

1. PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT - INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

SIGNIFICANCE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Public administration lies at the centre of modern society, which has witnessed the emergence of the 'Administrative State'. In the administrative state, public administration has become all encompassing and affects the lives of the people from 'the womb to the tomb'.

The different roles played by public administration in the modern society may be analyzed under the following heads.

Basis of Government

Public administration serves as the basis of government. A government can exist without a legislature or an independent judiciary. But no government can exist without administrative machinery.

All nations, irrespective of their system of government, require some sort of administrative machinery for implementing public policies. Thus, public administration has been the instrument of ancient empires, of monarchies, of both democracies and dictatorships, and of both developed and developing nations. As an activity, public administration cuts across different political ideologies such as capitalism or socialism. Administrative principles as such have no particular ideology at heart. Administration is conceived as a purely neutral instrument.

An Instrument for Implementing Laws and Policies

Public administration is responsible for implementing the laws and policies of government. In doing this public administration plays a crucial role. By carrying out laws, it regulates the behaviour of the people in society. By implementing public policies and programmes, it delivers the promised goods and services to the intended beneficiaries.

Participation in Policy Formulation

According to Dimock and Dimock, "In the modern world, bureaucracy is the chief policy maker in government." It is a source of facts and experience as well as of ideas and solution of public problems. In modern democracies, public administrators participate in policy making by giving advice to ministers and providing them the necessary information (i.e., facts and figures), which is relevant for policy formulation.

A Great Stabilizing Force in Society

Public administration acts as a great stabilizing force in society. It settles social tensions and conflicts and thus creates social unity and harmony. Public administrators solve social problems. Thus, public administration stabilizes social structure, social organization and social relationship.

Provides Continuity when Governments Change

Public administrators carry on government when rulers change every now and then owing to elections or revolutions or coups.

Provides a Wide Variety of Services in the Public Interest

Public administration in the modern welfare state provides a large and wide variety of services for the people.

Protective functions

First of all, public administration protects the life and property of the people by maintaining law and order. The survival and progress of human beings in society depend on the proper enforcement of laws against lawbreakers.

In recent times, protection of environment is added to the protective functions of government mentioned in the preceding lines. As a result of rapid industrialization, there is the problem of environmental pollution, which threatens our lives, and civilization. Befouled air, water and earth affect our health and lives. Now almost all governments are making efforts at the enhancement of environmental quality. The environmental administration regulates the relations between man and earth with its environment. It must maintain the quality of air, the uses of the ocean, and the purity of rivers and streams. It considers man's spiritual and physical survival.

Facilitative services

Public administration now-a-days provides facilitative services such as transportation, communications, supply of power, and so on.

Management of public enterprises

Public administrators manage public enterprises and public utilities in the interest of socio-economic justice. Public utilities are either publicly owned or strictly regulated in most countries. Government also imposes controls over private economic and business activities in the public interest.

Welfare services

The welfare services provided for the people include social security, old age pensions, welfare of the weaker sections, family planning, health, unemployment relief, poverty alleviation, housing, etc.

Promotion of agriculture, industry, etc.

Public administration promotes agriculture, industry, internal and international trade, banking, insurance, etc.

Cultural services

In the cultural sphere, public administration undertakes certain functions - provision of education, promotion of science and technology, encouragement of arts and ideology, etc.

Maintenance of political system

Public administration is concerned with the maintenance of the nation's political system and national unity. It is a continuous process in determining the activities of the government. To be brief, it is concerned with the preservation of the policy.

An Instrument of Social Change and Economic Development

Public administration is "concerned with managing change in pursuit of publicly defined societal values." In the developing nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America, public administration acts as an instrument of social change and economic development. The developing nations are mostly traditional and poor agricultural societies without adequate basic amenities of good life. These nations are anxious to achieve modernization of society and economic development and realize welfare goals. The state is called upon to achieve these goals. These objectives have placed challenging tasks on public administration such as formulation of economic plans and their successful implementation to realize economic growth and social change and welfare goals. The accomplishment of these goals requires honest and competent public administrators. Without efficient administration, socio-economic progress cannot be achieved. It is expected today to be the accelerator of economic and social change.

Public Administration: Essential for the Development of Civilization

Public administration has been described as "the heart of modern civilization." The civilized life that we live today depends upon the proper functioning of public administration. Civilized life implies security to life, liberty and property as well as enjoyment of the benefits that are the result of advances in modern science and technology. These are made available to people by public administration.

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AS AN ART, A SCIENCE AND A PHILOSOPHY

Is public administration an art or a science? This question is often raised and debated by both students and scholars in public administration. But different opinions have been expressed on this issue. To understand the extent to which public administration

is an art and a science, we must understand the meaning of the two key words - 'art' and 'science'. We shall now examine the question of public administration as an art and a science.

Public Administration as an Art

Art is skilful and systematized practice. It is a practical skill applied in producing something such as beautiful painting. It thus lays emphasis on practice rather than theory. In This sense, public administration is an art without any doubt. E.N. Gladden opines that the claim of public administration to be regarded as an art is rarely challenged. He says, "Administration is a distinct activity calling for specialized knowledge and techniques." It brings together the organized relationship of individuals and groups closer to each other. The ability to administer other people is a skill, an art.

Public administration is a practical art because it is primarily an activity. It is concerned with the doing of deeds with some practical end in view. It is the act of doing things, which make it an art. M. Ruthnaswamy says, "As administration consists of deeds or acts with a practical end in view, it is an art." The art of administration is the action part of government.

A successful administrator is also a skilful administrator. An administrator, who does things and solves practical problems, requires skill of a high order. Thus, the work of an administrator is more practical than theoretical. According to Charlesworth, administration is an art because it requires fineness, leadership, zeal and lofty conviction. In "the Art of Administration", Ordway Tead writes, "Administration is the comprehensive effort to direct, guide and integrate associated human strivings which are focused towards some specific ends or aims. Administration is, in short, a fine art, because it summons an imposing body of special talents on behalf of a collaborative creation which is integral to the conduct of civilized living today." Prof. Dimock also opines that administration is an art of a high order.

Public Administration as a Science

Sciences may broadly be divided into two groups: (1) exact sciences like physics and chemistry, and (2) inexact social sciences like politics and economics. Public administration belongs to the family of social sciences.

There is a controversy about the claims of public administration to the status of science. Some writers believe that public administration already is a science, or else it is going to be one shortly. But there are others who think that public administration is not a science, and never will be one. Thus, there are two diametrically opposite views on the question of public administration as a science. In this context, we should

remember that the question whether public administration is a science depends upon the meaning that is given to the term 'science'.

The term 'science' is used in both the narrower and wider senses. In the narrower sense, the term 'science' may be defined as a precise knowledge characterized by the ability to formulate accurate general principles, on the basis of which results can largely be predicted. Science allows experimentation and verification of facts and the truth of scientific laws. In this sense, public administration, or for that matter, any social science can be regarded as a science. In this sense, only physics and chemistry can be regarded as sciences.

In its wider sense, the term "science" may be defined as a systematized body of knowledge derived from experience and observation. In this sense, politics, economics, public administration and other social sciences are called sciences. Now we shall proceed to examine the various arguments for and against the science of public administration.

Arguments for Public Administration as a Science

In his seminal essay, "The Study of Administration" Woodrow Wilson referred to the 'science of public administration'. Charles A. Beard, (a pioneer in the field of public administration, and classical writers like Luther Gulick also believed that there is a science of public administration. Now, we shall examine some of the arguments advanced in support of the claims of public administration to be regarded as a science.

(1) Today, public administration has emerged 'as a self-conscious' study and gained recognition as an independent field of study. Charles A. Beard maintained that public administration is a body of "exact knowledge derived from experience and observation." He further said that public administration "is as much a general science as economics or psychology or biology, and more of a science than history or politics."

(2) In the opinion of some classical writers, public administration is a science because it has developed a set of principles, which possess a fair degree of exactness and certainty. They argued that these principles, which are developed on the basis of experience, observation and research can be applied in different administrative environments. In his "Principles of Public Administration", Willoughby asserted that there are certain fundamental principles analogous to those of any science. Luther Gulick said that like physics or chemistry, administration was governed by laws or principles. It is the job of the administrative scientist to discover such principles. The object of administrative principles is to achieve efficiency in getting things done.

(3) Public administration is a science because it can be studied by employing scientific methods of investigation. Modern scholars in public administration are employing

behavioural and comparative methods as well as sophisticated statistical techniques and computer technology. By using such methods, it is possible to collect and analyse facts relating to administration, and on the basis of such tabulated and observed facts generalizations can be arrived at.

Arguments against Public Administration as a Science

Many modern writers do not accept the view of classical writers that there is a science of public administration. They give the following arguments to prove that public administration has not yet become a science.

- (1) In his “Administrative Behaviour”, Herbert Simon has dismissed the so-called principles of administration as mere proverbs. He questioned their scientific basis and found them to be mutually contradictory. Robert Dahl, another modern writer, said that the principles enunciated by classical writers were limited to a few examples in a few national and historical settings. Hence, it is said that such unscientific principles without universal validity cannot make public administration a science.
- (2) In his “The Science of Public Administration: Three Problems”, Robert Dahl points out the impossibility of excluding normative considerations from the problems of public administration. Public administration is not value free, since public administrators often face the ethical considerations in doing their duties. As a result of the influence of values, the researcher in public administration cannot be completely objective. Since public administration is value-laden, it cannot be regarded as an exact science.
- (3) Robert Dahl also points out that public administration is not a science because it deals with certain aspects of human behaviour in organizations. Human behaviour cannot be examined in controlled experiments in a laboratory setting.
- (4) Public administration is not a science because it is largely influenced by cultural factors. The influence of culture on public administration makes it vary from country to country. In the opinion of Dahl, public administration cannot claim the status of science, unless it is studied on a comparative basis.

After examining the pros and cons of the science of public administration, one thing becomes clear. Public administration is not an exact science like physics or chemistry. It is an inexact social science like politics or economics. It is both an art and a social science. Stephen Robins says “Administration should be recognized as both a science and an art.” It has a systematized body of theory, which represents the science part of administration. The ability to apply the theory correctly is the art of administration.

Emergence of New Public Administration

The social and political upheavals of the 1960's in the USA created in the younger scholars of public administration a general spirit of criticism and a desire for reform of the discipline. They pioneered a reform movement in public administration, which came to be known as the new public administration. In September 1968, thirty-four younger scholars and practitioners met under the inspiring leadership of Dwight Waldo at the Minnowbrook conference center in Syracuse University. They were critical of the assumptions and realities affecting American public administration. They challenged the established wisdom of public administration as it was passed to them, that is, the ideals of orthodox as well as post-World War II value neutral, positivist scholarship in the discipline of public administration.

It was a time of turbulence when the young scholars gathered at Minnowbrook. The turbulence was due to war in Vietnam, the urban riots, campus upheavals, and black American movements. Economic crises also added to the turbulent times.

Affected by the turbulence of the times, the younger scholars expressed their concern about all institutions, especially government. In their opinion, the earlier dogmas of public administration - economy and efficiency were inadequate and incomplete as objectives of administrative activity. They, therefore, demanded vociferously restoration of values, ethics and public purpose in public administration. They pleaded for a more humane, pro-active public administration. Thus, they reflected the reformist radicalism of the 1960s. They also discussed relevance of public administration as a discipline. They wanted to make public administration, its teaching and research as socially sensitive. Hence, public administration should be sensitive towards the goals of social servicing and social welfare which have assumed great importance.

The major landmarks in the growth and emergence of new public administration in the USA are:

1. The Honey Report on Higher Education for Public Service, 1967
2. The Philadelphia Conference on the Theory and Practice of public administration, 1967
3. The Minnowbrook Conference, 1968
4. Publication of "Toward a New Public Administration: the Minnowbrook Perspective", edited by Frank Marini, 1971
5. Publication of "Public Administration in a Time of Turbulence", edited by Dwight Waldo, 1971.

What Does the NPA Stand For?

According to Ferrel Heady, "The New Public Administration movement not only reaffirmed the breakdown of the traditional emphasis on techniques of administration

and stressed the obligations of public administrators to be concerned with values, ethics and morals, and to pursue, a strategy of activism in coping with the problems of society." It emphasized relevance, personal morality, social equity, anti-bureaucratic philosophy and a concern for client. Its major thrust is on enhancing the role and capacity of the public administrative system to meet the challenges of, and to direct, social change. It marked a reaction against the positivist influence strongly in evidence following World War II, and reflected the reformist radicalism of the sixties. Thus, for the most part, the New Public Administration saw both the orthodox Public administration and the post-World War II reconstruction of the field as the "Old Public Administration."

Anti-Goals of the NPA

Robert T. Golambiewski mentions three anti-goals of the NPA. These are:

Anti-positivism: The literature on the NPA expresses a strong reaction against the positivist influence on public administration. The NPA scholars have rejected the concept of value free public administration as well as any definition of public administration that is not properly involved in policy. In their opinion, public administration should be problem solving.

Anti-technical: The NPA opposes the sacrificing of the human being to the logic of the machine.

Anti-bureaucratic and anti-hierarchical: The NPA is against the bureaucratic and hierarchical structures in administration. The proponents of NPA want to debureaucratize the government and replace the hierarchical bureau with a more flexible, humane and democratic form of organization.

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Five (positive) goals of NPA

From a positive perspective, the five goals of NPA are:

- i. The NPA views mankind, as having the potentiality of becoming perfect. Humans are not static factor of production
- ii. Stress on the central role of personnel and organizational values and ethics.
- iii. Social equity.
- iv. Client centered approach.
- v. Emphasis on innovation and change

Principal Themes or Goals of NPA

The major themes of NPA are: (1) relevance, (2) values, (3) social equity, (4) change, and (5) concern for clients. These may be explained as follows:

(1) Relevance: Relevance is an important theme of NPA. The advocates of NPA pointed out that public administration has traditionally been interested in efficiency and economy. In their opinion, the discipline was becoming irrelevant because it had little to say about contemporary problems and issues. They insisted that public

administration should be relevant to the needs of the society and deal with real-life issues such as urbanism, slums, riots, violence, environmental pollution, problems of technology and so on. They wanted that the administrators should be exposed to real-life problems and take an active part in analyzing them and suggest suitable remedies. According to the exponents of the NPA, the management-oriented public administration curriculum was found irrelevant. They demanded to change it to facilitate meaningful studies relevant to the realities of public life. A public administrative system should be based on identifiable social needs of a society within which it operates.

(2) Values: The proponents of New Public Administration lay greater emphasis on normative concerns in public administration. The various issues dealt by them such as social justice and good management deal with ethical goals and values of public administration. They stress the central role of personal and organizational values and ethics in administration. The goals of administrative efforts should be selected more consciously and deliberately on moral grounds. They reject the concept of value free or value neutral public administration. The administrators, they argue, cannot be value neutral or categorical or partial in administering social and economic programmes. Therefore, the New Public Administration is anti-positivist in nature.

(3) Social Equity: The New Public Administration considers the realization of social equity as the main purpose of public administration. Social equity means that public administrators should become champions of the less privileged groups in society and provide more and better services to them. The administrators have to fight not only for radical goals but also against unjust governmental orders. They are expected to shift agency resources to help the poor, helpless and powerless in society. Commitment to social equity means involvement of administrators in politics and policy making. They should use their discretion in administering social and other programmes to protect and advance the interests of the weaker sections in society. They are required to solve problems not in administrative self-interest alone but society in general. Frederickson's argument is that administrators are human beings. Some of them spend time in the field to observe conditions more closely than those who draft the laws. To a certain extent, if administration is a part of society, then its individuals cannot be inactive, disinterested agents within it.

(4) Change: Social change is another major theme of NPA. Social equity cannot be obtained without consistent effort towards social change. In the words of Mohit Bhattacharya: 'To serve the cause of social equity is to actively work for social change. This is the motto of new public administration. The attack is on the status quo and against the powerful interests entrenched in permanent institutions. The Minnowbrook participants explored ways of institutionalizing change and remedying

the bureaucratic tendencies of big organizations. Public administration can fulfil its commitment to social equity through social change. Social change necessitates decline of some public organizations and emergence of some new organizations. Public administration should become an important area of the “Management of change.” Public administrator has to deal with such a change.

(5) Concern for Clients: The New Public Administration is ‘client-focused administration’. It requires administrators to be sufficiently interested in meeting human needs of those who receive government services or goods. The administrators should be active in sensing public needs and responding to them. The clients of administration should also be given voice in deciding how and when and what is to be provided. The administrators should show efficiency not in the execution of policy but in the delivery of public services in a humane manner. The New Public Administration, therefore require positive and proactive administrators. H. George Frederickson finds that elitist systems of public administration are unresponsive to the demands and humane needs of those people whom the system is set to serve. Conventional public administration, therefore, according to Frederickson’s view, has to be restructured in order to be responsive to public needs.

The new public administration may be considered as a movement away from value free public administration, from positivism and scientism. On the contrary, it is a movement towards a normative theory, philosophy, social concern and activism.

According to George Frederickson, “The new public administrator ‘is less generic’ and ‘more public’ than his forbear, ‘less descriptive’ and ‘more prescriptive’, ‘less institution oriented’ and ‘more client impact oriented’, ‘less neutral’ and ‘more normative’ and ‘no less scientific’.”

NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE

Public administration is a dynamic, not a static, instrument state. It changes from time to time to suit the needs of the changing times as well as the changing philosophy of state. In 1887, Woodrow Wilson invented the discipline of public administration out of an anxiety to purify administration in order to re-establish social ethics in it. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, public administration was reinvented in the form of ‘New Public Administration’ to suit the needs of the dynamic situation of the turbulent American society demanding administrative activity to be relevant to the real needs of society - social justice, equality and so on.

Birth of New Public Management (NPM)

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the advent of the era of globalization, liberalization and privatization and the forces of market economy demanded significant changes in the management of public organizations. Consequently, a new model of public sector management christened as New Public Management emerged. Its birth was heralded by the publication of David Osborne and Ted Gaebler's book entitled "Reinventing Government" in 1992. The birth of New Public Management is regarded as the second reinvention in public administration, the first being 'New Public Administration'. During the 1990s, the NPM became a worldwide movement. The NPM has been variously called 'Managerialism', 'Entrepreneurial Government', and 'Market based public administration'.

In this new paradigm, the term 'management' is preferred to the term 'administration' because management implies a decisiveness and proactiveness that appear to be lacking in governmental administration. The term 'management' has some aggressive action-orientation and is much more practice-oriented than the term administration.

Important Features of the NPM

The most important features of the NPM may be examined as under:

1. Business administration as the right model of public administration

Business administration is the right model for governmental administration. NPM is influenced by neo-conservatism or New Philosophy, which believes in the superiority of the market as the guiding principle for the society as a whole. It advocates the incorporation of the established principles of private sector organizations and market competition in the public sector. It believes that the general management process, principles, skills and techniques are the same for both private and public organizations. Thus, the NPM emphasizes the business management perspective in the functioning of governmental organizations. Accordingly, if public organizations can make profits, then profitability is a highly relevant objective, in addition to serving public interest. Hence, the NPM aims at achieving the 3 Es: efficiency, economy and effectiveness.

2. Focus on efficient public management

The focus of NPM is on efficient management of public organizations in providing high quality goods and services that citizens value. Hence, it emphasizes professional management on the basis of economic rationality. It stresses the need to inculcate effective entrepreneurial skills upon the administrative leaders. The public managers should be experts capable of handling all the variants of contracts that the NPM requires.