind reservation (or Mandalisation as it is commonly known).¹⁵ For Corbridge (2000), the range of various high-caste retaliations that followed Singh's decision was quite predictable. Corbridge cites the fact that public sector jobs in India are much sought after, and are regarded by many high caste individuals as a buffer against the unpredictability of economic development. Joshi and Little (1994) have described how workers in public sector steel plants have been provided with dearness allowances, sick pay and guaranteed holidays in addition to a quite reasonable wage. Jonathan Parry was told in relation to working for the state, whilst researching at Bhilai steel plant in Madhya Pradesh, there was, 'no mother or father like it' (1999). Corbridge maintains that the situation is similar in the Indian banking system that was nationalised by Indira Gandhi in 1971. Singh's reservation package has threatened high caste Indians with increased competition for university places and government jobs (Corbridge, 2000).

In reality, entry to the services is discriminatory in a number of ways. In each State there are certain groups who control land, wealth and power, these groups have traditionally also dominated the selections in the Indian civil service (Chaudhury, 1990; Subramanian, 1990a)¹⁶. This is also true within the reserved categories. In Meghalaya, for example, the Khasi tribe has dominated over other tribes in terms of the number of civil service entrants (Chandresekaran, 1998). In terms of religion, Hindus have dominated the selection disproportionately, even when their relative dominance of the population is taken into consideration. Additionally, English speakers tend to be more successful, as do individuals with physics, mathematics and geology backgrounds. Bhatnagar's study of the financial backgrounds of candidates illustrated that most come from upper middle income group families. Further, a majority of the candidates selected had parents working in government (1989). Reservation, according to Shurmer-Smith (2000), was necessary so that the hold of traditional elites could be broken. However, in reality, it has not always led to the general improvement that was intended. She argues,

'Whatever their caste background, only highly educated people can come through as a result of ability and hard work, most recruits come from the so-

¹⁵ Singh gained a disproportionate number of votes from the 3,743 castes, tribes or communities (52.4% of the Indian population) that the Mandal Commission Report identified as Backward (Sivarammaya 1996: 22; see also Brass 1994).

¹⁶ See chapter 3 for Uttar Pradesh situation.

called 'creamy layer'. These people are often more concerned to draw close to politicians of their own community than to work with the poor' (p. 169).

Though there is no official discrimination in terms of gender, the fifty years of the Indian civil service show that women candidates on the whole do not exceed 10% of the total entrants. Anne-Marie Goetz has criticised the male dominance of administration,

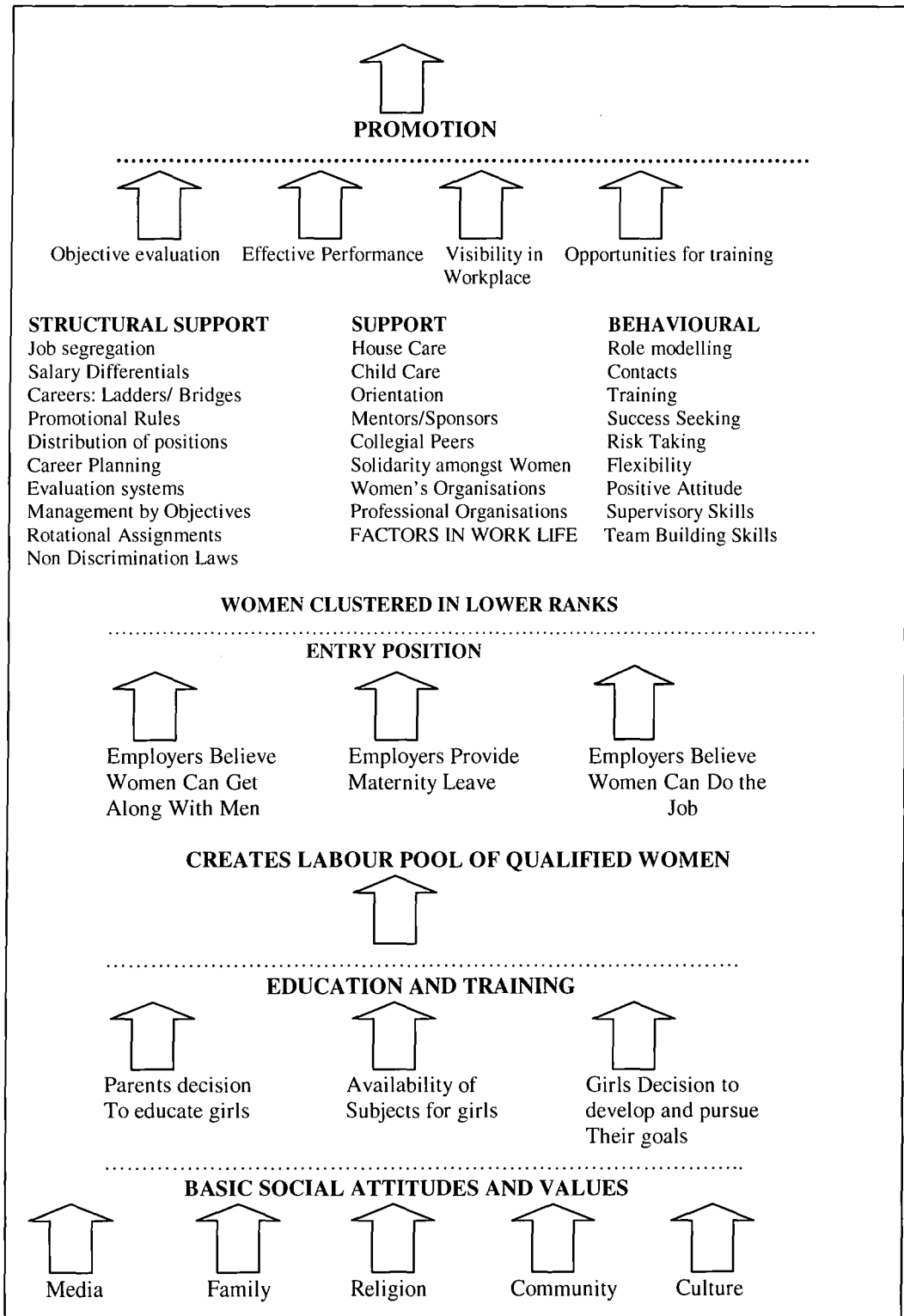
'Public Administration is, in itself, a gendered and gendering process, such that the outcomes, internal organisation and culture reflect and promote the interests of men' (1992:6).

These include institutional, organisational and cultural norms preventing women rising up the administrative ladder. Menon (1991) notes the dual problems of 'mal-administration' and 'male administration' that can adversely affect the quality of development work. In her recent study of the IAS, Thakur (1999) suggests that even if women overcome broader societal norms that have prevented them entering in the past, they still face bias in conditions of service, and gender interpretations of rules. These gender biases mean that whilst women actually fair better in the entrance examination, they fail to rise through the ranks at the same speed as their male counterparts (Thakur, 1999). Of women in the Indian Administrative Service, 60% of respondents to her questionnaire felt that gender had been an obstructing factor in their careers (Thakur, 1999). As organisational processes determine the manner in which the bureaucracy is constituted and perpetuated, the bureaucracy therefore reinforces the gender bias of society. In 1981, the UN Assistant General echoed the view that development could not fully succeed,

'Until there were more women involved in the planning process, in the administration at all levels, and in all sectors' (quoted in Col 1991: 71).

Col (1991) has shown various barriers and opportunities to women's advancement in public services. This is an area of interest to which I return in chapter Five.

Table 2.1: Barriers and opportunities for women’s advancement in the public service (adapted from Col, 1991)



2.4: Bureaucratic Cultures

I have already briefly outlined the history, structure and recent policy changes in relation to the Indian bureaucracy. It is, however, also the 'culture' of individuals within institutions that impacts upon the outcome of policy. Dutta-Choudhuri (1990) has highlighted how the culture of government officials has implications for the implementation of development policy,

'the entire implementation mechanism (of economic policy in India has been) based on the hope that civil servants would use their discretion in an enlightened manner' (1990:30).

Bardhan (1989) describes the bureaucracy as one of the three 'dominant proprietary classes' that have been deeply influential in determining the post-Independence political economy of the Indian state. Bardhan, in explaining the reasoning behind this dominance argues,

'The elevation of the public bureaucracy to the status of an independent and indeed dominant class is based on two separate arguments. One argument focuses on the bureaucrat's possession of scarce human capital in the form of education, skill, and technical expertise. The second argument focuses on the bureaucracy's possession of an independent power base due to their control over the state's regulatory instruments (licensing etc.) and their control over the large public sector enterprises' (1989: 155)¹⁷.

Here Bardhan is referring to the higher civil services (predominantly the IAS). Lower level officials are unlikely to wield comparable power to those higher up. Since the mid-1980s a number of scholars have tried to explain political discourse from a broadly post-colonial perspective. Sudipta Kaviraj, Satish Saberwal and Partha Chatterjee have all argued that the core dichotomy in India today is between the 'modern' discourse of the elites, and a public 'vernacular', 'community' or 'lower' discourse (Chatterjee, 1993; Kaviraj, 1984, 1991; Saberwal; 1986).

Kaviraj, (1991) argues that divisions in Indian society primarily relate to the 'modernizing development discourse' of the elite, and the 'lower discourse' of the masses, created by colonial policy in the nineteenth century. Chatterjee (1993) focuses on the differences between capitalist and pre-capitalist social forms and discourses, arguing that the elites uncritically adopted an orientalist, externalist construction of society and its destiny, reflected in the symbolism of the 'discovery of

India'. Saberwal goes as far as to argue that different level bureaucrats have conflicting moral, political and institutional codes, one European and one Indian, which affect the nature of the bureaucracy and the implementation of policies (Saberwal, 1986: 27). If this dichotomy is evident, it would suggest that the reactions and uptake of change would be starkly different at differing levels within the bureaucracy.

In this thesis, I am concerned with how the culture of the bureaucracy is likely to affect the way in which change, associated with NPM, is adopted and adapted by the Indian bureaucracy and how NPM might variously impact upon bureaucratic culture. Hirschmann (1999) has argued that failing to see that bureaucrats are stakeholders and actors, and elite ones at that, has been a central factor of reform failure in India. In this section, using Esman's categorisations, I will consider the main perceptions of the Indian bureaucracy and suggest how these types are likely to affect the ways government officials engage with processes of change associated with NPM.

Whilst Esman's (1997) work suggests that bureaucratic behaviour can be divided into three broad categories of the 'rational legal', the 'self-seeker' and 'entrepreneurial' bureaucrat, he acknowledges that these categorisations are idealised and never occur in pure forms, rather elements of each are likely to coexist at any one time. Gabris has highlighted the fact that meta-preferences do not remain fixed, but that choices of the individual are context specific.

'whatever dominant value system exists at a given time defines the acceptable boundaries of ethical behaviour, and those boundaries may expand, contract, and change depending on who has power and what they value' (1991: 216).

Not only are 'cultures' context specific, but broader societal factors lead these values to change over time,

'It is history that most effectively reveals the time dimensions of values in the system, illuminating the *evolution of the value*' (Braibanti, 1976: 136).

Within this section, I argue that, whilst historically the structure of the Indian civil service has been based on the rational legal model, the work cultures of government officials are negotiated and transient, with elements of rationality, self-seeking and

¹⁷ For a critique see Pederson, 1992.

entrepreneurship present at any one time. Significant for this study are both the relative dominance of each 'bureaucratic type' and the implications this has for bureaucratic change.

2.4.1: The Rational Legal Bureaucrat

The 'rational legal bureaucrat', for Esman, is based on the Weberian ideal. It is characterised by an elaborate hierarchical division of labour directed by explicit rules, impersonally applied, staffed by full-time, lifetime professionals. Weber wrote of officers being given income-yielding property for the duration of their employment, for example a farm, with its modern day equivalent being a salary. In accepting this 'payment', bureaucrats in Weber's view, should not take any other fees or gifts for service. The bureaucrat does not own their job (Weber, 1947 translation, p. 332), nor do they own the 'means of administration' – the computers, files or furniture. For Weber, the level of bureaucrats' salary should be sufficiently high to retain the individual for their working life. This idea derives from the perception that efficiency is affected if a bureaucrat leaves the organisation, due to the time and experience required for the task and the structures' dependence on elaborate divisions of labour (Beetham, 1974). Due to the nature of bureaucratic work, and also perhaps because of the importance of training and co-ordination in the job, Weber's idealised bureaucracy demands educated recruits.

Another feature of this type of bureaucracy is the impersonal way its rules are applied, to citizens, organisations and even its own staff. For Weber, the strict adherence to rules is the most important feature of bureaucracy. In 'Economy and Society' he wrote of bureaucracy under the heading of Types of Legitimate Authority. There are three types: *rational*, *traditional* and *charismatic*. Charismatic authority is regarded as legitimate, and works because followers are personally devoted to the 'gifted' leader. Second, traditional authority is that which has never been questioned so retains its legitimacy, for example hereditary monarchs. Third, rational authority represents the 'rule of law', which is respected by a particular community and has come to be seen by those individuals as legitimate.

Although Weber regarded bureaucracy as supremely efficient, he did not support what he saw as its 'inevitable triumph'. He highlighted the distinction between 'goal-

rational' and 'value-rational'. In the pursuit of goals it may be rational, for example to lie, this may not however fit with the values of an individual. He saw another contradiction in the distinction between 'formal' and 'substantive' rationality. Society is 'formally' rational if it aims to maximise the attainment of people's goals, but at the same time may not be 'substantively' rational. One example is personal freedom, to which bureaucracy is inimical. Weber notes that to succeed in bureaucracy it may mean curtailing personal freedom of expression,

"The quality which best guarantees promotion [in a bureaucracy] is a measure of pliancy toward the apparatus... of "convenience" for his superior' (Economy and Society, 1968 translation, p. 1449).

There have been numerous criticisms of both the idealised Weberian model and its workings in reality. Robert Parker (1993) indicates that popular anti-bureaucratic sentiment trades on two dramatic and often contradictory representations of bureaucrats as 'inert' and 'strictly hierarchical'. 'Bureaucracy bashing' has become a common phenomena in current literature (see Peters and Waterman, 1982; Peters, 1987, 1992, 1994). In Mintzberg's classic (1979) text, he referred to the limitations of what he sees as a 'machine bureaucracy', unable to adapt to particular circumstances. Others have questioned its transferability to developing nations (Weidner, 1964, more recently Gupta and Ferguson 1996). Post-modern variants of bureaucratic critique are offered by Bauman (1989, 1993) and Burrell (1997). Feminist critiques on the male domination of the typical Weberian bureaucracy are also common (Ferguson 1984; Pringle, 1989; various chapters in Savage and Witz, 1994). Crozier captured many of the key areas of criticism arguing that,

'[Weberian bureaucracy] evokes the slowness, the ponderousness, the routine, the complication of procedures, and the maladapted response of 'bureaucratic' organisations to the needs which they should satisfy, and the frustrations which their members, clients or subjects consequently endure' (Crozier, 1964: 3).

The traditional model of civil services in India saw the bureaucrat as legal-rational, hierarchically organised, generalist, technically competent and expected to remain politically neutral. Following an impersonal style of work, rules, regulations and procedures govern the working of the system (Arora, 1996). The 'license permit raj' was primarily dominated by government officers, and allowed little room for private initiative and enterprise. Traditional recommendations to improve the Weberian

construct include the flattening of hierarchies, an alternative relationship with the public, flexible task force approaches and an emphasis on field offices rather than headquarters (Esman, 1974; Gross, 1974; Panandiker, 1967; Raphaeli, 1967; Panandiker et al., 1983). More recently, Ferguson (1996) has argued that routine taking precedence over creativity is inappropriate in environments in which policy needs to be adapted in relation to specific circumstances. As seniority is regarded as more important than merit, and income rises with longevity of service, Sodhi, (1999) theorises that there is little incentive for administrators to excel. Arora (1990) has argued that as hierarchy acts as the backbone of the system, decisions do not emerge from discussion and consensus, rather orders flow top down. He has also suggested that this has resulted in a lack of communication, conveying the ideas of the functionaries at the bottom. Strict adherence to hierarchy has been argued to lead to subservience by Akerlof (1991).

2.4.2: The Vested Interest Bureaucrat

The second bureaucratic type for Esman is that of 'vested interest'. This theory has been dominated by public choice and neo-classical theorists. They suggest 'utility maximising' government officials will tend to be self-serving rather than public servants, all other things being equal. As Fox and Miller have discussed, the concept of personal gain for bureaucrats is rather complex (1995). Whilst neo-classical and public choice theorists suggest this would be based on financial gain, other benefits including ties to kith and kin and even 'job satisfaction' can feature in bureaucratic personal gain. Problems associated with this bureaucratic type include nepotism and clientelism, with individuals hired and fired on the basis of political and kin relations rather than merit. Public officials are seen as lacking adequate training and believe their own rhetoric regarding their superiority (Chaubey, 1997). In this model, programmes are often centrally conceived and inappropriate, and the dense bureaucratic hierarchy offers opportunity for bribery and corruption. All these arguments are well documented. In addition, within this theory, beneficiaries of public programmes are left in poverty due to the mismanagement and ineptitude of the bureaucracy (Mathur, 1991). Such 'undeniable' evidence on the rent-seeking nature of bureaucrats has led to policy influenced by advice based on the minimization of the ills of bureaucracy in the Civil Service Reforms in India. The body of advice developed from public choice literature prescribes limiting the 'damage' of the public

sector and advocates reducing both its size and scope, in order to reduce opportunity for corruption and encourage market intervention.

In the past, the ICS and early IAS have been characterised as honest and dedicated being portrayed as the 'steel frame' (Nigam, 1985) of the British Empire and the new Indian State. The current structure, in contrast, has been scathingly compared to a 'bamboo frame' (Sinha, 1997). Trying to put the current situation in historical perspective, Trivedi (1997) argues that in the years after Independence, the political neutrality of the civil service was, by and large, respected. He contends that,

'It can be said without any fear of contradiction that the first two decades of Independence saw the blooming of a service, highly dedicated and devoted not only to the requirements of a democratic and welfare state, but also to being an effective instrument of social change through responsible and responsive functioning' (1997: 72).

Subramanian (1997) argues that political interference is the main cause of bureaucratic corruption, and that one party domination by the Indian National Congress, both at the Centre, and in most States during this period, meant those civil servants were not faced with the same temptations which exist today. However Hughes-Jones argues that the 'steel frame' never really existed, and the bureaucracy in India has always suffered elitism, paternalism and inequality. Stephen Hugh-Jones says that the idea that the ICS were devoted servants of the people is a fallacy,

'Accepting that imperialism itself is a lost cause, we are mythicizing its administrators, the Indian Civil Service,' with the consequence that, 'in retrospect these oligarchs have been uniformly incorruptible, far seeing, all competent: stern but devoted servants of India, whose life work found its fulfillment in Indian Independence...' (1966: 842).

Evidence from the former Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi, would appear to support this assertion. The note on 'Basic Economic Issues', submitted to the All-Indian Congress Committee held in Delhi in November 1969, complained;

'The present bureaucracy under the orthodox and conservative leadership of the Indian Civil Service with its upper-class prejudices, can hardly be expected to meet the requirements of social and economic change along socialist lines. The creation of an administrative cadre committed to national objectives and responsive to our social needs is an urgent necessity' (Quoted in the Hindustan Times, 9th November 1969).¹⁸

¹⁸ Of course, Indira Gandhi had her own reasons for undermining political institutions and reshaping the civil service to her own ends.

Mathur suggests it was specifically the period after Indira Gandhi took over as Prime Minister, in 1966, that was a turning point in the politicisation of the bureaucracy, as she attempted to use the bureaucracy to strengthen her position both in the party and in government (1996). Whilst the nature of the early Indian bureaucracy continues to be debated, contemporary perceptions overwhelmingly mirror the vested interest model. It is difficult to open a newspaper or turn on the television without hearing about ‘politicisation’, whether based on party, caste or communal lines (frequently associated with transfers), ‘corruption’ (in its various forms) and ‘authoritarianism’ within the public administration. It is on these specific points that I will concentrate in this instance.

Politicisation:

For Edwards and Hulme (1997), inefficiency within the Weberian model is often viewed as a result of ‘rational’ problems whether it relates to lack of skill, funding or ‘irrational’ elements grouped under the title of culture (including familial ties, religion and cultural norms and values). However as they assert, this represents an incomplete assessment, as there are frequently important political elements at work. This may be in visible forms such as lobbying, but may also be discrete measures of promotion or subjugation of orders, or inaction that tend to be less visible. Shastri (1999) has described two related but distinct trends regarding the role of the civil service in the Indian administrative system which have dominated in recent years. First, he claims that increasing politicisation of the civil service has undermined the credibility of the administration. Saxena (a retired bureaucrat himself) concurs with this analysis, suggesting that the idea of an Indian civil service based on ‘neutral competence’ and the integration of ‘group objectives’ have been all but abandoned (1997). Politicians have achieved increasing power by placing in their ‘better posts’, bureaucrats who are willing to bow to their wishes, rather than to remain faithful to their oath of allegiance to the Indian Constitution (Bhambhri, 1997).

Second, Shastri contends that controversies involving minister-civil-servant relationships have raised doubts as to who controls and directs governmental activity,

and for what ends. He notes that the relative power of politicians can be judged by the acronym used by bureaucrats to describe the 'government of the day': GOD (1999). The Director of the Lal Bahadur Shastri Academy of Administration, B S Baswan, describes the nexus between the civil servants and politicians,

'Unfortunately many...officers are accepting a diminished role of themselves by becoming agents of exploitation in a state structure which is callous to the needs of the poor. In the process, they would become totally indistinguishable from other rent seeking parasites – politicians, inspectors...they are taking too much from the system and contributing too little' (quoted in Seth, 1999: 254).

In this context, Brambhri claims that civil servants are induced to keep their political masters in good humour by whatever means necessary (Bhambhri, 1971, 1997; see also Rudolph and Rudolph, 1987; Bhattacharya, M., 1989).



Figure 2.3: (Left)

'UNIFIED ADMINISTRATION CODE', (Pioneer, 21st Sept. 1999). Depicts Union Public Service Commission being assaulted by higher services. This cartoon exemplifies the idea that power relations between rank are highly differentiated (Vanaik, 1990).

Figure 23: (Right)

'REFORMING BUREAUCRACY', (Indian Express 16th November 1999). The caricature depicts a BJP Politician with the civil servants as 'puppets on his hand'.



Political affiliations are clearly not the only influence that impact working cultures of government officials. According to Hyden (1983) 'the economy of affection', namely

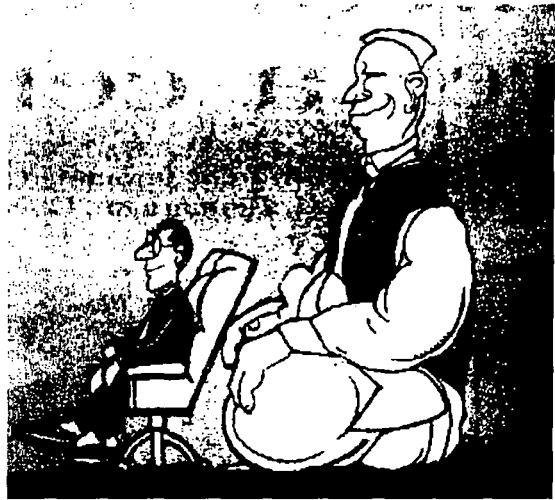
religious, class, caste, political, kinship or ethnic ties, can influence and even override the 'rational' behaviour of a bureaucrat. Patronage ties are seen as having a sweeping influence on the workings of the bureaucracy according to Beteille. He asks,

'Why has it proven so difficult to keep administration insulated from the small and large demands of patronage? Part of the answer lies in the turn taken by democratic politics in India. But there are deeper causes, embedded in the structure of Indian society. Ours is a society in which claims of kinship, caste and community are strong, not to say irresistible, and ties of patronage often emerge as concessions to those claims' (1996:3).

Figure 2.4: (right)

'WHIPPING BOYS WHO HOLD WHIPHAND', ET 10th June, 1997.

Depicts the relationship between powerful politicians and subservient public officials. The politician oversees what the bureaucrat does and controls the work of officials.



For Kohli, in India, the 'interventionist democratic state has facilitated rapid political mobilisation of various castes, classes, and religious and language groups' (1990: 20). The role of such values has been analysed by Huntington (1993), Tripathi (2001) and Kuran (1995), among others. In India as Ali (1979: 315) points out,

'caste, language and religion are still very decisive factors in political affiliations; administrators always are divided into groups and cliques based on caste and language'.

This has perhaps become more frequent after 1979, when a change in the Civil Service Examination system de-emphasised the English language. However the extent to which regional candidates are more vernacular than elite, is debatable. Such tendencies lead to lack of confidence among the public in the neutrality of the administration and hence foster social discontent.

A recent (2001) survey of U.P. bureaucrats would seem to support the 'sweeping influence' of caste factors. Whilst the majority of interviewees felt that issues of caste

were detrimental to the efficient working of the bureaucracy, 96% of bureaucrats said that their decisions were influenced by 'caste considerations' (Lucknow University and the Indian Council of Social Science Research, 2001). Despite this research, Honadle and Rosengard (1983) argue to the contrary, that while cultural factors are important, their role is frequently overemphasised to justify programme failure.

The Indian civil service system, at both central and provincial levels, has provided very short tenures to civil servants (Banik, 2001). In the past, frequent transfers of civil servants characterised the colonial Indian Civil Service (ICS), and Potter (1996a) finds that, in particular, District Collectors were very mobile¹⁹. Transfers were also due to posts becoming vacant due to illness, travel, accident or death. The logic underlying such a policy was primarily to prevent officials becoming stale in their posts, to ensure that there was fresh blood at the Centre, and to give all members of the ICS a fair share of what had always been regarded as prize appointments (Potter, 1987). Transfers can, for instance, prevent the growth of excess 'embeddedness' in local society by creating some distance between civil servants and private citizens. By transferring civil servants at regular intervals, it is hoped that the influence of 'ascribed' relationships (of family, caste, and propinquity) and 'achieved' relationships (with friends, acquaintances, and clients) will be neutralised.

However, many officers have written about the phenomenon, noting that their lives have been constantly disrupted (Arora, 1998, Dhar, 1997). Chambers (1983) has called transfers the 'slipping clutch' of rural development. Today, according to Banik (2001), the crucial determinant for transfers seems to be political culture and the nature of the political leadership in place. According to de Zwart, (1994), the power to transfer officials is a, 'very important political favour' at the disposal of a Chief Minister of a State. It can be a useful tool for politicians to extract obedience and compliance, since transfers offer the least line of resistance and can enable the most malleable officials to gain key positions. It is also a symbolic gesture that politicians use to convey to the bureaucracy, as well as to the masses, that 'their own people' have been put in charge of posts.

¹⁹ Collectors are the chief executive officers of a district within an Indian State. Given the data available on movement of these officers in 1936, Potter finds that almost two-thirds of Collectors held their posts for less than a year (Potter 1996a: 27).

There has been acknowledgement of the problem, starting with the Santhanam Committee Report (1964), which pointed out the connection between transfers and corruption. The Planning Commission of India urged State governments not to transfer able Collectors whilst implementing the Sixth Five Year Plan (Potter 1996a: 253). A study of IAS movement patterns shows that, for the country as a whole, more than 50% of officers serve for less than one year (Potter, 1987). The officers putting in one or two years of service are about 25% of the total strength of the IAS in the country, and the number of IAS officers putting in two or three years of service has been, on average, about 10% of their total number. Tenures are so short that, on average, less than 1% of officers remain in their posts for more than three years.

Banik (2001) identifies three broad categories of transfers at the State level: transfers prior to elections; mass transfers immediately after elections; and the transfers of 'difficult' officers. Needless to say, there are many overlapping features within each of these categories. Although this is a trend across many States, Banik argues that Uttar Pradesh offers a prime example of all these factors, particularly as the State had a dozen changes of government between 1977 and 1999. Successive Chief Ministers have mastered the art of wielding carrots and sticks particularly to IAS officers. When a new government assumed office in Uttar Pradesh in 1990, Collectors were transferred in 56 of the 63 Districts (Mathur, 1991). Between July 1991 and December 1992, Chief Minister Kalyan Singh transferred 293 IAS officers. His successor Mulayam Singh Yadav transferred 321 IAS officers in the period, December 1992 to June 1995. Chief Minister Mayawati then outdid Yadav by transferring 284 IAS officers between June and October 1995²⁰ (The Indian Express, 1998).

The coalition between the BJP and BSP was reformed in Uttar Pradesh in 1997, and the trend of mass transfer of officers in the State became even more pronounced. Raju Sharma, former Labour Commissioner, highlighted four extra costs involved in transfer; namely travel costs of transferred personnel, 'premiums' (rental value of

²⁰ According to another article Mayawati transferred an average of seven officers per day. After twelve months in office Kalyan Singh had, on an average, transferred sixteen officers a day (Indian Express, 5th Oct 1997).

post) 'quality loss cost' and 'delay costs'. He calculates that, for UP the alone, these total approximately Rs. 28 billion each year. This factor has recently come to a head in UP, with the World Bank threatening to cease loaning to the State if the practice isn't halted (Financial Times, 2002).

Using basic organisational theory, Potter (1987: 853) has argued efficiency is reduced where there is a high turnover of personnel. This is certainly the case with transfers that postpone, stop, or even reverse decisions. Furthermore, new appointees are likely to take quite some time to learn the working nature and culture of a new department. Rapid transfers can also have a demoralising effect, dampening the enthusiasm of IAS officers, as they are seldom able to witness the result of their efforts. Some see transfer as humiliating as it can be assumed they were not competent enough to perform the task assigned, others see certain postings as 'punishment' from powerful individuals (Bhattacharya, M., 1989, Potter 1996a).

The rapid transfer of officers is important for this research, as it may have adverse effects on administrative performance and ability to develop new ways of working. Chambers (1983) describes transfers as the 'slipping clutch' of rural development efforts, since they incapacitate field organisations of government. Kohli (1991: 5) argues that India faces a 'crisis of governability' since its 'capacity to govern (i.e. its capacity to simultaneously promote development and accommodate diverse interests) has declined'.

The Sarkaria Commission into Centre-State relations, pointed out that the practice of allotting at least 50% of the all-India officers to a cadre from outside the state (for the purpose of promoting national integration) was not working successfully (GoI, 1988). It argued that those individuals who were 'outsiders' generally prefer to go to the Centre on deputation, and prefer not to return to the State (Report 1988). Consequently, among the officers

'holding senior posts in the State governments, the *insiders* outnumber *outsiders*... (and) this is a serious deviation from the All India character of these Services' (1988: 225, Quoted in Gupta 1990).

The Sarkaria Commission recommendations came alongside the stand taken by the Sub Committee of the Inter State Council to ensure strict enforcement of the rules

relating to deputation of officers belonging to the All India Services to the Centre (The Times of India 16, 1992). However, it has been reported by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel and Public Grievances that 57% of the 2900 IAS officers working in the State have never been posted on deputation to the Centre. This implies that insiders are staying in the State and outsiders remain at the Centre (Hindu, September 4, 1996). The fact that, despite government rulings, bureaucrats have managed to avoid compliance, could give support to Shastri's argument that bureaucrats in fact control and direct government activity (1997).

Of course there are considerable variations to the pressure politicians are able to put on civil servants both regionally, and based on the relative power of the politician and bureaucrat. Vanaik (1990) suggests that,

'Bureaucratic elites at the Centre are far less susceptible to the pressure of the agrarian bourgeoisie...[while] in the States, the more localised bureaucracy, the more subordinate it is to the power of the rural rich. The industrial bourgeoisie clearly exercises greater authority on the bureaucracy at the Centre'.

Corruption:

Over the past few years there has been growing attention to the problem of bureaucratic corruption by the World Bank, IMF, NGOs, as well as academics. There is not sufficient time within this thesis to discuss the issue of corruption within Indian administration or otherwise, but it is necessary here to explain that corruption is one of the main traits of a 'vested interest' bureaucrat. There is general acceptance that the phenomena involves, 'the abuse of public office for private gain' (Gray and Kaufman 1998, Rose-Ackerman, Zakiuddin, 1998). Breton and Wintrobe argue that what constitutes corruption is much broader than direct financial benefit,

'The issue of corruption becomes even more clouded when we realise that within bureaucracies, it is not only money that can be used to compensate a pliant bureaucrat', but also other things like, 'access to villas and fishing lodges, free lunches, trips abroad, interest-free loans, gifts' (1982: 26).

Definitions of the phenomenon and how it is interpreted are dependent on social and cultural norms. Tanzi argues,

'to argue that the personal relationships that come to be established between public sector employees and individuals who deal with them, reflects a 'corrupt' society may be correct in a legalistic sense, but it misses the point

that these relationships simply reflect different social and moral norms' (1995: 44).

Although corruption is often interpreted as having negative distributional consequences, others have argued that corruption has positive effects; it 'humanises' the working of the bureaucracy (Ward, 1989). Ward suggests networks of personal relationships, which lead bureaucrats to be corrupt, demonstrate that bureaucrats are not only legal-rational, but that 'the bureaucracy' like other institutions is made up of a number of different people with differing and often conflicting personal traits and objectives.

Akhil Gupta (1995) examined how lower level officials execute their duties and found the conventional distinction between private and public inapplicable to the Indian context. He argued that the case of Shamaji, an Indian lower level official, 'poses an interesting challenge to Western notions of the boundary between 'state' and 'society' in some obvious ways (Gupta, 1995:384). Shamanji's ways of working show little resemblance to western experiences. First, his office was located in the same building in which he lived. Second, when performing his duties he constantly discussed matters with those around him. Third, money was demanded for the completion of his duties. When locals complained about the corruption of the state, it was not because they had to pay bribes, but rather that certain networks were required to be accessed in dealing with officials. Gupta concludes that, 'the discourse of corruption varies a great deal from one country to another, dependent as it is on particular trajectories and the specific grammars of public culture' (op. cit.: 392). In other words, social boundaries that delineate what is acceptable behaviour, and what is not, are socially produced and case specific.

Corruption, argues Harris-White (1996), is a social phenomenon, part of a broader, institutionalised process of redistribution and accumulation, of new forms of property relation. She claims in India, decades of tax evasion, black investment (Kabra, 1982) and corruption have resulted in relations and institutions involving elite groups, which create serious obstacles to the outcome of reforms predicted by economic deregulation and liberalisation.

Robbins (2000) suggests that the presence of corruption in the Indian bureaucracy does not represent the absence of rules but the presence of alternative norms. It is not the absence of a strong state, but the presence of different institutions that vie for legitimacy and trust among diverse players within state and civil society. He suggests that these institutions are bound together by persisting social actions (or social capital). Such relations are persistent in that they require energy, effort, and other transaction 'costs'. They are the product of state rules and cultural norms. Robbins' work on the Latwara reserve in India suggests that in reality state rules are porous, and that civil society and state are interwoven.

Furthermore, the ways in which similar phenomena are interpreted and understood is also important in how the effects of change are perceived. In his work on South Indian canal irrigation, Wade (1982, 1984) has described a network of politicians, middlemen and lower level officers who gain money from bribes, supporting transfers and getting kickbacks from contracts. This, he claims, is central to the poor performance of this type of agriculture. Paul (1997), in his study of five Indian cities calculated that one in ten households had given 'speed money' to bureaucrats for an essential service, whilst, Gopakumar, (1997) estimates that India manufacturing industries may be 'paying' 35 billion Rupees a year to government inspectors to keep them pacified.

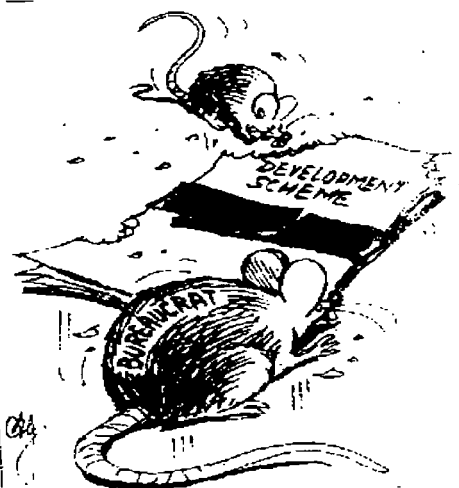


Figure 2.5 (Left):
'BUREAUCRACY NEEDS
REALIGNMENT':
Pioneer, March 6th 1999.

Depicts government officials as vermin who eat away at development policies for their own personal satisfaction.

However, Sissener (1999) has analysed these bonds and networks in a different way. Between family, friends and neighbours in Bangladesh he argues there exists an almost general 'obligation' of mutual assistance. It isn't possible to refuse a service, a favour or 'string-pulling' without severe social consequences. In this context, making

use of solidarity networks is a vital and legitimate part of everyday life. When this 'mutual assistance' is witnessed, in the form of getting access to resources or posts, it is seen as 'corruption'. However, if for example these networks lead to the development of 'micro-credit' enterprise it is likely to be perceived as the effective development of 'social capital'.

Authoritarianism:

In India, many have traditionally believed, and some continue to believe, that government should be a benevolent ruler and benign provider. This aspiration of dependence on government for deliverance is described as *Ma-Bap*²¹ Sarkar (government as the mother and father). In the case of India, Rothermund (1993: 196) argues that, 'The Indian people tend to look up to *Sarkar*, the omnipotent government'.

Veron *et al.* have suggested that for fifty years the idea of state as mother and father has been developed, making change, and as such participatory democracy that will enfranchise the people very difficult (2002). Beteille argues that this culture has been perpetuated through the role of District Officer as the final arbiter of the destinies of those in his care (1999). Mohit Bhattacharya (1989) also details the historical tendency towards autonomy of the bureaucracy from the highest to lowest levels, and the tendency towards authoritarianism that was seen most notably during the Emergency (1975 – 1977). Jalal (1995), in her analysis of democracy and authoritarianism in South Asia, studies the role the bureaucracy has played in shaping postcolonial polities. She argues that the practice of bureaucratic authoritarianism inherited from the colonial state has largely persisted, despite the adoption of a Westminster style parliamentary democracy. She notes specifically that,

'The nurturing of the parliamentary form of government through the meticulous observances of the ritual of elections in India enabled a partnership between the political leadership and the non elected institutions of the state to preside over a democratic authoritarianism' (1995, 249-50).

Here Jalal is referring primarily to authoritarianism demonstrated by IAS officials with considerable access to the political elite. However, in his work on street-level bureaucrats or Lower Level Functionaries (LLF) in America, Michael Lipsky (1980)

notes that those officials also have considerable discretion to accept or resist instructions from higher authorities. This may lead to them acting in an authoritarian manner or, as I discuss in relation to the entrepreneurial model, may allow room for innovation and customer orientation. The loss of 'political cohesion' identified by Manor (1982) and Kaviraj (1991), and the fairly transient nature of many political careers, has meant the bureaucracy has been well positioned to maintain this autonomy (Zafarullah and Huque, 1998).

It is necessary to highlight both the corruption, and the continuing honesty, of many government officials. A possible attempt can be made in the framework of changing metapreferences (Kuran, 1995). Using the dual personality model of Schelling (1984), it is possible to consider government officials as torn between conflicting objectives. These may include maximisation of state power and wealth versus personal and family wealth and welfare, commitment to colleagues versus personal glory, or social and media acceptance versus truth and nobility.

Shastri (1999) claims two important developments have encouraged a backlash against the vested interest bureaucrat. First, he cites 'bureaucratic activism' as having become popular, being viewed favourably by both the media and public. Godbole claims that 'activist bureaucrats' have assumed the role of educators to people at large on the corrupting influence of 'corroding moral and ethical standards' of the bureaucracy (1999). One such activist, T N Seshan, once Chief Election Minister has referred to senior bureaucrats as 'backbone-less wonders' (Indian Express, June 14, 1994). In Uttar Pradesh, the problems of politicisation and corruption were perceived to be bad enough to warrant a vigilante poll of bureaucrats to highlight the three worst offenders in the IAS (Trivedi, 1997). This 'name and shame' policy parallels observations made by Judith Tandler (1997), which will be discussed further in chapter 5.

The second development Shastri describes as '*judicial activism*' leading to a series of landmark judgements against bureaucrats. For Saxena, just as the Bofors²² represented

²¹ Though this term is rather antiquated it is still used in some rural areas.

²² The Bofors case, was a case of criminal conspiracy, bribery, criminal misconduct by public servants, cheating, criminal breach of trust, forgery for the purpose of cheating and, using as genuine, forged

a turning point which legitimised corruption, the arrest of senior bureaucrats like Chandraswami, HKL Bhagat, Kalpanath Rai and Sanjeev Rao has to some extent restored the faith of the common person in the rule of law (1996). Recently such activism has been facilitated through the use of information technology. Villagers in the Dhar District in Madhya Pradesh can use the new *Gyandoot* cyberkiosks to get birth certificates, land records and driving licenses without the need to use officials as intermediaries, and hence cutting corruption. The internet can also be used to complain about local issues, including roads and schools, and the conduct of individual officers (BBC Radio 4, 21st June, 2002). Such activism is of limited effect for Singh (1994). He suggests that whilst scapegoat prosecutions are taking place, in the early 1990s the Supreme Court alone reportedly had a backlog of half a million cases. For the majority of corrupt bureaucrats the chance of punishment remains slim.

A neo-classical interpretation of bureaucratic behaviour would suggest that bad policy causes bad values, such as licensing to rent-seeking behaviour. However, this conception does not quite explain the observed phenomena that I shall presently discuss. A more powerful perspective would be that changes in culture and social environment impact on values over time, and hence on policy. It has been demonstrated by Grief (1994) that entire institutions can behave differently depending on the cultural beliefs of the society/ individual. The causality here runs as follows: change in culture leads to change in values, which in turn affects institutional objectives. This then leads to change in policy. The focus of this thesis is the values of the government officials involved in the Indira Mahila Project. Values, however formed, affect the commitment (Sen, 1977) which a bureaucrat feels towards the work (s)he performs. Even a simple commitment to hard work or national development could have the potential to override much of the self-interest from which NC models seek to extrapolate behaviour.

Despite popular perception the government officials in India have not always been 'status quoist' in the pursuit of maintenance of power. Some of the earliest and staunchest supporters of liberalisation were in fact bureaucrats.

documents in respect of the Bofors-India howitzer (the Swedish arms manufacturer) contract of March 26, 1986. Those implicated in the affair were senior members of Rajiv Gandhi's government (including the former Defence Secretary) and the business magnates the Hinduja Brothers.

‘Within the government, report after report put together by bureaucrats and specialists had, since the 1970s, been recommending liberalisation of one or another aspect of the economy’ (Kohli, 1990: 312).

2.4.3: The Entrepreneurial Bureaucrat

In her book, ‘Good Government in the Tropics’, Judith Tandler (1997) argues that the ‘rent seeking’ depictions of the bureaucracy (and as such, prescriptions) in developing countries is flawed for several reasons. First, she argues that mainstream advice about public sector reform is based on examples of poor performance. She argues that through focusing on cases of bad practice, the World Bank²³, amongst others, have promoted the reform of bureaucracy primarily based on public choice prescriptions, namely to ‘slim down the state’. Some scholars, including Colclough (1983) in his work on Sub Saharan Africa, have disputed the idea that developing countries bureaucracies are over extended compared with developed. Others, for example O’Donnell (1993) for Latin America and Mkandawire (1994) for Africa, have argued that ‘down-sizing’ of the state and stripping away the prestige of the public service have actually increased corruption and decreased quality in public bureaucracies.

Second, Tandler argues, ideas of ‘best practice’ in development policy too frequently support the importing of ideas and practices from industrialised countries to the developing world. Nunberg (1995, 1996) notes the very different experiences of NPM in different countries. Tandler argues that, too often, a neo-liberal model of NPM is imported into the developing world based on ‘classic caricatures of the bloated bureaucracy and galloping wage bill syndrome’ (1996: 6). Further she notes that ‘the jury is still out’ on some of the more extreme elements on NPM, such as widespread contractual employment in core civil services and market mechanisms incorporating performance pay (p. 12).

Much work on development bureaucracies has focused on the lack of worker dedication, or what Charles Sabel calls ‘the science of suspicion’ (1997). Tandler criticises the fact that whilst Industrial Performance and Workplace Transformation (IPWT) research on firms tries to see how to encourage cultural change to increase worker dedication, donor communities have traditionally started with the assumption

²³ The term ‘good’ or ‘bad’ as ‘success’ or ‘failure’ refer to the World Bank’s own criteria, which is narrowly concerned with economic growth.

that civil servants are self-interested, rent seeking, and dishonest until proven otherwise. The IPWT literature prescribes greater worker autonomy and discretion as a way of obtaining better performance, whilst the development community tends to prescribe just the opposite. Elements of NPM, including downsizing, are used by restructuring firms to increase productivity. Lindauer and Nunberg (1995) have highlighted how frequently the donor community has focused its attention on downsizing government, to the exclusion of other NPM measures aimed at fostering increase performance.

Finally, Tendler argues that current public sector reform through NPM relies too heavily on the 'user' or 'client' of public services. She argues that the development community now views consultations with, and pressures from, the client as a key to fixing government. Central to this new faith is the obsession with decentralisation so that government can be closer to the people and the unquestioning promotion of civil society and NGO groups who provide services and demand accountability from government. Tendler questions the extent to which this kind of relationship between the state and other groups is possible, or desirable, in every development situation (see also Harriss, 2002).

Partha Chatterjee (1998, 2001) argues that the concept of civil society, emphasising equality, individual rights and freedoms and the autonomy of the state, does not fit well with the social realities in post-Independence India. In India, it was not that civil society demanded the creation of democratic state, but rather that the latter was created to bring into existence a civil society in India (Rudolph, 2000). Even if, as Chatterjee contests, the Nehruvian project of modernisation aimed to 'create' civil society (1998: 10-11), the theoretically politically neutral development programmes were

'reinvented at the District and Block levels by politicians and lower-level bureaucrats who did not always share the *world views* of their English-educated, metropolitan superiors' (1998: 10-11).

The mainstream development community, has instead, demanded highly structured relationships between the various parts of the bureaucratic chain, and almost obsessive interest with a report and monitoring culture. The public sector has been singled out as the instigator of development failure, and to improve performance it

should be avoided, circumvented and undermined. At the same time, other types of partnership and association are encouraged to trust each other and work together for the common good. Tandler questions the logic supports the promotion of common good through NGOs, private sector and civil society groups, whilst not having the same faith in possibilities offered by the public bureaucracy. In research on significant recent advances made in the public management of India's forests, Joshi (1997) discovered, to her surprise, that the public sector workers' association – the West Bengal Subordinate Forest Employees Association – played a key role in advocating and implementing these reforms.

Within the private sector there is growing acknowledgement of the importance of worker dedication and the encouragement of what are popularly termed worker participation and self-managed worker teams, multi-skilling of workers and multitask jobs, and flexibly organised or 'specialised' production (Piore and Sabel, 1984). Almost all of these innovations include greater worker discretion and autonomy, greater co-operation between labour and management, and greater trust between workers and their customers, as well as between workers and managers (Sabel, 1992)²⁴.

The work of Tandler and Evans, amongst others, has fed into the Post Washington Consensus perceptions of the role of bureaucracy, and the shift in focus of NPM, perhaps towards what Desai and Imrie have termed a post-managerial phase (1998). It is with such accounts of the potentially positive nature of the bureaucracy that Esman's third categorisation of the 'entrepreneurial' bureaucrat resonates. Essentially, this bureaucratic type incorporates these private sector perceptions of work culture into the public sector. Tandler's research in North-East Brazil would appear to support such an analysis of the potential offered by the bureaucracy. She argues that Ceara State was transformed from having one of the poorest records in relation to human development criteria, under the direction of two young reformist governors, to one of considerable achievement. For Tandler, this change is based on a changed relationship between all parties involved in development. There was greater consultation, more co-operation, flexibility and informality in their interaction and

²⁴ Many of these practices follow research on Japanese 'Lean' production. For information on lean production see Nishiguchi, (1989), Helper, (1990), and Dore, (1987).

supervision. She argued that this involved a transformation, although not universally or without resistance, in the performance of government employees. In many ways their patterns of work were seen to resemble the entrepreneurial bureaucrat, associated with the most successful private sector enterprises: they were flexible, involved team work and a client-centred problem solving approach (rather than a delivery of centrally determined 'products'). I will return to aspects of these changes in chapter five.

Esman argues that the entrepreneurial bureaucrat is best suited to carry out reforms in line with Osborne and Gaebler's 'reinventing government'. However, he argues against the pitfalls associated with excessive 'bureaucratic discretion' which aim to secure innovation and responsiveness, but which in practice may clash with both politicians and public in interpreting public preferences, and could lead to undermining efficiency in government. Pandandiker and Kshirsagar have also argued that managerial styles can also be directive and manipulative rather than participative (1990).

2.5: Conclusions

Within this chapter I have sought to highlight some key features of the bureaucracy in India, including its development, role and contemporary cultures. Using Esman's three bureaucratic 'images', I outlined the characteristics of the traditional Weberian rational-legal model, the vested-interest model and the entrepreneurial model, suggesting that elements of all three are likely to exist at any one time and in different ways at different levels. The introduction of any policy or discourse within a bureaucracy is likely to undergo a process of negotiation and change. It is my aim, through this research, to assess the ways in which government officials at different levels are adopting and adapting change associated with NPM.

Evans (1995: 67) laments about the prohibitive environment for bureaucratic change in India. He argues that the primary problem is 'the recalcitrant challenges of India's social structure' and problems 'exacerbated by the way the bureaucracy has defined its relation to society'. For him, the ethnic, religious and regional divisions in India add to the 'administrative nightmare'. He argues that the bureaucracy suffers, 'less internal capacity, more difficult environments, and less carefully defined agendas of

involvement'. For Evans, these features combine to, 'put embedded autonomy of the sort that characterises the development state out of reach' (pp. 69-70).

Nowhere in India are the problems associated with social, political, historical (and other institutional factors) more acute than in Uttar Pradesh. It is necessary to understand this environment so that assessment of change can be made in light of the low social and administrative starting point of the State (Steinmetz, 1999). In the next chapter, therefore, I discuss governance, administration and development (both economic and social) in the case-study State and District, before going on to discuss the nature and aims of IMY.

CHAPTER 3: THE 'STATE' OF UTTAR PRADESH: GOVERNANCE, ADMINISTRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

3.1: Introduction

Chapters 1 and 2 set out the background to the field of research. Shifts in development debate and policy from a Washington, to a Post-Washington Consensus were identified, and the parallel changes affecting public administration, namely moves towards new public management described. I concentrated specifically on the shifting focus, in India, to a more open and liberalised economic policy, the countries association with the World Bank, and moves to restructure the institutions of state through civil service reform from 1996 onwards. The central question tackled in this thesis, as previously stated, is 'How have bureaucrats involved in IMY in Uttar Pradesh engaged with the process of change associated with new public management?'

The second chapter outlined the structure, role and working cultures of the Indian bureaucracy. It argued that the ways in which policy is adopted and adapted *in situ*, are clearly context specific for a place at any one period in time. This section, therefore, offers a contextualisation of the areas in which this research took place. The chapter begins with a detailed analysis of the social, political and environmental characteristics of the northern State of Uttar Pradesh (see Map 1). Uttar Pradesh is at the heart of an area (made up of UP and its bordering States of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan) that has been characterised as *bimaru* (sick), particularly in economic terms in relation to the rest of India (Ashish Bose, 1991)¹. The State also has a poor record in social development, gender equality, bureaucratic and political corruption and poverty alleviation. It is on these factors that I specifically concentrate.

In the second, section I narrow the focus to the Rae Bareli District of Uttar Pradesh in which a specific government programme, Indira Mahila Yojana, was investigated. In terms of geographical area, caste groupings and population, the District is broadly average for the State, but it is particularly interesting politically, as the home of the Gandhi family strongholds, the Amethi and Rae Bareli constituencies. The Indira

¹ For comparative studies see Sopher (1980a); also Karve (1965), Rudolph and Rudolph (1972), Dyson and Moore (1983), Caldwell and Caldwell (1987), Satia and Jejeebhoy (1991), among others.

Mahila Yojana (IMY) central government Programme, for women's empowerment, forms the analytical heart of this research project. The final section of this chapter outlines the main structure and aims of the scheme, focusing on its links with the agenda of new public management.

3.2: Uttar Pradesh



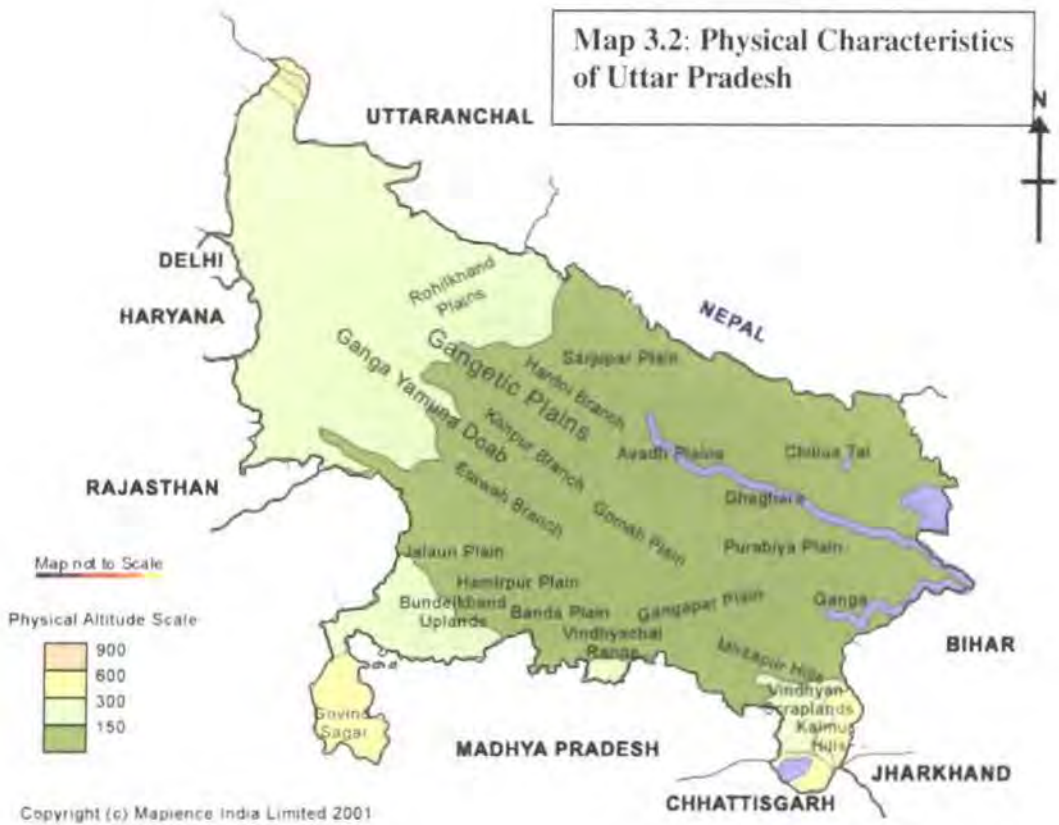
3.2.1: Geography

The northern State of Uttar Pradesh² is one of the 35 States and Union Territories within India. It is part of the 'Hindi belt'³ region, characterised by exceptionally high

² The research was conducted in the pre-division State of Uttar Pradesh (now Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh). Although the geographic area of the State of UP has now been reduced considerably (by around 20%) the division has involved the loss of about 4% of the population (approximately six million people). The area which forms the new State of Uttarakhand in the northern quarter of the old UP is environmentally, economically and culturally different from the area referred to in this study (Mawdsley 1997). The division of Uttar Pradesh, whilst politically important does not in any way negate the research. In fact it supports the idea of decentralisation into smaller units of the State administration, a key finding of this project, discussed in detail in Chapter 7.

³ Also known as the 'cow belt', this is the region in which Hindi is the predominant language.

levels of mortality, fertility, morbidity, malnutrition, illiteracy, social inequality, and slow pace of poverty decline⁴. Uttar Pradesh has also received a great deal of attention in its own right, in relation to its social, economic and political characteristics. In the 2001 census an estimated one hundred and sixty six million people live in Uttar Pradesh, accounting for one sixth of India's population. In development literature, following the National Sample Survey classification, pre-division Uttar Pradesh was been divided into five major regions because of its vast geographic area. These consist of (the plains of) the western region, the eastern region, the central region, and the southern region of Bundelkhand, as well as the hill region. This study is particularly concerned with the central region.



Despite social and economic differences within the State, particularly between the poorer east and richer west, Lieten and Srivastava (1999) argue that its experiences are broadly similar in terms of agrarian history, ecological conditions and

⁴ In Appendix 3.1 maps show statistical data (1991-2001) relating to population, literacy (female) and sex ratio's for the country as a whole.

development advancement (Lieten and Srivastava, 1999)⁵. Uttar Pradesh is primarily a low lying, agricultural State (See Map 2), with a high proportion, of its population, over 80%, living in rural areas, and mainly engaged in the agrarian economy (Census, GoI, 2001). Although urbanisation and non-agricultural employment increased in the post independence period, forms of agricultural production and the distribution of assets, notably cultivable land, still predominantly determine the material condition of the population.

Two developments in the region's agrarian history are particularly significant. The first involves the abolition of the *zamindari* system of land revenue and property rights at independence. Land reforms have resulted in some change including widening the base of ownership, limiting some of the power of large feudal landlords, and giving ownership rights to a vast majority of tenant farmers who previously did not own land⁶. The reforms did not, however, eradicate either landlessness or massive inequalities of land ownership in the State. The amounts of land given to farmers were small and, in the main, were taken from common land. Therefore instead of altering the dominance of proprietary classes (largely Brahmins, Thakurs, Jats and Ashraf Muslims) the abolition of *zamindari* led to large-scale eviction of tenants. This means the land ownership structure has changed little in the years since the abolition of the *zamindari*⁷.

The second development was the spread, in the 1960s and 1970s, of modern green revolution agricultural practices in western Uttar Pradesh, and their subsequent, although highly differentiated, diffusion to other parts of the State. This has led to some dynamism in rural economy and the creation of new economic classes, contributing to political turbulence as well as positive change. Whilst technological development has led to the expansion of private agricultural incomes, the lack of public distribution for this technology has led to a slow decline in conventional

⁵ In his recent work on work-force and socio-economic development in the State, Shafiqullah argues that socio-economic development in the State is highest in the North-Western part, it declines towards central and eastern parts (Shafiqullah, 2001).

⁶ Prior to the *zamindari* abolition, legal ownership of land in Uttar Pradesh was vested in between 3 and 8% of rural households (see Hasan, 1989, and Stokes, 1975, for various estimates).

⁷ Ranked by their ownership of land, the bottom 40% of households in Uttar Pradesh owned 2.5% of the total area in 1953-4, while the top 10% owned 46% of the area. The percentage breakdown remained largely unchanged in 1982 (H.R. Sharma, 1994).

indicators of poverty. Moreover, the low quality of public services, for example education (Dreze and Gadzar, 1996) has led to only minimal reductions in poverty levels.

3.2.2: Politics

The State of Uttar Pradesh has held considerable sway in the wider politics of India. As the largest State, it provides 80 MPs to the 540 member Indian Parliament. This, together with the relative vicinity of the State to Delhi has meant the influence of State politicians at the national level has been consistently high. The 403 member State Assembly, based at the State capital Lucknow, also holds considerable national political influence, with many senior politicians fighting for constituencies in the State. It is significant that of the twelve Indian Prime Ministers to date, eight have come from Uttar Pradesh.

The late 1970s defined the importance of Uttar Pradesh in national politics, indeed Gould (1971) argued that the politics of India from Independence were played out in Uttar Pradesh. Paul Brass (1985, 163), with reference to the Emergency period⁸ (1975-77) and political changes of the late 1970s, writes that,

‘In fact, it is no exaggeration to say that the conflicts for control of the government of India... have been almost entirely a playing-out on the national stage of social and political conflicts that have their origins in the north Indian states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar’.

In reaction to the Emergency and the imprisonment of opposition leaders, the Janata coalition rose in Uttar Pradesh and won all 85 Lok Sabha seats in March 1977 when Indira Gandhi called elections. The State elections followed the same course, with the Janata winning 352 seats in the UP assembly. The Janata victory was short lived however, collapsing under the pressure of coalition politics. Sanjay Gandhi took advantage of the turmoil in UP and helped his mother Indira become Prime Minister for the second time in 1980.

By the late 1980s, the socialist rhetoric of the Congress Party had lost much of its traditional support base of the upper castes. Dual political and economic pressures led

⁸ In a general State of Emergency (such as that declared by Indira Gandhi in 1975), the State legislative assemblies are dissolved and total power is assumed by the Centre.

many to defect to the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata party (BJP), which by the late 1980s became the second largest party in Uttar Pradesh. Liberalisation and the removal of many of the protective institutions of the state (Nair, 1996), led to economic pressures not only for the poor, but also the middle classes in both the cities and the countryside. Political change was influenced by the emancipatory cravings of the lower castes, promised to them by Congress⁹. The balancing act between classes and castes attempted by Congress began to alienate supporters on both sides. Under the short lived Janata Dal government of V.P.Singh (1989-1990), the multi-class appeal of Congress became increasingly difficult to sustain when the Mandal Commission recommendations, which had been produced over a decade previously, were brought into legislation in 1992. Its adoption meant a change in the relationship between Upper and Other Backward Classes, as the latter have been granted reserved places in elected and government postings (Balagopal, 1991; Galanter, 1991; Heuze, 1991; Beteille, 1992, 1996; Srinivas, 1996). Reaction to the national legislation was played out in the State and resulted in weeks of violence throughout the cities of UP. The then leader of the BJP, L.K. Advani, reacted in October by leading a Hindu procession through the States, ending in Ayodhya, and resulting in the destruction of the town's mosque by extreme Hindu nationalists.

Lower-caste groupings had begun vying for power at the centre of State politics in the 1960s (Hasan, 1989), and the swearing in of the first Dalit Chief Minister, Mayawati, in April 1995 symbolised the realisation of the previous decade's pressures (Lerche, 1999). But the farcical nature of UP politics was exemplified at this time with Mayawati's lower-caste based¹⁰ Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) precariously allied with the Bharatiya Janata Party. The coalition was predictably short-lived (though has recently been resumed for the third time), and the failure of any party to gain a majority during the 1996 elections led to UP being placed under Presidential Rule.

In March 1997, the BSP and BJP again joined forces agreeing to six months in office for each of the two leaders, Mayawati and Kalyan Singh (Brass, 1997). However, their radically differing ideologies led to persistent conflict. During her rule,

⁹ This prompted a range of demand groups to mobilise in the 1980s – most notably rural coalitions, known as the 'new farmers movements', with their political expression in the Bharatiya Kisan Union.

¹⁰ See Jeffery and Lerche, (2000) for an alternative perspective.

Mayawati dramatically restructured the administration to guarantee support, and promoted Dalit prominence through symbolism including building statues of Ambedkar (who had been a prominent equality-promoting leader at Independence). On gaining office Kalyan Singh took the offensive, successfully encouraging defections to his party, and gaining overall control. To encourage the support of new allies and to appease old ones, he increased the number of ministries to provide all key supporters with high level posts, leading to dramatic increases in expenditure and bureaucratic mayhem. Multiple resignations followed including that of the Family Welfare Minister, Devendra Singh Bhole in April, 1999 accusing the Chief Minister of 'corruption, prejudice and being under the influence of bureaucrats' (Frontline, May 6 1999). Kalyan Singh was finally removed from the party later that year.

For the State as a whole, with Congress fading out, the upper castes, particularly the 13% Brahmin population and the 12% Thakur population, continued to gravitate towards the BJP. In addition to the high-caste vote, the BJP has attracted a considerable lower-caste vote, with the former Chief Minister, Mr. Kalyan Singh, being drawn from the lower castes. However, with Singh now ousted from the party (from the beginning of 1999) the caste base began to weaken. Despite the party's waning popularity, it managed to hold onto power at the centre in 1999, albeit with a reduced majority.

In the recent State assembly elections (February, 2002), Mr. Vajpayee's BJP and its allies lost elections in four States, the worst affected being UP with 99 million voters. The party had campaigned on anti-terrorism, anti-Pakistan and security issues in UP, despite the fact that the State is home to India's largest Muslim population. The BJP fielded only one Muslim candidate and the Prime Minister churned up a political storm when he told a rally that the party could win without the Muslim votes. This undoubtedly contributed to the massive losses incurred by the party, dropping from 158 to only 88 seats. At the same time the contentious issue of the temple in Ayodhya, which had helped propel the party into national office on a wave of Hindu nationalist sentiment, is now proving difficult for the BJP to manage. In January 2002, around 4,000 protesters belonging to a militant Hindu organisation marched on New Delhi, demanding the construction of a temple to the god Ram in the town. These same nationalists have criticised Vajpayee for not giving them full support. Although he is

said to favour the temple construction, he is constrained by secular parties in his national coalition (The Guardian, 2002).

The socialist OBC Samjwadi party (SP) and its two small allies won 149 of UP's 403 assembly seats, with a voter turnout of about 53%. The samajwadi leader Mulayam Singh Yadav, has considerable support from the (8.55%) Yadav and the (16.5%) Muslim populations. The parties' candidate emphasised the state's failures in relation to infrastructure, the lack of development, and the corruption of officials who siphoned money away from its true causes. Success in this election has been in no small part due to two key factors. First, sentiment over the brutal killing of the Samajwadi party MP, Phoolan Devi, in the summer of 2001 is still running high. Members of the party have called it a political conspiracy against the lower caste leader (Hindu, 27th July 2001). The second weapon of the SP is India's biggest film star, Amitabh Bachchan – and presenter of 'Kaun Banega Krorpati'. Mr Bachchan campaigned in the State, entertaining tens of thousands of supporters with a mixture of poetry, songs, and political points alongside the party's leader Mulayam Singh Yadav¹¹.

The Bahujan Samaj party, which controls most of the (23%) Dalit vote nearly doubled its representation, winning 98 seats. Adding to the cacophony of participators in the election has been the candidature of about twenty eunuchs. Whilst new to the political scene, they argue that not having families will make them less corrupt than the current batch of politicians! This sentiment no doubt refers to the number of candidates with criminal records. On the 28th of January the Asian Age reported at least five incidents of pre-poll violence in the State concluding that these elections could end up "as one of the most violent ever" (2002). They were right, allegations of vote rigging and violence at polling stations led to two districts being struck from the elections, meaning that votes were calculated for 401 of the (403) seats (India Today, October, 2001).

¹¹ The BJP retaliated in similar fashion, with the support of Bollywood actress Hema Malini, popularly known as the 'Dream Girl'.

Figure 3.1 Uttar Pradesh State Current Assembly (2001)	
Samjwadi party - 145	Bahujan Samaj party - 97
Bharatiya Janata Party - 88	Congress - 25
Rashtrya Lok Dal - 14	Others - 30
Vacant - 4	
Total Seats 403	

As no single party took power in the elections it was necessary for the parties concerned to organise a coalition government, the debates around which took over two months. In May the leader of BSP, Mayawati, was sworn in as the chief minister of UP for the third time in coalition government with the BJP (BBC, website 2002). BSP members took thirteen portfolios while the BJP got nine, and the two remaining posts went to the Indian National Lok Dal.

This situation in UP exemplifies what Rudolph and Rudolph (1987) have termed the shift from 'command' to 'demand' politics. They refer to the fact that both State and Central governments have moved from a dominant position, directing policy through consensus and coercion, to a position where they are increasingly pressured by powerful social and political actors. Atul Kohli, in his study of the 'crisis of governmentability', suggests that uncontrolled politicisation of both state and civil society has resulted in the incapacity of the state to, 'simultaneously promote development and to accommodate diverse interests' (Kolhi, 1990: 14). Nowhere is this more true than in the current UP environment. The sharing of authority between the BSP and BJP has led to the transfer of senior officers, who have sometimes only occupied the portfolio for several hours, causing normal business to come to an abrupt halt. The World Bank has threatened to stop lending to the State, specifically because of the negative impact they have calculated political transfers to have had on development. The Bank contends that up to \$377 million, of their \$1.8 billion loan to the State is not being used effectively due to the transfer of officers.

3.2.3: Development:

Whilst caste polarisation is so complete and vicious in the State that it dominates the political agenda (Pai, 1997), successive State government regimes in UP, as in Bihar, have, until very recently, done relatively little to promote socially inclusive

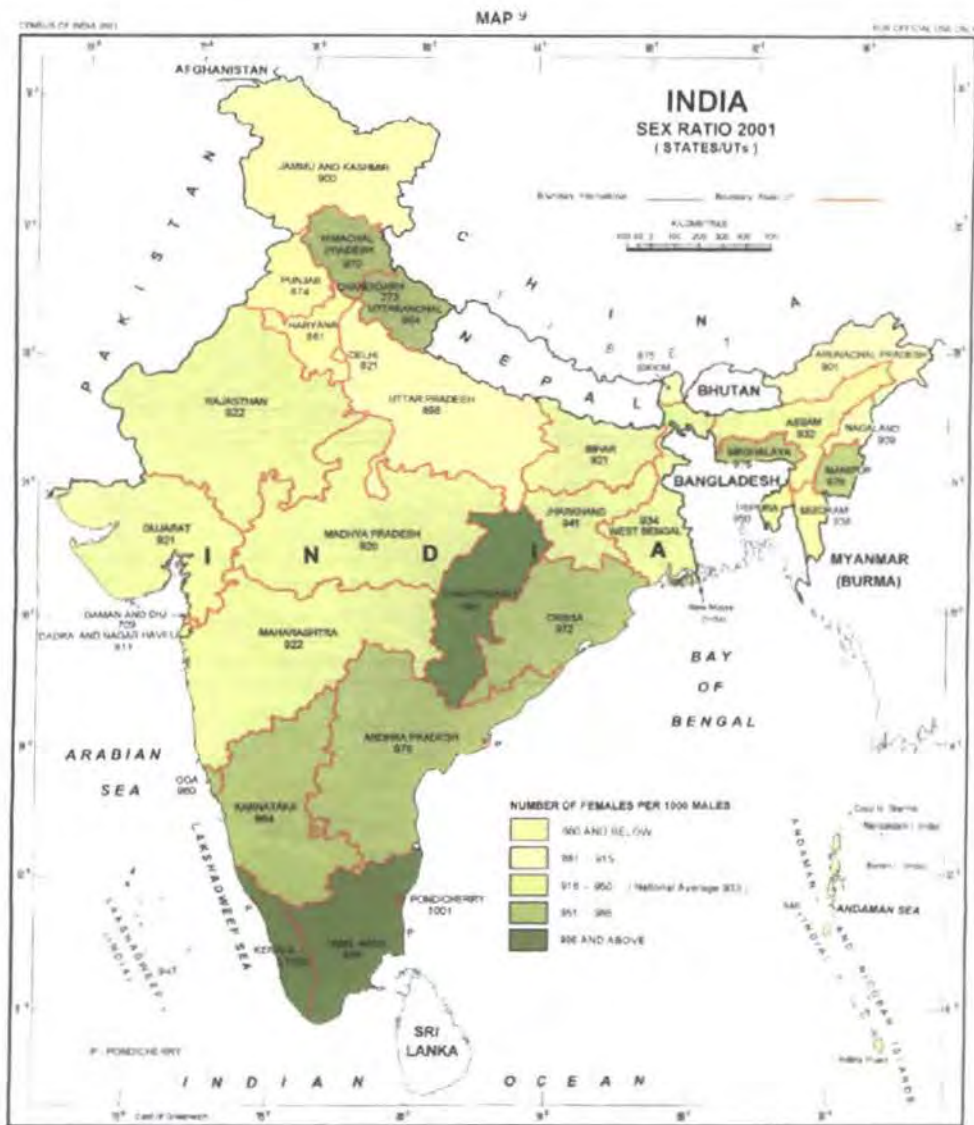
development or reduce casteism (Corbridge and Harriss, 2000, ch. 9). Within this generalisation, Lerche (1995) asserts that the persistence of caste and class oppression in western UP is greater than that in the east of the State due to greater political power and organisation of dominant castes in the west. According to Dreze and Sen (1997), the political inequalities in UP have severely distorted the priorities of state intervention and implementation in development schemes. The low participation rates of disadvantaged groups in the political process reflect inequalities on the basis of class, caste and gender. This they argue has fed into low levels of social advancement in the State. Whilst India ranks 138 out of the 175 countries for which the HDI is computed, marked differences are evident both between and within States (Shiv Kumar, 1996). The southern State of Kerela ranks highest in India with an HDI value of 0.603, which is comparable to that of China. At the bottom of the scale is Uttar Pradesh (HDI of 0.348), similar in ranking to countries like Madagascar, Rwanda and Senegal, which have some of the lowest levels of human development in the world (UNDP, 1997). Within this section, I consider specific elements of human development in the State with particular focus on women as this is particularly important for this case study.¹²

The Gender-related Development Index (GDI) for Indian States reveals not only the extent of gender inequalities within India, but also the country's poor performance in relation to other countries (Agnihotri, 1994)¹³. Topping the list of advanced Indian States is Kerela, with a GDI value of 0.565. Uttar Pradesh lurks at the bottom with a GDI value of 0.293, ranked next to Benin, reflecting the sharp disparities within India. Female literacy was recorded as 43% in the 2001 census in UP, showing a higher than average increase. This, however, remains less than half that achieved in Kerela, suggesting that the percentage increase may, in fact, reflect the relatively low starting point of UP.

¹² The role and status of women, clearly have important implications for the effectiveness of development work in India (see Basu, 1992; Asian Development Bank, 1994). However the focus of this project on changing culture of the bureaucracy, does not and cannot cover this subject in detail.

¹³ The Department of Women & Child Development (DOWC), GOI, has sponsored studies to evolve a mechanism of gender audit at the District level, using indicators more appropriate to the socio-cultural context in India. UNDP supported a study on data availability in eight districts in four States, which found that gender disaggregated data is not available as yet to compute a meaningful GDI at the district level. The interagency Working Group on Gender and Development is supporting initiatives to gender-sensitise data systems and provide the database for gender audits.

Map 3.3: Indian States by Sex Ratio



Despite the increase in literacy, the State remains 31st of the 35 States for female literacy levels. There are, in fact only thirteen countries in the world with lower GDIs than those of Bihar (0.306) and Uttar Pradesh (0.293)¹⁴. Another worrying trend in UP is the low Female to Male Ratio. Dreze and Gazdar, 1997 contend that,

'Uttar Pradesh is not just a setter of world records when it comes to the female deficit in the population, it is virtually in a league of its own' (p.45).

They argue that the main cause of the low female to male ratio represents the far lower survival rates of women from birth until mid thirties. For the 0-4 age group, female death rates in UP are 16% higher than male death rates, in contrast to the female advantage in that age group in South India.

The average births per woman is twice as high in Uttar Pradesh as in South India, and the risk of maternal mortality during child birth is three times higher. It should be noted, that not only is the female to male ratio in Uttar Pradesh low, but it has been declining since the beginning of the century from 0.94 in 1901 to 0.88 in 1991, though this has slightly improved in the latest census¹⁵. For Murthi, Guio and Dreze (1996) the decline of the female to male ratio, despite improved medical facilities and reduced total poverty levels, must in part relate to the persistence and even accentuation of unequal gender relations. At the State level there has been little change in the rate of population growth in Uttar Pradesh¹⁶ compared with signs of quite considerable reductions in growth rates for many other States (Dyson, 2001). Whilst the provisional census results suggest that there has been a decline in India's population male bias (compared to 1991), Dyson argues that evidence is largely spurious because women were less fully enumerated in 1991. Dyson's argument is supported by the fact that the FMR in the 0-6 years age groups is actually falling¹⁷, which implies the perpetuation of traditional female disadvantage.

HDI levels within the State are both spatially and socially differentiated. The levels of development in urban areas, where 26% of the population live, are better than their rural counterparts in many respects. Life expectancy for a person born in urban India

¹⁴ Twice as many people live in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh (combined population of 222 million in 1991) as in the total of the thirteen countries that have lower GDI values.

¹⁵ According to the preliminary figures for the 2001 census the FMR is now 0.9.

¹⁶ 26% growth for the decade 1991-2001.

¹⁷ This figure stood at 0.976 in 1961, 0.945 in 1991 and has fallen to 0.927 in 2001.

is sixty-five years, compared with fifty-eight years in rural India. Similarly infant mortality and illiteracy are far higher in rural areas. A quarter of India's population belongs to communities classified as Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (SCs and STs). The level of human development amongst these communities have remained lower than the rest of the population, a feature intensified in the UP context (Chakrabarty, 2001). In 1992-3 the infant mortality rates were 107 and 91 per 1000 live births among Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes, respectively, (22% and 45% over the national average). Similarly, according to the 1991 census, only 24% of women in Scheduled Castes and 18% of Scheduled Tribes were literate.

Uttar Pradesh, like many other Indian States, has been hit by the financial crunch of the late 1980s and 1990s. Expanded government borrowing at market rates, particularly from the late 1980s, has increased the cost of debt service management throughout India. Although central government allocations to the social sector have been slightly increased, combined Central and State government expenditure has reduced, as transfer funds from the Centre to the States have decreased (GoI, 1995). Social sector spending began to slow down in the mid-1980s. There was a decline in real *per capita* expenditure on health and education, especially in the poorer States (UNDP, 1997). However, since 1990-1 this problem has intensified. Total expenditure of central and State governments on social services and rural development fell from 9.1% of GDP in 1989-90 to 8.7% in 1994-5 (Ghate, 1998). This factor was highlighted in interview with a senior bureaucrat B. L. Bajaj, Chair of the State Electricity board. He argued that, whilst caste and religion are often cited as causing communal violence in the State, the real cause is financial,

'The major problem in U.P. is that new development expenditure has gone down very sharply. It's had an impact on employment and development projects, the effects can be seen in tension in the villages. These problems erupt under the name of caste and religion but essentially the problem is about money...Per Capita Income from 1992 -1997 has risen only 1.8% whereas in most States this is around 3%. There are also very sharp inequalities in income in the State and the poorest haven't had much benefit lately. We have witnessed the withdrawal of the state in many areas. The government is pressed with fiscal and financial problems and so can't employ new people. The programmes that do actually occur are restricted by the Central Government or by the World Bank (Interview, 5th May¹⁸)'.

¹⁸ Unless otherwise stated all interviews were conducted in 2000.

It could be suggested that low levels of social development in the State relate to the high incidence of economic poverty (poverty is of course widely understood to be multidimensional) (Kanbur, 2001). The extent of poverty in Uttar Pradesh is undeniable, demonstrated by the fact that in 1987-1988 almost half of the population was estimated to live below the 'poverty line' (Jain et al. 1993; Minhas et al. 1991). However, the incidence of poverty is high in India as a whole, in fact poverty indicators in UP have been similar to those in other States, whilst HDI improvements show great disparity (EPW Research Foundation, 1993). Whilst the problems of poverty in UP are vast, Dreze and Gazdar (1997) argue that other factors must contribute to the low levels of advancement in social sectors. They contend that one important factor relates to the nature of public service in the State. First, expenditure in relation to health care provision, educational facilities and the PDS provision in UP is extremely low (GoI, 1992, 1993; Tyagi, 1993; Visaria et al. 1993; International Institute for Population Sciences, 1994 a and b; Parihk, 1994). Second, and particularly relevant for this work, Dreze and Gadzar argue that it is not simply the quantity, but fundamentally the quality, of public services which have restricted advancement in the State,

'The restricted scope and quality of public services in Uttar Pradesh, in comparison with South India, seems to have less to do with the levels of government expenditure than with distorted *patterns* of social spending as well as with the defective *functioning* of the services in question' (p. 54 emphasis in the original).

They continue,

'It is important to note that the neglect of public service in Uttar Pradesh is not confined to specific programmes...Rather, it is a case of comprehensive failure of social provisions in a wide range of fields including basic education, land reform, child immunisation, public distribution, maternal health, social security, public works, environmental protection, anti-poverty programmes, among others. There are few exceptions to this pattern. Nor is it easy to cite any examples of a successful or innovative public programme relating to the promotion of human well-being on a widespread basis' (p. 55-56).

According to Tolia the general acceptance of bureaucratic failure coupled with financial crisis led the Government of Uttar Pradesh to approach the World Bank for assistance. India has a relatively long relationship with the Bank, which began in 1944. Today India is the Bank's largest single borrower with cumulative lending of

more than \$47 billion in market based loans by June 2000¹⁹ (World Bank, 2001). In recent years, the Bank has shifted its focus from national loans to those focused on States that 'chose' to embark on a programme of economic reforms. State level operations are not new for the Bank. Previously, however, these were largely on project and sector specific grounds, rather than as a broad based approach to reform as detailed in chapter one (World Bank, 2001). Uttar Pradesh is particularly interesting, as it became the first State in India to take a sub-national adjustment loan, consisting of \$125 million credit and \$126.3 million loans (in 1998). The government of UP and the Bank are currently working on reforms in the areas of public expenditure, tax policy and administration, civil service, anti-corruption, deregulation, decentralisation, privatisation, financial management and accountability. The scope of reforms is too vast for this research, which focuses specifically on reform of the civil service.

3.2.4: Administration

Lewis (1995) has acknowledged the problems of change in 'giant systems' of which the Indian civil service is clearly one. Today there are approximately one million civil servants directly employed by the UP government, and a further seven million employed in public enterprises in the State of Uttar Pradesh (Tolia, 1997). As a result of the numerous critiques of the bureaucracy in UP (e.g. Dhar, 1999, Rai, 1999, Toila, 2000), and the World Bank loan criteria, the government is currently initiating a programme of reform relating to the structure and nature of the administration (see chapter 1).

As already detailed in chapter 2, problems of the bureaucracy such as politicisation, corruption and nepotism have been highlighted in the UP context. However, Dr. R. S. Tolia, Director of the UP Administrative Training Institute (ATI) at Nainital, has suggested that real changes are taking place. Tolia claims that there has been an attitudinal change, a reduction in the 'fear psychosis' in the government officials in UP, to enable shifts to working practices synonymous with NPM (which involves the reduction of bureaucratic power) to take place,

¹⁹ Money has come from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and development credits from the International Development Association (IDA), the World Bank affiliate that provides interest free loans to economies with low per capital incomes.

'We're doing client surveys and looking at customer satisfaction which is a complete change. There is a change in opinion, that now as a bureaucrat, 'I am going to be judged by the people', this is good. We have shifted from a *status quo*-ist administration to a *proactive* one. There is a feeling that it is necessary to stick your neck out to get things done, instead of doing nothing. We're teaching that they won't be judged for making mistakes... There is a move to re-skilling and re-deploying, looking at the problems sector wise and seeing what changes should be made. There is also a move to capacity building and IT. It is a new message that people should be working as a team not as an individual. That they succeed or fail as a team, this is essential to cut down hierarchical thinking. We're starting to encourage working in a circular manner so that anyone can be free to give ideas (Interview, 9th June)'.

However at the same time as acknowledging the need for attitudinal change, Tolia also points to a right wing focus to reforms, including terms made popular by the World Bank, such as 'right-sizing'.

'We are initiating a 2% per annum reduction in the civil service... The role of the bureaucracy is changing to a *facilitator*. They are moving from 'rowing' to 'steering' in development policy. ... There is a dual change going on at the moment which is a precedent in history - the attempts at the up-linking with the global and, at the same time down-sizing and delegation to the local... The state has to be key in this change. For this simultaneous change to be possible, there has to be empowerment at the local level. Without this change isn't possible. We have shifted from *no* agenda to a *double* agenda (Interview, 9th June, 1999).

One important area of change highlighted by Tolia is the greater devolution of power to locally elected village councils. The aim here is not to study the *Panchayati Raj* Institutions (PRI), but rather to consider the ways in which the change in power relations has impacted, and is impacted, by changing bureaucratic values associated with new public management. According to Morris-Jones (1971, p.156), the government administration was working in an authoritarian manner in the 1960s so that the marriage between local self-government and the centralised bureaucracy in India was 'somewhat inconclusive'. For him, the reality was that bureaucracy has held onto power, and the devolution of finances and responsibility remained constricted within a centralised framework. Jain (1985) in his book, 'Grass Without Roots', argued that attempts to revitalise local democracy have shown few promising results, in part because of the nature of public administration in India. Following the 73rd constitutional amendment legislative changes in 1994, the PRIs are now officially recognised as the lowest rung of self-government and have been given greater

financial resources and responsibilities. These changes supported a three-tier structure with the *Gram Panchayat*²⁰ at the base, giving wider representation to women and scheduled castes, both as members of village councils and as council heads. In keeping with the constitutional amendments, the Uttar Pradesh *Panchayati Raj* Act was initiated in 1994 (*Panchayat Raj* Act, 1994). Although the adoption of this legislation is a significant shift, the efficacy of the model, according to Lieten, is based on the assumption that the highly unequal access to resources in rural areas will be modified. In their survey of 250 *Panchayat* members from twenty-five *Panchayats* in 1995, Lieten and Srivastava report that many candidates to the *panchayats* before 1995 were elected unopposed. This signifies dominant relations and that many village councils only existed in name but were otherwise non-functional. They argue that OBCs and SCs have *de jure* gained representation as many village-level elected leaders, or *Pradhans*, are agricultural labourers with low literacy levels. They claim, however that, in reality these individuals are manipulated by (or working in association with) local elites, in many cases with the collusion of Block and District level government officials. They describe what they see as *Pradhans* by proxy, accentuated in the case of women members and women *Pradhans*. Legislation of reservation for women and SCs has not been viewed favourably by the richer classes (Lieten and Srivastava, 1999). Lieten and Srivastava saw intense factionalism in villages creating problems for even the smallest development projects. They argue, therefore, that of the *panchayats* in UP most do not function properly and others don't function at all.

Lieten and Srivastava (1999) also evaluated the *Panchayat's* role in village development programmes. They argue that the selection of beneficiaries for the Integrated Rural development Programme (IRDP) programme by the village *Pradhan* often resulted in the selection of ineligible beneficiaries as well as other forms of corruption. Despite the findings of the study, Lieten and Srivastava found that the majority of people interviewed supported the greater devolution of funds to the village level, with the caveat that there be better supervision over the management of funds by an accountable administration. Across the social spectrum, the universal demand was for a more responsive administration. This assertion made by Lieten and

²⁰ Village level council.

Srivastava, would support evidence presented by Veron *et al.* (2002) that political society plays an important part in the acts of translation that bridges the gap between government and 'the public' at the District and Block level. Furthermore, the calls for responsible administration would support Veron *et al.*'s argument that rent seeking is highest where low levels of accountability are present. The failures of panchayats, highlighted by Lieten and Srivastava, are particularly important as the ways in which devolution of power is enacted through NPM in UP is likely to be influenced by the nature of these governance structures.

3.3: Rae Bareli

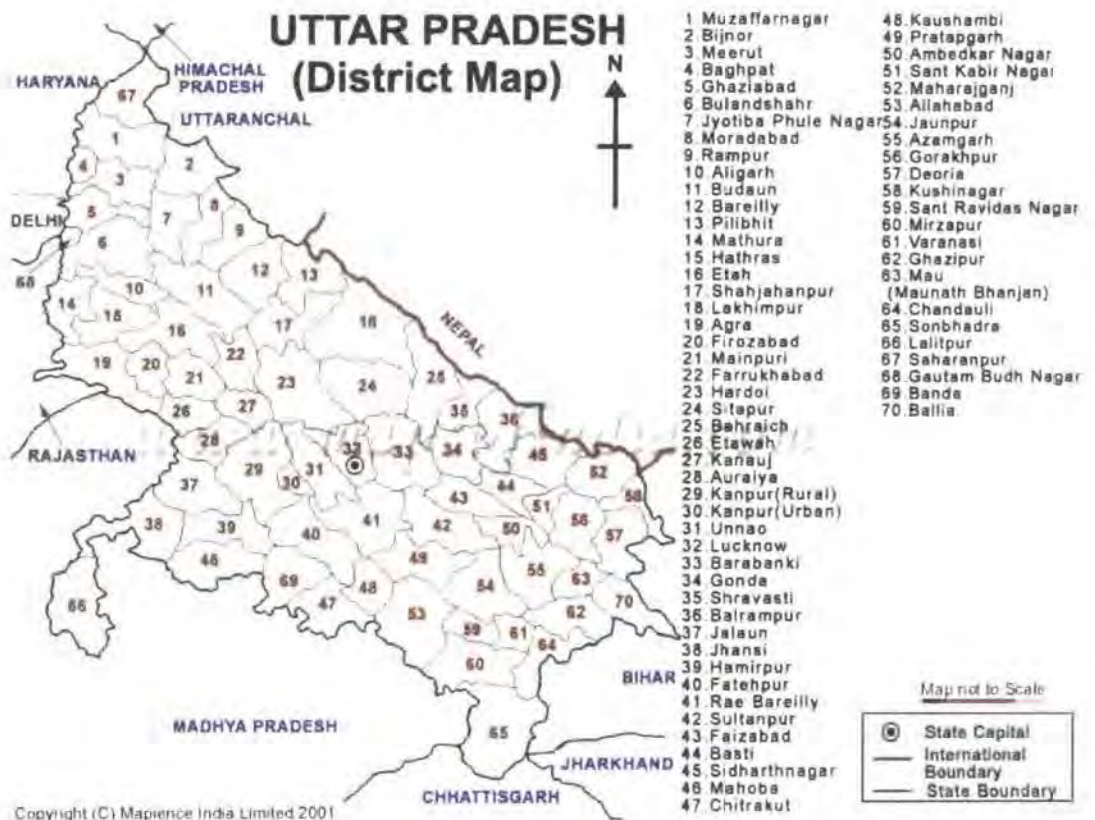
In order to explore bureaucratic cultures, I interviewed those involved in the IMY programme at central, State, District and Block levels. There are 70 Districts in UP. Only four Districts, Bijnor, Jalaun, Rae Bareli and Sonbhadra, and 30 Blocks within these are involved in the IMY programme. Rae Bareli (RB), is broadly average for the State in terms of population, size of District and development indicators, and being 80 km south of Lucknow, it has the added advantage of accessibility. Rae Bareli covers an area of 4600 square kilometres and has a population of 2.9 million.

Map 3.4: The District of Rae Bareli



The District lies between the Ganga and Sai rivers, is generally flat, with some tracts of gently undulating land. As with the rest of UP the primary occupation is in agriculture. Extensive patches of infertile land intersperse better clay and loam soils. In the past, wet season crops have consisted of rice, *jowar*, *urad dul* and *bajra*; the dry season agriculture included wheat, barley and opium (Nevill 1905: 33). During the colonial era the *taluqdars* were primary holders of land (Kumar, 1984; Pandey, 1992). At Independence, the Rajputs (around 9% of the population), possessed two thirds of the land; the Brahmins (approximately 7% of the population), controlled 14 % of the land (District Gazetteer Rae Bareli 1923: 219; Census of India 1951a: 61-61). The fortunes of the Muslim landlords were not as favourable, as their trading activities were reduced. Most tenants at this time were tenants at will, although Settlement Reports suggest that they were little more fortunate than bonded labourers (Saxena, 1984: 25).

Following Independence, the occupational structure of Rae Bareli changed, to some degree. Whilst land reforms of the 1960s and 1970s helped most people gain some (if limited) access to land, since this land was taken from the commons it did not alter traditional domination by big landed families.



The government-engineered process of liberalisation has contributed to a marginal shift towards industrial trade and services. In less than a decade, the 'no-industry' area of Amethi acquired the distinction of having the highest industrial investment in UP. Despite this, in 1991, 87.5% of the population still worked in agriculture. Furthermore, the many industrial ventures which have come up, and for which many peasants were dispossessed of their land, has not resulted in employment generation for the majority of the poor (Lieten and Srivastava, 1999).

After Independence, the population growth in RB was amongst the lowest in the State. The reason for this was not lower levels of female fertility, but high levels of male emigration from the area. This, rather than social factors, is the most likely explanation for the higher than average female-male ratio in the District. The FMR for Rae Bareli in 2001 is 949²¹, compared to 898 for UP as a whole. As elsewhere in the State the identity boundaries between different groups remain important. The rules on caste segregation have been somewhat relaxed, but inter-caste commensality continues to be rare. The proportion of Muslims in the Tahsil of Rae Bareli itself is 12%, however, in some towns such as Salon the number can be as high fifty percent.

Rae Bareli is well known for forming part of two distinguished political constituencies, those of Amethi and Rae Bareli. For the past two decades, these have been bastions of the Nehru-Gandhi Dynasty that has presided over the Congress party for over 40 years since Independence. The long-standing interest of the Gandhi family in Rae Bareli and Amethi constituencies has resulted in the allocation of ample development resources to the area, particularly after 1980. After the death of Indira Gandhi, Rae Bareli constituency went to her cousin Arun Nehru and after his defection, to the BJP, to her cousin Sheila Kaul. Today the dominance of Congress in the constituency is far more tenuous. In 1996, the INC had a 44% margin over opposition party the BJP. However, in the last elections, with only a 4% advantage over the SP, the traditional power of Congress was severely challenged²².

²¹ This shows a considerable achievement from 931 in 1991. However the result may reflect inaccuracies in the 1991 calculation (Dyson, 2001).

²² Veron *et al.* (2002) suggest that the politics of an area has important implications for the way in which development policy is implemented. However, within this research the areas considered do not fit into set constituencies. Therefore, in this instance, such analysis was not possible.

In Amethi, the adjoining constituency in which Salon is located, Sanjay Gandhi's first attempt to enter Parliament was stopped by the Janata wave of 1977. It was not long, however, until the Gandhi dynasty became dominant in the politics of the area. Sanjay Gandhi, and after his death, his brother (Rajiv Gandhi) conquered the constituency with relative ease. In 1984 and 1989, for example Rajiv secured respectively 83.7% and 67.4% of the valid votes (Buttler et al. 1991). The battle for the State assembly seats was more of a contest. The Left of centre parties (the Socialist Party in the 1950s and 1960s, the BKD in the 1970s, the Janata Dal in the 1980s and the Socialist Party/BSP in the 1990s) have continued to be strong contenders. That contention is now with the BJP, which has replaced the Indian National Congress (INC). After its unsuccessful attempt in the 1950s, as the Hindu Mahasabha and the Jan Sangh, the Hindu party had withdrawn from the area. In 1991, it reappeared and gained one quarter of the votes, and more than one third in 1993. Concurrently the fortunes of the INC dwindled. As in the national and State arenas, once the Gandhi patronage was dislodged, many upper caste voters transferred allegiance to the BJP. This shift has been of quite remarkable proportions. Whilst in 1996 the BJP had a 4% advantage in the constituency (over the INC), this increased to almost 41% in 1999. A significant feature of the area, considering its political background, is the lack of participation in the electoral procedure. In 1993, 50% of the population chose not to vote, although this remains higher than in many western countries, a rise from only one third in the early 1980s (Election Commission, Lucknow).

The head of administration within a District is the District Officer (DO)²³ based at the District Headquarters, *Vikas Bhawan*, in Rae Bareli. A Chief Development Officer has responsibility over all the development work within the District. Other District Officers are also posted at the District Headquarters (see Annexe of major officers at District level). The unit of development in India is the Block. There are twenty-one Blocks within the district of Rae Bareli (see Annex of Blocks). At each Block, a Block Development Officer (BDO) is posted to oversee the co-ordination of development work at this level. The IMY project is being implemented in six developmental Blocks in Rae Bareli, namely Bhadurpur, Maharagang, Salon, Singhpur, Tiloi and Unchahar.

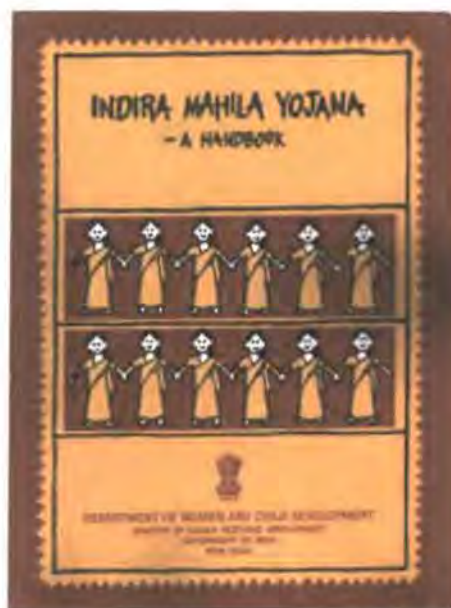
²³ The DO is also known as the Deputy Commissioner for revenue and the District Magistrate (DM) for judicial matters

3.4: Indira Mahila Yojana

In this section the aims, structure and nature of the Indira Mahila Yojana scheme are detailed. The IMY is a central government scheme developed in the wake of new economic policy in India and changing perceptions of the role of the bureaucracy in development. It was introduced in 1995 and its aim is to promote the 'holistic empowerment of women' (GoI, 1998). Both the structure and the features of IMY are quite different from many other government schemes. However, this thesis should not be seen as a case-study of successful development or self-help group policy, nor is the study of the scheme comprehensive enough to provide one. Rather the scheme provides a means through which I can consider the ways in which government officials at different hierarchical levels have adopted and adapted elements of NPM, and the implications this has had on their work cultures.

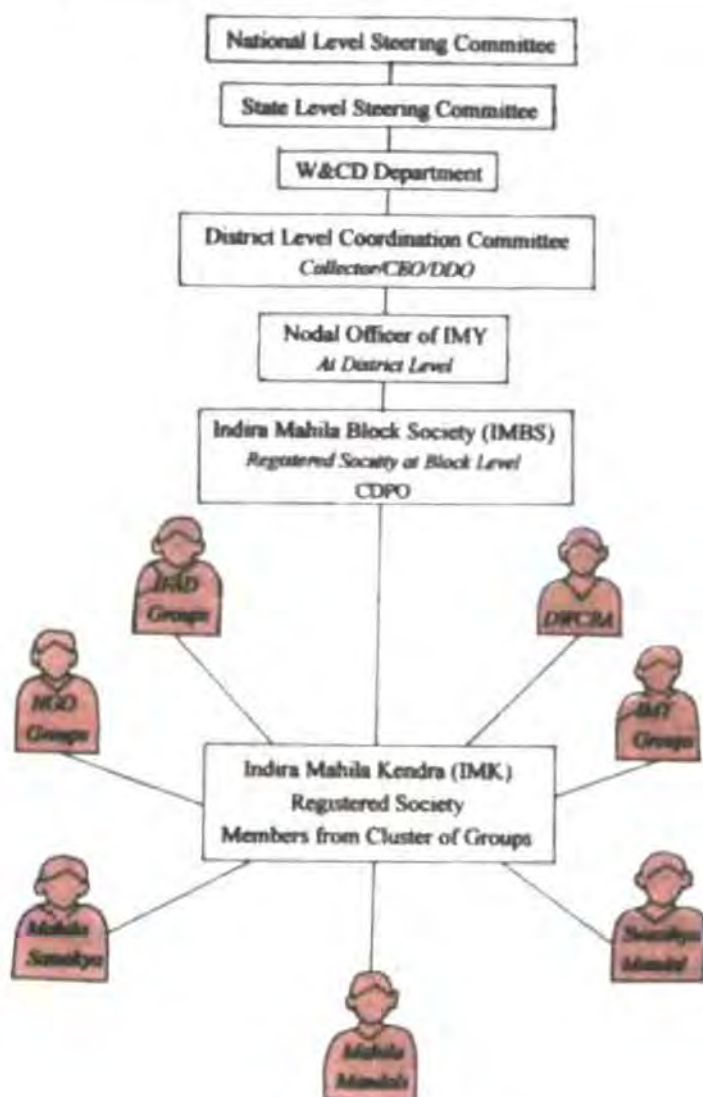
Figure 3.2: Indira Mahila Yojana

The language and ideas behind IMY fit with concepts promoted through new public management (discussed in chapter 1). Directly alluded to in the scheme handbook is a new role for the bureaucracy as facilitators of change rather than direct implementers. The programme aims to work with private and non-government sectors in achieving its aim (p.8).



At the national level, the nodal agency of the scheme is the Department of Women and Child Development (DWCD). While the scheme's conception and central co-ordination lie at the national level, funding arrangements for the scheme are organised by outside agencies. Funding for the programme at the national level is co-ordinated by Rashtya Mahila Kosht (RMK) a quasi-government body which functions as a private sector business. RMK was set up by the Department of Women and Children, Government of India, as an organisation registered in 1993 under the Societies

Fig 3.3: Organisational and Administrative Structure of IMY



Registration Act 1860. It was set up with the main objective to promote and undertake provision of credit as an instrument for socio-economic change for the development of women. It is the first and only apex micro-finance organisation for women set by the Government of India. RMK has a Governing Board comprising of five Secretaries from the government, two Secretaries from the State governments and Seven non-official members from the NGO sector.

At the State level in Lucknow, the scheme functions through the government's Institute of Child Development Services (ICDS). The role of the DWCD at this level, is co-ordination with other departments and the organisation of training for the programme workers. Training for the scheme in UP is primarily offered through the National Institute of Public Co-operation and Child Development (NPCCD), Lucknow. In addition to ICDS, other organisations (both inside and outside of state provision) play a part in IMY through the State Level Steering Committee (SLSC). The Committee aims to identify various schemes, for example in basic education, which may be important to the women involved in IMY, and avoid any duplication of effort. NGOs also have a key role to play in IMY. In Rae Bareli CARE works directly with the programme in its Breast Feeding Campaign, as do UNICEF and the local NGO *Sabla*.

At the District Level in Rae Bareli, primary responsibility for the scheme rests with the project officer (PO). In each District, there is a District Level Co-ordinating Committee (DLCC), involving all sectors from government and various external agencies involved in the programme²⁴. Working with the programme officer is one CDPO (Chief District Programme Officer) and a number of supervisors in each development Block. Supervisors are recruited at the District level, rather than through the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) at the national or State level. In addition, the recruitment criteria are also more flexible in terms of age and education. Supervisors interviewed in Rae Bareli were of different ages (25 to 58) and came from different vocational backgrounds, whilst others had either returned to work after having children, or come straight from higher education.

The work of Peter Evans has been important in informing development policy and debate in recent years, particularly in regard to the possibilities offered by a more effective state for development. He cites the work of Moore (1994) who suggests that local level officers can have positive implications for the quality of their work, and responsiveness to the public,

'Irrigation associations are overwhelmingly staffed by people who were born in the locality, have lived there all their lives, and in many cases also from there...(so that)...IA staff are so much part of the local society that they can

²⁴ The specific roles of each of the parties involved in the project are outlined in Appendix 1.

neither escape uncomfortable censure if they are seen to be conspicuously performing poorly, nor ignore representations made to them by members' (cited in Evans 1996a: 1121).

A similar policy to recruit at the local level is adopted in the case of IMY.

Training within the IMY is intensive, and offers a broader range of exposure than that given before to those at State level and below. At the State level, key actors in the programme are offered training both overseas and domestically, and in a shift from convention, so are Programme Officers at the District level. Lower level supervisors are given four-week residential training courses in Lucknow, which are followed up every six to twelve months with refresher courses. *Anganwadi* workers are trained at the District level and by the trainers and government supervisors involved in the scheme.

The funding for the scheme at the district level is through Intermediate Micro-finance Organisations (IMOs), who work directly with RMK. The IMO for Rae Bareilly district is an NGO called Avadh Lok Seva Ashram. The IMO works with IMY programme but also with other micro credit schemes working in the District. As the IMO works as a business, if it does not meet set targets it can be replaced by RMK.

The scheme operates at the lowest possible level in the village with the assistance of the *anganwadi* worker (village level worker), who lives and works in the village with the women. The IMY handbook (1995: 12) suggests that, 'the *anganwadi* will play the most important role in IMY'. Within the IMY group focus is placed on social education, including literacy and health care and thrift savings in the first instance. Once they have developed sufficiently as a group, they are encouraged to network with other groups thus forming a village level society called Indira Mahila Kendra (IMK). Once a sufficient number of IMK groups are formed, a Block level society known as Indira Mahila Block Society (IMBS) will develop as an apex body. It is anticipated that the development of networks of trust will promote intergroup learning and empowerment so that the women in the SHG's may gain both social and economic independence.

Fig: 3.4 Aims of the IMY Scheme:

The vision for IMY according to the Department of Women and Child Development is to empower women who will then:

- **Demand their rights** from family, community and government
- Have increased **access to and control over** material, social and political resources
- Have enhanced **awareness and improved skills**; and
- Be able to **raise issues** of common concern through **mobilisation and networking** (Department of Women and Child Development, Government of India, 1998).

IMY is premised on recognition that empowerment is a multifaceted process (GoI, 1998; Rowlands, 1997). Unlike previous projects such as Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) and Jawahar Rojgar Yojana (JRY), social empowerment is seen as a precursor to economic development. It aims to generate awareness among women by disseminating information and knowledge, so as to bring about an attitudinal change. Subsequently, there is an attempt to help women achieve economic strength through micro-level income generating activities; and also to establish convergence of various services including literacy, health, non-formal education, rural development and water supply.

This would seem to contrast with previous schemes. Attwood and Baviskar, (2002) argue that although the Indian government has invested huge amounts of money in formal, state run credit 'co-operatives', empowerment was rarely achieved for the poor. In these schemes, they suggest, the assets were never formed through members' savings, in reality, they consisted of loans that went primarily to landowners (mainly men), many loans never being repaid. Thus, for them formal 'co-operative' credit is neither self-supporting nor beneficial to the poorest villagers, including women. It is suggested even the goal of economic empowerment was rarely achieved. Other schemes that have encouraged economic empowerment have been more successful, and include the 'Women's Thrift Co-operatives' (WTCs) in Andhra Pradesh State, launched in 1990 under the auspices of an indigenous NGO. WTCs raise funds solely through small, regular contributions from their members, earning modest interest. A village WTC consists of around two to five hundred women divided into groups of

between ten and fifty. Biwas and Mahajan (1997) have asserted that group discipline ensures excellent rates of loan recovery. By the end of 1998 the village WTC's combined savings totalled Rs.26 million, without external grants or loans. They suggest whilst NGOs provide advice and support in establishing the WTCs, the groups soon become self-sufficient and self-managing, and provide a source of empowerment for their members. However, the primary focus on economic empowerment has now been questioned.

That IMY aims to 'facilitate' SHGs to gain empowerment is an interesting concept in itself. Srilatha Batliwala (1994) has criticised the way in which the term 'empowerment' is used as a 'catch-all' phrase, virtually replacing terms such as poverty alleviation, welfare and community participation. She called for a more precise understanding of power and empowerment, one that sees power, 'as control over material assets, intellectual resources, and ideology' (1994: 129). For Batliwala, empowerment, rather than the *financial freedom* seen in the Andhra Pradesh case, is 'the process of challenging existing power relations, and of gaining greater control over the sources of power' (1994: 130). For her, it requires a political element, including a collective assault on cultural as well as national and community power structures that oppress women and some men. Like Batliwala, Naila Kabeer (1994) emphasises collective, grassroots and participatory action – the power to work with others 'to control resources, determine agendas and make decisions' (1994:29). Jo Rowlands describes empowerment as more than the ability to contribute to decisions, it is the feeling that your contribution is worthy. She suggests,

'there is a core to the empowerment process...which consists of increases in self-confidence and self-esteem, a sense of agency and of 'self' in a wider context, and a sense of *dignidad* (being worthy of respect from others)' (1997: 129-30).

It is on this holistic concept of empowerment, through self-help, facilitated by government officials, that IMY focuses. The IMY handbook outlines the core group activities as, 'information sharing, awareness and confidence building, planning for child care and nutrition, health and literacy, creation of opinion groups and opinion lobbies, monitoring government schemes and finally raising resources for various activities' (p. 7).

In July 2001 the Human Resource Development (HRD) Ministry announced the amalgamation of the IMY scheme with the *Mahila Samridhi Yojana* scheme, creating the 'Swayam Siddha' programme, based on the precepts of IMY to empower women. Two developments are important in relation to this work. First, is the increase of funding for RMK. During my research, I was told that in order for more women to benefit from the scheme, the size and scope of RMK would have to be increased (Interview with Durgesh Hukku, 30th August, 1999). Originally, a total credit of Rs. 77.36 crore was sanctioned to benefit 350,000 women. This figure is being increased to Rs. 250 crore by 2006. This implies increased prioritisation of this area, something to which I return in chapter 6. The second change relates to the expansion of facilities for women. In addition to the social provision it is envisaged through the new scheme that training and facilities be provided so women can pursue activities following vocational training. This is a specific element that the State level head of IMY, Durgesh Hukku, said that she wanted in the future (Interview, 15th May, 2000).

Within this chapter I have offered an outline of the geographical area and socio-political environment in which the research was undertaken. I have also detailed the aims, nature and organisation of the IMY scheme. In an attempt to understand how the theory of bureaucratic change has been translated in the UP context, I conducted my fieldwork in several stages, in different geographical areas and with a wide variety of individuals. In the next chapter, I discuss the logistical and methodological considerations that impacted my work.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1: Introduction

Within this chapter, the methodological challenges and choices in deciding how best to analyse change within the bureaucracy 'at grass roots level' are discussed. The task of analysing means of change (or resistance to it) is complex, so various methods including interviews, focus groups and other participatory approaches were used. The use of a multiple method approach permitted cross checking of information and also improved reliability, depth and richness of explanation.

The first step within the research process involved critical analysis of literature relevant to the research area (Layder, 1994; Silverman, 1993). Three distinct yet interrelated literatures, were covered within this project, namely development studies, public administration, and the literature pertaining to India's political economy. Academic books, journal articles, documentary sources, policy documents, other official resources and newspapers were all used. Whilst there are limits to the reliability of politically produced material (Scott, 1990), secondary sources including materials from the Government of India, the World Bank and the Indian Journal of Public Administration, helped situate my theoretical understanding within the Indian context.

Figure 4.1: CREME course outline

From Literature from the Durham University Business School:

The participants on the Credit and Micro Enterprise Development Training Course (or CREME for short), are employed by a variety of government Departments and Non-Government Organisations and all work in the area of women and child development. They have been selected to undergo training at The Foundation for Small and Medium Enterprise Development at the University of Durham by the British Council, on behalf of the Department for International Development (DfID), in partnership with the Department of Women and Child Development (DWCD) in India. The CREME course is designed to enhance participants' skills in the support of the women in the IMY groups. The focus is on training of trainers. The course material aims to help officials 'facilitate' the development of SHGs in their area. It also stresses that whilst it is important to be aware of the results of interventions and review performance, it is necessary to examine approaches to 'monitoring and evaluation' in order to assess their usefulness.



Initial access to research participants was through the University of Durham Business School (DUBS). DUBS, runs a three-month course, annually, for Indian government and non-government officials. The course, called CREME, is sponsored by DfID and teaches individuals working in the areas of credit and rural enterprise for development new ideas and ways of working. By November 1999, when I first met the course participants, I had already decided on the broad research area on which to concentrate, centring on changes to the bureaucracy in the post-liberalisation period. I conducted pilot interviews with the DUBS course participants in order to check my areas of questioning were appropriate and flexible enough to include all areas of interest. These government and non-government workers then provided initial contacts in India. Other contacts were accessed through Dr. Mawdsley and other members of the Department of Geography.

The fieldwork took the form of three visits over a period of eighteen months (March 1999-September 2000). During my first visit to India in March and April 1999, I met contacts in Delhi who facilitated introductions with other potential participants through a 'snowballing' technique. My objective was to gain a broad spectrum of opinions from both state and non-state employees. Informants included policy makers, bureaucrats, officials, NGO workers, activists, academics and community members. After speaking to individuals involved at the national level with IMY, the programme was selected to form the analytical heart of my research¹. Advice and information gained, as well as geographical proximity, led to the choice of Uttar Pradesh for my case study. Later the same year (October, 1999) I returned to India for a period of four months. During this time I was based in Mussoorie, in northern Uttar Pradesh where I attended the Landour Language School to learn Hindi. The choice of Mussoorie was an obvious one, as it is also home to the Lal Bhadur Shastri Academy of Administration, the centre for training government (primarily IAS) recruits for the whole of India. This institute not only trains new entrants and retrains more experienced bureaucrats, but also houses a wealth of academic expertise pertaining to the bureaucracy in its literature and staff. During my time in Mussoorie I was able to make several visits, use the library and interview key personnel.

¹ Justification for the programme and research area selection are detailed later.

The final and most substantial research period (from April 2000 to September 2000) consisted of a six-month intensive field study. During this period I began in Delhi following the IMY project from its formulation at the national level in Delhi, through the State level in Lucknow to its implementation, at the lowest administrative level within six allocated Blocks within the District of Rae Bareli. From the base of Lucknow, I also visited and interviewed individuals at Uttar Pradesh Administrative Training Institute (UPATI) in Nainital, during a week of meetings and negotiation relating to civil service reform with World Bank representatives.

4.2: Research Strategy

The aim of this research, set out in chapter 1, is to explore the ways in which the bureaucrats involved with IMY have engaged with the process of change associated with new public management. The research question is deliberately broad and open. Strauss and Corbin argue that this is necessary so that all possible answers are able to surface. They argue there is a need for,

‘a research question or questions that will give us the flexibility and freedom to explore a phenomenon in depth. Also underlying this approach to qualitative research is the assumption that all of the concepts pertaining to a given phenomenon have not yet been identified, at least not in this population or place...This reasoning creates the need for asking the type of question that will enable us to find answers to issues that seem important but remain unanswered’ (Strauss and Corbin, 1990: 37).

Kabeer (1999) notes that any organisation should be scrutinised through analysis of its official rules and unofficial norms. She notes an analysis of ‘rules’, in particular official ones, (here involving moves towards agendas promoted through the NPM discourse) offer only a partial picture as far as understanding the true outcomes. Analysis of the *processes* by which written rules and unwritten norms and beliefs come into play, and result in the translation of organisational goals into practice. For Kabeer, the ‘outcomes’ of organisational practice - *who gets what, who does what, who decides, who gains and who loses* - cannot be understood through a ‘snap shot’ analysis of its rules, resources and practices.

The theoretical framework for this project, therefore, draws on actor-orientated approaches (Long, 1992). Actor-oriented approaches suggest that, although certain important structural changes may result from the impact of outside forces (due to the

encroachment of the market or the state), it is incorrect to see end results as purely the result of external determination,

‘All forms of external intervention necessarily enter the existing life-worlds of the individuals and social groups affected, and in this way are mediated and transformed by these same actors and structures. Also to the extent that large-scale and ‘remote’ social forces do alter the life-chances and behaviours of individuals, they can only do so through shaping, directly or indirectly, the everyday life experiences and perceptions of the individuals concerned’ (Long, 1992: 20).

This approach, therefore, tries to offer descriptions of diverse actions within set social structures.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) introduced the term ‘grounded theory’ as an approach to inductive research, where theory is developed from close observation of the empirical world. In my research, I explore local interpretations of the changes within the bureaucracy that may challenge traditional ideas about the role and nature of the Indian bureaucracy and its role in development. This method is particularly suitable for my work as the variety of perceptions elucidated could not have been predicted before the research began.

The exploratory and inductive approach to the study of the bureaucracy necessitates a case-study approach (Casey and Lury, 1987). This research does not aim to provide a general picture of what is happening to the bureaucracy in India, but rather gives an in-depth and rich account of what is happening in a specific programme in Uttar Pradesh at a particular point in time. McDowell (1992) makes the distinction between intensive and extensive research, with intensive methods involving in-depth investigations being:

‘essential to reveal the underlying causal mechanisms and structures that lie behind observed behaviour. Whereas extensive research - of the type commonly based on the identification of descriptive patterns through large scale data analysis - has its place in the initial identification of empirical irregularities, it rarely meets the criteria of real explanatory power’ (1992: 213).

The aim of the research is to explore local perceptions of bureaucratic change, both from within, and outside, the bureaucracy. An approach was taken to attempt to ensure that the hypotheses, frameworks and theories that were developed were based

on the opinions of those involved in the IMY scheme, from inside and out, rather than primarily on stereotypical 'vested interest' perceptions of the bureaucracy currently dominating academic and policy literature. Traditional categories and theoretical positions were challenged through the 'elucidation of actors' interpretations and strategies' and the 'understanding of everyday life situations' by those actually involved in the programme (Long, 1992a: 5-6).

Research on the bureaucracy has produced a range of findings. There has been considerable difference in opinion between theoretical and practical scholars (Hanson, 1969; Riggs, 1967). Differences have also been highlighted between the views of scholars on the one hand and the views of practising bureaucrats on the other (Adedeji, 1974). Pelto and Pelto (1978) make the distinction between 'emic' and 'etic' approaches. The emic approach, which is taken in this study, is seen as being based on 'their' concepts and categories of meaning, with local definitions and understandings discovered through inductive research. The etic stance takes a more externalised viewpoint whereby the researcher,

'stands "far enough away" to see it as a separate event, primarily in relation to their similarities and their differences, as compared to other cultures, rather than in reference to the sequences of classes of events within that one particular culture' (Pike, 1954: 10, quoted in Pelto and Pelto, 1978).

4.3: The dynamics of the research process and role of the researcher

The role of the researcher is central at all times in the research process. How knowledge is produced affects both the data collected (England, 1994) and how it is analysed and how the findings are written about (Clifford and Marcus, 1986). England (1994) supports the need for reflexivity and the acceptance of subjectivity,

'Reflexivity is critical to the conduct of fieldwork; it induces self-discovery and can lead to insights and new hypotheses about the research questions. A more reflexive and flexible approach to fieldwork allows the researcher to be more open to challenges to their theoretical position that fieldwork almost inevitably raises' (1994: 82).

Much social science research has tried to take a detached scientific approach. In order to legitimise their research social scientists have tried to express their findings as 'objective'. However, this 'scientific approach' ignores the central role of the researcher in the 'production' of the research. Giddens (1984) refers to the concept of 'double hermeneutics', where actors interpret the social world around them, and this

can include the researcher and the research process. Drinkwater (1992) criticises researchers that study human agency but ignore the role of reflexivity of the researcher,

‘If one lauds the ability of the participant to make a difference to his or her own world, then it is inconsistent not to acknowledge the equally active nature of the researcher in shaping the field work encounter and hence the role the researcher plays in the selection and interpretation of field material’ (1992: 367).

Strauss and Corbin (1990) claim that,

‘the illustrative material (quotations from interview notes) are meant to give a sense of what the real world is really like; while the researcher’s interpretation are meant to represent more detached conceptualisation of that reality’ (1990: 22).

When doing social research, it is necessary to be aware of whose opinions are prioritised (Scoones and Thompson, 1992, 1994). In taking notes in interviews, it is important to be aware of which information is taken down, and which overlooked (Seur, 1992: 142; England, 1994: 86), and whether that which doesn’t fit into the theoretical framework is overlooked (de Vries, 1992). As Chambers puts it,

‘The question is ‘Whose Reality Counts?’, ‘ours’ or ‘theirs’. As part of this we have to ask: Whose knowledge counts? Whose needs? Whose priorities/criteria? Whose appraisal? analysis? planning? Whose baseline? Whose indicators? Whose monitoring? Whose evaluation? Is it ours, or theirs?’ (1996:7).

Every researcher is affected by their prior assumptions, cultural backgrounds and conceptual frameworks (Seur, 1992). Habermas writes that it must be recognised that,

‘The social scientist has to draw on a competence and knowledge, that he (*sic*) has intuitively at his disposal as a layman. So long, however, as he does not identify and thoroughly analyse this pre-theoretical knowledge, he cannot control the extent to which, and the consequences with which, he also influences as a participant - and thereby alters – the process of communication into which he has entered only to understand’ (1984: 111-112).

Drawing on feminist research methodologies, England (1984: 86) calls for greater recognition of the inherently hierarchical nature of the research relationship. Madge (1993: 295) argues for greater consideration of the role of the ‘self’, showing how the researcher’s positionality may influence the ‘data’ collected and thus the information that finally becomes ‘knowledge’. Herod (1993) cites a range of research reports that

show the impact of gender on the data collected and even the ability to get an interview in the first place. Whilst I experienced various power relations with interviewees, I found in the majority of cases being a young female actually improved access for interviews. MacDowell (1992) suggests this may be due to the limited threat a woman can often be seen to represent to the interviewee.

Perceptions of the researcher are constantly changing in the mind of those interviewed. Sidaway (1992: 403) discusses how class, cultural, racial, and gender contexts are increasingly altered and shifted as researchers from the 'first world move into the hierarchies of the "third world"'. However, for Lancaster (1996), reflexivity and attention to positionality in the research process can be taken to extremes when the writing becomes centred on the researcher. Whilst it is important to realise the impact we, as researchers, are having on the project (Scheper-Hughes, 1992), the acceptance that we do have an impact does not negate the value of the work. The outsider is always an outsider, but this does not invalidate the issues of the research. Within this work, issues are presented as I have seen and recorded them, from those interviewed. The reader in turn should take into account my positionality when reading the interpretations offered.

4.4: The research experience

The way in which I was perceived by interviewees relates to the impression I gave about my intentions, and also by people I was seen to be aligned to. These issues were constantly shifting throughout the research process. In each interview I was demanding time and (often) confidential information. Co-operation from bureaucrats and other informants, and outcomes from interviews were based on the degree trust in me, and the power relations between us.

It is very difficult to know how anyone perceives an outsider although, in my case several issues about my identity were referred to at various times. Firstly my identity as white and British in an ex-colonial country and as relatively rich and as an individual from a nation with many job opportunities was frequently highlighted. My gender identity; as a female who was both single and alone in an environment in which both were against the norm, and as a young woman working, at times (at the

national level), in an almost exclusively older male environment, both affected how I was perceived.

As an outsider, my understanding of the cultural context, and the experiences of everyday life were restricted. However, this factor also acted as a benefit in certain circumstances. This was particularly apparent with the bureaucrats, as I was not considered to be a threat to their position. I was therefore able to tackle issues, such as corruption and inertia, which Indian researchers' may have found difficult to broach. I was able to gain access to many senior bureaucrats, who were flattered that someone had come from the UK to speak to them. At the same time women within the IMY groups were very eager to speak to me, as they had not met a western woman, and often news of my coming had reached a village before I did! There were, however, several cases of opposition to me talking to women, as some men within the villages saw my presence as a threat. One male in particular noted, 'Didn't you (the British) do enough damage last time you were here! (Interview, 14th May 1999). He was referring to the colonial history of the British in India and me personally as an outsider.

Gender relations shaped how research relationships were built up with people who were visited regularly. With women, I could draw on common gendered roles and customs, while with the men, I could distance myself from Indian women because of my ethnicity. An example of this was my acceptance in the (almost) exclusively male members-only Ram Bagh Club, in Lucknow². This difference also served as a limiting factor in a tiny minority of cases. A couple of bureaucrats (one fairly senior) made reference to what western girls 'are like', an impression gained I was told, from the roles of many women in western films on Indian satellite channels. This made me feel uncomfortable enough in one case to end the particular line of research. Fortunately, the individual in question did not work directly with IMY, so the decision to stop contact with him, in my case, was an easy one.

The beginning of many interviews consisted of relaxed and informal conversation, and often centred on questions about myself. To higher bureaucrats this was generally

² Members consisted of bureaucrats, business people and politicians.

about my education and background, to people in the Districts this was almost exclusively about my marital status. My race and ethnicity were constantly referred to and played a major role in how I was perceived. I found that it opened many opportunities, but frequently for reasons I found difficult to accept. From the majority of people I interviewed, there was uncritical respect for white people, and disrespect for people with dark skin. This influence is a form of ascribed power, and was something I witnessed on many occasions, an exception being among some (although not all) of those with higher education. The issue of race has become particularly important within the bureaucracy since the adoption of Reservation policies. One senior Backward Caste government official, for example, was sarcastically referred to as the 'rickshaw wallah' by several other high-caste officers. Race and power relations is an issue that will be returned to in later chapters.

How I was perceived was also influenced by how I explained my role. I took some time at the beginning of each interview to explain to the interviewee that I was interested in seeing how they are changing the way they work. To the women's groups in the villages I said that I was interested to see what they thought of the provision they got from the bureaucracy, and that the work was unlikely to bring any direct benefits to them. I promised all interviewees confidentiality, but frequently interviewees said they wanted others to know their views. Despite my constant repetition of the reasons for the work, a number of rumours spread about my role, I was working for an aid agency that may help them, for the World Bank doing a survey or for the British government doing research about training. This became less of a problem when I was carrying out repeat visits, or when I was working at the State or national level. Research also became easier as my confidence increased and my relationship with my two research assistants developed.

Access to villages was primarily gained through female IMY Block supervisors, who had already developed a relationship with the various groups of women. Whilst this affected the way I was viewed, as aligned to the government employees, other means of introduction without a 'gatekeeper' would have been impossible. Other IMY groups were accessed through NGO workers (in particular CARE) who worked with them. Non-IMY groups interviewed were those formed by Avadh Lok Seva Ashram (ALSA) the NGO working with RMK in the Rae Bareilly District. As the research

process continued, I became more accepted. I had to 'enrole' people into my research project, by trying to change the way in which I was perceived, in order to build up co-operation (Latour, 1986). To avoid the ethical considerations of paying interviewees (Robson, 1997), people who helped me were never paid, although I gave some key informants gifts and photographs.

My position was complicated further by working closely with research assistants and 'interpreters', partially at the District, and entirely at the Block level. On the one hand, these individuals are seen in their own context and this affects how the research is perceived. Therefore the issue of gender, race, class and caste of the research assistant can shape the research outcome. When I arrived in Rae Bareilly I was told that a District level bureaucrat would be accompanying me to help with interpretation. However, after one visit it was clear that the officer could not put aside the 'lecturing' role of so many government officials, and I declined the offer of any further assistance. My research assistants were both Indian, although still 'outsiders' to a different degree (Twyman, 1997). The position and background of the research assistants was given as much importance (Berreman, 1993), if not more, than my background, with most interviewees asking them where they were from and their ethnic origin. My first research assistant, Aparna Chaudry was a postgraduate university student from Delhi. I was eager to work with a female interpreter, but was unable to find a local woman who had good enough English, interviewing skills and could live away from home. Though Aparna was able to associate herself with the women in the self-help groups, her knowledge of local cultures, politics and customs was that of a complete outsider. My second research assistant Amit Bajpai, was a public administration graduate from Rae Bareilly. Amit found it easy to talk to the groups and the majority of women responded to him well. In the cases where women were insecure talking to a man either Toolika Khan (a worker with CARE) or one of the supervisors was able to ask the questions so the women felt more at ease.

The role of research assistants as 'interpreters' is also problematic as the translation of a conversation allows room for reinterpretation and the selection of what facts they think the researcher wants to know. My proficiency in Hindi was adequate for introductions and small talk before and after an interview, important in building up rapport. I was not able to conduct in-depth interviews, although I was able to

understand much of the questioning and replies to check that the questions were understood and details of the replies had not been left out.

I paid attention to the role of my research assistants as moderators (Cook and Crang, 1995: 57) as this affected the behaviour of participants and the information I was given (Herod, 1993: 308; Mosse, 1994 and 1995). It was a constant battle at the end of a day of interviews to make sure a question did not change, for example, from,

‘have you noticed change in the way the people (bureaucrats) who come here treat you?’, to

‘you like the people (bureaucrats) who come here, isn’t it?’.

4.5: Selection of research sites and respondents

4.5.1: Selection of Uttar Pradesh and Rae Bareli

Following Kabeer and Subrahmanian (1999), I needed to talk to a wide variety of people with knowledge of the bureaucracy from both outside and within. When I visited Delhi for the first time (March 1999) both Mrs. Sarojini Thakur, Director of the Department of Woman and Child Development (DOWC), and Mr. Mark Robinson, of the Ford Foundation, suggested that it might be interesting to consider a social sector scheme so that the reality of change as understood by beneficiaries could be investigated. The IMY scheme was relevant to my research interests as it was created in the post-liberalisation era and contains many of the ideas espoused in the new public management literature. These ideas included the use of private sector ethos in the scheme’s financing (through RMK), working through NGOs and civil society bodies, facilitation through the bureaucracy and attempting to provide a holistic, rather than sector specific, approach to development. The fact that it is a centrally formulated, rather than State, scheme was also important. This meant that I could follow the scheme from the Central level, to the State and finally see its implementation in the District. This was important, as I thought that changes seen in the bureaucracy were likely to be different at the various spatial scales. IMY is obviously not a particularly typical central government scheme, in fact, in many ways, it is atypical. This very difference in fact allowed me to explore the different ways in which change is being attempted in this scenario.

Uttar Pradesh was chosen for several reasons. As one of the *bimaru* States, I was told by many that ‘nothing positive’ was happening there, but this was not the impression I got, regarding IMY, from those who co-ordinate the scheme at the State level. I was interested to see why this was apparently possible, in the face of so many development failures in the State. Uttar Pradesh is also home to the National Training centre for IAS recruits, the Lal Bhadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA). UP’s relationship with the World Bank is well publicised and offers an interesting additional dimension to the national attempts at bureaucratic reform. The Administrative Training Institute (ATI) under the direction of Mr. Toilia, has been central to these changes. The proximity of UP to Delhi made research of the three major tiers of administration possible within this project.

Mrs. Durgesh Hukku (State level co-ordinator for the IMY programme), oversees the project in the Four Districts in Uttar Pradesh in which the project has been introduced, namely, Bijnor, Jalaun, Rae Bareli and Sonbhadra. Mrs. Hukku suggested Rae Bareli to me for a number of reasons. The District is only 80 kilometres from Lucknow which meant that access was fairly easy (although access between Blocks in the District was rather difficult). Second, the District level co-ordinator of the programme in RB, Lilly Singh had been involved in much of the new training (although she had not attended CREME in the UK) and so was keen to help me with my research. Third, the political history of Rae Bareli, within the constituencies of Rae Bareli and Amethi, makes the area a particularly interesting case study.

4.5.2: Selection of key informants

Research was carried out with key informants who were selected for their particular knowledge or position. The development of trust and rapport was built up through the number of times I visited the individuals, and repeat visits allowed me to establish relationships with the individuals involved. Several key informants became friends, with whom I would spend social time with in the evenings, or go out with in the day. Key informants were also ‘gatekeepers’ to new areas of research and made introductions, creating a ‘snow balling’ method of sampling. However, in some circumstances this restricted my access to others, as I was aligned to particular individuals. I attempted to ensure that I met a range of key informants that were representative of different opinions on change within the bureaucracy. In order to do

this, I interviewed individuals who were practicing as well as retired, those who were working in IMY, and those outside (these tended to be connected to IMY through the State and District Level Co-ordination Committees). The decision of ‘representativeness’ was mine, based on categories emerging from earlier research (Strauss and Corbin, 1990) and experience of living among the people I was selecting.

Great care was taken to avoid the different forms of bias (Chambers, 1983: 13), especially according to gender, age, ethnicity and wealth. However, as the primary informants were the bureaucrats working on, or with, IMY the extent to which this was possible was limited. I ensured that different groups were included in the study, so that I could understand the various actors’ personal values and ideologies (Kabeer and Subrahmanian, 1999). Three sets of indicators are highlighted. First, ‘agency indicators’, to uncover how individuals within the agency perceive and measure its objectives. Second, ‘outsider indicators’, from individuals who have gained wide acceptance in a particular field of development, arising from a substantial body of research. Finally, ‘beneficiary indicators’, which express how those who are expected to benefit from a particular intervention would themselves assess their own well being and experiences as a result of the intervention. For total numbers involved and breakdown see Appendix 4.1.

Table 4.1 Interview Breakdown

	<i>Bureaucrats</i>	<i>Non</i>
		<i>Bureaucrats</i>
<i>National</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>State</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>District</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Block</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>55</i>

4.5.3: Sampling for the semi structured interviews and focus groups

A list of all bureaucratic posts involved in IMY was accessed and bureaucrats (at Central State and District levels) involved directly, or indirectly, with the programme were interviewed. Academics, NGO officials and RMK workers were also

interviewed. At the District level, six Blocks are participating in the IMY scheme. I interviewed between four and seven of the groups in each Block. I went to each Block with the Block supervisor who had a schedule of groups to visit each day. The groups interviewed, therefore, reflected those that the supervisor was to visit on that particular day, rather than those groups that the supervisor felt reflected best on them, as an individual. In addition to these visits with supervisors, I visited several groups with CARE and *Sabla* employees who were working with the IMY groups but who visited independently of government employees. As well as IMY groups, I interviewed non-IMY micro-credit groups organised through ALSA.

Interviews were carried out on different bases and at different times depending on who the interviewee was. Interview length ranged between twenty minutes and two hours. At the National and State level, these were often during 'office hours' at the various government offices. As I spent much of my time at the State level, I developed a close friendship with many of the participants, so interviews were often more informal, over dinner or during a visit to someone's house. The IMY groups in the villages were always interviewed in the early mornings, or late in the afternoon, when it was more likely that members would be in the villages, rather than working in the fields or at home. Village level workers (*anganwadi*) were often interviewed on their own, whilst IMY groups always took a focus group format. In the majority of cases, this was in their meeting place for the group, away from other villagers. However, on a few occasions, men demanded to be present and dominated the interview.

4.6: Methods used

4.6.1: Semi Structured Interviews

The main research tool was the 'semi-structured' interview, which follows a checklist of open-ended questions allowing conversation to shift to areas of interest, both for myself, and for the interviewee. The checklists of questions varied considerably according to whom I was interviewing. Elite government officials were, for example, asked questions specifically relating to NPM, whilst self-help group interviews were more concerned with their perceptions of change in bureaucratic culture. Questions were constantly adapted as new areas of research were identified (examples of interviews are given in Appendix 3). When working with key informants, repeat or

serial interviews (Cook and Crang, 1995) helped build relationships and allowed certain areas to be further explored. Some of the most interesting interviews happened when interviewees were most relaxed. This happened at various times, whether after I had put away my notepad at the end of interview, or when we were socialising together.

Group interviews and discussions were used to explore certain issues. The advantages of group work are not only the over-lapping range of knowledge, and 'observable mutual cross checking' (Chambers, 1997, 148), but also 'a means to set up a negotiation of meaning through intra and inter-personal debates' (Cook and Crang, 1995, 56) that may

'bring forth material that would not come out in either the participant's own casual conversation or in response to the researcher's preconceived questions' (Morgan, 1989: 21).

Morgan (1998: 11) found the use of focus groups was useful for, 'orienting oneself to a new field, generating hypotheses based on informants' insights, evaluating research sites, developing interview schedules and questionnaires and obtaining participants' interpretations of results from earlier studies'.

In this way, Morgan sees focus groups as a compromise between the strengths and weaknesses of participant observation and individual interviews (1998: 22, see also Barbour and Kitinger, 1999). Focus groups were conducted, with between six and ten self-help groups in each administrative Block involved in the IMY programme. To enable some comparison between perceptions of bureaucratic culture of those working in IMY, and individuals outside, I conducted two focus groups with SHGs working with each of the NGOs - CARE, LSA, *Sabhla* and UNICEF. The women in the SHGs were accessed through two sets of gate-keepers. The first was through government supervisors. Here, I arranged to work-shadow the supervisors to the villages, to visit the groups in each of the six Blocks associated with IMY. The supervisors prearranged meetings with the *anganwadi* workers up to a month in advance, so through work-shadowing, I was able to visit the groups on a random basis depending on which ones the supervisors had arranged to see on any given day.

It was during the supervisor's meeting with the *anganwadi* worker that I was able to speak to the groups. During interview, the supervisors were occasionally present,

primarily in the case of those supervisors who were less comfortable with my questions, but more usually were not. In Blocks where supervisors were on training programmes, I was accompanied by another (ICDS) official who was known to the *anganwadi* worker in the village. Having met the SHGs, I arranged where possible, to return to discuss my work with them again at a later date. The second set of gatekeepers was provided through the NGOs, *Sabhla* and CARE. A woman NGO worker, with whom I developed a close relationship, was particularly useful in this regard, and gave me an extensive non-state view of the scheme. Accessing IMY groups with NGO workers provided the opportunity to verify findings of research conducted where access was gained through the government officials. The focus groups with NGO SHG's further gave me a sense of comparison between IMY and non-IMY schemes. Focus groups took place in the late afternoon and in the early morning, around work and *anganwadi* centre times. Informal group interviews and discussions were not planned, but took place when there were a number of people together who were willing to discuss a certain issue. This may have been in people's houses, when I called to see individuals in their offices, who also had guests, or in public places like the *anganwadi* centres in villages.

Group interviews were not, however, always productive. In some cases, particularly in the case of ALSA created groups, discussed in detail in chapter 6, the group itself was not strong enough to avoid pressure from outside. Women were marginalised and were not well organised (Burkey, 1993) in giving an accurate account of their experiences within the meeting, without the interference of men within the village. Power relations within the groups were problematic at times within the groups. As Mosse (1995, 29) found, this affects who is invited, who speaks, and who is excluded. This was certainly the case in one village, when one woman who had been ostracized from the group and was consciously excluded from the meeting. I tried to minimise the effect power relations had on my work, by noting the social relations within the groups (particularly the influence of domineering individuals; Mascarenhas et al, 1991; Norman et al, 1989; Mosse, 1995; 28) and consciously trying to involve those who were less vocal in the discussion process. I found that other women could simply not spare the time to help to assist with the research, particularly in a format which required many of them to be available at the same time (Farrington and Bebbington, 1993).

Data from interviews and group work were recorded in notebooks, except for a small number of tape-recorded interviews. Note-taking was found to be preferable as it was more informal, people interviewed were more comfortable and less suspicious, and it would not have been possible to conduct the large number of interviews if all were transcribed (and/or translated). Notes and recordings were transcribed in the evenings following the interviews. This allowed me to identify areas for further discussion or cross checking, and was a vital part of the ongoing analysis.

Analysis of qualitative data took place continually with comparative analysis (Silverman, 1993) where the researcher seeks negative examples in order to constantly rework hypotheses. The reworking of hypotheses was done during the interviews, in discussions between myself and my research assistant after the interview, during transcription and whilst talking to key informants. Much of the preliminary analysis was in the form of writing notes on the side of transcripts, or noting ideas and memos whenever they came to me (Burgess 1984, 174). Once transcribed, data was formally coded for further analysis with the search for relationships and tensions in the data (Strauss and Corbin, 1990; Janesick, 1994). The analysis process continued to progress after the field research period was over.

4.6.2: Participatory methods – Observation:

Observation played an important role throughout the fieldwork. This took place continually while living in India, at every scale from the Central level to the villages, and especially during and whilst waiting for interviews. I cannot refer to this as participant observation, as I was not able to participate in what it is to be a bureaucrat. I was, however, able to work-shadow bureaucrats at various levels which gave me an insight into their working lives (Evans, 1998). The friendships I built with many key informants during my fieldwork meant I also gained a detailed understanding of the lives of bureaucrats outside the work environment. Whilst living in the Government hostel at Rae Bareilly, as well as at other times, I followed the approach of Hollier (1986) who in relation to market transactions, adopted a method of 'lurking' which he identified as 'patient, unobtrusive observation'. This enabled me to collect information by observing the ways that bureaucrats act towards each other and toward other people, which I discussed with parties involved at another time.

Throughout the research process, including preliminary interviews in Durham, experiences at the LBSNAA and during the six month extensive field visit, I kept a field diary covering my experiences of living with government officials, interviews, social events and grass roots field work. This not only provided me with richer material than interviews alone, it also proved a useful *aide-memoire* to remember certain events which may not have seemed important at the time, but later added to my understanding, or interpretations, of bureaucratic culture.

4.7: Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the methodological tools used to study the ways in which the bureaucrats in UP have engaged with the process of change associated with new public management. The methodology was adapted to collect and analyse data that can give a rich explanation of what is actually happening in the bureaucracy in Uttar Pradesh. I have attempted to develop a mixed methodology that relied, almost exclusively, on qualitative data. The exploratory nature of the work required an inductive approach that created the opportunity for me to explore new ideas and linkages, as they became apparent.

I have tried to present my role through the research experience, in order for the reader to understand the context of the data and analysis presented. I am aware of the role my position has played in the collection, analysis and presentation of data. However, I feel there is validity in the information presented, and that the perceptions expressed in the following chapters are those of individuals involved in the IMY scheme, rather than my own.

CHAPTER 5: INSIDER PERCEPTIONS OF BUREAUCRATIC CHANGE

5.1: Introduction

In chapter 1, I discussed the recent shifts in 'mainstream' development thinking towards forms of governance influenced by the new public management (NPM) discourse. As the state's main institution of governance, the civil service directly affects, and is affected by, these shifting debates and practices. In this, the first of two substantive analytical chapters, I consider how those working *within* the bureaucracy have understood and interpreted change along NPM lines. The opinions expressed within this chapter are those of practising government officials associated with the IMY scheme at various levels of the hierarchy: at the Centre (Delhi), the State capital (Lucknow), the District (Rae Bareli) and in the six administrative Blocks in which the IMY scheme is being conducted¹.

Within chapter 3 I considered how efforts at promoting effective development through the public bureaucracy in Uttar Pradesh have largely been seen by a sceptical public as camouflage, a public show aimed solely at getting votes. I outlined the chronic underdevelopment of the State, and a political and administrative environment legendary for its clientelistic and corrupt ways of governing. Many academics and government officials, to whom I spoke in Delhi, were quick to surmise that any analysis of the workings of the bureaucracy (particularly in relation to development projects) in the State would be futile. An academic working for a bilateral agency in Delhi lamented, 'Nothing is happening in UP' (Interview, 27th April, 2000), and a senior administrator commented that in fact, 'there's been very little progress in the State in the last twenty years!' (Interview, 20th May 1999)². It is specifically this kind of resignation, as well as well-documented cases of bureaucratic failure in the State, that makes the case of IMY so interesting.

Whilst there was some resistance to bureaucratic change, the majority of local government officials working at all levels on the IMY programme felt substantial and

¹ As described in chapter 3, other schemes were also briefly considered in other Blocks, to get a sense of comparison. These included schemes by UNICEF and *Sabla* (two NGOs), as well as schemes run by LSA (the NGO responsible for RMK loans).

positive changes were actually occurring. According to interviewees, these changes related to the role of *training* at all levels, the *structure* of the scheme, and the nature of *accountability* and *monitoring* within the programme. The three areas are detailed in turn in the following section, after which the views were critically appraised.

The arguments made in this chapter broadly relate to two phenomena, the development of a 'culture' of commitment within the scheme, and the flexible forms the programme takes. Reasons for the high, and perhaps unexpected, levels of commitment recorded relate to a variety of key issues. First, the role of particular (women) officials at District, State and National levels was fundamental in both creating personal relationships with individuals who held access to power and resources, and in developing an environment of trust between various bureaucratic levels (and those 'outsiders' involved in the scheme). These women were able to encourage, through a combination of consent and coercion, a work environment at odds with the traditional 'vested-interest' perception of the bureaucracy. Furthermore in the process of 'de-bureaucratisation', circumvention tactics were deployed to avoid dealing with individuals, both inside and outside the bureaucracy who were felt to be 'corrupting influences' on the work of officials.

The scheme's implementation through supervisors and village level workers has also enabled greater reach and scope in the villages. The fact that these women had not been recruited through State or national level examinations meant they were less authoritarian and 'closer' to beneficiaries. The predominantly female staff appear to have a 'sense of calling' (Tendler and Freedheim, 1994) not prevalent in many other sectors and departments. This I understood to relate to intensive training at all levels, and the high degree of autonomy given to lower levels of the hierarchy, promoting both improved status and satisfaction. Social sector positions were seen by some in the department as 'punishment postings', due to their lack of power and prestige. Whilst this is clearly a negative phenomenon, the corollary leads those who are not committed to push for immediate transfer, leaving a concentration of individuals that have a genuine concern in the sector. Furthermore, this sector controls little finance

² This interview took place with, A.M. Tiwari, Joint Director DOWC. Other national level interviews offering similar perceptions include Vivek Srivaster, (National Council for Applied Economic Research); and Mark Robinson, (Ford Foundation).

and wields only minimal power, so temptations to divert funds, develop patronage ties and gain speed money, though not absent, are less prevalent. The low status of the department means the traditional bureaucratic problem of politically motivated transfers is much reduced in the case of IMY. This increases the amount of time individuals spend on the programme promoting worker knowledge and experience, and through this the quality of their contribution is enhanced.

The scale of adaptation within IMY reflects the high degree of flexibility afforded within the scheme. In contrast to many other central government schemes, individuals at lower levels felt their contribution was both valued and valuable, with individuals trusted, and indeed expected, to adapt the scheme at the local level. Key elements of NPM are incorporated into the scheme including 'circular working' (which aims to develop interaction, debate and feedback between the various levels of the hierarchy), flexible job roles, and support for innovation and experimentation, points to which I return later in the chapter. Having no fixed quotas for group formation or development reduces the 'fear psychosis', described by Tolia (see chapter 3, page 87) as one of the key restrictions to effective working of the administration. The current development fascination with 'audit' and 'report culture' (Imrie, 1999) was notably absent in the scheme. Accountability is, theoretically at least, provided from below. However, low levels of official accountability in several cases did leave the work of less scrupulous government officials free from detection, castigation and correction. Moreover, despite senior officials professing the importance of quality over quantity of groups, some Block level officials still felt the necessity to fulfil certain numerical criteria for group formation, and the establishment of authoritarianism in the preceding decade was perpetuated in certain instances.

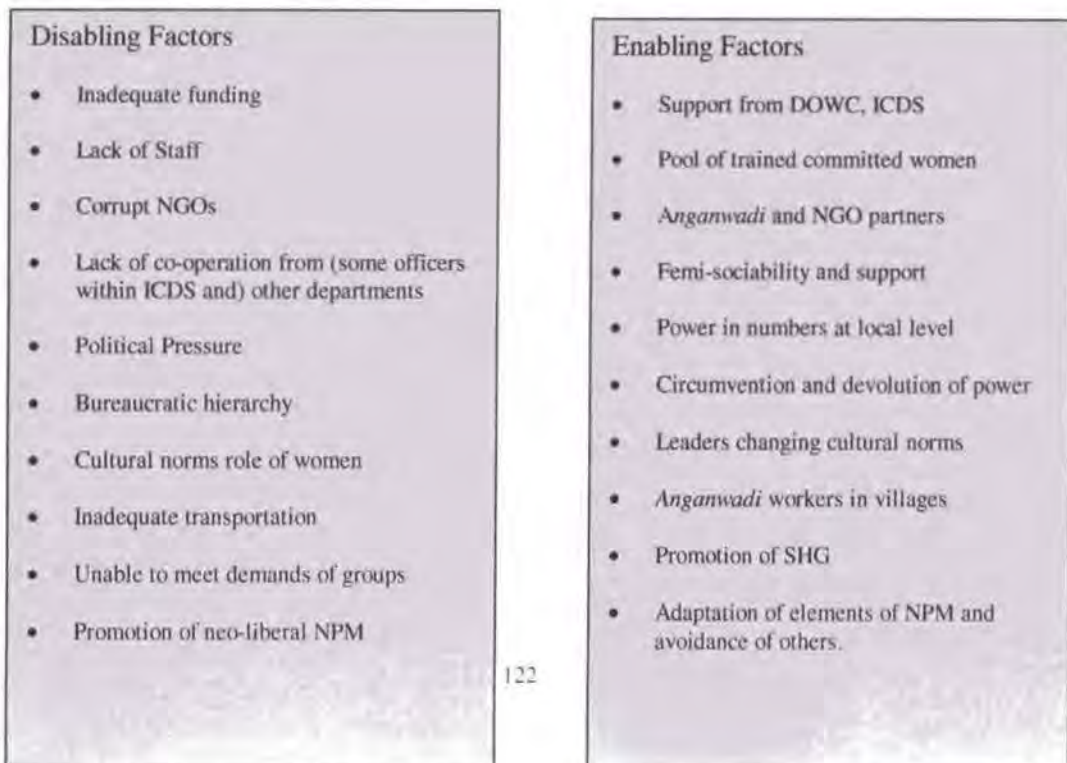
I do not claim that the scheme is either an uncontested success, as there were those who resisted change for a variety of reasons. Ideological resistance to change relates to India's long (quasi-) socialist tradition. Some interviewees saw the introduction of NPM as exemplifying the hegemonic domination of western ideas in India, as promoted and imposed by the World Bank. Other officials interpreted the shift towards 'facilitation' as symbolising a move away from government provision, and hence the welfare state. This was described as inappropriate and undesirable in the Indian context, and is a point to which I return later in this chapter. Pragmatic reasons

for resistance included fear of privatisation and loss of jobs, but more commonly related to apathy and inertia. Typically this occurred when the demands placed on officers were not perceived as legitimate, relevant or necessary. This was enhanced when incentives available for co-operation were matched or outweighed by benefits of non co-operation.

The majority of government officials supported the adaptation of elements of the NPM agenda (though in many cases they did not define change as relating to a specific discourse). My analysis of the adoption of elements of NPM identified in the case of IMY concurs with the work of Mawdsley et al (2002: 8), who suggest that, 'Knowledge and ideas are always political. They cannot be divorced from contexts of power'. They highlight the distinction between 'little' and 'big' ideas. In the case of IMY, local level adaptation of NPM represents the development of 'little' ideas, whilst change is dominated by the western conceived discourse - the 'big idea' - with little space afforded to alternatives. This is particularly the case in UP, where the Bank has been actively involved in the process of administrative reform.

The factors promoting and restricting bureaucratic change are complex and shifting. Here a 'force-field' analysis has been used to broadly determine the issues, referred to in this chapter as the main institutional factors affecting the culture of the bureaucracy in the case of IMY in UP.

Figure 5.1 The composite force-field analysis of bureaucratic cultures through IMY in Uttar Pradesh



5.2: Training

The new public management 'revolution' (referred to in chapter 1) reflects the global dimensions of power wielded by those promoting the discourse. This thesis broadly considers the ways and extent to which government officials involved in the IMY programme have adopted and adapted aspects of NPM, and the resultant change in bureaucratic cultures. The impact of changes in *training* was immediately apparent within the IMY programme and offers a useful means to analyse this issue. Proponents of NPM suggest that training is important in changing the 'the mind sets' of administrators (Clarke and Newman, 1993; 1997) and creating new bureaucratic 'cultures' (Dunleavy, 1991, 1997; Dowding, 1995).

Extensive training for senior government officials is not a new phenomenon. Kees van der Pijl (1998) has written of the development of a 'transnational class', especially at senior levels, whereby individuals in different countries in different institutions think about, and 'do', development in similar ways as a result of international experience and learning through consultancy, training and visits. He suggests that they start to share more common mindsets and languages with each other than with subordinate workers, or 'beneficiaries', in their own countries. In contrast to this, particularly interesting in the IMY case, is the extent of training offered to District and Block level government officials and even village level *anganwadi* workers. For this reason the issues relating to training are divided into two sections. The first outlines the change in training for higher officials, namely IAS and PCS officers, and considers whether in fact this reflects the direct transfer of global ideas on NPM to the UP context. The second considers the training and its implications of lower level functionaries (LLF), namely (Assistant) Child Development Programme Officers ((A)CDPOs), supervisors and *anganwadi* workers.³

Commitment to Training in Uttar Pradesh

In UP, the scale and type of training, and its implications for the traditional hierarchical bureaucratic structure are all important. R. S. Tolia (Head of the

³ Issues relating to *anganwadi* workers are, in the main, dealt with in the next chapter. They are not government employees, as they have no legal rights in relation to the state, and are not paid a salary. Instead, they are given a stipend of up to Rs. 500 a month.

Administrative Training Institute in Uttar Pradesh⁴) suggests the scale of commitment to NPM in the State is borne out by the State's training strategy⁵, focusing on more training hours per person at every level in the hierarchy. For him, the new training policy in Uttar Pradesh is particularly innovative as it 'expands and improves on national policy', incorporating global ideas and learning much from the experiences of South-East Asia. In UP the NPM discourse has primarily been promoted by the World Bank in its administrative reform package. As described in chapter 2, the ways in which reform has been legitimised in UP supports specific changes. Clarke and Newman have argued that,

'Increasingly, particular changes have come to be legitimated in and through narratives which place them in globalising contexts of change' (1997: 40).

In relation to training, Tolia stressed that 'delearning' is as important as 'learning' – perhaps more so. He argued the traditional command and control environment of the bureaucracy has to change, but stressed that creating 'enablers' was a difficult task, particularly in the older generations of officials. This was something that was observed to be a key factor in the IMY programme. Second, he emphasised the role of 'capacity building', which includes 'mutual appreciation and learning' between state and non-state actors. Third, he said that training can help remove the 'fear psychosis' of government officials who have felt in the past that it is better to do nothing for fear of punishment or transfer. Once the fear has gone, he suggested, government officials can 'stick their necks out', knowing that it is better to try to be innovative and fail, than to perpetuate the *status quo*. Finally, Tolia considered the importance of training in enabling individuals to stand back and look at what the department should not be doing, as well as what it should. As a result, the Uttar Pradesh Civil Service Reform Policy document⁶ (2000) places emphasis on training that consolidates and expands on the experience of others.

'Training institutions are to play a major role in the entire implementation process and their suitable exposure to best practices within country and overseas are also planned' (2000: 4).

Another change relating to training reflects moves away from the traditional hierarchy of the Indian administration. The CSR document exemplifies this point noting,

⁴ Tolia has also written extensively on bureaucratic reform, including 'Reforms in Governance in the State of Uttar Pradesh' 1999.

⁵ This interview (dated ninth June 2000) is discussed in more detail in the Uttar Pradesh context in chapter 3.

'If the subject of restructuring of the civil service is to be treated in its proper perspective, then the subject 'civil service' must include not only the superior civil services but also the subordinate civil services. The cutting edge or the contact level between the government and others is the subordinate civil services, especially in the States' (1999: 12).

The document points to the traditional prominence of, and adherence to, hierarchy within training. This has, in turn, structured superior/subordinate relationships in highly rigid and deferential terms, reducing innovation and causing resentment amongst lower level officers who feel their room for personal intervention is limited (Subrahmanian, 1999).

Problems of early training strategy in IMY

When the IMY scheme began in 1995, both quantity and quality of training programmes was lacking (Interview, 26th May Durgesh Hukku; GoI, 1998). The style and functioning of IMY, focusing on empowerment and participation in development, were elements not seen as central to earlier schemes promoted by the same government officials (including IRDP and DWCRA). Durgesh Hukku, Assistant Director of ICDS, in charge of IMY for Uttar Pradesh, argued that in the beginning the scheme was sanctioned without due preparation, leading to problems of understanding by officials and thus difficulties with policy implementation.⁷

'On our part at first the implementation was slow. There was a lack of training and so even we at higher levels were unable to guide those working in the field. [For example...] We were asking the field level workers to draw up an 'action plan'. Time went by and the plan was not formed. When we spoke about it, it was clear that the PO (Programme Officer) was unable to make a plan as she didn't know what it was, or what it was supposed to contain' (Interview, 26th May).

In fact, so bad was the information relating to the programme in the beginning, that it came to an abrupt halt in the Rae Bareilly District.⁸ On a field visit to Bhadurpur Block, one of the supervisors there, Shiromani Soukar, explained what happened,

'The project started in 1995 but it stopped for some time. This was partly because of the lack of training the supervisors had received so they were unclear about their role, and partly because there had been bad rumours about the project, so encouraging people's participation was difficult (Interview, 1st August)'.

⁶ Outlined in chapter 1.

⁷ These problems were furthered by the fact that IMY followed the withdrawn Mahila Yojana scheme discussed in section 5.4.

⁸ There are a few cases of IMY groups which continued during this, however these are rare.

Since 1995, the National Institute of Public Co-operation and Child Development (NPCCD) has been the primary institution providing training for IMY in UP. However, Mr. Mishra, one of twenty trainers at the institute in Lucknow claimed that, in the beginning, training was generic and offered nothing substantially different to that which had gone before. He explained that at this time, despite official rhetoric of innovation, working environments remained rather static, and the transformative potential of the scheme went unrealised. Because supervisors had not been trained to understand and promote the long-term aspirations of the scheme (and use alternative means of achieving these ends), they often felt uncomfortable and insecure. Mr. Mishra offered the example of supervisors paying the joining fee themselves, thus creating 'paper-groups', or exaggerating the (financial) benefits of the programme to encourage women to join in order to create a positive external impression of the scheme. The inaccuracies of such 'paper truths' have been highlighted by Emma Tarlo's (1995) work on sterilization and slum clearance during the emergency (1975-1977) in Delhi. Tiwari said that in the case of IMY, these cover-up attempts could not be sustained, suggesting that the women in the groups.

'quickly became impatient as they had been promised a lot and began to criticise the scheme and spread rumours about it (17th August)'.

Many District and Block level officials I interviewed expressed similar concerns about problems of the previous training strategy, or lack of it, within IMY. Several supervisors said they were nervous about the scheme as they did not feel competent or confident in the role they had been assigned. A typical response was offered by a supervisor in Bhadurpur Block,

'IMY was just another scheme that we implemented. I wasn't so enthusiastic about it initially. I had to encourage the same women (that had lost money in a previous scheme) and I couldn't convince them of the benefits because I couldn't see what they were myself' (Interview, 20th May).

Criticisms of the Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA) programme have highlighted exactly this issue. Based on her examination of available reports and evaluations, as well as interviews conducted with officials in the Ministry of Rural Development, Ramachandran (1995) found that very little effort had been made to communicate its innovative rationale, concepts and strategies to the officials who were responsible for implementation. In fact, once DWCRA had been approved

at the national level, the conceptual documents explaining the philosophy of the programme were put to one side and only the financial and administrative guidelines were circulated to the implementing agencies lower down the bureaucratic hierarchy. The lack of appropriate training was clearly a limiting factor that, not surprisingly, led 'to a major gap in the objectives of the programme and implementation on the ground' (Ramachandran, 1995: 8).

Training the elite

Senior Indian government officials are given extensive training from the time of recruitment. This involves one year's intensive training at the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration in Mussoorie, overseas visits, and even the opportunity to study for higher degrees in overseas universities. Two of the officials taking part in this research had been sponsored, by the government, through their Masters degrees in development studies at the Universities of London and Sussex. The overwhelming majority of those officials working on IMY felt the exclusivity of such experiences to the senior administrative echelons was not productive to the development agenda. Durgesh Hukku commented why she did not think this was a good idea and how the process has changed,

'In the past it was possible only for the IAS and then the PCS to go for this training...This was not effective as these people may only stay one or two years in a department, so as soon as they were trained they were shifted. They had no need or interest in what they had learnt after moving so the process of bettering the way in which we provided our service did not happen. Even if these people were able to advise better what people lower down should be doing, and writing it into policy, because the people who were implementing the policy did not have these innovative ideas, the way in which they worked remained the same... Also in the past the IAS officers because they were offered training abroad they became choosy about which training they took. Because who went on the training was strictly based on a pay structure it meant that if the officer did not want to go, no one went...Programme officers and supervisors are even receiving this kind of training now. Government feels that people working at the field level, who are in direct contact with the people need wider exposure to other ways of working so they can do their own work better. They can function better because they have a much broader realisation of alternative ways of working' (Interview, 26th May, 2000).

She described the current system as more flexible, allowing those lower in the bureaucratic hierarchy to attend overseas training. This change of approach is a key element of the IMY programme. Several of the more senior (PCS and IAS) officials

(as well as NGO workers) interviewed for this research had attended the CREME⁹ training course for credit and enterprise development in Durham. It was anticipated that, because I am a student at Durham University, they would speak highly of their time at the University, and that they would also want to imply that they were effective in their work. However, the extent of enthusiasm based on experiences through the CREME course was far in excess of that which I had expected. Course participants argued that it had significantly contributed to their change in attitude, and changes in their work environment¹⁰.

One example is the case of Arvind Mohan, a trainer at BIRD (Banking Institute of Rural Technology) in Lucknow, who attended the DUBS CREME course in 1997. BIRD offers training to both government and non-government officials involved in IMY, particularly in relation to small enterprise development. He said that through his experiences in Durham he had fundamentally changed his perceptions of how to measure *success* in development programmes. Elements of change, he argued, included greater tolerance for other ideas, being more creative and innovative in the way he works, and acknowledging that constant experimentation and adaptation is necessary within development work. Mr. Mohan said he felt that at present this described only a minority of officials in Uttar Pradesh, which in general are 'not the facilitating type'. He estimated that less than 10% of officials felt that things had changed,

'if you look for the right parameters there has been a definite change in schemes and what is achieved. Those who have been part of forums and training are definitely acting differently. Those who have not, usually have not been changed' (Interview 5th May, 2000).

Durgesh Hukku also attended the CREME course in 1997. She said that it too had changed her perceptions of what could be achieved. She noted that her, 'ambitions and expectations for the schemes has been greatly improved through the Durham training' (15th May). Two UK projects that she visited as part of the course were pertinent to Mrs. Hukku. The first was a micro-enterprise scheme for women in Scotland. Here all the facilities were provided under one roof with communal

⁹ For further information on the nature and content of the CREME scheme see figure 4.1.

¹⁰ Course feedback information (accessed through Durham University) suggest that support for the scheme was consistently high during the five years it took place. Despite appeals for the scheme's extension, DfID has decided to withdraw overseas training for Indian government officials and the last course was run in 2001.

reception facilities, fax and phone system. Without these facilities, she said, the women would not have been able to engage in the various enterprises undertaken. The second scheme involved training and business support for disabled people to promote their entry into employment. She said it was her ambition to be able to promote some similar schemes in India. Hukku noted that the work environment within these schemes in the UK differed substantially from that she had seen before. These aspirations, she noted, together with the training through CREME, has played a large part in the help, practical training and encouragement she is able to give to officials working beneath her in IMY. It is interesting that since the change of the scheme in 2001, the idea of training and provision of facilities for beneficiaries to pursue such ventures has been incorporated into the scheme. This is not to suggest that Mrs. Hukku has necessarily had a direct impact on policy-making, but rather that the circular way of working, and upwards transfer of ideas, is likely to have occurred in the case of IMY.

A three year collaborative training programme with the British Council, evolved for CDPOs, Programme Officers (POs) and NGOs, has been implemented under the IMY programme. This included training courses held at BIRD and NPCCD in Uttar Pradesh and two exposure visits were arranged to Bangladesh, (where individuals visited some of the Grameen Bank's self-help groups) and Indonesia. Lilly Singh, PO for Rae Bareli District, has spent several months in various schemes, both in India and overseas, training for the programme. She felt her experience in Bangladesh had given her encouragement as to what could be achieved in her own District.

'In Bangladesh I saw in a poor slum one group, where the lady was the wife of a rickshaw-puller. He had been ill so they had borrowed money from the moneylender. When she joined the group she borrowed the money from the group to clear her debts with the moneylender. She was managing to repay the money to the group as well as contribute to her savings, (as she didn't have the huge interest rates of the moneylender). They had got group dynamics. This area in Bangladesh is very poor so there is no reason if it is working there why it can't work here' (Interview, 14th August).

Training Lower Level Functionaries

The direct implementation work of the IMY scheme is primarily conducted by lower level functionaries (LLF), namely supervisors and *anganwadi* workers. Kaviraj (1991) suggests that a profound gap has developed between the bureaucratic elite, at

home with the 'modernist discourse', and personnel at lower levels whose 'everyday vernacular discourses' are very different. This, he argues, means that when policies are implemented 'very low down in the bureaucracy, they are reinterpreted beyond recognition' (Kaviraj, 1991: 91). It is only reasonable that these women be trained to the highest possible standard to promote the successful realisation of the goals of the scheme. However, before IMY (and even within IMY in its early conception) this was not the case.

Supervisors working in the Districts said that in the past they resented the fact they were 'doing all the work' (Interview, 15th June), but did not get the benefits of going to conferences. They also saw the transfer culture in India (Banik, 2001; Chambers, 1983; de Zwart, 1994), which appears to have worsened in recent years, as a justification for training lower officials who would be less likely to be transferred and so could make better use of their skills. Furthermore, according to current IMY supervisors, in the past and in other schemes, the higher up the bureaucratic chain an individual, the less frequently they visited the field. This meant that while senior individuals frequently had an abstract understanding of the problems for development, they would have little bearing on grass roots reality. However, it was noted that things had changed somewhat in recent years.

'Those from the Centre are actually visiting the States. They are seeing what is happening on the ground. They are realising the very different ways in which the States work. And again training at the State level, this was not done before. This means we know what is expected of us. Everyone is clear on the policy and what is to be achieved' (Interview, Durgesh Hukku, 26th May).

The shift in policy to encourage the training of LLFs fits with Subrahmanian's observation that,

'Middle-level officials and field-level officials in particular can often feel paralysed by the hierarchy that characterises bureaucratic organisations, and often cannot see a role for themselves in initiating change. The training environment can positively reinforce the capacity of bureaucrats to act as agents of change' (1999: 405).

Several key aspects of change were highlighted by those attending the various training initiatives including, broader exposure to other ways of working, the feeling of being appreciated through the status implied by being trained, and more effective working once they knew precisely what was expected of them.

I attended several days at a four-week residential training course for CDPOs and ACDPOs at NPCCD in Lucknow. Here, I had the opportunity to see details of the training programme, how it was carried out, and discuss with tutors and participants on the programme how they felt it impacted their work. The course had 41 participants, (39 women, and 2 men), 26 from Uttar Pradesh and 15 from Madhya Pradesh. Though all participants were ICDS employees, they were not all involved in IMY¹¹. Most of these individuals had not been trained outside the District before, and certainly not for the same length of time. The structure of the programme was very informal, involving watching videos covering various issues including anti-dowry promotion, literacy campaigns and the importance of using clean water. This was followed by discussion sessions and focus groups. After each stage of training the groups were asked how they could put such information into practice, and to discuss their own experiences of the issues. The video I saw was part of a UNICEF sponsored campaign that aims to unite government and non-government officials in the promotion of certain welfare issues. The course also included field visits to case study development projects. Participants to whom I spoke, said the change of environment for training was a positive one, for several reasons. First, they were able to meet people in similar positions from different areas, exchange ideas and share mutual experiences. They also commented on the advantages of leaving the classroom and seeing how projects were working in different areas (Session attended 18th August).

Training in the State centre meant individuals could focus exclusively on training in an environment designed specifically for that purpose. Pankaj Jain's (1994) study of eleven successful development organisations in five Asian countries found that these agencies tended to centralise the training of field workers. In order to train the new entrants, he explains, the organisations 'deployed some of their best people and made heavy investments which, in itself, required centralised training' (1994: 1371). It is not clear from his work, however, whether he feels centralised training *causes* an improvement in training quality, or rather, that to encourage the involvement of the best trainers, a centralised location is desirable. In the case of IMY, it was felt that the centralised nature of training provided a more conducive atmosphere for learning. One of the ACDPOs at the NPCCD training course commented that there weren't any

¹¹ As explained in chapter 3, IMY is only working in four districts in Uttar Pradesh.

factions in the training institute and they all felt open to discuss any matters there without any inhibitions.

'We are all the same in the institute. There aren't any (peer) groups, and we all work together. We've all made contacts and friends from different Blocks and Districts who we'll stay in touch with... We can discuss our problems in a more open way here and suggest ideas without any pressure on us' (Interview, 18th August).



Plate 5.1: Course Photograph - Training at NPCCD

The change in training offered at NPCCD was argued by another CREME participant, Mr. Mishra, to relate to the process of 'de-learning' a phenomenon highlighted by Tolia in relation to NPM:

'There are a lot of projects and they are giving a lot of information but it is useless if the people are not using it. What we need to do is to try to change people's attitudes. DUBS (Durham University Business School) helped me see the need to change my attitude and they way in which I look at things. You have to respect the basics and use your knowledge in a different way. There is a need for 'de-learning' and a change in approach and attitude or projects will continue to go the same way as those before them' (Interview, 17th August).

However, whilst the de-learning associated with NPM espouses the adoption of private sector working practices, for Mr. Mishra it involved the use of more participatory forms of development, exemplifying the divergent interpretation and adoption of NPM ideas. This is reflected in the example of participatory learning and action (PLA) relating to women's ages given by Mr. Mishra. He argued that, in the past, officials would get incorrect data, as they simply asked a question and were given an answer. Now Mr. Mishra recommends that surveys are collected through group discussion in which people relate their experiences to (for example) local calendars rather than national ones, and women's perceptions and ideas used to generate information rather than those of the bureaucrat. This is not to suggest that PLA is an end in itself. Rather, the example given by Mr. Mishra suggests an awareness that authoritarian approaches to development are not effective, and that there is a need to be more flexible and open to new approaches, PLA being just one.



Changes experienced by officers in IMY are more resounding when compared with officers in other departments who have not experienced such training. Many government officials interviewed from other departments still had the idea that they 'ruled', particularly in the District. One District officer, not involved directly in IMY, expressed how entering the civil service was a 'national hobby' and the aspiration of every parent for their child. He felt that government officials represented the 'supreme

sector of society' (Interview, August 4th). The following comment, made by a District Provincial Civil Service (PCS) officer, is just one of many expressions of this type:

'In 'the Hindi belt' the bureaucracy is very powerful. In backward areas 'the bureaucrat' rules. In agricultural areas the power is shared between the *Pradhan* and the bureaucrat. Their liking and disliking and what they think should be done is what happens. It isn't in the interests of many bureaucrats to change the way it is. If we get more literacy and development then the power of the bureaucracy may be questioned. The very reason we go into this field is for the power and authority' (Interview, 3rd August).

Mrs. Hukku (like many others) did not underestimate the problems faced in working in the bureaucracy, which are intensified in the case of Uttar Pradesh. However she maintained that advances were being made (Interview, 15th May). Training for her meant that officials knew what *could* and *should* be achieved.

Not only was the interaction between officials different in the case of IMY but the way in which information was imparted to the public also varied considerably in relation to other schemes. The first week in August is national breastfeeding week in India. The programme in Rae Bareli is jointly funded by the government and by the NGO CARE focusing on a three-step programme for mothers; namely immediate breastfeeding, exclusive breastfeeding and weaning of the child. I attended a training programme for supervisors in Rae Bareli and a publicity drive for breastfeeding the following day (1st and 2nd August). The promotional visit I attended was not in an IMY Block but in Bhaon, a village in Rahi Block (in Rae Bareli).

From the outset the nature of this meeting was far different from anything I had seen with IMY. The 'presentation' began with lengthy introductions by the panel before going into laborious detail about breast-feeding. Whilst I am sure the content was pertinent, the temperature was incredibly high and although we were supplied with water and tea the people watching were not. Children soon became tired and mothers were more concerned with pacifying them than watching the middle aged men from out of town talking about the benefits of breast-feeding. Once registers of attendance were taken several women left, although most stayed. Whilst the potential benefits of such meetings are undeniable the structure was low on visual stimuli (except for the cooking session at the end) and I found it very difficult to keep my concentration while man after man thanked the doctor, officials and 'our friend from England' for

attending. The meeting coincided with the distribution of 'pushtahar' (food supplies) in the village and this together with the weigh the baby competition (complete with prizes) were presumably the reason for the high attendance figures.

S.A. Khan, Director of NPCCD, said that in many cases the superficiality of schemes is a major problem, which would seem to be the case from my limited experience of the breast-feeding campaign,

'They think if they visit a village once or twice the group can form, and will work. I give them (the supervisors) the example. If someone comes to you to sell something and talks to you for half an hour are you going to buy it? They need to sell it to you, to convince you to buy it, and this takes time. The same is true of programmes. They involve the women making a choice with their time and often money, and it has to be sold to them, they are the customers of the project. At the same time they should be accurately informed and not led to believe that something will come that won't. If this is the case they lose faith very quickly and it is much harder to get them to buy a product from the same sales group (government) again' (Interview, 17th August).

This aspect of 'embeddedness' in the community, developing relationships to convince beneficiaries to 'buy into' a scheme, does not only relate to training. Because IMY works through supervisors and *anganwadi* workers, it has created or developed networks that are close to the people. In addition, due to vast numbers of women working on the project, it has access to resources (of people and time), which are unavailable to many other departments. This point will be elaborated upon later in the chapter. Mr Khan noted the problems were largely based on autocratic perceptions of government officials.

'Last week I was training some supervisors at Bakshi Ka Talab¹². I asked them, "What is your job?" People said, "to inspect groups". I ask them when they were made part of the police rather than the social sector. I say they are there to help the *anganwadi*, to see what shortcomings she is faced with and then find how these problems can be remedied' (Interview, 17th August).

The fact that the IMY handbook (GoI, 1998) states that nodal officers in the District should have had several years in their position, implies the importance of tenure in the programme. Not only does the development of trust for effective working take a long time, but also learning how to work in a new department or District is a lengthy process. The intensive training offered in IMY also takes resources of time, effort and

¹² Bakshi Ka Talab is an area outside Lucknow that houses the Rural Training Institute.

money. Based on these grounds, it is unsurprising, therefore, that transfers were seen to be a major problem particularly by the key officers at the District and State levels. In the case of IMY, however, 'politically motivated' transfers were not seen to be the major issue (and rarely featured below the State level). Rather some, mainly male, officers who were transferred into the department saw it as a 'punishment posting', and other Block level officers who wished to move out of rural areas to the District or State capitals were constantly using any influence they had to push for transfer. Mrs. Hukku explained how she feels about the transfer situation.

'It is a loss to the department when people shift. They request the transfers, but if they leave it is a waste of money. NIPCCD have trained them, we have invested time and money in them and then they move. They shouldn't be able to move for 3 years, especially if they have had training abroad. One of the CDPOs in Jalaun¹³ was trained and ready to train her subordinates then got a transfer. How is the project supposed to make progress like that?' (Interview, 24th May).

I would suggest that whilst elements of the NPM discourse are being promoted through training including devolution, downwards accountability and flexible working conditions, in reality, these exist in hybrid forms developed in conjunction with other influences. The harder 'public choice' influences of NPM are notable for their absence. Whilst at the State level, 'down-sizing' and 'right-sizing', and even the idea of 'vision crafting' are buzzwords, but in reality these are not translated into training at the grass-roots level.

5.3: Structure

The structure of IMY was highlighted by both 'insiders' and 'outsiders', as being fundamental in changing the work culture of government officials. Elements discussed in this section reflect the adoption of some (and avoidance of other) elements promoted within the NPM discourse. First, the flexibility of the scheme has, according to officers at the District level and below, given them greater autonomy. This is typical of the NPM promotion of 'localisation' through the 'devolution' and 'deconcentration' of power. The second feature relates to the nature of hierarchy in IMY. Within the scheme, not only is there a narrow chain of command above the District level providing direct points of contact, but the nature of relationships within

¹³ Jalaun, like Rae Bareilly is one of the other Districts in Uttar Pradesh which has been selected for the IMY programme

the hierarchy were discernible for their congenial nature. Here I focus on the role of key individuals in the activity of managing the process of 'de-bureaucratisation'. The final area discussed in this section relates to selective use of 'externalisation' and 'contracting out' methodologies, through interaction with quasi-and non-governmental organisations within the programme.

5.3.1: Localisation

Through the devolution of power and responsibility to the lowest practical level the IMY programme attempts to shift away from the conventional centralised command and control of Indian state sponsored schemes. In the IMY Handbook (GoI, 1998), an entire chapter is dedicated to the subject of flexibility in the scheme. It states,

'the State level nodal agencies... have been vested with the flexibility to modify any other feature, instructions, guidelines... The changes can be brought out to suit the needs and requirements of the field situations. There is no need to seek prior approval of Government of India for effecting such changes' (p.157).

Durgesh Hukku (Assistant Director ICDS, Lucknow) explains what this change of approach means for the project,

'In the implementation of IMY the approach is flexible, it's according to the geography of each specific locality. Not just the physical resources, and access to market and raw materials but looking specifically at the *culture* of the area and the conditions with which the project is faced' (Interview, May 26th).

District and Block level supervisors suggested they were more able to take their own initiative with the groups. This supervisor from Singhpur said that, though groups sometimes fail, at least within IMY they have tried their utmost to support them in every way possible,

'Some groups are doing incredibly well, obviously this relates to their starting point. Some groups take a long time to form and the process is often a long and difficult one. I can and do spend time with these groups. It is upsetting when they don't work out but at least I know I have done all I can' (Interview, July 7th).

This devolution of power within the bureaucracy has several implications for the culture of those implementing the policy. The first relates to minimising the culture of fear that leads to inaction to which Fineman and Gabriel (1996) have referred. They argue that in many cases,

'Organisational hierarchies become highways along which blame travels; superiors blame subordinates for designing forms and levers wrongly or giving the wrong instructions. Apportioning blame can become an unpredictable business. Under these circumstances, people may learn the simple, but demoralising lesson, that the best thing to do is simply to protect themselves' (p.119).

The second aspect relating to the structure of the scheme concerns the ability of lower level functionaries (LLF) working at the grass roots level to have some input into the way in which the policy is interpreted and implemented. Vaughan and Walt (1984), amongst others (Walt, 1988, Walt et al, 1990, WHO, 1989), have highlighted the fact that restricting involvement of those who implement policy in the planning of programmes and discretion in work has led to project failure. It is interesting that research over the past two decades relating to private sector environments has focused on the need to 'empower' employees to facilitate innovative and dedicated work cultures (Kanter, 1982). In Tendler's research in Ceara, she suggests that recognition or appreciation for individual's work (to which I turn later), and their ability to have some control over the direction of the programme are important factors in successful implementation (1997: 36).

A third element relates to the culture of bureaucratic authoritarianism that appears to have been minimised in the case of IMY, partly through the devolution of power to the localities. The implementation of IMY is carried out through large numbers of supervisors (government employees) in each Block, who assist *anganwadi* workers in the villages. The role of *anganwadi* workers is seen as crucial to the programme's success as they are the points of direct contact for the beneficiaries. Mrs Hukku notes the importance of interaction with the groups,

'As a department, it has the best network to the people. Because we work through the *anganwadi* workers there is a close link to the field. The POs have to go into the field also so the women in the groups know who to contact and have a personal relationship with the administration (Interview, July 20th)'.

Neither supervisors nor *anganwadi* workers are recruited through the traditional examination, as for the PCS or IAS, but are recruited at the District level. This has the implication that they have not been trained in the 'authoritarian culture' from which they felt many other officials suffer. Further, as the *anganwadi* workers live in the

villages where they work, they feel they have a better understanding of the problems of local women, and better access to them.

This evidence contrasts with the research of Pankaj Jain (1994, 1996) which has been mentioned above. He suggests that the most successful working practices were found where work was highly standardised. This is in opposition to much work on the benefits of NGOs based around their 'local knowledge' and ability to adapt projects to suit local needs (Clarke, 1995). The departure from traditional top down, standardised ways of working was highlighted as a key factor in IMY's success. Other factors highlighted by Jain do coincide with experiences in IMY. These include what he describes as a 'sense of calling' and 'brotherhood' among employees, promoting dedication and motivation.

Jain's case studies do differ from the case of IMY, and many NGO studies, in several respects. The organisations studied were non-government or semi-government, and had an employee total of more than one hundred. Whilst large in terms of firm sizes, compared with the size and scale of IMY these represent relatively small numbers of people. Another key difference between Jain's work and my own relates to the type of work conducted by the organisations he studied. Those NGOs he highlighted as most effective were working in areas suited to standardisation of procedures, namely irrigation, milk processing and bank credit – rather than the multiple and differentiated tasks involved in social and economic development through IMY.

Much of the latest work on developmental service bureaucracies (Wade, 1988; Moore 1989; Lam 1996; Ostrom 1996, 1998 and Evans 1996a, 1996b) has tried to come to terms with the issues of flexibility and standardisation in bureaucracies. Judith Tandler suggests that performance and job satisfaction can be increased where a strict structure enables power to be taken away from local elites. At the same time power and autonomy is devolved to programme workers at lower levels. In her case study of Caera she contends that, 'the state's actions represented a felicitous combination of centralised control and local "embeddedness"' (1994: 1176), whereby power was both devolved to the lowest possible level at the same time controlled by officials higher in the hierarchy. In a similar fashion through IMY, power is devolved within the scheme to lower levels of the hierarchy to the District level. At the same time power is

maintained within ICDS by restricting the involvement of other departments and local elites in the form of *Panchayati Raj* Institutions (PRIs).

5.4.2: De-bureaucratisation - The role of key individuals

The structure of IMY encourages limited hierarchy. The numbers of bureaucrats involved at higher levels is reduced, with the focus being placed on those individuals who implement policy. At the District level therefore there is one main point of contact, (the Programme Officer), one at the State level (the Assistant Director, ICDS), and one main Central contact (the Joint Director of DOWC in Delhi). Whilst there are, of course, other individuals at each level who contribute advice to the scheme, the chain of authority in reality is very narrow. Of particular interest, in the case of IMY in UP, is not just the reduced numbers of officials involved at higher levels, but the ways in which these key individuals use various strategies to induce or restrict involvement of various other institutions, individuals and groups in the programme.

In Jenkins' work on the promotion of liberalisation in India, he highlights three main strategies used by key individuals to manage change associated with the shifting economic environment. These are political skill, political institutions and political incentives. In IMY, key individuals have also been fundamental in promoting certain aspects of NPM, whilst avoiding others. The methods described by Jenkins in the economic sphere can be usefully adapted to describe the measures used to promote the reduction of 'bureaucracy' in the administrative sphere. The following section discusses the main methods used by key individuals in the case of IMY, namely *administrative skill*, *administrative incentives* and *administrative institutions*.

Administrative Skill:

The devolution of power and authority to lower levels of the administrative chain, through IMY, implies a reduction in power of those higher up and their accountability at the grass-roots. It is unlikely that bureaucrats easily relinquish their authority, or that those at lower levels would feel compelled to encourage the SHGs to act as monitors of their work. The way in which this has happened can be understood through the pursuit of three (overlapping) methods of consent, coercion and circumvention.



Plate 5.4 (below): Annexe Bhawan, Lucknow. State level government offices, surrounded by high walls, and guarded at the entrance. Many lower level government employees had never been to the department in Lucknow before IMY.

Consent:

The aims and rationale of the scheme are explained in detail to those at each level in the hierarchy through extensive training (already detailed in this chapter) in order to encourage understanding and promotion of its values. Key individuals involved in the programme were important in both perpetuating and developing the positive and innovative nature of the programme. Beverley Armour Metcalf (2002), in her recent work on public services, suggests that there are several essential skills at all levels necessary for effective leadership. These include a 'can-do' attitude, the ability to connect with people at different levels, and to excite people to question and criticise in an effort to improve working practices. This supports Tolia's idea that change in the bureaucracy will only occur through 'role models' and demonstrations of 'vision crafting' in the bureaucracy. This specific type of behaviour was frequently recorded in the workings of IMY. For example, the way in which Durgesh Hukku stood her ground and refused to have the programme side-lined was frequently witnessed in her meetings with both government and non-government officials. She constantly pushed for extra resources (particularly in relation to technology) and was vocal in her contempt for individuals who 'just sat in their air conditioned offices' and were, in her

opinion 'an insult to her profession' (Interview, 25th May). This kind of commitment and strength of character, particularly in situations that were difficult, gave those at lower levels faith in her support for their work.

The relationship between superiors and subordinates in IMY was particularly interesting. For example, whilst the supervisors used the term 'Madam' for Lilly Singh, showing their respect and regard, the reality of the relationships was far from the obsession with protocol seen in other departments. There were, for example, no cases of deferential feet touching, or walking out of offices backward by subordinates towards Lilly Singh, so common in other departments. Whilst Lilly was obviously unable to form the same relationships with the women's groups as the supervisors had, several *anganwadi* workers singled her out specifically for praise. The same type of camaraderie was witnessed in the case of Mrs. Hukku. She visited the Districts on a regular basis to praise the work of individuals, to support the work of groups and to try to assist when particular problems had developed. It was this type of understanding, and 'can do' attitude promoted by key individuals, that appears to have promoted consent for the changes encouraged through the scheme.

Coercion:

The process of encouraging participation, and even acceptance of a project to devolve power from State and District level, obviously met with some resistance. The use of coercion was a key skill to promote acceptance of the scheme at the same time as minimising the laborious red tape for which the administration has often been criticised. Here, personal networks played an essential role. The key individuals I met were particularly assertive women. At the National, State and District levels, Sarojini Thakur, Durgesh Hukku and Lilly Singh, respectively, would actively coerce and pester those individuals whom they felt could offer something to the scheme. An example in Rae Bareilly is useful to illustrate the point. Every week all the higher ranking District government officials are obliged to attend an audience with the District Magistrate (Raj Veer Singh) to discuss their work. The parochial nature of the District bureaucracy means that all officials attend. It was at these meetings Lilly gained access to particular government officials without an appointment. She said she had their captive attention as they had nowhere to 'escape', and she noted the amount of co-operation gained was further enhanced if the conversation was in earshot of the

supportive District Magistrate. For her, this was particularly useful in relation to the *Panchayati Raj Officer (PRO)*, who was usually less than obliging, but from whom she needed assistance in cases where tensions existed between *Pradhans* and *anganwadi* workers or SHGs.

Circumvention:

Despite efforts to encourage support for the programme through consent and coercion, some individuals both inside and outside the bureaucracy, deployed strategies of resistance (discussed earlier). Officials directly involved in IMY at all levels attested to the difficulties of coordination with other departments. Official guidelines for IMY suggest that there should be a District Level Co-ordination Committee (DLCC) and a State Level Steering Committee (SLSC) in each State. However, when I interviewed official 'members' of the co-ordination committee for IMY at the District level (See Appendix 3.2 for list of members), it was obvious why these people had not been actively involved in the project. Typical responses included, 'What has a social project to do with agriculture?' (Interview, 3rd August) and 'it is a woman's project, it's nothing to do with me' (Interview, 4th August). This contemptuous attitude was intensified in the case of older officers at the District level.

Typically countermeasures included strategies such as absenteeism, and negative attitudes including alienation, apathy and inertia. One District officer said,

'Here you still get your pay packet if you work or do not work. If you sit around all day doing nothing but eating parathas and drinking chai (tea) you will still get a pay packet at the end of the week' (Interview 25th August).



Plate 5.3:
'Vikas Bhawan',
Rae Bareilly, the
District
Headquarters.

Literally the
'Development
Building' where
many of the higher
ranking officers of
the District spend
most of their time

The most visible resistance tactics were deployed by (mainly male) officers, who considered work in the social sector degraded, and viewed the posting as a form of 'punishment'. Mr. Khan, previously Director DOWC Uttar Pradesh, now at the Department of Finance, said he felt that the morale of those working within the department was low – although he claimed this is not the way he personally felt.

'They feel their job is a waste of time. It depends on what job you are in but people in DOWC often feel that things have been dumped on them. Because of the nature of the work some feel they are being punished' (4th August).

Others felt that the political priority of the social sector and resources available to it are so low that it could not achieve anything, so to even try would be futile. The attitude of a senior DOWC official epitomised this resolve,

'This job is very diffuse, very frustrating. Jobs in the industrial sector are very satisfying, very sought after. You can show your children a building and say I made that but in this job I can't own anything. What can I say, "that women's group is because of me?" When I was in the industrial department you heard that this department couldn't do anything. There is no job satisfaction.... I can say they were trained because of me' (20th April).

People who felt this way about the Department were, in the main, actively seeking transfer. As noted earlier Mrs Hukku acknowledged that this was a problem for the programme. However, at the same time she said if they weren't committed, their leaving the scheme was in the long run, no loss, 'They don't do anything positive for the scheme, it's no loss in the end, if they leave!' (Interview, 16th June).

Agarwal (1994) cites this type of reluctance and often downright refusal of state officials to carry out government policy in relation to land rights in India which allow women to inherit. They argue that it would jeopardise the stability of the family through challenging male authority. She argues that such attitudes often start from the top and notes the response of the Indian Minister of Agriculture to her advocacy of land rights for women at a seminar for the Indian Planning Commission in 1989: 'Are you suggesting that women should be given rights to land? What do women want? To break up the family?' (Agarwal, 1994: 12).

At the District level the committee has never met, the majority of its members did not even know they were part of the group until I informed them. Whilst it may be perceived as a failure of the IMY officials not having encouraged co-ordination with

the other departments, this is not how Lilly Singh saw the situation. She argued that, because of the nature of administration in the District, having meetings would not only be difficult to organise and low on productivity, but may even have a negative impact on the scheme by introducing adverse attitudes into the scenario. Instead, she said she had close relationships with officers in certain departments, including Basic Education and Social Welfare (as well as certain NGOs), with whom she worked on a regular basis, whilst consciously avoiding others.

At the State level, the committee had only met once since the programme had begun in 1995. Mrs Hukku argued that the senior bureaucrats who form the Steering Committee are moved so frequently that the processes of negotiation and co-ordination are brought to a halt when officers are transferred. Furthermore, due the vast number of commitments each senior bureaucrat has, she said, to arrange a meeting would require more effort than simply finding a solution to the problem, for which the meeting was being organised. Again, whilst Mrs. Hukku worked closely with officials whom she felt could further the project, she claimed the constant transfer of others was a constant hindrance to the work of officials in the scheme. A typical example of the negative impact of transfers was that of Uma-Shanker. He is a proactive IAS officer previously Secretary of the Rural Development Department transferred five times during my twelve-month fieldwork period (as well as spending several months without a post!).

Just as factions have been highlighted within UP society more generally (chapter 3), they also exist within the bureaucracy. One example can be seen in the perceptions of Reservation policy. Some senior officials stated how Reservation was lowering the calibre of the service. One new IAS recruit interviewed in Mussoorie even commented, 'How can these people enter into the civil service when they are so backward they cannot even eat with a knife and fork!' (Interview, 10th December 2001). More implicit prejudice was frequently observed with caste and regional groupings within the bureaucracy forming alliances. One senior bureaucrat recruited from within the BC category was even referred to by *high-caste* government officials as the '*rickshaw wallah*'. IMY officials, through direct contact with key officials have, in the main, managed to side-step the political and religious factions within the UP bureaucracy, particularly at the State level.

The autonomy of key individuals clearly has the potential to be either extremely dangerous or productive depending on the objectives of the bureaucrats who wield power. If the key government officials' wanted to behave in a clientistic manner they could no doubt do so. There is little or nothing structural that enforces change, it has to come from the individual. The focus on support, training and empowerment of the individual is therefore central to changes in bureaucratic culture within IMY.

Public choice theorists suggest that 'managers' in the public sector will adopt a vested-interest culture if unregulated and autonomous. However, when the same conditions are afforded to the private sector an 'entrepreneurial culture' is presumed to develop. Whilst clientistic practices, both explicit and implicit, were observed during my research, this was rarely the case in either DOWC or ICDS. My experience of IMY would suggest, in agreement with Tandler's work on 'good government', that there is no reason why this should be the case. Indeed, key officials working on IMY are IAS and PCS officers publicly renowned for being the intellectual cream of Indian society. It is reasonable to presume, therefore, that if their motives were based on financial, prestige or clientistic bases, they would have entered the more lucrative private sector or, at the very least, the more prestigious economic departments within the bureaucracy.

In the case of IMY the circumvention of other departments was not the result of individuals trying to hold on to their power bases. Rather, within IMY, officers were doing something different and quite actively so. Veron et al. (2002) suggest officers at the District level reshape development policy, due to a lack of trust in the capacity of national level officials to fulfil their promises, and in grass roots level officials to perform their tasks without corruption. This parallels the case of IMY, the difference here, however, is that officers, at every level within the scheme, have an inherent distrust for those outside. However, whilst the involvement of 'corrupting influences' within the bureaucracy were indeed restricted, other less traditional involvement was actively encouraged in the forms of quasi-governmental, NGOs and the private sectors (discussed in the externalisation/ contracting out sector). Whilst the narrow chain of command was seen to avoid many of the problems of working in the bureaucratic hierarchy, it is not to suggest that it did not in any way, or at any time,

adversely affect the working of government officials. Indeed, Mrs Hukku lamented that the lack of technology in her department meant she physically had to go to the Districts to see supervisors or arrange for them to come to Lucknow, involving both expense and time. At the District level, it was not possible for the PO to supervise the work of all government officials. As a result, there were instances of individuals not fulfilling their roles.

Administrative Incentives:

Incentives were important in changing the attitudes of those government officials working on IMY. However rather than financial incentives, motivations were based on the promotion of prestige, respect, and self-esteem. There has been substantial publicity in relation to IMY in Rae Bareilly District including poster campaigns, word of mouth, and networking between SHGs. At the District level, Lilly Singh used every opportunity possible to promote positive perceptions of IMY. In one instance, she invited a local reporter to one group I was attending to interview me, and in so doing also gained publicity for the scheme. The championing of positive attitudes towards the scheme clearly contributed to government officials feeling obliged to meet the high standards they felt were expected of them. This is an example of downwards accountability, meaning that official monitoring, which has the potential to increase the amount of bureaucracy in the project is reduced.



Plate 5.5: A group member in Pali village, Maharajgang Block, has opened her own shop. Such achievements give supervisors a sense of pride and act as an incentive to perform.

Further incentives for officials to perform to the best of their ability result from the relationships developed with the IMY groups themselves. ICDS is the only department that works through village level *anganwadi* workers in project implementation. There is a closer bond between those who implement the scheme and the IMY groups, than simply exist between officials and beneficiaries. There was a feeling expressed by both *anganwadi* workers and supervisors that if they didn't help the groups they were letting down their own communities. The *anganwadi* workers' have the further incentive of awards from the District Magistrate for their performance and the opportunity of promotion to post of supervisor. The supervisors too, are almost exclusively from the Blocks in which they work, and so were (geographically and emotionally) closer to the groups with whom they worked. Whilst this structure hasn't changed from previous ICDS schemes, the opportunity to adapt the scheme at the local level and increased focus on training of lower levels of administration has helped implementers realise their aspirations for the groups.

Administrative Institutions:

In defining institutions the analogy between institutions and the 'rules of the game' in a competitive sport (represented by the organisation) is a useful starting point (North, 1990). The institutions affecting bureaucratic cultures include class, caste, gender and cultural rules and norms. There is currently little work on how the women within given organisations affect, and are affected by, such institutions. Noting this in her work on getting institutions right for women, Goetz writes,

'To explore the question of whether women approach public organisations membership differently from men, more still needs to be known about women bureaucrats and agents in development organisations...as long as women remain a minority in these contexts, it is very difficult for them to develop any potential for performing as advocates in women's interests given the pressure to respond to dominant organisational incentives. This underlies the importance of strategies for *networks to build up internal power and support blocks*, and to connect to external sources of support' (1995: 9, emphasis added).

In the case of IMY, most jobs, and all key posts in UP, are occupied by women. The networks to which Goetz refers clearly depend on the development of trust, shared values and on personal relationships, key factors in the scheme. The relationships that have developed in the organisation make an interesting parallel with the work of Kanter (1977) who suggests that the development of 'homosociability', in the form of

old boy's networks has the capacity to restrict the advancement of women. I would argue that IMY provides an example of 'femi-sociability' that provides the 'internal power and support blocks' of which Goetz writes. The sheer number of *anganwadis* and supervisors has allowed them to act as a considerable force against local politicians and other powerful people (most notably *Pradhans*) who they felt had, in the past, diverted policy and funds to their own ends. The strength at the local level has been enhanced by the availability of 'protection' from those women higher up the hierarchy, whether that is at the District, State or Central government level. However, whether, as in the case of homosociability, this type of institutional development actively restricts the advancement of the opposite gender within the department, is a moot point. In my experience, the majority of men in the department found the job degrading and had no real desire to gain advancement from within. Whether this is because of the networks developed within the sector or in spite of them, it difficult to assess.

A key difference between the 'culture' developed by those working in IMY and Kanter's observations is that those inside IMY are fighting against the norm. As Goetz suggests, women remain very much the minority in the bureaucracy. In working with those outside the sheltered and supportive environment of ICDS or DOWC, women frequently have to sacrifice their different needs and interests and become as Kanter (1977) describes, 'sociological males'. At the national level, one IAS trainee commented that entering the service demanded greater commitment from women than men. She said her choice of profession had narrowed her options for marriage. She argued that marriage outside the service was unlikely, as potential husbands would feel uneasy about her status, work commitment and the potential of being posted away from home (Interview, 12th November 1999). Due to this phenomenon, Kaw, (1993), in her book 'bureau-crazy: IAS unmasked,' highlights the fact that the majority of female officers marry within the service, known in common parlance as 'CBM', cadre based marriage.

When dealing with other departments Mrs. Hukku frequently changed her language and approach, presumably responding to the institutional norms outside her own department. This could be described as the abandonment of her different needs and interests as a woman, or alternatively it could be argued to represent her skill as a

manager to be able to network and interact with a range of actors on their own terms (Armour Metcalf, 2000).

De-bureaucratisation infers cutting 'administration' out of the system, but also an attitudinal change of those working within the bureaucratic hierarchy. Attempts to reduce the 'bureaucracy' in IMY include narrowing the chain of command (above the District level), the circumvention of other departments and the ability of those lower down the hierarchy to adapt the programme without higher approval. An attitudinal change has also occurred according to those within the scheme, which I interpret as having been promoted by incentives such as prestige, and a genuine commitment promoted by key individuals within IMY. Furthermore, the development of close bonds between the various levels of the hierarchy, described here as 'femi-sociability', has allowed individuals the confidence to enact change. Women are a minority within the Indian bureaucracy and the changes made have been automatic nor uncontested, and have involved, at times, considerable sacrifice. Ironically, due to the low social and political status of the department, coupled with its minimal access to finance, change has been enacted with relatively little political interference.

5.4.3: Externalisation

During our discussion, Dr. Tolia spoke of the need for government to act as 'enablers and facilitators' in development rather than 'providers' (Interview, 9th June). This is characteristic of the promotion of 'contracting out' within the new public management discourse in the pursuit of efficiency and effectiveness (although these terms are often contradictory, see chapter 1). In the IMY handbook (GoI, 1998, p. 6), it is suggested that the government officials should act as *catalysts* for development, creating *access* to credit, and as *instruments* of awareness generation and empowerment. If this occurs in reality, it would support Veron's (1999) argument that the government in India has shifted from the broad role of 'provider' to one of 'supplementary provider' or 'facilitator' in the 1990s.

'it (the Government) enables, or 'empowers', self-help groups and voluntary organisations to strengthen people's opportunities for development' (1999:5).

He continues,

'The state defines its role increasingly as supplementary provider of services that are not offered by the private sector, voluntary organisations and the

community. In line with current World Bank thinking, India's government is concentrating its efforts, besides promoting economic growth, on the provision of basic education and primary health care because in these areas, private initiatives and the market are unlikely to play a significant role... Development responsibility is shared with, and delegated to, other institutions such as community groups and the private sector. This also signifies the state's changing relationship to these institutions' (Ibid: 10-12).

The extensive range of bodies involved in IMY, enable a narrow administrative hierarchy in the scheme. External actors include NGOs, *anganwadi* workers and the private sector in the form of *Rashtrya Mahila Kosh* (RMK). The interaction with individuals outside the bureaucracy (as with those within) is, in reality, highly selective. RMK is a quasi-governmental body that acts as a business, working through a selected NGO in each District (Lok Sebha Ashram in Rae Bareili) to loan money at non-subsidised rates to the IMY groups¹⁴. Removing credit facilitation duties from government officials is intended to remove opportunities for rent-seeking behaviour and allow implementers of IMY to dedicate their time to the core function of supporting the SHG groups (Interview, 30th August, head of RMK).

The relationship with, and attitudes towards, NGOs by government officials are diverse and case specific. Although government officials felt some NGOs were working well with IMY, the overwhelming opinion was that they were more bureaucratic, less innovative and even less accountable than the state institutions. The recruitment of NGOs into IMY is a selective and subjective process largely determined at the State level,

'We work closely with CARE, UNICEF, *Sabla* and a few others, which are doing great work. But when I see NGOs that are not primarily socially committed I don't want to recommend that they have association with our work (Mrs. Hukku, 26th May)'.

Many government officials thought that whilst potential was offered in some spheres by NGOs, the attitude of government officials towards these bodies remains one of suspicion. One senior central government official noted,

'My generation has internalised this idea (mistrust). Now we talk of *enterprise* and the NGOs as *animators*. But it is not a partnership, it's seen as our generosity to let them in' (Interview, 29th August).

¹⁴ For more detail about RMK and its role see chapter 3.

Several high profile cases of corruption involving NGOs in Rae Bareilly, most notably that of B.K. Shukla, has done nothing for the confidence many government officials have in the sector. In the case of Mr. Shukla, who is currently serving a prison sentence for his crime, crores of rupees were embezzled from government funds for 'development projects', not only causing frustration, but also deep embarrassment for the officers who had allowed such large-scale fraud. One supervisor noted that at first, an NGO wants to 'earn its bread and butter', but eventually 'need' a Contessa Classic (a four-wheel drive prestigious car) (Interview, 17th May). So bad is the reputation of NGOs in UP, that the Director of ICDS felt that they actually damaged the reputation of the bureaucracy, which, as already discussed, is incredibly low.

'We are just starting to co-ordinate with the NGOs. Thinking has changed and we are trying to involve them. But this is not with an open heart – it is with a heavy heart – many officers' view NGOs with suspicion. To be frank, NGOs spoil our image. They have not performed well and they are commercialised. This has led to their image being dirtied and people have lost faith in them' (Interview, 13th June).

Recurring criticisms of NGOs related to their 'vested interest' nature, their lack of accountability. Even where they were not seen to be corrupt, the idea of 'professional NGOism' (Interview, 14th August) was seen to be a problem. One of the trainers at NPCCD argued that whilst the way in which government works is changing, NGOs performance remains static. One reason for this, he said, is that government departments now attempt to emulate private sector firms. NPCCD therefore charges NGOs attending its training schemes. As a result, the number of NGOs attending has fallen to one fifth of what it was at its peak. The corollary, surmised Mr. Mishra, was that the majority of NGO workers are now in a similar position to government officials who had not been educated in new ways of working (Interview, 18th August).

Even where NGOs do gain training and have the potential to become innovative, the nature of their work in reality relates to their dependency on government for funding. Dr. Singh, (Director of *Mahila Kalyan Nigam*, one of the State level government organisations which works with ICDS in IMY) suggested at the local level this can mean NGOs are less flexible in their functions than the administration which they seek to replace,

'Whilst some NGOs are free, most are dependent on government funding. This means that the functions they perform and the routes they take are not entirely of their own choice, but they are dictated to from above (5th May)'.

Mr. Mishra at NPCCD argued that, particularly in relation to IMY, the idea of contracting out to NGOs is unproductive. He said that,

'I think sometimes NGOs' are threatened by the true concept of SHGs. If the SHGs succeed then it no longer depends on them and the local NGOs rely on dependency for their incomes. So in the main they are not supporting them properly and so they don't work' (Interview, 18th August).

The primary use of contracted labour in IMY is in the form of *anganwadi* workers. These women are not government officials, but are paid a stipend for their work (as such their perceptions of the changing cultures of bureaucracy are considered in chapter 6, which looks at 'outsiders'). The UP government is financially constrained so the use of this cheap labour source could be perceived as the 'rolling back' of the state. However, in IMY these women work in addition to the government officials rather than replacing them. It is perhaps this reason that accounts for the lack of animosity between the state and non-state employees. Lilly Singh described the role of *anganwadi* workers,

'They are very important, they provide the point of contact between the state and the women and they provide awareness for the rural women - without imposing officials coming into their villages. The *anganwadi* arranges all the co-ordination at the local level, they seek opportunities for productive ventures. They arrange group meetings at the local level. The scheme really couldn't work without them' (Interview, 14th August).

Whilst decentralisation of power within the realms of the state is one key element in IMY, it does not devolve power to local government or *Panchayati Raj* institutions (PRIs) (headed by an elected leader or *Pradhan*). Durgesh Hukku felt that this was beneficial as, in her opinion, in UP the PRIs represent the perpetuation of unequal power relations, dominated by men. Many government officials, including the PRI Director at the District level, criticised the ways in which PRIs had been introduced in Uttar Pradesh. The District Magistrate, Raj Veer Singh, commented,

'They seem to have taken the case of West Bengal where this system is apparently working well and decided to transplant it here. Over the years we have learnt that a policy that works in one area won't necessarily work in another, but yet this is exactly what they have done in this case... the better answer is SHGs. Whatever the people want should come from the people' (Interview, 9th August).

The newest IAS officer in the District Mr. Shahu, said he could see the potential benefit offered by decentralisation, but felt that this potential was not realised in Uttar Pradesh.

'Local forms of governance are not well developed in UP. Whilst it is fine to say that all the people need to decide what they need and who needs it this is not the reality at the grass roots level. The idea of a *Panchayat* is they make collective decisions and these decisions reflect the aspirations of the villagers. But in reality this is not happening. The *Pradhan* once he is given authority has started behaving in an autocratic manner and does not consult the Gram *Panchayat* (GP) members in the decision making process. In reality, after reaching the *Pradhan*, true decentralisation is finished. Each person is not given their rights. The *Pradhan* offers his personal opinion, often for his personal benefit. Perhaps the situation would be better if there was an awareness among the people, then only can this process be more effective. But with the ignorance that prevails, the *Pradhan* is getting the whole deal' (Interview, 4th August).

Whilst there has been some contracting out in IMY, particularly to key NGOs, the shift has not met with popular approval. In Rae Bareilly, resistance to moves away from state provision towards facilitation, were seen to relate to two main factors. First, Uttar Pradesh is at the centre of what has been termed the 'Hindi-Belt', synonymous with low levels of literacy and human development. Interviewees, at the District level in particular, highlighted the persistence of what has been termed '*Ma Bap Sarkar*¹⁵ culture'. Literally translated this means 'government is mother and father', and perpetuates the idea of state as unconditional provider to the people¹⁶. Tolia noted that, 'there are now certain things that government *can not* and *should not* do and giving hand-outs is one of them' (Interview, 9th June). Supervisors, particularly in the more remote areas of Blocks, noted that whilst the idea of facilitation to help people help themselves and participate in development projects stands in theory, in many parts of UP it is not a feasible approach, particularly in areas of high illiteracy. One supervisor in Salon Block explained what happened when she asked a group how they would like to help themselves,

'When the groups are illiterate and want to focus first on economic activity it doesn't work. I go to them and say what do you want to do. I say, 'it's up to you – you could buy a goat', they say 'OK, we want to buy a goat'. That's what we'll do!' (Interview, 10th Aug).

¹⁵ This is also frequently spelt Sarkar Mai Baap

Whilst the *Ma Bap Sarkar* is largely criticised by a financially constrained state, those working within IMY saw the scheme as a half-way house between total provision and facilitation. Instead of focusing on economic development, IMY aims to help women gain access to welfare resources and help them demand their rights of the state and their communities. In this sense, externalisation through IMY acts as a support, rather than an alternative, to state assistance.

The second factor District (and State) level officials believed restricted their role as facilitators was political interference. This factor, common in UP, is particularly the case in Amethi and Rae Bareli as they are such politically significant constituencies. A case that illustrated this, was that of Sonia Gandhi and her daughter Priyanka, who visited the District and handed out sari material to women during the run up to the State elections in 1999. This frustrated several government officials, who said such actions were promoting a 'dependency culture' among the people and conflicted with the idea of self-help promoted through IMY.

'Politics interferes with interaction. I wouldn't say it was corruption as such, but the influential people and local politicians want to give money away to an area in which they are fighting their election. This causes disparities and makes people expect handouts. The politicians are the worst - like Sonia Gandhi turning up and giving sari material to the crowds. It creates a 'begging culture' and isn't what our aim is. If they would stay out of it everything would be much better' (Interview, May, 26th).

Jenkins, in his analysis of moves towards liberalisation in India, argues that politicians actively sought liberalisation, they did not simply respond to the shock of financial crisis by initiating change. However, Corbridge and Harriss (2002) argue that there is a more 'Marxian' interpretation of reforms than Jenkins allows. This, they contest, has led to liberalisation being unstable, partial and even violent. The case of NPM in UP (as the administrative equivalent to economic liberalisation) would appear to parallel the arguments made by Corbridge and Harriss.

In the case of IMY, whilst there is general support for some elements of NPM, other aspects of the discourse have been resisted. Government officials are encouraging greater interaction with other organisations for development provision, and the reduction of bureau-pathologies, including excessive hierarchy and delays. At the

¹⁶ This issue is discussed in detail in chapter 6.

same time, government administrators on the scheme do not support the unequivocal shift to contracting out and privatisation. This idea does not emanate from individuals desire to protect their own position, although this is inevitably a factor, but rather those within the scheme feel a commitment, as state employees, to some form of welfare provision. The extent to which government officials have been able to adopt and adapt NPM in the case of IMY, would suggest that the hegemony of the western discourse is far from complete. This is an area of debate to which I return in chapter 7.

5.4: Targets, Accountability and Monitoring:

Targets clearly put pressure on government officials to fulfil quantitative criteria, removing their ability to focus on qualitative aspects of change. Ramachandran found, in her discussion with DWCRA officials, that this led to hasty formation of groups with the main focus on economic, rather than social components of the programme. Furthermore, a review of the programme in Rajasthan noted that, 'The implementation of the programme is restricted to accomplishment of targets without concern for actual results' (PRADAN, p. 22). Not only is the structure of the IMY programme flexible, with high degrees of autonomy given to lower layers, but the obsession with 'audit' and 'report' culture to which Mawdsley et al. (2002) have referred in relation to NGOs is notable for its absence in the scheme. Those government officials involved in IMY noted that the lack of fixed targets and limited bureaucratic monitoring has led to both positive and negative outcomes. Within this section, therefore, I discuss the ways in which IMY is measured, monitored and made accountable and the implications of each.

5.5.1: Targets

In my experience, IMY was the only government programme based around self-help groups in Rae Bareilly, which didn't have enforced quotas for group formation. In other departments, where quotas exist, the long-term quality of groups and projects was questioned,

'LDC (Land Development Corporation) groups are working without adequate groundwork. In this situation, what they are creating is non-functional infant groups. They are given a quota to form groups and if they demand by a certain date there should be 100 groups then there will be, on paper at least. But after a month or two these will collapse' (S. A. Khan, NPCCD, 17th August).

The pressure placed on other departments to form groups was seen however to impact on IMY making the job of supervisors more difficult. Muni Singh Chauhan (originally from, and now supervisor in, Maharajgang Block) is the head of the Supervisors Association and was previously a policewoman. She said that although she has a good rapport with the people in her Block, the job is still a difficult one.

'Self-help groups are the flavour of the month and there's been a 'scramble for groups'. It confuses the women as to which group to join. It costs both time and effort to take part in IMY so they were enticed by short-term handout schemes. There is a mixed message being sent to the people in villages. No wonder it takes a long time (Interview, 11th of August)'.

In the initial formulation of the IMY scheme, the areas in which it was to take place were decided at the national level based on social and economic criteria. However, within the Districts in which it operates, there are no determinants of who can join an IMY group, based on class, caste or income categorisations. There are no set targets for numbers of groups to be formed, or the timing for stages of development. Supervisors said they could afford to take the time to encourage groups which required more 'ground-work' and encouragement, rather than have to search for the 'easy targets' to fill quotas (Interview, 14th May).

Supervisors in the Tiloi District found that task particularly difficult, as the area is remote and people predominantly illiterate. In these cases, supervisors said family members were not supportive and group formation tended to take a great deal of effort,

'When I first approached the group they were very annoyed and they wouldn't even talk to me. It has taken a lot of hard work to get them this far and they are still in the early stages but it has been great to see the changes already. It took a long time for them to come to this stage. First they gave me 15 minutes time, then half an hour and so on until I could convince them that they would benefit from the scheme if they gave it a chance' (Interview, 10th May).

Supervisors felt it was the embedded nature of their relationship with the groups, facilitated through lack of targets, that made IMY a success. In Salon, one supervisor explained;

'In this area the women all work in the fields. They earn Rs.30 a day. They have so little they find it hard to save, and they are scared to put their money in a scheme – they feel safer to hold (wear) it....I try to tell them, 'if you save Rs.1 a day you can save Rs.10 in 10 days and it will benefit you'. They said to me, 'why should we believe you, you are rich', sometimes they are abusive to

me. I speak to them in their own words (colloquial language), 'I am from the village too' I try to motivate them with their own understanding, *sometimes* it is successful, *always* it is a long process (Interview, 10th May).

As the majority of supervisors and all the *anganwadi* workers live in the Block in which they work, the relationships built up were not in the main ones of bureaucrat/beneficiary, but of friendship and support. Through the gradual development of trust between the officials and groups, the beneficiaries' faith in the possibilities offered by the scheme were enhanced. Such relationships were immediately obvious through the way in which many supervisors walked into *anganwadi*'s houses and, for example, helped women making tea or helped with their children. They talked about village issues, who was getting married and how their children were, rather than just checking the administrative issues of the groups.

Supervisors felt that IMY worked better than self-help groups in different schemes for a number of crucial reasons. First, supervisors are employed to work at the Block level, they know from the outset that this is what their job entails. In comparison they felt officers in other departments who had not been recruited for the purpose of working in the Blocks did not want to, nor were they able to work as effectively in these areas. The Social Welfare department was offered by supervisors as an example of a department whose staff did not have sufficient time available to develop sustainable groups.

As there are no targets for the rate of progress of groups once formed, IMY functioning varies considerably in different localities. The pressure to promote economic ventures is not paramount in IMY and many SHGs focus predominantly, often exclusively, on social development, particularly in the early stages of group development. Supervisors also used their autonomy to take on tasks outside their usual realm. Examples of such new roles included the '*ne dana ne lana*' (don't take don't give) UNICEF sponsored anti-dowry scheme, an adult literacy programme, and the government sponsored '*School Chalol!*' (Go to school) scheme to encourage children to attend school. The flexibility of the scheme meant that, in reality, supervisors sometimes worked in a way contrary to government policy. For example, whilst all of the supervisors (and the majority of women in SHGs) spoke about the promotion of the anti-dowry message, the grass roots reality in villages means that

dowry is unlikely to be eliminated in the short-run. In several cases, SHGs that had begun economic ventures gifted items they produced to poor or orphaned girls to act as dowry payments. Supervisors acknowledged that morally they were opposed to the practice, but that education and change in practice was not going to happen over night and that without dowry, these women would be destitute.

Supervisors often acted outside their traditional roles within the scheme. During one visit to Unchahar, members from the 'Mother Theresa'¹⁷ *samu* (group) came to the supervisor's office. The house in which the Mother Theresa Group did their work (they did some *chikkan* embroidery work as part of IMY) had been burgled, and equipment stolen. They had come to see their supervisor, Meena, before going to the police so she could accompany them and fill in the police report. She said it was not unusual for people to come to her for such things as the women didn't feel confident with 'officials' and she could speak on their behalf. The women clearly didn't see her as part of the 'establishment' of which they were uneasy¹⁸. Public choice theorists, however, would suggest that such flexibility would merely extend the opportunities for patronage and reduce accountability within the system. Whilst observations made by government officials were in contrast with traditional perceptions of bureaucrats as 'self-seekers', inevitably interviewees were unlikely to describe themselves in a negative light. However, having spent a considerable amount of time with the various individuals involved in the scheme I would suggest that, whilst there are obvious exceptions, the majority are genuinely utilising the scheme's flexibility to benefit the groups and furthermore, have even taken on extra tasks. Furthermore, the fact that relations are so close between group members and supervisors that downward accountability is reinforced.

The case of IMY shifts away from what Fineman (1993: 9) terms the 'rule bound obsession' of many bureaucracies. He argues this has reinforced the negative, and unproductive view of people in organisations as 'emotionally anorexic'. Rather, IMY sits more comfortably with Gabriel's (1998) thesis that emotions such as commitment, trust, caring, enthusiasm, pride and even fun are more important for organisational

¹⁷ Each of the groups chose their own name. Groups frequently named their groups after Hindu deities, famous figures or after their *anganwadi* worker.

¹⁸ This argument is developed in chapter 6, which discusses 'outsiders'' perceptions of the bureaucracy.

success than structure and hierarchy. He draws a distinction between *managers* who promote efficiency through deals and an eye for detail, and *leaders* who stir emotion, provide vision and generate commitment.

Officials at all levels felt more able to extend help to SHGs, as they were not under pressure to meet targets. They argued this changed the way in which they responded to groups and in turn what the groups achieved. Whilst I do not intend to assess the effectiveness of IMY, supervisors suggested that the effects of moving from a 'box ticking' (Interview, 16th August), to a flexible and responsive approach, made their job more fulfilling. At a meeting with one of the supervisors in Unchahar Block it was commented,

'It is a gradual process. They are gaining literacy, they are gaining knowledge and they are becoming aware of their rights – more powerful. They are coming out of their homes, which is a hugely empowering thing, they are going to the banks and they are having their say' (Interview, 9th July).

Because there are no quantitative targets, supervisors are more able to concentrate on any aspect that may assist the holistic empowerment of women. Mrs. Hukku offered another example,

'There was one school where the male teacher was misbehaving with young girls. The parents didn't know what to do so they took their daughters out of school. When the group heard about it they went straight to the District Inspector, and the teacher was suspended. How are you supposed to measure this?' (Interview, 8th May 2000).

It could be suggested that the lack of targets in IMY mean the wrong groups are favoured in order to assist kith and kin. However, this very problem has been noted in schemes which *do* have targets. Evaluations of IRDP (Integrated Rural Development Programme) in India note widespread errors in targeting; of exclusion (of eligible beneficiaries) as well as inclusion (of ineligible ones). While estimates of errors vary between States and sources, summaries suggest leakages of around 15 - 20% to ineligible beneficiaries (Rath, 1985; Bagachi 1995). According to Dreze, (1990) IRDP has tended to reach the relatively better off within the poor at the expense of women and landless. He highlights the top down identification of beneficiaries and target driven structures as contributing to failures in the work of the bureaucracy (Dreze, 1990). The numerous criticisms of the IRDP have fed into its restructuring, in April 1999, as the *Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana* (SGSY). Several key changes in

SGSY reflect moves that have already been made in the case of IMY, namely a focus on SHGs rather than individual beneficiaries, and a move away from fixed targeting in the scheme (Government of India, 1999).

5.4.2: Monitoring

Monitoring in the IMY scheme takes a variety of forms. First, the self-help groups act as checks and balances on the scheme as they are informed of what the scheme and its implementers should be providing for them. Second, government officials from the Centre, State and District are visiting the grass roots more regularly than in most other comparable schemes. One of the 'failing groups' in the remote area of Salon was, for example, visited by Durgesh Hukku, to see what was happening, and what could be done, only weeks before I conducted my field work. This willingness of senior officials to visit the field sites and groups directly is unusual in the UP context. The third element of monitoring takes the form of reports, completed by the supervisors in the Blocks themselves. This particular element is the one that causes greatest frustration, both to those completing them, and those who process and analyse them. Within IMY, as in many other development schemes, government officials noted a lack of financial and technical resources. Financial constraints at the Block level were constantly highlighted as a problem. Whilst I was able to travel from one village to another by Jeep, supervisors tended to travel by bicycle, or on foot, between their groups.



Plate 5.6: The Block level Jeep outside the ICDS Block office at Unchahar.

Not only was this felt to waste too much valuable time, but some supervisors felt that they should visit a certain number of groups each day, which in many cases was logistically impossible, so filled in their reports saying they had done this. Thus, although there are no set quotas, Durba Banerjee, one supervisor from Maharjganj expressed exactly this problem when problem when we were late in arriving to meet her,

‘The whole process is fake. Like today I was worrying that you might not come, and today I have to visit certain villages, so if I had to sit here all day I would have to make fake entries that I have been there’ (Interview, 11th August).

The lack of transport was the cause of further frustration, particularly when supervisors saw government officials, based in Rae Bareli, who didn’t leave the office but had a Jeep permanently parked outside. The situation in Unchahar Block was even more ludicrous in that they employed a full time driver¹⁹, but their Jeep had not been road-worthy in years.

Lack of technical resources further restricted the ability to monitor the scheme. From the State level, Durgesh Hukku could not easily communicate with the Districts, and had to call them to Lucknow for meetings when required. Within Rae Bareli power failure was a constant problem, and the lack of telecommunications meant that it was not possible for Lilly to stay in regular touch with supervisors. Mrs. Hukku noted further, that the lack of computers not only made the compilation of information about the scheme long-winded and laborious, but that statistical analysis of the performance of the project was impossible.

‘There are certain important things that still restrict us acting as efficiently as we would like. The weakest point, despite changes, is still monitoring. This is a priority, which should be strengthened. The field level workers make detailed reports about what is happening in the field. These reports are organised by the PO and sent to me. I get them, and all the information is manually filed. There are reams of information, but when I want to access something specific to look at the way things are changing or which areas are doing what it is very difficult. If we had a computer it would be much easier to analyse these things. If everything is done by register manually is it difficult to manipulate the figures for the most benefit (Interview, 26th May)’.

¹⁹ Because of restrictive employment laws the driver remained employed.

5.4.3: Accountability

According to Durgesh Hukku, despite the low levels of monitoring, there was still pressure for accountability within the scheme, albeit from the non-governmental sources.

'There are only a few people involved in the scheme in Delhi, the information is given to me and the only monitoring which goes on is that which we do ourselves. This project is not accountable through strict monitoring. However, as the groups develop, they act as a check on the work that we are doing and if there is something they feel is not being provided at the field level, they approach the problem through those higher up' (Interview, 26th May).

In the past, however, the lack of accountability at the highest levels was a problem. This also caused problems for the IMY programme, as there was a lack of trust of the government from women who had been let down by a previous government programme.

'The lack of accountability within schemes made it very difficult for us to start this programme. This was a major drawback. Several years ago a programme called *Mahila Yojana* was sanctioned to increase the savings of women in the rural areas, so they would have access to money for their essentials. In order to promote the scheme, ICDS was used. We made the contacts with the women and told them of the benefits of the programme and encouraged them to save, as they were offered favourable levels of interest... Once the scheme had been under way for two years and we had built up the trust of the women and they were saving nicely, the scheme was abruptly cut and we were not told why or given notice. Because the scheme was cut the women who's money had been deposited in the post office became stuck and it was a very difficult process for them to get at their own money' (Interview, 26th June).

This scheme was not adapted or sanctioned at the State level, unlike IMY, which can take different forms in the different States, Districts and even villages. Mr. Saxena, (Director of ICDS, UP), said that if government officials feel they are responsible for the scheme then they are more accountable and also have more desire for it to work,

'If we formulate policy then we are fully accountable for it, we are also inclined to want it to succeed. If it is from Delhi, whilst I may be officially accountable for the policy, what happens is that there is no association, we just do what we have to do, lip service if you will. There is no personal touch or

involvement. Association should be from the beginning therefore at all levels' (Interview, 19th June).

Mr. Saxena supported the move away from constant reports and evaluations. He admitted that, in the past, fake data had been created at the field level and been processed by him (knowing it was fake) to protect his, and field level officers positions.

'When projects are framed in Delhi by central government on whatever criteria, then they ask the people at the field level to implement it is difficult as policy often has no bearing on ground realities. Sometimes we get a scheme that cannot be implemented. Those at the field level have to protect their position and create fake data at the field level. We process it knowing it is fake and send it to the central level. This has to be done to survive. So I think those who formulate should be those who know what is needed and not needed and what is possible and not possible' (Interview, 19th June.).

Apart from the internal reports, there is no structured monitoring of the IMY scheme. Though this lack of monitoring does not fit with public choice conceptions of NPM, recently research has suggested that with the focus on constant evaluation, rather than the promise of streamlined, efficient services, the reverse is occurring (Cochrane, 1993, Stewart, 1998). Such criticisms were supported at the highest level in IMY, as Sarojini Thakur²⁰ criticised what she saw as the obsession with 'report culture' affecting the real work of the state.

Some individuals did, however, use the low levels of monitoring and accountability to their personal advantage. Though several cases were highlighted, the example of Uma Shuklla in Singhpur illustrates the point. We had arranged to meet Ms. Shuklla at Singhpur Block headquarters at ten o'clock in the morning, but she didn't arrive. Other officials informed me that she had gone to Rae Bareli to attend a meeting. However, when we arrived back in Rae Bareli that evening, she had apparently said she was busy in the District and couldn't attend the meeting. Although I did not get the opportunity to question her about this, others who knew her said that it was probable that she had no intention of doing either.

Mr. Khan (NPCCD) describes some of the more serious cases of officers not living in the Districts,

'Now if you look, you will find them living at the District headquarters, or worse, at the State centre. They go only to get their salaries and visit the groups very rarely. You will find that they go when the *anganwadi*'s duties are over, and fill in all the records so it looks like they have been at the correct times. They spend their time at the District level trying to use any influence they may have to get a transfer... They are trying to cheat people they are supposed to serve. So what can you expect of the groups?' (Interview, 17th August).

The majority of IMY supervisors lived in the Block, or at least District in which they worked. This situation appeared to be productive because, as government officials, they commanded respect, but as locals they appeared to have better relations with the people in the scheme. Where supervisors did not live in the Block, the difference in quality of groups was easy to see. Salon offers a good example of this as two supervisors there showed a complete contrast in their work, despite working in the same area (see Fig. 5.2).

Fig 5.2: Excerpt from field Diary:

'Thursday 10th August Visit to Salon Groups:

Ragni said little. She lives in Lucknow and says she travels every day to the Block but I can't see it. Salon is 35km from Rae Bareli (1 hour) and Rae Bareli is over 80km from Lucknow (1.5 hours at least) so to do this everyday would be near on impossible.

The first group we visited was one of Mrs. Verma's. The second was one of Ragni's. Firstly Ragni had great difficulty finding the village, (she said she had used a different route previously). Then she said she shared the group with the CDPO. The ladies in the group have only had one meeting so we asked if we could meet one of her other groups but she said the other was less mature than this. She had no rapport with the women; in fact they didn't seem to recognise her. She did not interact with the ladies as any other the other supervisors had'.

5.5 Conclusions:

The IMY scheme is not typical within India, or even Uttar Pradesh. As such, it is not possible to draw broad generalisations about the changing cultures of the bureaucracy, or regarding the adoption of new public management, within the Indian administration. However, government officials involved in IMY felt that positive

³¹ Joint Secretary, DOWC, Delhi.

changes in the way that they worked were occurring through the adoption of new working practices. The key elements in the promotion of change are, training for individuals at all levels, a more 'circular' and flexible approach to development practice, and the empowerment of lower level officers. The hierarchy of IMY, although officially working with other government bodies, does so, in reality, only selectively at the State and District levels. Through selection by key officers involved in the project, association and co-ordination with other departments, and non-government organisation, was enacted on a sporadic and partial basis.

The evidence that I have gathered on IMY contrasts with that of Schug (2000). He argues that the unbending hierarchical structure of forest administration (in the Joint Forest Management programme in India), in which there is little downward delegation of authority or upward flow of information remains largely unchanged. He argues that to deny lower rank forest officers responsibility and initiative, not to mention adequate pay and training, is counterproductive in a programme that requires close and continuous interaction between field staff and village representatives. 'Until senior officials learn to listen to their juniors,' noted one commentator, 'they will not be able to listen to villagers' (Campbell 1992:42).

As I have argued, in the case of IMY there has been structural change but also a fundamental change in process affected the work of the bureaucracy. Structural changes have not been imposed from outside, they have been the result of negotiated change from within, which in turn has led to a change in working culture within the bureaucracy. This change has not been unequivocally accepted by all within the administration. As a result, whilst some have enacted change through a combination of consent and coercion, others, seen as 'corrupting influences', have been circumvented by key individuals in the scheme. Though the traditional perceptions of the bureaucracy in India suggest that individuals work within a vested-interest model, this was not seen to be the case in IMY, where officers actually took on extra tasks and showed a 'culture of commitment' in the implementation of the scheme. The flexibility of the scheme does, of course, raise certain questions about accountability, which, in a minority of cases, was exploited by unscrupulous individuals. However, in the vast majority of cases 'empowerment' of lower level functionaries, backed by 'change agents' (in the form of key individuals) and the development of 'femi-

sociability' appears to have significantly changed the culture of administration within IMY.

Furthermore, the case of IMY shows that change along NPM lines, although partial and contested, can be both empowering and enabling to government officials at every level of the administrative hierarchy. This, I would suggest, relates to the elements of new public management that have been adopted. 'Externalisation', for example, has been encouraged, but in addition to, rather than instead of state provision. I would also suggest that government officials, in the majority, feel that elements of NPM, namely 'localisation' and 'de-bureaucratisation', can be useful in attempting to combat both poverty and social exclusion in the case of IMY.

CHAPTER SIX: OUTSIDER PERCEPTIONS OF BUREAUCRATIC CHANGE

6.1: Introduction:

In chapter 5, I analysed how those government officials working inside the IMY scheme, regarded, and had experienced change, associated with new public management (NPM). Interviewees argued that changes had been facilitated through training, the structure of the scheme, and the nature of accountability and monitoring within the scheme. Chapter 5 showed that there was an identifiable cultural shift within this section of the bureaucracy, which was generally perceived as positive, from an internal perspective.

In this chapter, I seek to build on these, and other insights, through detailed analysis of outsider perceptions of bureaucratic change. Contributors include academics, *anganwadi* (village level) workers, NGO workers and employees of *Rashtrya Mahila Kosht* (RMK), the funding body associated with IMY. Kabeer and Subrahmanian (1999) suggests that whilst 'agency indicators' are important, they are, on their own, insufficient to provide a realistic picture of the culture of any institution. They contend that 'outsider indicators', from individuals who have gained wide acceptance in a particular field of development, and 'beneficiary indicators', that express the opinions of those who are intended to gain from the work, are a fundamental part of research into institutions. NPM encourages the involvement of other actors in the processes of de-bureaucratisation, localisation and externalisation. The perceptions of these other actors regarding bureaucratic cultures are particularly important, therefore, in defining the nature of interaction between government officials and outsiders. Furthermore, as the overwhelming aim of the civil service in development is to support and benefit a country's population - in this case poor women in particular - it is important to understand how those individuals perceive cultural change within the bureaucracy.

General attitudes towards the bureaucracy, already discussed in chapter 2, provides a contextual framework for the discussion of IMY in this chapter. Unfortunately, given constraints of space, only a small part of the evidence gained during the extensive exercise of interviews, focus groups and participant observation can be explored in this section. When questions relating to cultures of the bureaucracy were asked,

examples of bureaucratic corruption (for example involving the deferral of computerisation of land records or collusion with *Prandhans* in accessing development funding), failures in development projects, and bureaucratic authoritarianism and inertia more generally, were given. However, it is the perceptions of outsiders regarding the bureaucratic culture within IMY that takes precedence in the chapter. Here, I rely heavily on direct quotes from the interviews, focus groups and discussions undertaken. As I lived with academics and bureaucrats for a substantial part of my fieldwork, participant observation also provides important understanding for this study. All the examples have been carefully selected, and are, in the main, representative of my broader findings on the respective issues – I have indicated unusual instances presented below.

Whilst justification for, and understanding of, change varied considerably, outsiders attested to a cultural change in the actions of those government officials involved in IMY. A dominant feature in outsiders' observations was the high visibility and involvement of women in the programme. Both individually, and as a community, women are firmly positioned within the ideological and organisational mainstream of the IMY project, and its ethos for change. In particular, key women were seen to play a vital part in the promotion of a 'can do' culture and the development of trust between the various individuals involved in the programme. Bureaucratic change was variously described as a result of facilitation, partnership or familial approaches.

In relation to how change relates to factors promoted through NPM, a clear distinction was drawn, by interviewees, between what they saw as positive and negative elements of the discourse. Positive endorsement was offered for aspects relating to empowerment (of government officials and those working with them), a focus on missions rather than rules, as well as decentralisation and facilitation. However, the same support was not given for elements of NPM that have been influenced by public choice theory, including contracting-out, down-sizing, and what was interpreted as excessive externalisation.

This chapter does not provide a representative survey of administrative cultures in India. In fact, those government officials working in IMY were characterised by outsiders as working in a way rather different to 'standard' vested-interest perceptions

of bureaucratic functioning. Clearly, as Fox argues, state organisations are, 'composed of a *range* of actors with different interests, who struggle to control agency, to determine its goals, and to decide how to pursue them' (1993:10). Opinions expressed by outsiders clearly related to the personality of the individuals with whom they worked. Responses also tended to correlate to the nature of interaction between the individual and the IMY scheme. In short, the closer the involvement with IMY, the more positive the outsider tended to be about change in bureaucratic culture.

The bureaucracy is clearly not a single unitary actor, nor entirely part of the 'dominant proprietary classes' of which Bardhan has written (1989). Whilst high ranking officers, particularly at the national level are part of, and have access to, political and administrative power structures, this is less true at lower levels. Whilst NGO workers and academics at the national level considered the higher ranking government officials to be capable of, and willing to change, they had little faith in this rationale being translated to the lower levels of the hierarchy. Outsiders, interviewed at the sub-national level, however, did testify to considerable change lower down the administrative hierarchy, precisely because individuals were not part of what was perceived as an authoritarian elite.

The state/society division, more prevalent at higher levels of the administration, was described at the grass roots level to be more blurred. This was particularly notable in the reactions of members of the IMY groups themselves. These women often held that the 'state' had failed them, but it was clear in interview that they did not consider those government officials with whom they worked in IMY to be part of 'the state' of which they complained.

Opinions varied considerably between those outsiders working at different geographical scales, in different occupations, and even between individuals within the same organisation. However, considerable overlap in understanding and experience was evidenced in the views of academics and NGOs. These individuals primarily spoke the same language (English), had similar educational backgrounds and understandings of the nature and influence of western discourses on development policy on India. Likewise, *anganwadi* workers and SHG members had similar social, cultural and economic backgrounds, and held broadly corresponding opinions about

the role and nature of the bureaucracy. The dichotomy of opinions and understandings that exists between these groups exemplifies the elite and vernacular discourses emphasised by Kaviraj (1991), amongst others. This chapter is divided into two major sections, on the basis of this observation. In the first section, I discuss bureaucratic change as perceived by the outside elite at various administrative levels. The second part draws on the experiences and understandings of bureaucratic change, as described by vernacular contributors, namely *anganwadi* workers and IMY group members.

6.2: Elite Perceptions of Bureaucratic Change

6.2.1: National Level

At the national level, 7 academics and 4 NGO employees, as well as the Director of RMK, the funding body associated with IMY, were interviewed. Academics had varying degrees of knowledge regarding IMY. Whilst the DfID, CARE and RMK representatives all had direct working knowledge of the scheme, only two of the interviewees at the national level had seen the programme in action in UP. Therefore, opinions expressed by these individuals, whilst relating to the Indian bureaucracy, and to IMY where possible, are not primarily case specific regarding change in Uttar Pradesh.

In Delhi, NGO workers and academics predominantly viewed high-ranking national level bureaucrats as part of the elite, but how they understood the nature of this elite contrasted significantly between interviewees. In some circumstances, individuals interpreted the situation as offering opportunity for collusion with politicians in the ‘vested interest’ model. Others described the knowledge and power of this group as enabling substantial and sustained positive change. Where positive change was highlighted, it was described as having developed through the creation of closer relationships with outside agencies and a change of approach to development. The overriding factor in this shift was described as the influence of ‘role models’ in promoting and sustaining change.

Interviewees almost exclusively differentiated between those individuals working at the higher bureaucratic levels, the IAS and PCS, and those at the lower levels. They argued that those at the highest levels were particularly powerful, and had the ability

to make significant decisions, both positive and negative. These interviewees, however, had very little faith in the possibilities of significant positive bureaucratic change at the local level, as they felt both the desire and ability to change were negated by other social, economic and political factors.

Mr. Shurma, Director of the Indian NGO, Development Alternatives, was himself an ex-IAS officer. Having no direct involvement with the IMY scheme, his views epitomised the populist opinion of the bureaucracy in the 'vested interest' model of administration. He felt that the elitist, self-serving nature of the administration was unlikely to change. He suggested that new recruits are enrolled into long standing, authoritarian and corrupt ways of working,

'The bureaucracy as it stands is a major problem – it's exploitative, institutionally corrupt, and political... it's elitist. It takes on young professionals, who, from the start they know they can do what they want. It creates an exclusive club, which is truly undemocratic' (Interview, 26th May).

Attitudes towards the bureaucracy in general continue to perceive the organisation as one that negates change. Kamal Nayan Kabra, professor at the Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA), has worked for over 30 years on the nature of administration in India, and is well renowned for his work on the 'black economy' (1982). Professor Kabra argued in line with current literature (outlined in chapter 2), that institutional constraints placed on central government officials mean that it is difficult for an individual to bring about change within the system.

'It's not that new recruits are the victims and those already recruited the perpetrators. Those joining have idealism and enthusiasm... It is just that through their experiences, these ideals usually fall by the wayside... Within the existing system there are restrictions on change. Some people have romantic ideas of change, which are simply not possible in the short-term. Even honest implementation of not so well designed policy will achieve little. In reality they have minimal capability to intervene in the social space. So the amount of blame that can be placed on the bureaucracy is not complete (Interview, 21st June)'.

He also saw the bureaucracy at the sub-national level as a political tool, not powerful enough to independently change. For Kabra, the public administration represents nothing more than, 'the whistle in the kettle' of broader problems.

'There is a saying that administration is meant for administrators. They are kept in an ugly and unbecoming level of luxury. They are parasitic.... Another problem [preventing change] is that landowners are the power structures. They represent the 'creamy layer' - from them comes the power, mafia, and criminal scams. In UP you see this in the elections, and the farce of power. This is the ground reality. It is *these people* who are *managing* development so that the cream of the society are integrated in the global economy and the rest are left behind. It is *north centrist development*. Bureaucracy cannot control this. I see them more as part of the perpetuation of mal-development' (Interview, 21st June).

These types of opinions can be contrasted with those of individuals who work directly with officers involved in IMY at the national level. These include Mr. Sachdev, Director of RMK. He argued that there has been a cultural shift by those working in public administration, suggesting that government officials have now become more flexible, open and receptive to outsiders' ideas. In his work with IMY, he suggests,

'Now if I want to speak to Mr. Tiwari or Mrs. Thakur I can just pick up the phone. It's not a case of having to go through twenty people. They always make time, and expect the same in return. Suggestions we make are now being taken on board. There are certainly fewer blockages. From what I've seen, the same is even happening at the State level' (Interview 1st September).

He viewed the example set at the highest level as fundamental in encouraging (or resisting) broader bureaucratic change.

'Whilst the bureaucracy has to be *responsive* to the village, *change* has to come from the highest level [the elite]... It's *only* through setting an example that those lower down [the bureaucratic hierarchy] will ever have faith in the system. So often, there is a lack of trust in [and between] departments. But with more interaction at every level, this will change' (Interview, 1st September).

Mrs. Thakur is clearly part of the elite of which Mr. Sachdev speaks. She, in particular, has been a driving force in the design, promotion, and change incorporated through IMY. When I first met her, she had been attending an International Conference in Women and Development in Delhi, and noted her constant struggle to keep the issue of gender and development at the forefront of the minds of those working in international development and policy formulation. She acknowledged the difficulties of working in her department, but described the considerable achievements that can be made (see chapter 5). For Sachdev, this kind of 'leadership' was essential for a broader change in mind-set. This explanation supports Tolia's

assertion that the administration needs ‘change agents’ who pursue their goals through ‘vision crafting’.

Others involved in IMY, including DfID and CARE representatives, drew similar conclusions regarding the essential role of key figures in the hierarchy. However, few at the national level had faith in the lower levels of the bureaucracy to translate change into reality, at the implementation stage. A senior DfID employee, argued that conscious change is occurring from within the Indian bureaucracy. He contended, because change is being enacted ‘within existing power structures’, policy will be diluted and distorted by the time it reaches implementation. Further, he argued that without change lower down, innovation at higher levels is largely futile,

‘The IAS is different. Their vision has shifted to a focus on performance, but this is not some new egalitarianism, it is due to fiscal crisis. The fiscal reforms were from the basis of what the state wanted, so this ‘forced on from above’ is rubbish - although this is not to say that I support the Bank. The problem is they [higher authorities] cannot communicate the change to lower levels. The bureaucracy are still too inward looking. If you look outside the key NGOs, the bureaucracy and the groups themselves – no-one will have heard about IMY. The point is that they have failed to generate consensus. Without this it’s just a scheme – rather than part of a new ideology’ (Interview, 26th August).

Those who observed change at the national level argued that, in part, this related to a change in relationship between state and outside agencies in IMY. The World Bank has encouraged the targeting of the most vulnerable affected by liberalisation particularly through the use of NGOs (Desai, 2002). NGOs are generally promoted to deliver public services through grants from donors and governments (Robinson, 1997). Edwards and Hulme (1997) have suggested an increase in the number of NGOs associated with this change in agenda, and that they have become a dominant force in development.

Whilst NPM literature suggests that cooperation and coordination can be achieved with other organisations to promote development, at the national level academic interviewees were largely sceptical in this regard. Ratna Sudarshan, senior economist at the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), suggests rather, that the state has always responded to ‘dominant others’, whether this be politicians or other dominant elites. She argued, rather than state agents acknowledging the valuable

contribution offered by outside organisations, the relationship between the two is forced. Sudarshan argues, coordination with NGOs relates to the relative strength of the NGO sector and that such co-operative relationships are ‘forced-marriages’ (Mawdsley, 2002) rather than open acceptance. She offers the example,

‘Planning Commission meetings now have NGOs on them, this never happened in the past. But to surmise from this that the state has changed would be wrong. It is the NGO institutions that have changed their position. There has always been a framework of powerful people attending these meetings... It is just now that the people who are influential have changed. The shift to NGOs took place in the 1980s – it is not a change in policy but a change in outputs. The NGOs are increasingly linked with donors and funded by them. What is more important is how this affects the environment in which the state works, rather than how the state has changed the environment’ (Interview, 25th May).

Mark Robinson, at the Ford Foundation, argues that in the majority of cases the ‘donor recipient’ (Brehm, 2001) is more the reality of the working relationship between government and NGOs. He suggests that ‘the idea that NGOs are partners is debatable. Coerced provision, or acting as contractors is more often the case’ (Interview, 27th May).

Despite their strong opinions neither Sudarshan nor Robinson had direct experience with the IMY scheme. As head of the funding body working closely with IMY, RMK Director Mr. Sachdev said he was in a position to talk about change as, ‘we are in the business of actually doing it!’ He did acknowledge that ‘some government officials are uneasy about parts of these ventures, as the work is largely outside of their control’, but that bureaucratic change was actually occurring. He notes that,

‘It has been acknowledged that in examples like the Grameen Bank, there’s a *cultural* difference from what was happening here... [Now] since people are here longer [those inside and outside associated with IMY], the work is going well. People have a pride in what we have done, so they do more, and it works like that. It’s been realised that state issues cannot be separate from others. [for example] Credit is important but on its own is not enough. Illiteracy and *pardah* require more than credit. Literacy and skill increase the options of the individual and increase their confidence. Without *synergy* with the state it wouldn’t work’ (Interview, 30th August).

Whilst change and innovation was acknowledged at the highest levels, there was little faith in lower level functionaries (LLF) to translate this change into tangible outcomes in the scheme. However, as I will presently discuss, those working with government

officials at the State, District and Block levels, *did* acknowledge some significant positive changes in the culture of the bureaucracy lower down the hierarchy.

6.2.2: State Level

In line with findings at the national level, the most significant changes in bureaucratic culture at the State level were identified by those with closest working relationships with IMY. Of the 6 academics interviewed at the State level, Professor Singh at the Giri Institute of Development Studies (GIDS), and researchers at the Rural Institute of Development Studies in Lucknow, had direct knowledge of IMY. Others interviewed at Lucknow University and at GIDS, however, did not. NGO employees at the State level all had dealings with IMY. These employees worked for the international NGOs, CARE and UNICEF, and the local NGOs, *Bharat Jyoti*¹ and *Sabla*. At the State level, both those who highlighted significant change in the bureaucracy, and those who did not, persistently referred to the very low starting point of UP, both in terms of its administrative and development status. Johan Fagerskiold, State Director of UNICEF, said that problems include the nature of the political environment, 'transfer mania', an 'audit culture' and an obsession with creating SHGs in many government departments (Interview, 1st May). Despite substantial problems, he did see hope for bureaucratic change in Uttar Pradesh as part of a long-term evolutionary process. He explained,

'The States such as Karnataka, and Maharashtra are 'pet-states'- where of course there are good projects. In UP there are definitely more difficulties – but it is possible to find flowers amongst the weeds. The problem from a national or international perspective is that no one expects projects to work from the outset – so they don't. The most successful projects are village programmes in which the people develop their own frameworks. They work out their own problems as they see them, and design their own solutions. Within UP there are definitely pockets of success...The sheer size of the place affects development – it's governance of an area two-thirds the size of the United States with little funds and infrastructure. The greatest opportunities are presented in Grass Roots developments - if it is done in a conscious way. But it involves training and a change in mind set. If you start weeding too vigorously you can damage the flowers as well – the State will be hurt as a result. There's need for interaction. In an economy of wealth and poverty we need evolutionary change. We can't just *decide* to change. The basic environment in which people live has to change in order for people to change their lives. There are still reams of stupid traditions. There are administrators who are transferred after six months, bureaucrats who are full of themselves;

¹ *Bharat Jyoti* was not working in Rae Bareilly District with IMY so employees were only interviewed at the State level.

who think only of their posts and the personal benefit holding the post creates - but things are changing' (Interview, 1st July).

The majority of interviewees at the State level working directly with IMY tended to be positive about changes being made. These individuals overwhelmingly identified an attitudinal shift and the development of close relationships with NGOs. Mr Fagerskiold (UNICEF) noted that in IMY, 'the policies are correct on paper'. This may seem obvious, but was seen by those involved as a critical starting point. This observation is also supported by the comment made by Kabra at the national level, that without correct policy, any attempts at reform are likely to have only minimal impact.

One element of this policy is the focus on training, which insiders (in chapter 5) described as effective in changing the ways in which they worked. One UNICEF State level employee described how she understood the change in government officials' outlook.

'It's an attitude change. The officials [in IMY] are also listening more, they are not always giving the orders. There's a change in attitude on the part of *some* officials. I believe government *want* this change to happen. They're trying to make people aware. They are encouraging, and getting direct requests from society. They are providing *energy* to the process of change. There is increasingly the idea that the officials are not separate from the people' (Interview, 15th July).

Another important element of the IMY policy, for Fagerskiold, was the coordination encouraged with other agencies. Support for coordination with NGOs has increasingly featured in Indian Government Development policy in recent years (Brehm, 2001). In fact, Narman has argued that NGOs have become 'something of a sacred cow' in the development debate (1999: 168). Supporting the argument Pushpa Pathak notes in her study of urban poverty reduction,

'in India co-operation between governments and NGOs appears to be a necessary and effective strategy for economic empowerment of urban poor men and women' (1999:261).

Developing active relationships with NGOs is described as an integral part of the IMY programme. The IMY manual suggests that, in every Block, NGOs should be involved in the diverse and varied tasks of group formation and training, developing, monitoring and networking with the groups, and assisting in group development (GoI,

1998: 21). It should be stressed at this point that it is not my aim to analyse the work of the NGOs involved in IMY, or to discuss the merits (or otherwise) of this type of association. Rather, in this section, I discuss the ways in which NGO workers involved in IMY feel that government officials are responding to the ideas of partnership with other development agents.

Bharat Jyoti is a local NGO focusing on social welfare and women's empowerment, Mr. Kumar, a State level employee, discusses how he sees his interaction with government officials involved in IMY.

'We are having meetings together, creating plans, so there is more co-ordination. But we [*Mahila Ashram*] have our own priorities, and they [the state] have theirs, so [partnerships are] not to the true extent I would say, but greater than before. There is a better working environment, and more trust' (Interview, 11th May).

Dr. Pandey, State representative for CARE, concurred with this idea arguing that in IMY there are 'networks' for ideas with government officials, and more consultation. At the State level, change was being witnessed, though the process is inevitably a slow one. He said the achievements could be seen more easily when compared to other departments that focus on, 'window-dressing rather than any true participation' (Interview, 7th August). Though attempts at coordination and cooperation with other agents in development is not new (Anand, 2001), it is reasonable to question why this apparent change been possible in the case of IMY and not in so many other schemes in UP. A summary of opinions offered at the State level is offered in the following statement by Mr. Fagerskiold, who argued that the bureaucracy is now.

'open-minded - no longer a closed block. It is primarily the work of a small group of people that have made the changes. What happens [in the long run] we will see with time, but an attitude change is definitely there' (Interview, 15th July).

6.2.3: District Level

The 7 District level NGO employees interviewed from CARE, *Sabla*, UNICEF and *Avadh Lok Sewa Ashram* (ALSA) (there were no academics interviewed at this level) had considerable working experience of those individuals involved in IMY. The majority of interviewees did acknowledge cultural change amongst government

officials, suggesting that this related to the way in which officers interacted with those on the scheme, treating NGOs as valuable contributors and attempting to empower beneficiaries to demand their rights. The changes highlighted by outsiders imply a shift to facilitation in IMY's dealings with beneficiaries, and externalisation in working with NGOs. There was one interviewee who suggested that little or no change was evident in the work of the bureaucracy involved in IMY. However, this criticism related more to the nature of the affiliations of the individual respondent, and the frustrations of working with the bureaucracy more widely.

Mr. Tiwari, a District level employee of the local NGO *Sabla*, said that bureaucratic change could be visualised through the achievements the officers have made in relation to women's empowerment. He argued the change has been self-perpetuating. As SHGs gain more power and confidence they demand more of the bureaucrat, who in turn is encouraged to change the ways in which they work.

'Since the project has started there is a huge change in the attitudes of the women [beneficiaries] involved. They're no longer passive bystanders in the development process. They discuss what they want as a group and then find who can provide it for them. It used to be that people said, "the word of the state is final" the people listened to what they said and accepted it, whether they agreed or not. Now they say, "the word of the people is what matters". If they don't like how some official is behaving then they will approach someone to do something about it. Because of this the officials are definitely more efficient, as there is more interaction with the people so they can find out what the people want' (Interview, 20th May).

He continued,

'Before there was a saying that "if the government is there then we are there", now they [the SHGs] say "if we are there then government is there". The people feel that they have more rights' (Interview, 20th May).

Toolika Singh, an NGO worker, has worked for CARE in the District for three years. She works alongside IMY employees in 4 of the 8 IMY Blocks, and in agreement with other NGO workers interviewed notes,

'at the village we are seeing real change. The supervisors believe in what they are doing and so the groups are working. They [the supervisors] have more confidence, more motivation' (Interview, 17th May).

NGO workers at the District level recorded this change to relate to the involvement of key individuals in the process of developing positive relations, motivation and

support. When asked whether there has been a change in bureaucratic culture, Toolika said,

‘I wouldn’t say there is a change in the bureaucracy in UP in general. It seems that within this scheme, there is a real motivation to assist the groups. There is a better relationship between the women [government officials] in the scheme, which is to a large extent due to the work of Lilly. But if you look outside the scheme, in the other departments I work with, there is very little change’ (Interview, 24th May).

She also spoke of the relationship she had with the women officers involved in IMY as one of mutual assistance, co-operation, and friendship. The relationship between Lilly and Toolika in particular, extended beyond the work environment. As two women living alone in the District, the bond between the two was very close and frequently witnessed both inside and outside their work environments.

The structure of the scheme was seen to be a key element in the quality of the work individuals in the scheme performed. One important factor was seen to be the longevity of postings for those individuals working within IMY. I am still in regular contact with several officers who lived at the field hostel in Rae Bareli, and today only Lilly and one other officer of a similar rank (from approximately thirty senior District level posts) have not been transferred. For reasons outlined in chapter 5, including the lack of power and prestige in the sector, politically motivated transfers are not prevalent in the department. Lower down the administrative hierarchy, supervisors (and *anganwadi* workers) are also relatively free from the pressures of transfer. The time and effort needed to develop the programme necessitates a relatively long tenure, for the development of trust and the building of networks, both present in the majority of cases in my experience of IMY.

The number of NGOs involved in IMY in Rae Bareli is intentionally limited (see chapter 5). I have already discussed how particular unscrupulous NGOs have given the sector a poor reputation in the District. The case of B. K. Shukla is resonant of Clark’s (1995) work which suggests in extreme cases, NGOs are set up for the purpose of accessing funding, whereby members, beneficiaries and entire projects are fabricated in order to win funds that are then embezzled. Desai (2002) argues that in the 1980s and 1990s, new types of NGOs began to emerge, which were formed by retired bureaucrats, business people and political parties. For him, these types of

NGOs seem to have a good relationship with the state because of their founder members' connections with state officials. Many such NGOs, he suggests, are driven by the market rather than values and motives generally associated with NGOs.



Plate 6.1: CARE worker (Toolika) and Mr. Shurma (centre of picture) in the shop that sells the produce made by the SHGs to which he provides credit.

This would seem to be very much the case for *Avadh Lok Sewa Ashram* (ALSA). The NGO was formed by Mr. Shurma in 1982, and has grown to support twenty-five full-time, and sixty-five part-time staff. As the District level NGO that deals with RMK (detailed in chapter 4), his organisation borrows money at 8% interest and loans to self-help groups for 12% (with an extra 1% for tardy interest payments). At the time of research, Mr. Shurma had outstanding loans with 122 groups. Based on the groups I visited in the Rahi Block, this could include as many as 2,500 women, all with sizeable loans. His organisation runs a 'SHG shop' from his offices in Rae Bareli. Mr. Shurma was typical of an NGO leader bent on 'organisational survival' (Fox, 1995). As his funding largely relies on enterprise development and productive use of loans, the 'shop' with all its produce is 'evidence' of productive ventures, despite the fact that the location of the offices meant it was not likely to get any trade. Mr. Shurma is a close personal friend of many District level bureaucrats and spent a considerable amount of time at *Vikas Bhawan*, government offices in the District headquarters. He

has dealings with many different government departments, so his opinions reflect a broader spectrum of experience than IMY,

'The state's co-operation with us (ALSA) is OK, it's growing. But the amount of money we are given to do our jobs is too little... There is some working with the officials but the state wants to keep its hold. The NGOs want to work freely but the state is always watching us ... and it's not just the state. There is pressure at every level, from the Block to the State level there is political pressure... There is so much back door money. The BDOs and the support networks are taking their piece...The motto of the (IMY) scheme is good, and the main emphasis is on the *anganwadi* worker and the women not those at the higher levels...the bureaucracy are better staying out of it' (Interview, 19th May).

Mr. Shurma's comments regarding corruption at the Block level, and arguments in favour of localisation, were both frequently described. They are, in part, supported by the circumvention tactics used by officers involved in IMY. Despite this, his attitude towards those on the scheme was far from usual. Mr. Shurma was critical about the amount of pressure and monitoring he felt officials within IMY placed on him. However, knowing the networks of individuals within the administration to whom he was aligned, the fact that IMY employees felt it necessary to monitor his work is not necessarily a bad thing. It was when I visited schemes run by the local NGO, *Avadh Lok Sewa Ashram*, that I realised how different the IMY scheme actually was. ALSA loans money to IMY groups and its own self-help groups. I visited several of its groups in the Rahi Block in Rae Bareli (see Map of Rae Bareli in chapter 3), and was accompanied to the villages by Mr. Shurma and Toolika Singh. The 3 ALSA self-help groups in Jhakrasi village were very different from those working with IMY. When we arrived, the group were sitting waiting for us, their husbands all close by. On being asked questions, the women did not answer readily but looked to their husbands and Mr. Shurma before they ventured an answer.

There aren't any *anganwadi* workers involved in this scheme, but Mr. Shurma says his own staff, assist the groups. They have all been formed since January 1998 and meet once a month to collect their savings. When I asked about social aspects of self-help, the members look blank, but Mr. Shurma insisted they have been involved in health, education, sanitation and nutrition programmes. The group said nothing but nodded dutifully. The women were not literate, though some could sign their names so a member's husband was responsible for the collection of money and the book

keeping. When prompted to answer, one woman said a few of the women have taken their children to be vaccinated, but this was not organised collectively as a group. They said that they understand about the loans and what they have to do to repay them, but mention no other benefits.

All loans are large, between two and five thousand rupees per person. Every group member has taken a loan. One woman has taken a loan for a shop, but says she doesn't run it as she works in the fields, another woman has bought a cow. They say they have received information regarding other economic activities they could pursue, but they say they have no time. They assured me that their families support the scheme, which is unsurprising when it appears likely that these same members control the money borrowed. When I asked them what more they wanted, they said there was nothing, they had everything they needed. This was far from the case in IMY groups who tended to be animated and specific in asserting what they wanted. Toolika said that it was obvious that there was no kind of self-help group in the village,

'The problem is that groups are set up solely for loans. They are given the carrot of cheap loans so the men tell the women to get together and form a group, so they can access the money. Once they have the loan the women's involvement is finished. They don't get any benefit. In these groups there is no empowerment, no social activity and no enthusiasm' (Interview, 19th May).

As a result, Lilly, at the District level, had little trust in the work of ALSA, and had made her reservations clear at the State level. This situation parallels the situation identified by Veron *et al.* (2002) who suggest that in the case of the EAS (Employment Assurance Scheme), policy is reworked at the District level by those who lacked trust in those both higher in the hierarchy and those lower down.

'The EAS was reshaped at the District level by officers who understood the workings of New Delhi or Patna only too well. The fact that they converted a demand-led employment programme into a more conventional programme of public works was not a product of misunderstanding, but of a lack of trust...If anything, it was a fear of rent-seeking by Block and *Panchayat*-level officers that prompted District-level officers to behave as they did, which is not to say that there was no corruption at this level' (p. 3).

However, in the case of IMY it is primarily those (state and non-state actors) outside the scheme that are not trusted.

The majority of elites involved at the District level saw conscious and considerable change in the case of those individuals working on IMY. The case where change was not identified, appears to relate more to Mr. Shurma (and his NGO) than the scheme. The IMY scheme only works with a limited number of selected NGOs in the Rae Bareli District. These NGOs tend to be staffed by English speaking, western educated individuals with similar perceptions about the role of state as facilitator, to those government officials involved in the project. Other NGOs were excluded, according to those on the scheme, because of corruption and lack of genuine commitment to beneficiaries. However I was unable to assess this from the point of view of those NGO workers not included in the scheme. This aspect of the scheme raises questions about acceptable types of knowledge and ideas. It may be true that no other NGOs were suitable to be involved in the scheme. However, the fact that all involved NGO workers had been assimilated into the western discourse of NPM to some extent, could expose the fact that the scheme, through its selection, has negated the ability for any other types of knowledge to be seen as valid.

Factors involved in change, according to elite outsiders, include the role of key individuals in the hierarchy and close personal relationships between insiders and outsiders on the scheme. Bourdieu, suggests that 'cultural capital' and 'symbolic capital' are important features in the promotion of 'social capital'. The term cultural capital refers to socially constructed qualifications, to which rank is attached, and symbolic capital, involves the production of prestige or honour. Harriss (2002: 20) argues that,

'[T]he "possession" of durable social relationships is both a condition of differential access to resources and an aspect of social differentiation. Cultural/symbolic/social capital are, quite evidently, socially and historically limited to circumstances that create them...they are contextual and constructed'.

The evidence of elites involved in IMY would seem to suggest that social capital has been developed through training (described in chapter 5), networks and associations (within the bureaucracy and in association with outside organisations), and the promotion of a 'can do' attitude by key individuals involved in IMY.

6.3 Elite Perceptions of NPM

The majority of elite outsiders involved in IMY, were English speaking, and in the case of NGOs, northern funded (with the exception of *Sabla*). They possessed a 'shared vision' with government officials, which encompassed a specific type of development based on self-help and perpetuated through education and training in the discourse of new public management. Though there was a clear consensus of ideas developed between the various parties, the situation fits with Mawdsley et al.'s (2002) identification of an internationalisation of language and knowledge based on certain 'big ideas' which do not allow much room for expression of alternatives. The reach of the discourse of NPM was experienced even at the District level, where interviewees spoke of such ideas as 'down-sizing' and 'right-sizing'. It could be expected, therefore, that these individuals would be assimilated into the discourse of NPM and promote its ideology.

There was a constant theme running through interviews conducted at all geographical levels, identifying positive change in the bureaucracy, but there was also concern that reform associated with NPM should have definite limits. The elite outsiders spoke of the potentially damaging impact that elements of NPM had for development, including further moves towards rolling back the state. Obviously understandings of, and justifications for, the persistence of state as the prime actor in development varied. However, outsiders at all levels, despite the popular criticism of the public administration, could see no viable alternative. There was considerable support for reform from within, and the continuation of cultural change typical of that experienced in IMY.

Many of the changes in bureaucratic culture highlighted by elite outsiders are those promoted through NPM, including a 'can-do' culture, 'facilitation' and 'working with outside agencies'. However, when questions regarding NPM were asked of this group, there was a resounding opinion that the cultural aspects of the discourse were the only elements appropriate in UP. At the national level, though acknowledging some internal transformation of the bureaucracy, a DfID interview was critical of the NPM discourse, suggesting,

‘there is nothing *new* about new public management. It’s an alternative term for right wing activists who want to roll back the state’ (Interview, 26th August).

Externalisation through NPM was seen as a highly evocative issue by both academics and NGOs workers. At the State level a CARE employee suggested that, ‘extra-government organisations’ is the new term for ‘small government’. One NGO employee who works with IMY in Lucknow said of the change of approach,

‘Are the changes we see because of circumstance that dictate policy or out of new ideology? If it is through well thought out ideology it is good, but if it is a response to broader economic and political circumstances then it is not good... Is this streamlining and increasing efficiency or is it passing the buck so it can blame someone else for failures (Interview, 20th July)’.

Others saw the role of the state as one of continuing provision, a point to which I return later in this chapter. Mr. Fagerskiold in Lucknow, noted that whilst the state should be working towards increased partnership with outside bodies, its role should remain central. He said in many cases it is the NGOs that are ‘problem partners’, in that they are often subject to the same obstacles faced by the government administration,

‘Of course the government has made mistakes, but then so have we. [For example] In the approach to health, the original policy of UNICEF failed, it tried to do too much and spread its efforts too thin on the ground. That is not UNICEF talk as they would draw only on the positive, but that is what happened. We thought that *we* didn’t need *them* [state]. Now we are concentrating on specific Districts and specific programmes and working with the state as well as other NGOs...’ (Interview, 14th June).

Mr. Vikram Menon, at DfiD, concurred with this assessment. He suggested that whilst the state is seen as being controlled in its work, the same is true of NGOs and bilateral agencies,

‘I have sympathy with the NGOs for the endless monitoring and quantification they are doing. It’s more important to have proxy measures. It’s not even the bilaterals which have the power, we can’t be innovative, as we have the same bureaucratic problems [as the Indian bureaucracy] to a lesser extent as we are controlled by the British government’.

Not only were NGOs and the private sector seen as incapable of filling the role of the state, but such a shift was not seen to be in the interests of the development agenda in UP. Whilst privatisation espouses consumer choice, this necessitates knowledge of,

and access to, alternative providers, a situation at odds with that in UP. Mr. Fagerskiold argued,

‘Of course NGOs and the private sector are definitely working more with the state. But, the main part is, and should remain, the state. We shouldn’t, and couldn’t, replace that. If that’s going to be the end aim of NPM, I dread to think what would happen’ (Interview, 1st July).

He said NPM terminology was frequently inappropriate to UP. He spoke of the *Sakar Ma Bap* culture, that views the state as ruler and provider. He argued it was unrealistic to expect women who are faced with the daily burden of survival to aspire to long-term goals of empowerment of their own volition. He said that if, in the short-term the women gain a degree of financial independence, then this is an important start.

‘We need to change the mind-set of the people for success - as now they don’t believe that it can succeed. They shouldn’t say ‘god took their baby back’, when it dies of infant mortality. It is not that they are religious fanatics – they are fatalists... Their greatest burden is financial. Money is lent at a usury rate this keeps the poor down. It reduces their independence. Self-help is not help in itself- but if it only acts as an alternative credit scheme- with the money borrowed at a fair rate, then it is still better’ (Interview, 20th August).

At the District level, Toolika of CARE, highlighted this problem. She said that, in India, NPM is not appropriate as ‘*beneficiaries* are not *consumers*, no matter how you define the term’. This suggestion supports Sarah Jewitt’s (2000) work on gender, environment and development planning in the Jharkhand region of India. Here, she argues, there are dangers in overestimating the ability of women to ‘participate’ in development projects based on socio-cultural constraints (For more recent work see Veron et al. 2002, discussed in chapter 7).

The evidence provided in this section shows that elements of new public management associated with debureaucratisation and localisation, involving change in bureaucratic culture, are both highlighted and supported by outsiders. However, outsiders have neither witnessed nor advocate, elements of administrative reform associated with externalisation, that involve the reduction in the role and scope of state intervention.

6.4: Vernacular Perceptions of Bureaucratic Change

Anganwadi workers and IMY group members were categorised as representing the vernacular in terms of language and knowledge. Both groups of women were

classified as offering vernacular perceptions as they did not speak English, they also lived and worked, almost exclusively, in the Blocks in which the scheme was being implemented. Their perceptions of change were also significantly different from those of bureaucratic insiders and elite outsiders. They did not, for example, mention 'facilitation', or any other aspects promoted in line with the discourse of NPM.

Members of 32 self-help groups were interviewed, along with 20 *anganwadi* workers. The evidence provided in this section, clearly, does not offer a representative study, but does provide detailed examples from which we might generalise. In Tiloi Block alone, for example, there are 124 *anganwadi* workers, of which I interviewed 4. However, evidence gained during these interviews supports that gained through other methods, and provides an important body of data, based on the views of the non-state implementers and intended beneficiaries of the state scheme. The opinions of *anganwadi workers* are discussed here as 'outsiders' as they are not (neither do they consider themselves to be) direct government employees.

Some of the opinions of vernacular interviewees were quite unexpected. For example these interviewees expressed a strong feeling of disappointment in the state, arguing that it should provide more for them. They overwhelmingly saw the state as corrupt and politicised with government schemes perceived as a means to access money and resources, but they felt that, in general, no long-term benefit was likely. There is clearly nothing new in this assertion, particularly in relation to Uttar Pradesh. Concurrently, however, these same women supported both the achievements made, and the individuals working within IMY. So different were their perceptions of IMY, that during interviews it was quite usual to be given starkly contradictory opinions. One typical example was given by an IMY group member in Rangharpur village, in Singhpur Block,

'We don't trust the *Sarkar* [state] schemes, we wouldn't be involved with them...This is a good scheme, Neelam [the supervisor] is like *parivar* [family], we are getting stronger, but we need more. The state won't help us. She is good to us but her hands are tied, like ours' (Interview, 24th May).

Criticisms offered by these interviewees were of specific government departments, the lack of state provision, and the failure and non-accountability of state and non-state actors. Vernacular interviewees' felt that the difference in IMY related to the

closeness of relationships with those involved (both state and non-state actors) and the nature of the scheme. As I have already explained, my aim is not to analyse the effectiveness or otherwise of IMY, but rather to use the scheme as a means to analyse bureaucratic perceptions and perceptions of the bureaucracy, in this instance as described by grass roots implementers and beneficiaries.

6.4.1 Anganwadi Workers Perceptions of Bureaucratic Change:

The rationale for using *anganwadi* workers in development service delivery is similar to that which justifies NGO involvement (see Clark, 1995), namely that in certain areas they are more effective in delivery than the state. With the discourse of NPM, implementation through *anganwadi* workers represents externalisation of state functions, though working with, rather than instead of, the state in service delivery. Their capacity to reach the poor, and in particular gain access to the grass roots, is hoped to encourage participation. *Anganwadi* workers can offer essential 'local knowledge' to enhance the delivery of services to difficult to reach groups, the key focus here being poor women. In the case of IMY (as the scheme can be adapted at the local level), they are able to determine how the scheme can better serve different communities, and be tailored to specific groups. They are, theoretically, better placed to sensitise officials to the 'real' needs of the focus groups and can mobilise the poor to help themselves through savings, demanding social change and ensuring downwards accountability and probity of the project officers. These are all important elements of localisation through new public management that have been incorporated into the workings of IMY.

Anganwadi workers felt that the relationships they built up with both government workers and the groups was more 'familial' than the donor-recipient relationship present in many schemes. Though *anganwadi* workers felt that the culture of government officials involved in IMY had changed, feelings towards government officials in general was low. Unfortunately, whilst the *anganwadi* workers felt they were supported by the IMY supervisors in the scheme, they were extremely negative about their relationships with other government and non-government departments. Despite efforts made within IMY, the low morale described by *anganwadi* workers is likely not only to affect their work with other departments but also override the positive efforts that have been attempted in IMY.

The perceptions of *anganwadi* workers are useful in detailing, not only how those officers involved in the IMY scheme are working, but also offer a useful insight into other development implementers in the bureaucracy outside. A typical example of the authoritarian manner in which many government officials respond towards *anganwadi* workers was experienced during an interview with the District Magistrate. During our meeting he was also involved in a discussion regarding the promotion of a particular vaccine by the Primary Health Care (PHC) Department. The outcome of the meeting was that private investors should be approached as sponsors for the information campaign, in return for free advertising on the posters, and that to cut costs on implementation, the *anganwadi* workers would be given the task for a small fee. Whilst this does represent a shift in approach to 'contracting out', the officers concerned had no interest in the extra burden on the *anganwadi* workers, or in any training that might have been necessary to complete the task effectively (interview, 17th August).

A typical view of 'the state' was offered by the *anganwadi* worker with the Jey Durga Group in Mahima village, Unchahar Block.

'We want to work with government but we have no power. We are told we have an important job, we work long hours, we do all these tasks and then they give us Rs 500 a month. What does this do for our status? We have no social standing even the families are dubious about us. They don't trust us, they think that there must be something more in it for us. The primary school teachers get Rs. 5000. No one looks at me with any respect, and yet I have to do all this. (All the women were agreeing with her). I feel so strongly about it I want to take it to the government [other officials implied]' (Interview, 15th August).

The Indian government has been under pressure from lobbyists to upgrade the status of *anganwadi* workers. It reacted by agreeing that *anganwadi* status should be improved, but let reforms be at the discretion of the State level governments. In Uttar Pradesh the allowance has not been increased, or job category changed, as the government argues that it is in too weak a financial position². There has, however, been a move to upgrade some *anganwadi* workers to supervisors, if they have the qualifications and when a position comes available. I met several supervisors being trained in Lucknow who had been upgraded from *anganwadi* workers, however, none were part of the IMY scheme. The work of an *anganwadi* worker is undeniably

² The U.P. government is currently pursuing policies to reduce costs and numbers of employees, so the opportunities for AW to gain full employment status which would include pensions, is slight.

difficult. It is perhaps surprising, based on this, the positive perceptions the majority of these women had for the supervisors involved in IMY.

Despite the overworked and underpaid role of *anganwadi* workers performed, their relationships with officials in IMY were not particularly strained. Relationships between these individuals were so close that the IMY employees were not considered to be part of the state machinery by the groups and *anganwadi* workers. Those few *anganwadi* workers who felt negative about the IMY scheme tended to be those with no supervisor, or a supervisor who didn't appear dedicated. In such cases, the women did not feel like their work was either important or valued. The *anganwadi* workers complained quite extensively during interviews about state failures in the Blocks relating to their work and treatment. One *anganwadi* worker in Singhpur Block described how she saw her situation,

'I am expected to encourage the ladies, but how can I feed them when I am still hungry? How can I expect people to respect me or do what I say? I am supposed to encourage the ladies to be literate and do things for themselves, but how is this possible when I am so dependent. I have a son who is at University, he qualified for engineering college but I couldn't send him on this money, so he had to go without. How does this make me feel or look in society? I have a postgraduate and want to help the women, but how can I help them like this. I have no resources, no funding, no transport. I feel so helpless, I know I could do so much for the women, but the lack of resources means I can't...The ladies are tired of the scheme. They have gained little. I beg them, 'please deposit Rs. 10 and save my job'. How can I ask them to believe in it if I don't?' (Interview, 8th August).

Most *anganwadi* workers differentiated between IMY supervisors and 'state officials'. Government officials were almost always referred to as males, and frequently as *bare log* (literally big people), or *Babu* (Sir, when in direct contact), particularly when relating to those at the District level. Officials were not seen to visit the groups and were regarded as distant, both in geographical as well as social terms. In complete contrast, supervisors were referred to by *anganwadi* worker and IMY group members in familiar and familial terms, as sister and friend.

The *anganwadi* workers in Barbalia village, (Bhadurpur Block) were working alongside both NGOs and the state. The supervisor in this village, Saroj Singh (her work is discussed in chapter 5) tried to co-ordinate with other state departments and NGOs, to enable the groups to access all relevant schemes and entitlements and avoid

effort duplication. In relation to her supervisor, the *anganwadi* felt she offered advice, support and encouragement.

'She's helped us more than I can say. She tells me what other options are open to us, whether it be for [in respect to] village matters or for the group. If she hears of something that will help us (through an NGO or other government department), she tells us' (interview 7th August).

The close and informal relationships that existed between supervisors and *anganwadi* workers were frequently witnessed on field visits. For example, Meena Singh a supervisor in Unchahar Block, was recently married. When I went with her to one group the *anganwadi* joked,

'I asked why she didn't stay at home with her husband now, but it's because she would miss us all too much!' (Interview, 18th August).

These apparently contradictory comments were quite confusing in the first instance. The supervisors are clearly all government officials. The reason why IMY workers are not considered as government officials is due both to the informal structure of the scheme and the personal relationships developed between the individuals involved. The *anganwadi* workers are familiar in the villages having worked there for a number of years and the supervisors (in the majority of cases) develop close personal relationships with many of the women through their frequent visits.

TEXT BOX: from Field Diary: 20th August

The first group we met was Lakshmi Group the *anganwadi* worker was Nirmala Devi. The group has been formed for two years but has been meeting regularly for one year. We sat outside one house as the *anganwadi* centre was quite a walk and young children were still in lessons there. Nirmala was clearly very fond of Muni (the supervisor) and they spoke as friends. They obviously knew each other well and had a good relationship....The next village we visited was Ragharpur. The Jeep stopped away from the village and we walked through to the *anganwadi* centre where several of the women were already talking. On our arrival there Muni made some notes in their savings book, said hello to the women inside and went straight into the kitchen to help make tea. It is clear that she spends a lot of time with these ladies and they feel very comfortable with her. The *anganwadi* worker here is Neelam Pandey and there are two groups called Lakshmi Pujan and Anapoona groups.

Though they did not refer to new public management, vernacular interviewees were sceptical about the possibilities offered by alternative providers to the state for development, although work with the key NGOs mentioned was, on the whole, seen as productive. *Anganwadi* workers often felt NGOs (and the private sector) as large (and often international) organisations were overly bureaucratic, paternalistic and unaccountable. White (1999) argues that many have become,

‘formidable institutions... Increased size has inevitably meant increased distance from the grassroots, and the early pioneering vision has been replaced by an ethic of efficiency and professionalism’ (p. 321)

An example was provided of a male CARE employee, whose role included overseeing the distribution of *pushtahar* (proteinous food) by *anganwadi* workers in the villages. One *anganwadi* working in the Singhpur Block described the way in which she felt her position and status had been undermined by the NGO employee.

‘One day I was giving out *pushtahar* to the village and he (an NGO worker) came to check on me. I was nervous with him around and instead of 75g I gave a woman 80g. Then he shouted at me and said he would report me to the higher authorities and I would lose my job. How does that make me look? What will people think of me after being spoken to like that? (Interview, 8th August).

The lack of accountability of various NGOs and private sector firms was seen as a problem. Small NGOs, in many cases, were seen to offer little different to the moneylender contracts that predate them. SHGs in Singhpur Block even spoke of NGOs forcing them to put ‘red-flags’ in their fields to symbolise their debt. Other groups spoke of half hearted attempts by private sector and NGOs, which have resulted in little or no benefit to the groups. One *anganwadi* in Panhona village said of the assistance from Indo Gulf and various NGOs working in the area;

‘They come and offer us everything, but it never materialises. I have so much training but it’s incomplete. I have been trained in packaging – for sweets and spices. I was taught to make petticoats and *salwar* suits, to make candles and bidis. I have no money, no materials and nowhere to sell the goods. Indo gulf promised a papad machine, it never came’ (Interview, 7th July).

6.4.2 IMY Member’s Perceptions of Bureaucratic Change

As with other groups of interviewees, opinions of IMY group members also ranged considerably. This was intensified by the fact SHG interviews took the form of focus groups. In general, however, differences were experienced between those groups in

more remote areas, and those in less remote areas, within the Blocks. There were many examples of successful social empowerment in each development Block in which IMY is implemented. The case of the *Mahila Samu* in Jayas village (Unchahar Block) is an interesting example. Each IMY group consists of approximately fifteen to twenty members who are assisted by the *anganwadi* worker in the village. For most groups the focus is on social empowerment and thrift savings, but for some, like the Lakshmi Group, income-generating ventures have also been pursued. Jayas is a majority Muslim village and the group structure reflected this. Of the eighteen group members, only one was Hindu.

The ages of women in the group ranged from 18 to 42 years, and the group first formed in March 1999. They met officially every Friday and take a register for attendance, but because of their income generating schemes are based in the house also they also used for meetings they met almost every day. During a focus group (18th May) the women said the *anganwadi* worker has been a great assistance in advising them in terms of social and economic schemes they may want to participate in, but they felt the main achievements have been their own through hard work. They suggested the main emphasis of the group was on social development and to act as a forum for discussion on village matters. The social activities in which they have been involved are varied. These include health education, 'anti-arrack' (alcohol), 'school chalo' (see chapter 5), adult literacy, immunisation and anti-dowry work. They have also campaigned for better water provision and have gained several hand pumps in the area. One woman said,

'Now people in the village respect us as they know we get things done'
(Interview, 18th May).

The main economic activity of the group was needlework. They made tablecloths, shawls, pillowcases, children's clothes and wedding clothes. Other work included fabric painting, making sari tops and woollen goods. They originally sold their goods locally and had begun to broaden their sales to shop keepers in Rae Bareli. They had very detailed registers for attendance, orders and products (bought and sold) with which the *anganwadi* worker helped them. One woman commented that initially the family members were sceptical about the scheme, the group meetings and even made

comments about 'what kind of work' the women were going out to do. She said that now her husband says,

'Go! You'll be late for work', all the women laugh at this turn of events, another woman says,
'they (their husbands) change their mind when they see what we can do'
(Interview 20th May).



Though these women had not either collectively or individually been part of any other government scheme (this perhaps relates to the time and effort required to promote such activities), they spoke positively about IMY. They noted their greatest help had been the *anganwadi* worker, but also so said Lilly Singh had offered them a lot of assistance, particularly in organising the licences and purchase of tobacco (so they can start making *bidi* cigarettes). They noted that neither they nor the *anganwadi* worker would be able to organise this. They stressed that they did still need some help from 'outside', but said that the most important factor in group dynamics and sustaining the achievements made is now the group members themselves.

Some women in other IMY groups I interviewed (in each Block) had previously been part of other schemes, but felt that the help offered by officials (and *anganwadi* workers) is different in IMY. Other schemes include DWCRA, IRDP, TRYSEM and the *Mahila Yojana*, a post office savings scheme that ended abruptly. Groups members in Chak Bhoor village, Bhadurpur Block, said that,

‘in the old scheme we just gave our money. We bought medicines and didn’t have to borrow money (from lenders), but we weren’t strong like we are now’ (Interview 19th May).

The majority of groups did feel that they had made considerable achievements, primarily through the assistance given to them by the *anganwadi* worker. One group member in Bhadurpur Block explained how she perceived the role of her *anganwadi* worker, Neeraj.

‘She gives us good support (Yes, we are more powerful now. We can put our opinions across). We are united’.

However, the task of promoting IMY for Neeraj was a difficult one. The group had previously been part of the *Mahila* project for post office savings (see chapter 5), which was abruptly withdrawn without notice and left the savings inaccessible. One of the IMY members’ explained,

‘It took a long time. We are poor and last time we saved 400Rs. The money is still in the bank and we can’t get at it. We can’t afford to lose that type of money. But we spoke to Madam (Neeraj) and decided that if we could save then we would be more independent. We feel better about this scheme. We’ve been given assurances we won’t lose this time. We have our own passbooks. We aren’t as worried about the scheme’ (interview 8th, August).

The trust which developed between those employed by IMY, and those involved in self-help groups, can perhaps explain why opinions about the scheme and ‘the state’ or other schemes, differ so radically. In Purha Dixit village, Bhadurpur Block, I asked the women what they thought of government schemes.

‘We heard of DWCRA, but didn’t join because of rumours about it. We didn’t feel we could repay the loans for it so we haven’t joined a government scheme’ (interview 7th August).

When asked why they wouldn’t join a government scheme they said they wouldn’t ‘trust’ it.

Within IMY, power is increasingly devolved to the lower levels of the hierarchy. For *anganwadi* workers, this change met with a commensurate increase in the confidence of supervisors. As supervisors felt they had support from those higher up the hierarchy (and probably through added confidence in their ability through training) the amount of assistance they gave to those at the village level increased. Following decentralisation and increased powers given to the *Panchayati Raj* Institutions payment of *anganwadi* workers is now delegated to the village *Pradhans*. In several

cases, *anganwadi* workers told of the way in which *Pradhans* had withheld their payment and their supervisors had assumed the role of mediator in the situation.

‘I hadn’t been paid for (four) months. When I went to see him (the *Pradhan*), he said he didn’t have time to discuss it and told me to leave. Time went by and finally he said I hadn’t done my work and didn’t deserve the payment. I couldn’t do anything. She (the supervisor) went to him and said, if he didn’t pay she’d contact the PRI Officer. Eventually he gave me the money’ (Interview 27th May).

The faith individuals had in the scheme also relates to the amount of time spent with groups by supervisors and *anganwadi* workers, and the tasks undertaken. Extra tasks undertaken with the groups ranged from acting as mediator in village disputes, speaking to family elders who were concerned about the group membership and putting women in touch with the relevant bodies in matters of divorce or pensions when legal advice was required. The SHGs suggested it was not just the roles being adopted by their *anganwadi* workers and supervisors, but essentially about the way in which they were now performing their roles. Group members in Asni village, Bhadurpur Block said,

‘we can talk to her about anything, any advice we need. One woman wanted to join the group but she was staying with her mother-in-law and her family were not happy about her joining. She (the supervisor) went to talk to the mother-in-law and explained that if the woman joined it would help the family, she could learn about health and educate the children’ (Interview, August 8th).

The IMY groups also noted a change in this respect. When I visited *anganwadi* centres (frequently the meeting place of IMY groups) the women had frequently designed their own PRA maps of the village, marking out where in the village pregnant women, breast feeding women and women with young children lived. The school, water pumps and other facilities were also on these maps. It was from this basis that the women of the groups decided where they would like to apply for a toilet or a water pump, rather than on the basis of the supervisors say so. It was in this way that the group members felt they had ‘ownership’ of the schemes. This is a key aspect of NPM, promoted through the Administrative Reforms of UP, and incorporated into IMY.

Though the IMY groups are not part of formal cooperatives, the work of Hyden (1988) provides a useful analysis on the cooperative behaviour of group members. He

argues that the *ujamaa* programme of co-operatives in Tanzania failed precisely because it was based on too simplistic assumptions about rural society, coupled with top-down management by state officials. Though successful cases of state run cooperatives in Latin America are rare, Sick (1999) identified one Costa Rican co-operative processing and marketing coffee beans that could compete with private companies. He argues, again, that this scheme was based on the *support from* rather than *management by* the state. Esman and Uphoff, (1984) concur that co-operatives perform better with government support, rather than government control. Like positive cases of co-operatives elsewhere, the IMY is supported, rather than controlled, by the Indian state. I would argue that in the majority of cases, government officials, along with *anganwadi* workers do actually 'facilitate' (social and sometimes economic) empowerment. I would suggest that this provides evidence of considerable bureaucratic change particularly in relation to the negative environment in Uttar Pradesh.

Attempts to facilitate through IMY were not always successful. It suffers from many problems seen in other schemes. The social and cultural environment (detailed in chapters 2 and 3) in which the scheme is being implemented is, of course, a constant restricting factor. The opportunities offered for a population of women willing to 'initiate' self-help are limited. When visiting Tiloi Block I was accompanied by Mrs. Souklar, a supervisor from Bhadurpur Block, as the Tiloi supervisors were being trained in Lucknow (see chapter 5). As we drove to the first village some women were walking towards Tiloi centre, which is six kilometres away. They were part of an IMY group and were going to the bank to pay in their savings. When we arrived at the village, we approached a house and asked the owner if we could sit in the shade of her porch whilst waiting for the *anganwadi* worker. The Muslim woman that lived there said,

'Even though you are going to the group I will let you in, that's my gesture to you' (interview, 7th August).

She explained that because of village factions (she was aligned to a different group to the *anganwadi*), she wasn't a member of the group, even though the *anganwadi* lives close to her. She said she had asked other women about the groups but had been told that 'no one knows anything about it'. When the *anganwadi* worker arrived, she called from outside the house saying we could talk, but had to go to her house.

A large gathering of women came down to the *anganwadi* centre. Mrs. Sourkar told us later that some of the women thought we had come with medicine. I asked the *anganwadi* whether she wanted to sit on the chairs the group had brought out for us, but she said her in-laws didn't understand why we were there, so she couldn't. The social status of women in the village was clearly very low. There are four IMY groups in the village all named after Hindu deities. The first formed over two years ago, but the others have only been formed for a few months. I asked the *anganwadi* what her role was in relation to IMY. She said that through IMY they were no longer dependent on moneylenders.



In trying to uncover what social change had occurred through group membership, I asked the groups whether they become more involved in village matters. The answers were given by the *anganwadi* worker.

AW³: We aren't involved with that sort of thing that is for the *Pradhan* to do.

AB: Are any of the members involved in the *Panchayat*?

AW: There used to be, but not now.

AB: Why? Has there been a change in *Panchayat*?

AW: No they left. Some people left, and set up their own group. They swapped to a bank scheme.

AB: Why did they move?

³ AW: *Anganwadi* worker; AB: Amit Bajpai (interpreter)

AW: The financial package was better. They were offered 1.5 *lakhs* after only 3 months. Those who left got good postings. They can be president or secretary in the new group.

AB: If it's better will you move?

AW: No, some of the women are even moving back now. Some are in the newer (IMY) groups. The money offered is better but there is nothing else.

AB: Are there any other NGOs involved in your area?

AW: No

AB: Are you involved in other things, for example for economic activities?

AW: No, the government should provide us with some work. We just sit idle in the house all day and we have nothing to do. They should give us some business.

AB: Do you get enough help from the government for this scheme?

AW: We were given a form to fill in (to say what else we wanted). We have filled it in and are waiting for the supervisor to collect it.

AB: What did you ask for?

AW: We asked for money. We want to open a shop and start our own business.

AB: Is the group literate?

AW: Some are (no more than one in ten), but most are not. There used to be a scheme run by Indo-fertilisers and CARE but it stopped. Then there was an informal education government programme⁴.

AB: Did you not ask for the government to provide you with a literacy programme?

AW: No, we just asked for money.

AB: Are you going to start economic activity in the future?

AW: Yes but we are seeking it from the government side. It hasn't started yet, but we have asked (interview, 7th August).

As we left the village, I felt disheartened about what I had seen. Not only did it appear that the group was gaining little from the scheme in social terms. Village factions seemed to prevent women joining this apparently 'all-inclusive' programme. The *anganwadi* (quoted above) acted differently to many others I had met. She was more part of the group than an advisor to it, and was not clear of her role as an 'enabler' for

⁴ This point refers to the lack of accountability in the case of some NGOs. In certain circumstances already detailed, private firms and NGOs have become involved in development work which has been abruptly halted without any explanation. Though this has also happened in the case of state schemes contradicts the idea of NGOs being closer to the people and more accountable.

the women. Whether or not, the dispute was simply between two women in the village rather than factionalism, as the supervisor I visited the Block with maintained, there were clear problems in the area which can only have suffered from the lack of monitoring within the scheme. The lack of a supervisor, for whatever reason, can only have intensified the problems.

Mrs. Sourkar, was positive about successes in the village. She said that although the women themselves did not mention they were benefiting from the scheme, several years ago it is unlikely they would have been free to walk around the village, let alone walk to Tiloi. In relation to education, she said in remote villages like this one, the men (and often other family members) don't want the women to be literate, so it is difficult for women to demand it. She felt that when the groups develop, they will eventually demand more. Despite this reassurance, it does not appear that the bureaucracy have 'facilitated' the women in demanding their rights, although this may increase with time. The women in the groups were adamant that the state should 'provide' for them. The experience highlights what has been called the *Ma Bap Sarkar* culture (discussed in chapter 2). In the Amethi constituency in particular, this idea has been perpetuated and even encouraged by politicians in their attempts to guarantee electoral success. This is the type of area specifically referred to by outside elites to justify the limits of new public management.

However, the above observations require clarification. Whilst elements of NPM are clearly unsuitable, others may have in fact contributed to any achievements made. First, as outlined earlier the starting point in many villages is one of excessively high levels of illiteracy, female mortality and oppression. It is only when these things are taken into consideration that the achievements of the officers within IMY can be fully appreciated. Of course, both within IMY, and in other state and non-government schemes, there are SHGs where women have achieved much. It is specifically the fact that IMY does not have to meet targets for groups formation and development, that it can 'afford' to concentrate on groups such as the one described in Tiloi. Scott in his book 'Seeing like a State', also refers to this point, arguing that for state action to be effective, it must concentrate on 'small steps' that can be furthered, adapted or even reversed. Specifically, he makes the case for institutions that are, 'multifunctional, plastic, diverse and adaptable' (1998: 251). This is very much the case in IMY. Where

those individual government officials and the SHGs feel that leaps of progress can be made in a sustainable manner, they are attempted. However, the project is not pushed ahead at the risk of destroying what has already been achieved. For example, the group members in Gopalpur village in Singhpur Block for example said that they felt their greatest achievement was the group purchase of wedding utensils. Not only were different women (religious and castes) using the same equipment, the women rented the utensils out to other families for wedding parties, something that may not seem important on first impression, but does suggest the facilitation by individuals involved in the scheme, to develop sustainable group dynamics.

The evidence presented in this section suggests that, in line with Judith Tandler's experience of health work in Caera, the use of village level workers can be highly effective in project implementation (1997). The majority of *anganwadi* workers and SHG members, whilst supportive of the scheme and the individual government officials involved in it, were resentful of the state and what they perceived as neglect and a lack of provision. If the low status and neglect of *anganwadi* workers by the state continues, it is likely to have negative implications for their motivation and, as such, the success of the scheme.

6.4: Conclusions

Throughout this chapter I have tried to explore the diverse and often contradictory changes within the bureaucracy as perceived by those outside the state. Outsider perceptions were analysed to represent 'elite' and 'vernacular' understandings of the nature of bureaucratic culture and change. At the national level, elites acknowledged the power and autonomy of high-ranking bureaucrats, in Delhi, but felt that lower ranks, at the implementation stage, would resist change. In contrast, those individuals actually working with lower level functionaries, did acknowledge significant and sustained change in bureaucratic working practices.

Individuals are motivated by a combination of complex, 'material, institutional and ideological goals' (Fox 1993:30). Therefore, while some state actors are inclined to pursue the state's private capital accumulation interests, others may value the tasks of strengthening political legitimacy more. Fox notes that others, 'may simply be concerned with career advancement or material gain. However this does not mean that

individuals within the system are free to act as they wish, 'they face structural-institutional constraints and limitations' (P. 31). All the assertions made in this chapter must be viewed in the context of the governance and social structures in Uttar Pradesh. I would argue, therefore, that shifts towards cooperation and coordination, as viewed by outside elites, and changes in attitude and approach highlighted by those categorised as representing vernacular perceptions, represent considerable cultural shifts in the workings of individual officers involved in IMY.

Fox argues that change by state officials is possible, but that it 'is closely related to the influence of social forces that are pushing them in the direction, whether or not they consider themselves allies'. Within IMY, these social forces (outlined in chapter 5) include the development of trust within the department, training of officials at all levels, and support for change from the highest to the lowest levels. However, as seen in chapter 5, there are, of course, those within the organisation that chose not to follow the new cultural rules and norms. For outsiders, attitudinal change was witnessed in several forms relating to the increase of power at lower levels, the intensity of involvement with the groups, and the increasing acceptance of outsiders' views.

In relation to NPM (whether or not it was described as such), opinions were broadly consistent both at all levels of the hierarchy, and in the arguments expressed by a variety of actors. There was a general acknowledgement that positive cultural change had occurred in those government officials working in IMY, but the limits of 'new public management' or 'entrepreneurial governance' should be recognised. Any further shifts including privatisation and downsizing, were not supported, even by those who criticised the working of the current bureaucracy.

In the next chapter, I draw together the arguments made in chapters 5 and 6 to suggest what conclusions can be drawn regarding bureaucratic culture and IMY. I also consider the ways in which these changes relate to the adoption of administrative reforms influenced by the discourse of NPM. In the second part of the chapter, I discuss how my finding fit with broader debates about governance. I argue that elements of new public management can be utilised to empower lower level workers, and help in the pursuit of development.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS AND REFERENCE TO BROADER DEVELOPMENT DEBATES

7.1 Introduction:

I began this thesis by citing the recent work of Desai and Imrie who suggested that research is necessary to explore,

'the different ways in which state and/or governance structures are being recast, and to document the role and importance of locally embedded socio-political and institutional structures and systems in framing governance outcomes. It would also be interesting to explore the precise transmission mechanisms which lead to the adoption and/or adaptation of managerialist ideas from one country to another. Moreover, as our paper suggests, the complexities and variations within and between bureaucratic-professional regimes are clearly important in interpreting and shaping the ways in which the new (governance) arrangements are being constructed. Given this, one research task is to explore the contrasts between the old, bureaucratic professional, approaches and the new managerialist ones in ways which seek to highlight the differences in the old as well as the new. These, and related ideas, provide possibilities for further research into the changing nature of governance systems' (1997: 647, emphasis mine).

Within this thesis I have tried to research the ways in which Indian government officials have engaged with the processes of change associated with new public management. Through the case study scheme of Indira Mahila Yojana, in Uttar Pradesh, I have also considered the ways in which these ideas have impacted upon the 'culture' of the bureaucracy. This chapter is divided into two sections. In the first I summarise the preceding chapters and reiterate the main themes and arguments that ran through them. In the second I relate my analytical conclusions to two broader debates in the area of governance. The first of these, in section (7.3) relates to the issue of social capital, one of the features of the Post-Washington Consensus recommendations. I focus particularly on the recent work of John Harriss (2002). Whilst I am sympathetic to certain elements of his critique, I feel that his arguments focus too heavily on research conducted in the late 1980s and early 1990s, whilst largely ignoring the shifts associated with the Post-Washington Consensus of late 1990s. The second area of discussion (7.4) in this chapter considers the extent to which the adoption of elements of the new public management discourse in India represents neo-imperialism based on the hegemony of western 'truths'.

7.2 *Ma Bap or Manager* : the experience of Indira Mahila Yojana

Within this section I reiterate and reflect on the main points of discussion raised in the previous two chapters. In order to do this I use the three main elements of NPM (according to Sharma, 2000) namely externalisation, localisation and debureaucratisation, and consider the extent to which these have been adopted and adapted in the case of IMY. The evidence presented and analysed in chapters 5 and 6 shows that, although partial and contested, there has been an adoption of key institutional reform elements of NPM by those government officials involved in IMY in Uttar Pradesh.

The case of Indira Mahila Yojana in Uttar Pradesh offers a valuable case study that demonstrates how elements of new public management *can* be used to assist positive change in bureaucratic culture. This is not to say that these changes are happening in every scheme in the State, or that new public management always has positive results. Whilst certain elements of NPM have been incorporated to facilitate change, in the case of IMY there are other specific factors present that contributed to the change experienced. In the same way as Tandler's (1997) experience has shown the difference two reformist governors can make in the implementation of health care policy in Caera, key factors outside the structural change imposed are also important in the the processes of change described in IMY.

The first factor relates to the status of the department in which change was being enacted. The social sector in general, and IMY specifically, has little power and controls only minimal finance. The corrupting influences, identified by interviewees in other departments were notable for their absence in this case. Second, the role of charismatic individuals has been fundamental in enabling cultural. Whilst, the Indian bureaucracy is widely critiqued for its authoritarian and corrupt ways of working this was not seen to be the case in IMY. Here key individuals acted as 'change agents' at each level in the hierarchy, helping to promoted and sustain substantial cultural change. It is within this environment of support from the highest level, and minimal interference with the working of the scheme from outside, that change has been adopted.

Within this working environment positive change associated with NPM can clearly be highlighted, and are detailed in this chapter. However, these outcomes are not an automatic result of structural change. Whilst devolution has occurred, for example, it requires constant support from those above in the hierarchy, something that can not be enforced through policy change alone. Institutional elements are central to the cultural change seen through the adoption of new public management in the case of IMY though they cannot be pointed out in the general discourse.

Externalisation:

The element of NPM most heavily influenced by public choice theory is externalisation. This implies the reduction of the role of the state to its core functions and the privatisation or contracting out of non-essential functions to more 'efficient' non-government organisations, whether that is in the private, NGO or community sectors. The main form of contracted labour within the IMY scheme is through the use of village level *anganwadi* workers who are responsible for group formation and scheme implementation. The reasons used to justify the use of these workers are that they have greater access to and knowledge of the realities at the grass roots level.

However whilst the majority of *anganwadi* workers felt positive about the scheme and the individual government workers on the IMY scheme they were in general negative about 'the state'. *Anganwadi* workers said their pay and conditions were excessively low, they felt undervalued and often had a low morale in their work. The vast range of tasks that are now being devolved to *anganwadi* workers, by various departments, was highlighted as being unreasonable. Reasons for low morale related to the fact they are not salaried but are given a small fee for their work, and they did not feel adequately trained for many of the tasks expected of them.

Anganwadi workers highlighted the difference between other departments and their experiences in IMY, where they felt part of a team of more adequately trained implementers and had a sense of being appreciated for the tasks they fulfilled. Efforts had been made within to increase morale of these women including training, rewards from the District Magistrate for exceptional work, and the promotion of some *anganwadi* workers to supervisors. Furthermore, *anganwadi* workers felt that changes in bureaucratic culture enhanced their own contribution to the scheme. The increasing

externalisation of government functions to *anganwadi* workers, without adequate training primarily related cutting expenditure without due care for the quality of the service provided by these women. The *anganwadi* workers did have positive perceptions about the work of government officials in IMY, but the amount of pressure placed on them by the 'state' and the lack of appreciation and payment, is likely to have a negative impact on the IMY scheme's work in the long run.

Non Government Organisations (NGOs) have a negative press in Uttar Pradesh and many government officials, particularly at the grass roots level, had little faith in the sector. Government officials and *anganwadi* workers complained about the autocratic, paternalistic and unaccountable nature of many of the organisations in this sector. This was described by high-ranking officials as one reason for the limited number of NGOs involved with the scheme in Rae Bareli District. The NGOs that are involved in IMY are selected on a case specific basis. The majority of those NGOs working with the government officials for IMY argued that there had been a considerable cultural shift in the attitudes and working practices of those individuals in the scheme, whilst noting little change in the bureaucracy in general.

NGOs working in Rae Bareli were primarily, western funded, staffed by well educated, English-speaking individuals many of whom had attended the same training courses (both in the UK and elsewhere) as the government officials in IMY. These individuals had a 'shared vision' of what could and should be achieved through the scheme. These organisations sought to instil new working practices amongst their own workers, adopting key elements of new public management, including downwards accountability, flexibility and working practices more akin to private sector working practices. This 'internationalisation of ideas' could be the reason that certain NGOs were integrated with the scheme whilst others were not. I will discuss the extent to which certain understandings and interpretations dominate others later (in section 7.3).

Limiting the degree of externalisation in IMY was supported by those both inside and outside of the scheme. The socio-cultural environment in Uttar Pradesh was described not conducive to the idea of a 'cultivated consumer', who decides which services they want provided, and by who. As government officials in IMY have no set targets they

felt more responsive to the needs of individual groups. In contrast, both government and NGO employees highlighted the continuing, 'audit culture' in the non-government sector, preventing them working as they would wish.

Localisation:

Localisation consists of the dual actions of devolution and deconcentration so that power (in larger societal terms as well as intra-organisational ones) is directed downwards, as is the flow of information. Through this, it is hoped, significant networks and expertise can be built up at the lowest practical level within the bureaucracy. According to Dunleavy (1991), it is precisely through this dispersal of power that the bureaucracy can become more responsive and effective service providers.

In organisational terms, within IMY there is a conscious devolution of power to the District and Block levels with the implementers of the scheme, able to adapt it in light of local conditions and needs. This follows Clark and Newman's theory that through changes associated with NPM, officials (as well as those outside the bureaucracy) can shift to a concentration on local needs away, 'from generic fields of public provision' (1997: 79). However, whilst power and authority is vested in the lowest levels within the IMY hierarchy, circumvention tactics were used to minimise the effect of 'corrupting influences' on the scheme. Officers that were considered to be uncooperative, at the State and District levels, were consciously sidelined in the programme. Neither was power devolved to locally elected leaders, or *Pradhans*, within IMY. The *Panchayati Raj* Institutions have been allocated considerable power in recent years, but were seen to be, at best uncooperative and at worst corrupt, in relation to their dealings with IMY.

In societal terms, the scheme is accountable to the lowest level, namely the IMY groups. Through 'facilitation' of empowerment of the groups, the group members are encouraged to act as monitors of the scheme, and demand their rights of the state, and society more generally. The case of IMY mirrors the experiences of Judith Tandler (1997) where power was devolved to the local level in health care policy in Ceara, but at the same time, traditional power and autonomy was taken away from those at higher levels, in an effort to increase the schemes efficiency.

Debureaucratisation:

The term debureaucratisation has been used by supporters of public choice theory to suggest a reduction of the bureaucracy. This includes contracting out, in order to streamline the service and improve efficiency. Other elements of debureaucratisation involve the reduction of 'bureaucracy' in administration through the removal of 'bureau-pathologies' including red-tape, excessive hierarchy, and a culture of authoritarianism. IMY officials have clearly focused on the latter rather than the former, changing the culture of the bureaucracy to make it more efficient.

The World Bank supported Civil Service Renewal for Uttar Pradesh, suggests that, training of officers at all levels is necessary for a change in the 'working culture' of the administration (2000: 4). It is this element that constitutes the primary change in the working of IMY according to interviewees both inside and outside of the bureaucracy. This has involved exposure visits both in India and abroad to see 'best case practices' of governance for those at the District level and above, whilst training courses organised by the UP government of up to four weeks have begun for District level officials. The roles and obligations of each individual within the scheme are fully explained, and manuals provided for reference material. Refresher courses are periodically conducted with government officials after the initial training programme.

Though the focus on training for officers at lower levels is a relatively new phenomenon, a cultural change in the relationship between officers (and towards beneficiaries) was highlighted as the dominant factor supporting a change in working culture in the administration. The World Bank suggests that it is through individuals acting as 'change agents' that new working practices and procedures become sustainable. Within the IMY programme, debureaucratisation has occurred through the removal of what Tolia calls 'fear psychosis' in the administration, whereby individuals are afraid to act for fear of reprimand (a factor that has only been increased in other contexts with the transfer mania in the State). Those officials involved in the IMY programme described an environment of mutual trust and appreciation within the departments (DOWC and ICDS) involved in the programme.

Several factors are responsible for this shift. First is the very significant role and influence of key individuals within the programme offering support, guidance and by setting an example to those lower down. Second the development of 'femi-sociability' within the departments involved in the sector. This has been developed through creating and sustaining networks of trust and support within IMY. Both these factors are important because although trust within the scheme is important, without support networks many officials would not have the strength independently to have faith in their actions and decisions lower down the hierarchy, for example in relation to difficult *Pradhans*.

A third factor, ironically, derives from the low status of the department in terms of economic leverage and power. This has meant those not committed to its goals and methods have pushed for transfer, leaving the majority with a genuine commitment to the department and the beneficiaries. In order to maintain the relationships within the scheme higher officials would, when necessary, circumvent other government and non-government departments who it was felt would negatively affect the scheme. It was the use of personal networks and skill, rather than interdepartmental co-ordination, that minimised the amount of hierarchy in the scheme, and hence the time delays so frequently associated with public administration.

It is impossible to present a singular definition of new public management, because as Polidano (1998) suggests a singular form of the discourse only exists in abstract terms. However, several assertions about the changing influences on the discourse of NPM in recent years can be made. In the late 1980s and early 1990s NPM, associated with the Washington Consensus, was heavily influenced by public choice theory and neo-liberal ideas of rolling back the state in order to reduce the room for manoeuvre of a vested interest bureaucracy. Research in the early 1990s, including the work of Evans and Tandler, has suggested that this narrow deterministic perception of government officials is inaccurate. They argue that it sits uneasily with research on good working practices in public sector firms which have been seen to improve in performance through increased flexibility and the 'empowerment of middle level managers' (Tandler, 1997). This research has fed into recent shifts in NPM practices, at the same time as a parallel move within governance debates associated with the Post-Washington Consensus. The Post-Washington Consensus, though remaining

faithful to the necessary role of the market, accepts that there is an important and valuable role to be played by the public bureaucracy, amongst other institutions. Elements increasingly associated with this changing face of NPM, including localisation and debureaucratisation have led Desai and Imrie to argue that it may even be possible to conceive of a 'Post-managerial phase' (1998: 646). This phase is essentially represented by a shift away from questioning the *raison d'être* of state to one questioning how it performs its functions. I would argue that the case of IMY, government officials at all levels are engaging with the processes of change associated with new public management or even Post-managerialism.

In the next section of this chapter I consider how the evidence of IMY sits in relation to the claim that the adoption of NPM in India represents the hegemony of western discourses.

7.3 Neo-imperialism and the hegemony of western discourses

to conclude with an issue that opened this thesis we may ask the extent to which the adoption of elements of new public management in the case of IMY represents the hegemony of western discourse in the developing world. There has been a considerable amount of literature regarding the forms of knowledge and power that regulate practices in development. for Watts (1999) hegemonic development has,

'penetrated, integrated, managed and controlled countries and populations in increasingly pernicious and intractable ways. It has produced underdevelopment, a condition politically and economically manageable through 'normalisation', the regulation of knowledge and the moralisation and technification of poverty and exploitation' (1999: 90).

A Foucauldian analysis of the state in India would claim that the hegemony of western discourses in the Third World are almost complete (Escobar, 1995). There are some aspects of NPM in Uttar Pradesh that may encourage such a perception. The discourse of NPM was created in, and primarily for reform of public bureaucracies in the west (Desai and Imrie, 1998). The financially constrained State of Uttar Pradesh was encouraged to adopt a civil service reform policy in line with new public management, as conditional for being granted loans.

The IMY training is sponsored by DfID and as such, the training methods and ideas are those promoted by the bilateral agency. Many of the elites within the IMY have

been trained in England, and as such adopted ideas based in the west. There are certainly 'privileged circuits of information' (Mawdsley *et al.* 2002: 77) through which information flows. The individuals who are trained overseas then train those lower down the hierarchy, so that there is a downwards filtration of ideas, that have their origin in the west. The NGO workers involved in the IMY programme, are in the majority, employed by international NGOs. They speak English and use the same language of 'enabling', 'facilitation' and even 'right-sizing' (a World Bank phrase) in speaking about new public management. The fact that very few local NGOs are involved in the IMY scheme could symbolise the 'suppression of ideas' of the 'other' highlighted by Kabeer (1999).

Dr. Tolia at the Administrative Training Institute in Nainital, co-author of the Reforms in Governance, was certainly part of a 'privileged circuit of information', in his direct dealing with Bank representatives. During interview (9th June) Dr. Tolia used World Bank-popularised narratives to justify change, include the idea that the NPM discourse is part of a natural process of growth and development, as 'evolutionary' and 'organic'. He also used the language of NPM as a new and progressive force, actively seeking change for the better. The metaphors used in this sense include 'reinventions' of the old and 'visions' of the future order.

Of course there are those who have taken on the ideas of NPM in their totality. However was not the case I found in the case of those government officials involved in IMY. Evidence provided in chapters 5 and 6 suggests that whilst elements of new public management have been adopted, they have been adapted at the local level and other elements have not been adopted at all. I would suggest therefore that IMY, offers an example of 'little ideas' of local change within the 'big idea' of new public management.

Critiques of Western development discourses frequently infer the direct transfer of a discourse from one environment to another. In the assessment of ideas being transferred from the North to the South there is a tendency to analyse the translation as direct power *over*, with depictions of Southern 'others' that implies passive, receptive, individuals that have little (if any) power to modify, subvert, relocate or contest the change. This is certainly not the case in IMY. That elements of the

discourse have been adopted is undeniable but that government officials in UP have simply been passive recipients of the change is not true. No matter how extensively powerful ruling elements in any given society have conditioned the interpretation of concepts, even of words, in their own interests (or what they perceive as the interests of others) they cannot completely remove alternatives, or suppress resistance. For there to be only one understanding and translation of the NPM discourse it would be necessary to use language that is so narrow that it offers no room for alternative interpretations- a situation that is clearly not possible.

This was my experience in the case of IMY. The promotion of some aspects of the discourse and dismissal of others shows the power of government officials to adapt, to some degree at least, discourse and policy directions. The flexible nature of NPM in UP has led to an environment in which people of different philosophical and moral standpoints can wax lyrical about the benefits of 'effectiveness', 'decentralisation', 'right-sizing' and 'participation'. Whilst one person may infer 'cutting costs', 'externalisation', 'redundancies' and 'slimming-down the state'; another using the same language may translate meaning to reflect 'improved provision', 'local level involvement', 'increased employment' to meet development demands, and 'community participation' and debate. It is perhaps this very reason that the NPM has achieved such global dimensions. As I discussed in chapter 5, whilst training has been influenced by national and even global agendas, including the promotion of flexibility, decentralisation and devolution of power, the inherently flexible nature of the discourse has led to its selective adoption and adaptation at the implementation level.

James Scott (1998), in his book 'Seeing like a state', argues that for effective state action it is necessary to heed this advice. He argues that an experimental approach to government action involving 'small steps' is necessary. Policies should favour reversibility as some interventions will inevitably fail. Policies should plan for surprises as the relationship between policy and intended outcome is rarely realised in totality. Human inventiveness refers to the fact that those who become involved later are likely to have or develop the experience and insight to improve on design. This he calls a *metis* friendly approach to institutions. He makes the case for institutions that are 'multifunctional, plastic, diverse and adaptable' (251). I would argue that the case

of IMY does meet the criteria and as such is not subject to the domination of any fixed ideas about what new public management should entail.

How long this relative independence of the state will continue in Uttar Pradesh is debatable. Since the State has begun to negotiate as a single entity with the Bank, it has considerably less negotiating power than it had as part of the sub-continent. It may be the case therefore, in future years that the Bank places increased demands and control on the State. This would seem to be suggested by the recent threats of funding withdrawal if transfers aren't controlled (FT, 2002). Furthermore, much of the institutional change that has occurred through IMY has been assisted through the use of *anganwadi workers*. If the status and conditions provided to these women is not improved, the continued successes of state schemes such as IMY will inevitably be in jeopardy.

India has been and remains a relatively powerful international force with considerable power in relation to International Financial Institution's, including the World Bank. This can be seen in the way India adopted its new economic policy in 1991, to a very considerable extent, on its own terms. It has also been an active participant in negotiating the terms of its reforms in governance. Bureaucratic reforms were not solely imposed from above in Uttar Pradesh, in fact, research by the Indian Institute of Public Administration, as well as within the Department of Administrative Reforms, were suggesting change along entrepreneurial lines from the early 1990s. But, how long this relative independence of the state will continue in Uttar Pradesh is debatable. Since the State has begun to negotiate as a single entity with the Bank, it has considerably less negotiating power than it had as part of the sub-continent. It may be the case therefore, that in future years, the Bank places increased demands and control on the State, possibly adversely affecting the ability of the officials to locally shape the NPM agenda. The IMY scheme may be atypical within Uttar Pradesh, but it does demonstrate the importance of supporting institutions and the potential value of bureaucratic reform for provoking positive change and development.

A more general argument that can be drawn from this thesis, is the necessity of paying close attention to the ways in which development discourses and agendas are mediated, manipulated and sometimes significantly changed by various agents –

including the subject of this work, the bureaucracy. This is not to deny the pressure of broader trends, or the limitations to choice and agency, but the complexities of local, regional and national contexts allow for greater room for manoeuvre than some post-development theorists allow for. A second more general observation, *pace* Tendler, is that elements of the state can work for positive development and local empowerment. It is therefore, misguided to always pit a parasitic and/or hostile state against a virtuous community. Just as 'the community' is now widely understood to be heterogenous and conflictual, so too 'the state' (or, in this case 'the bureaucracy') must be recognised more dynamically as a diverse set of people, relations, outlooks and institutions.

APPENDIX 1

CIVIL SERVICES, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

I) All-India Services :

- i) Indian Administrative Service
- ii) Indian Foreign Service
- iii) Indian Police Service

II) Central Services :

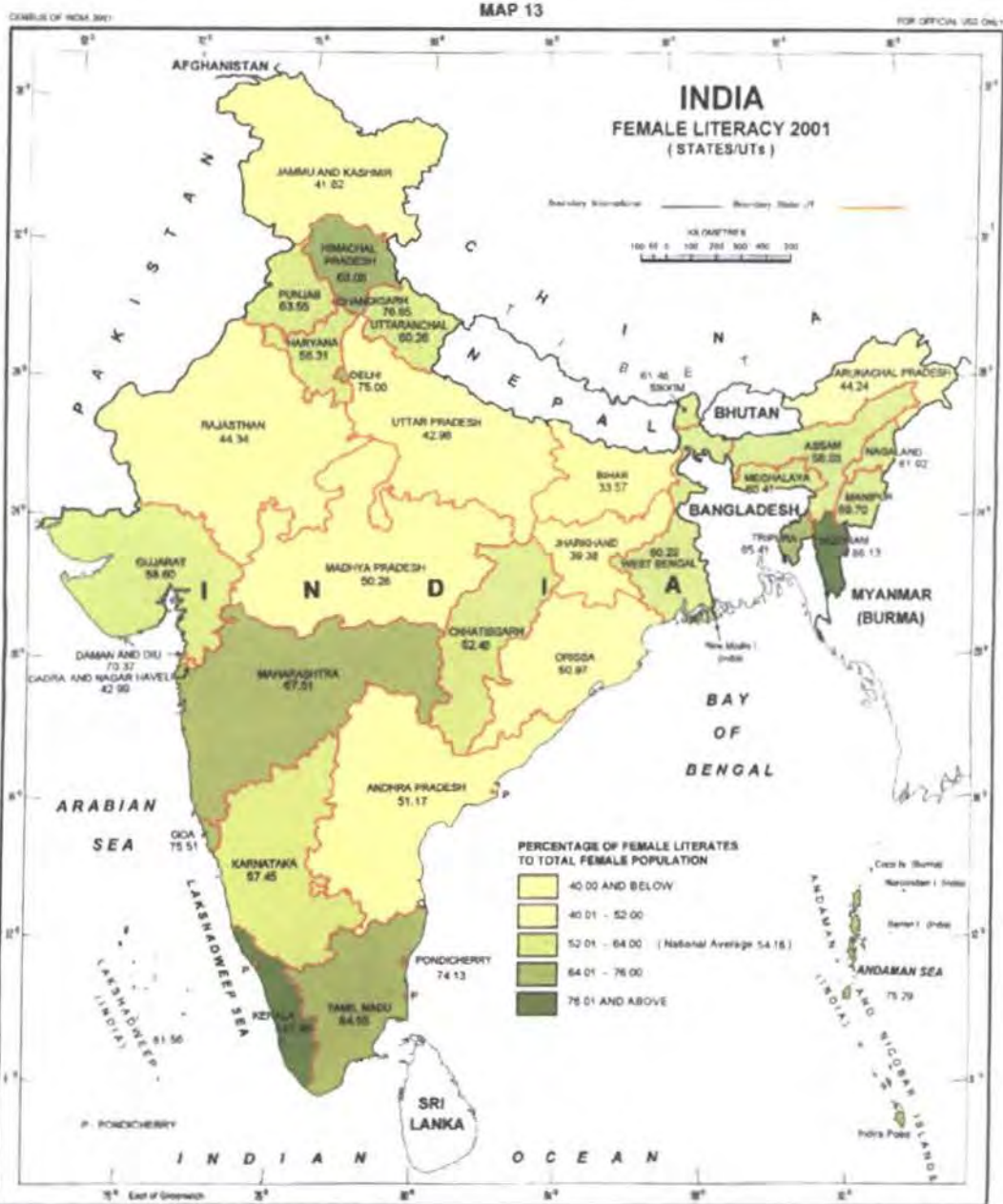
- i) Indian P & T Accounts & Finance Service, Group `A"
- ii) Indian Audit and Accounts Service, Group `A'
- iii) Indian Customs and Central Excise Service, Group `A'
- iv) Indian Defence Accounts Service, Group `A'
- v) Indian Revenue Service, Group `A'
- vi) Indian Revenue Service, Group `A'
- vii) Indian Ordnance Factories Service Group `A' (Assistant Manager Non-teaching)
- viii) Indian Postal Service, Group `A'
- ix) Indian Civil Accounts Service, Group `A'
- x) Indian Railway Traffic Service, Group `A'
- xi) Indian Railway Accounts Service, Group `A'
- xii) Indian Railway Personnel Service, Group `A'
- xiii) Posts of Assistant Security Officer, Group `A' in Railway Protection Force
- xiv) Indian Defence Estates Service Group `A'
- xv) Indian Information Service (Junior Grade), Group `A'
- xvi) Indian Trade Service, Group `A' (Grade-iii)
- xvii) Posts of Assistant Commandant, Group `A' in Central Industrial Security Force
- xviii) Central Secretariat Service, Group `B' (Section Officer's Grade)
- xix) Railway Board Secretariat Service, Group `B' (Section Officer's Grade)
- xx) Armed Forces Headquarters Civil Service, Group `B' (Assistant Civilian Staff Officer's Grade)
- xxi) Customs Appraisers' Service, Group `B')
- xxii) Delhi and Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep, Daman & Diu and Dadra & Nagar Haveli Civil Service, Group `B'

xxiii) Posts of Deputy Superintendent of Police in the Central Bureau of Investigation, Group `B'

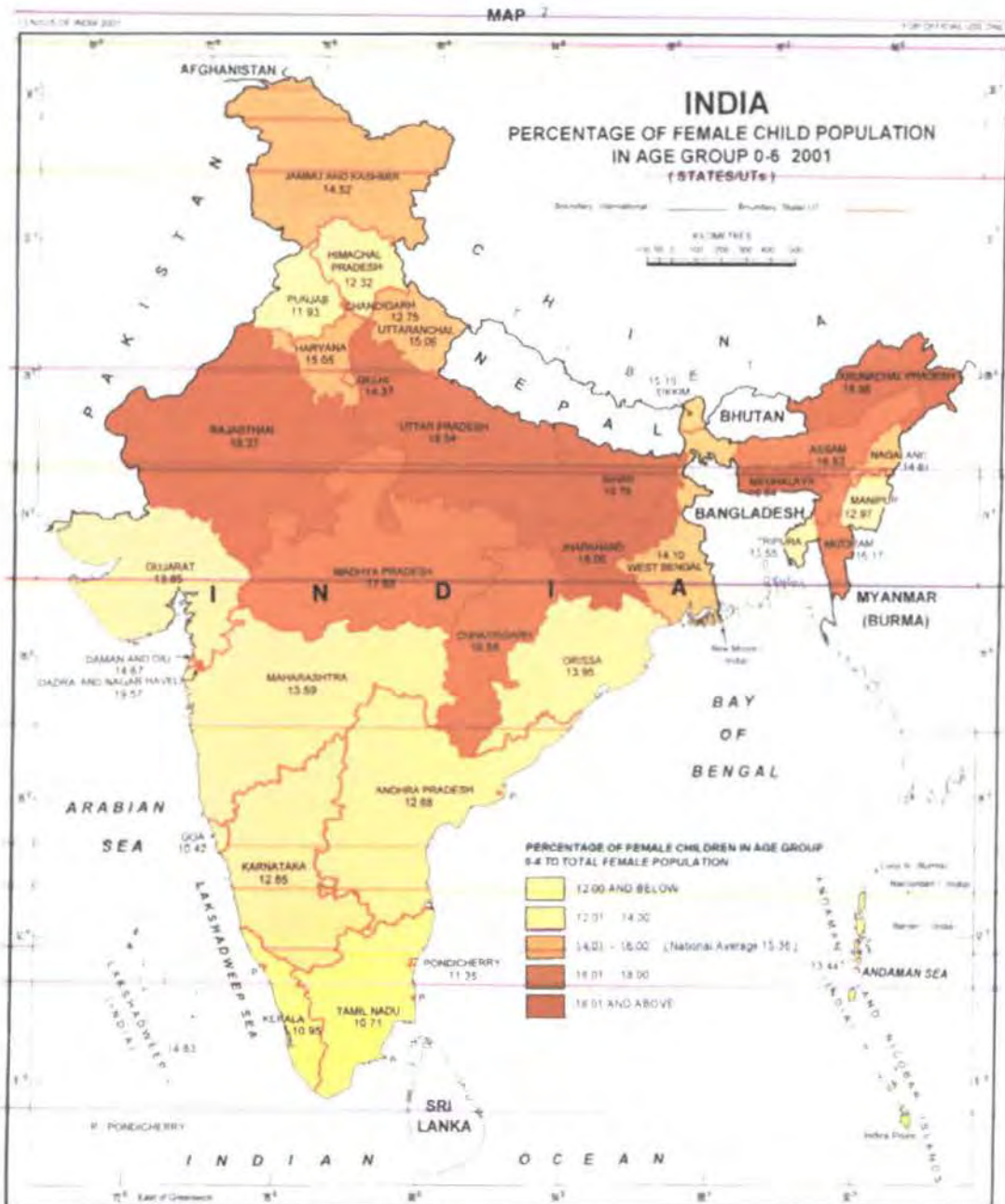
xxiv) Pondicherry Civil Service, Group `B'

xxv) Pondicherry Police Service, Group `B'

Source: Government of India, New Delhi, Employment News (Special Supplement), 14-20 December, 1996.



Based upon Survey of India map with the permission of the Surveyor General of India.
 The territorial waters of India extend into the sea to a distance of twelve nautical miles measured from the appropriate base line.
 The interstate boundaries between Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Meghalaya shown on this map are as interpreted from the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act, 1971 but have yet to be verified.



Based upon Survey of India map with the permission of the Surveyor General of India.
 The territorial waters of India extend into the sea to a distance of twelve nautical miles measured from the appropriate base line.
 The interstate boundaries between Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Meghalaya shown on this map are as interpreted from the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act, 1951 but have yet to be verified.
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APPENDIX: 3 Rae Bareli Information

Development Blocks in Rae Bareli (2002) there are now 21, at the time of research there were 19

1. Amawan	2. Bachhrawan	3. Bahadurpur
4. Chhatoth	5. Deeh	6. Deen Shah Gaura
7. Dalmau	8. Harchandpur	9. Kheeron
10. Lalganj	11. Maharajganj	12. Jagatpur
13. Rahi	14. Rohaniya	15. Sareni
16. Salon	17. Sataon	18. Singhpur
19. Shivgarh	20. Tilo	21. Unchahar

Main District Level Offices -

Sr. Treasury Officer

District Supply Officer

District Agriculture Officer

District Information Officer

District Informatics Officer (NIC, GOI)

District Economics & Statistical Officer

District Savings Officer

District Sports Officer

District Employment Officer

Field Publicity Officer (GOI)

Trade tax Officer

Income Tax Officer (GOI)

Entertainment Tax Officer

District Prosecution Officer

District Excise Officer

General Manager, District Industry Centre

Plant Protection Officer

District Panchayat Raj Officer

District Programme Officer

Basic Shiksha Adhikari (Basic Education)

District Inspector of Schools

Sp. Land acquisition Officer

District Social Welfare Officer

Minority Welfare Officer

Project Manager (U.P.L.D.C.)

Asst. Regional Transport Officer

Asst. District Election Officer

District Soldier welfare Officer

Bold Signifies those individuals who are theoretically at least members of the District Level Coordination Committee for IMY, in addition to these the District Magistrate is also a member of the committee.

Rae Bareli Tehsils, Blocks and Nayay Panchayats

TEHSIL: MAHARAGJANJ

BLOCK: Bachhrawan

Nayay Panchayats: Rampur Sudauli, Neem Teeker, Sayhgao Panchchim Gaon, Tilenda, Bhairampur, Bhulendi, Kherahni, Ichauli, Rajamau.

BLOCK: SHIVGARH

Nayay panchayats: Beraroo, Baiti, Kasna, Rewan, Basantpur Sakatpur, Shivgarh, Bhaushi.

BLOCK: MAHRAJGANJ

Nayay Panchayats: Halore, Dhurauna, Hardoi, Kubna, Kair, Kotwa Mohammadabad, Maugarbi, Chandapur.

TEHSIL: TILOI

BLOCK: SINGHPUR

Nayay Panchayats: Kukaha Rampur, Chilauli, Khara, Rampur Pawara, Panhauna, Inhauna, Fatepur, Phoola, Yentaypur.

BLOCK: TILOI

Nayay Panchayats: Semrauta, Viraj, Bhalaipur, Ramaie, Semvasi, Tiloie, Rajanpur, Jamukha, Dhodhanpur, Shahmau.

BLOCK: BHADURPUR

Nayay Panchayats: Brahmani, Mohaiva Kersaria, Pothaie, Nigoha, Sarai Mahesh, Odari.

TEHSIL: RAE BARELI

BLOCK: HARCHANDPUR

Nayay Panchayats: Panchchimgaon, Johuwa Sharki, Manjhgawan Hardoi, Harchandpur, Dighaura Sommau, Rahawan, Gulpur, Toda.

BLOCK: AMAWAN

Nayay Panchayats: Balla Bawan Buzurg, Pahremau, Paharpur, Hardaspur, Kodras Buzurg, Sidhauna, Abhawan, Sandi Nagin.

BLOCK: SATAON

Nayay Panchayats: Sataon, Shahjaura, Kotihar, Aurara Buzurg, Dedaur, Nakpholha, Kalayanpur Raili,

BLOCK: RAHI

Nayay Panchayats: Rahi, Rustampur, Salempur Siki, Bibipur, Garhi Mutwalli, Khagipur Sandwa, Belamela, Bhano, Bhadokhar, Lodhwari, Kanauli.

TEHSIL: LALGANJ

BLOCK KHIRON

Nayay Panchayats: Attarhar, Paho, Kheeron, Bhitergaon, Tiklamau, Deogawan, Semari, Bakuliha, Nihastha, Aaikauni.

BLOCK: SARENI

Nayay Panchayats: Rasulpur, Bhoremau, Murar mau, Bhojpur, Chautar, Daulatpur, Neebi, raipur, Sareni, Malkegaon, Chiblaha, Sader Khera.

BLOCK: LALGANJ

Nayay Panchayats: Gahiri, Behata Kalan, Mubarakpur, Govindpur Balauli, Semarpaha, Bahuria Khera, Khajoorgaon, Untra Gaun, Bahaie.

TEHSIL: DALMU

BLOCK: DALMAU

Nayay Panchayats: Madhukarpur, Aaihar, Lodhipur Utyrawan, Govindpur Bheera, Kathgar, Ghurwara, Narendrapur, Radha Balampur, Makhdoom Pur, Dalmau, Bharsana, Barara Buzurg.

BLOCK: JAGATPUR

Nayay Panchayats: Bhulrai, Bannawa, Gaurahardo, Sukkha Hardo, Rassulpur Dharawan, Jaalalpur Dhari, Dhoot, Sarai Sribux, Khajuri, Dhobaha, Jagatpur, Jamodi, Purabgaon.

TEHSIL: SALON

BLOCK: DIH

Nayay Panchayats: Pothai, Mau, Tekari Dadu, Deehh Birnawa, Khetaudhan, Atawa Aroha Rampur.

BLOCK: CHHATOH

Nayay Panchayats: Naseerabad, Ashrafpur, Hajipur, Parriva Namaksar, Chatah, Bhabalpur Shisni, Bara

BLOCK: SALON

Nayay Panchayats: Soochi, Umari, Salaun, Barbalia, Matka, Pari, Kharahni, Pahargarh, Mamoni, Ashikabad, Mahonganj, Dharai, Rampur Kasiha, Nuruddinpur.

BLOCK: UNCHAHAR

Nayay Panchayats: Matrauli, Rohania, Rasulpur, Umran, Delauli, Kiahundaspur, Ramsanda, Kharauli, Urakha, Khurrampur, Saraini, Salimpur Bhaira.

APPENDIX 4: Total Interviewee numbers and justification

	National	State	District	Block
Government	6 (8)	22 + 3* + 6*	12	17
Academics	7	6		
Anganwadi Workers				20
NGO employees	4	7	7	3
SHGs				32
Other	1 (RMK)			

Key:

(8) Refers to interviews conducted at LBSNAA. This includes an interview with the head of the training institute Mr. B. S. Baswan Director of the Academy. Insights gained from these interviews were not however specifically related to IMY, but rather the changing culture of the bureaucracy more generally.

22 State level government officials with direct contact with IMY, both past and present (due to transfers) were interviewed

3* refers to the number of interviews conducted at the State level with (A)CDPOS at NPCCD, however I also conducted a focus group with course participants and gained further information participating in the course.

6* refers to the interviews that took place at the ATI in Nainital.

Numbers included in the table above reflect the numbers of interviews conducted, as I lived with academics and then government officials other insights gained are not expressed in the table. Furthermore interviews and focus groups conducted in the Durham and during the first two field visits to India are not included as these did not contribute to my understanding of changes experienced in IMY but rather assisted my general understanding of change within the bureaucracy.

APPENDIX 4.2

QUESTIONS FOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS NATIONAL, STATE AND DISTRICT.

Interviews were conducted in English with government officials at these levels. Some questions were more appropriate than others, and conversations during interview tended to move in various directions, so not all the questions were always relevant.

1. **What** have you observed as the major changes in **foci and strategies** of development policy over the last decade?
2. **Why** do you think these changes have occurred?
3. What **implications** have these changes had on the working of your department?

The **5th Pay Commissions** suggests a **change in the priorities** of the public administration and development:

- Does the activity need doing?
- Does the government have to do it?
- Does it have to carry it out itself?
- Is the organisations properly structured to do it?

4. To what extent have you **observed these changes?** (e.g. factoring out, internal competition)

The **Discussion Note 1996** for the Chief Secretaries of State Governments, in response to liberalisation suggests changes in the effectiveness and responsiveness of government. It suggests that the role of the bureaucracy in assisting the market is a crucial one.

5. Are there any changes that you have seen that have made the bureaucracy more **market orientated?** (cost effectiveness, change of approach of programmes, privatisation etc.)
6. In line with this document what efforts have you seen in attempting to increase **effectiveness? (co-ordination** within and between departments/ at various levels in the hierarchy/ through the use of **new technology/ training/ ideas**)
7. Have you witnessed any changes in **responsiveness** of the bureaucracy? (to the **public's demands /flexibility** within programmes)

The document continues to say that the bureaucracy should act as, 'enabler and facilitator rather than a direct provider of goods and services.

8. In what ways is the bureaucracy able to **'enable'** people for development?

9. Has there been a **shift** from a **provider** administration to a **facilitator** administration? How?
10. If so **who** are the **new providers**? **How successfully** is this change working? To **what extent** is this shift **possible** in India?

The document further suggests that there should be a separation of formulation and implementation of policy. A greater need for customer orientation and the decentralisation of powers to the local level are also seen as important.

11. To what extent has the **separation of formulation and implementation** happened?
12. How **accountable are the formulators and implementers** of development policy?
13. How and to what extent are the **public participating** in development programmes that you have seen? Is this a change?
14. To what extent do **their views** get interpreted into development policy?
15. What is your opinion on the **citizen's charter**?
16. There is seen to be a need to **reduce the estrangement** of people from the providers of governance – to what extent do you see this has happened in the bureaucracy / within other provides?
17. The decentralisation of power to the **PRI's** is very new in UP – but what do you think the **effects of this change** will be?
18. What **effect have these changes** in provision and workings had on those working within public administration?
19. What are the **remaining problems** that affect the effectiveness and responsiveness of those working in the bureaucracy? (quality of recruits, politicization, transfers, funds, technology, etc.)
20. **How** do you think these problems could be **remedied**?

QUESTIONS FOR SUPERVISORS AND ANGALWADI WORKERS

All the interviews with supervisors and anganwadi workers took place in vernacular Hindi, and had a great deal of space for discussion/answers. If respondents led naturally onto a topic that formed a later question, we would follow it, and then return to the point we had left off. Often when the 'formal' part of the interview had ended we would carry on talking notes from the discussion the questions had provoked.

Village:

Name of supervisor/anganwadi worker:

- 1) How long have you been involved in IMY?
- 2) How many groups do you help?
- 3) What is your background prior to working as an angalwadi worker/ supervisor?
- 4) What do you see as your role as supervisor/AW (are you involved with any other schemes apart from IMY)?
- 5) What training have you had for this post?
- 6) How often are you able to meet each group?
- 7) Which government officials/ departments have you had dealings with in this role?
(in what capacity?)
- 8) Have you been informed of other government programmes that the groups could benefit from?
- 9) How often do you meet government officials?

- 10) Which Non Government organisations have you had dealings with? In what capacity?
- 11) What do you see as the major successes of the project? (Social and Economic- which is the major focus?)
- 12) Are some groups doing better than others? Why do you think this is?
- 13) Prior to IMY were you involved in any other government/Non-government programme?
- 14) If so, how does this project differ from previous schemes?
- 15) Do you think the way in which this government project is implemented is different – why?
- 16) Do you think people have more faith in government schemes or those run by NGOs?
- 17) Do you feel that your ideas and the ideas of the people involved in the projects are taken into consideration when new schemes are designed?
- 18) Do you feel you receive enough help from government and NGOs in your capacity as supervisor/ AW?
- 19) What additional facilities do you feel would benefit the further progress of the groups? (financial/ staff/ training/ information)

QUESTIONS FOR VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

Which NGO do you work for?

How long have you held this post?

- 1) What is your role in the NGO?
- 2) What was your background prior to working for this NGO?
- 3) Are you involved in IMY?
- 4) If so in what capacity?
- 5) What do you see as the major aims of the project?
- 6) How much do you feel the government are encouraging your involvement in schemes? How?
- 7) Ho much do you think the government is involving the PRI (public in general) in its schemes?
- 8) Do you think that the type of projects the government is now providing differ from those in the past? If so in what ways?
- 9) Do you think reservation in posts has made a difference in the workings of the civil service?
- 10) What do you see as the major successes in schemes provided by the government?
- 11) What do you see as the major failures in schemes provided by the government?
- 12) Do you feel it is committed to these schemes?
- 13) Do you think the people have faith in government schemes? Why (not)?

14) How accountable do you think the government is for its schemes?

15) How do you think government could attempt to improve its development schemes for the public?

QUESTIONS FOR WOMENS' GROUPS INVOLVED IN IMY

Name of Village/ Block:

Name of Group:

1. How long have you been involved in Indira Mahila Yogana?
2. How many members are there in your group?
3. How old are your members?
4. How often do you meet? Where do you meet?
5. Were you organised as a group prior to IMY? (If so, what government scheme were you involved in?)
6. Is the group literate/ was the group literate when you formed the group?
7. Do you meet with other groups?
8. What activities have you undertaken as part of IMY?
9. Do you borrow from the savings/ if so what for?
10. What do you think of the scheme?
11. Are you involved in the local panchayat? Have you helped in making village level Plans?
12. Have you undertaken any economic activity have you undertaken as part of IMY? If so did you get credit? (Who from)
13. IF SO -Is the economic activity working well? Where do you sell your goods?

14. How much time do you spend on group activities?
15. What do your family think of the group's activities?
16. What do you think of 'state schemes'?
17. Have you had any dealing with NGOs? What do you think of them?
18. What help have you received from outside AW/ supervisors?
19. Do you think this scheme differs to other projects you have heard of/ been involved in? IF SO How?

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