

Experimental governance or **experimentalist governance** falls under the new modes of governance mechanisms or frameworks in the continuously transforming and evolving sector of contemporary governance. Sabel and Zeitlin (2012) characterize it as “framework rule-making and revision through a recursive review of implementation experience in different local contexts” (p.179). Experimentalist governance is an iterative method of contingent goal-setting and revision based on lessons learned from comparing alternative approaches in taking it forward in different contexts. Reflexivity and learning by monitoring form the core conceptual framework of this form of governance. In other words, the ability of institutions and actors to monitor and learn from past successes and failures and innovate accordingly is where the success of this form of governance lies. It goes beyond the rigidity of the traditional bureaucratic structures to focus on mechanisms that emphasise consultation and deliberation between the different stakeholders involved in the process. We will be looking at how this could play out in reality next. Say, a set of central and local government agencies establish comprehensive policy goals and objectives in consultation with key civil society stakeholders. The local units are then accorded considerable leeway or scope in order to achieve or implement these objectives according to the approaches they see fit. As the units do not have complete policy autonomy, they are required to report policy results to a central authority and undergo a peer review process in which their results are compared to those of other units. Rigorous development and adoption of indicators and decision making processes that are reviewed periodically to continuously refine and improve are the key determinants of the efficacy of this whole setup.

References

- Sabel, C. F., & Zeitlin, J. (2012). Experimentalist Governance. In D. Levi-Faur (Ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Governance* (pp. 179–181). essay, Oxford University Press.
- Morgan, K. (2018). Experimental governance and territorial development (OECD Report). *OECD Report*.