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PRINCIPLE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

PRESENTED

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DEDICATION

We dedicate this Seminar Work to God Almighty.

PREFACE

This paper analyses the series of metamorphosis experienced by the field of public administration as well as its theoretical dispositions. It compartmentalizes these theories into three (3) approaches: classical, modern and postmodern theories, and evaluates the theoretical implication and challenges of these approaches at each stage of its development. It highlights the creativeness of classical school on successful management process and its focus on organization dynamics. The argument of modern school that identifies human factors as the basis for the optimal performance of an organization has been critically put in perspectives. The arrival of postmodernism as a new approach seeks to bridge the useful parts of classical and neoclassical recommendations in view of contemporary organizational challenges. Literatures were drawn from secondary sources of data collection, such as: Books, Journals, and other internet materials. This paper reveals the contribution of these theories on important areas of public administration, such as: public policy, public-private partnership, as well as new emerging goals in the field, especially postmodernism. This paper therefore concludes that more concerted efforts should be geared towards theorizing old, contemporary and new terms in public administration so as to gain an in-depth understanding of the causes and consequences of any given subject matter in the field, as well as building new field of enquiries, and helps clarifying and directing inquiry into policy making, governance, ethics among other primary subject matters within the purview of public administration.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Administration as an activity is as old as society itself. But as an area of study it originated, with the publication of Wilson's essay on study of Administration in 1887. As a process, administration occurs in both public and private organizations. It occurs in such diverse institution as settings as a business firm, labor unions, religious or charitable organizations, educational institutions, etc. Its nature is affected by the sphere with which it is concerned. Administration is commonly divided into two types, Public and Private Administration. As an aspect of government activity it has existed since the emergence of political system(s). While public administration relates to the activities carried out by government, private administration refers to the management of private business enterprises. It is important to understand the functioning of administration for on this lies the understanding of the government. In this Unit an effort has been made to bring the concept of administration, public administration in particular, closer to you. This understanding will take you through the entire course of Public Administration. In what follows, we will examine the meaning, nature and scope of public administration.

Public administration is a combination of both theory and practice. According to Stillman (1980), there is no sharp point in history where the story of public administration theory begins, just like that of its practice. However, its practice is as old as human civilization. In the United States, there were two general textbooks on the subject matter of public administration theory which were regarded as the first attempt at presenting the discipline. These books were written by two scholars, White and Willoughby published in 1926 and 1927 respectively (Stillman, 1980). Although, the publication of these books marked the birth of public administration theory

as a discipline, it should, at the same time, be noted that there had been several decades of preparation for the birth of the discipline ever before they were published. For example, the works and efforts of some United States political leaders such as Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton cannot be underestimated in the attention which these leaders gave to the problems of public administration theory in a futuristic manner (Pfiffer & Presthus, 1967). Despite these efforts and their relevance to the growth and maturation of public administration theory, one cannot also down-play or ignore a remarkable essay by Wilson in 1887, eulogized by Akindele (1994) as serving as the symbolic beginning of the discipline in such a perceptive, persuasive and influential way both in its analytical and theoretical parlances

CHAPTER TWO

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION: DEFINITION AND CONCEPT.

WHAT IS PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION?

The word 'administer' is derived from the Latin word *administere*, which means to care for or to look after people, to manage affairs. Administration may be defined as "group activity which involves cooperation and coordination for the purpose of achieving desired goals or objectives".

According to William Schulze Administration is the force, which lays down the object for which an organization and its management are to strive and the broad policies under which they are to operate. L.D. White observes that although public administration varies in form and objects, and although the administration of public and private affairs differs at many points, there is an underlying similarity, if not identity. As an integral aspect of such generic concept, public administration could be related to that type of administration, which operates within a specific ecological setting. It is a means to carry out the policy decisions made by political executive.

Public Administration, therefore, refers to that part of administration, which pertains to the administrative activities of the government.

Woodrow Wilson: Public administration is the detailed and systematic application of law. Every particular application of law is an act of administration.

Percy Mc Queen: Public administration is related to the operations of government whether local or central.

Luther Gulick: Public administration is that part of the science of administration, which has to do with the government; it concerns itself primarily with the executive branch where the work of the government is done; though there are obviously problems also in connection with the legislative and judicial branches.

Corson and Harris: “Public administration ... is the action part of government, the means by which the purposes and goals of government are realized.”

Dwight Waldo: “Public administration is the art and science of management as applied to the affairs of State.”

CONCEPTS OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

The concepts of public administration include:

Public Policy: This is a proposed course of action or in action which the government intends to implement in response to a given problem or situation. Problems are brought to the attention of the government; decisions in the form of solutions are provided or taken by the bureaucrats working in the concerned agency with the knowledge of the executives. The proposal is subject to approval by the legislature.

The bureaucracy: This is a complex organization with structures, offices, personnel, methods and hierarchy of authority designed to accomplish administrative tasks of implementing laws and policies through the systematic coordination of the work of many individuals called Bureaucrats. The bureaucracy can be public or private.

CHAPTER THREE

NATURE, SCOPE, IMPORANTCE AND ROLE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

NATURE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

There are two views regarding the Nature of Public Administration, that is, Integral and Managerial. According to the integral view, 'administration' is the sum total of all the activities – manual, clerical, managerial, etc., which are undertaken to realize the objectives of the organization. In this view all the acts of officials of the government from the Attendant to the Secretaries to the government and Head of the State constitute Public Administration. Henri Fayol and L.D. White are the supporters of this view. According to the managerial view of administration, the managerial activities of people who are involved in planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating and controlling constitute Public Administration. This view regards administration as getting things done and not doing things. Luther Gullick, Herbert Simon, Smithburg and Thompson are the supporters of this view. The managerial view excludes Public Administration from non-managerial activities such as manual, clerical and technical activities.

The two views differ from each other in many ways. According to Prof. M.P. Sharma the difference between the two views is fundamental. The integral view includes the activities of all the persons engaged in administration whereas the managerial view restricts itself only to the activities of the few persons at the top. The integral view depicts all types of activities from manual to managerial, from nontechnical to technical whereas the managerial view takes into account only the managerial activities in an organization. Furthermore, administration, according to the integral view would differ from one sphere to another depending upon the subject matter, but whereas that will not be the case according to the managerial point of view because the

managerial view is identified with the managerial techniques common to all the fields of administration.

The difference between the two views relates to the difference between management and operation or we may say between getting things done and doing things. The correct meaning of the term administration would however, depend upon the context in which it is used. Dimock, Dimock and Koenig sum up in the following words: “As a study public administration examines every aspect of government’s efforts to discharge the laws and to give effect to public policy; as a process, it is all the steps taken between the time an enforcement agency assumes jurisdiction and the last brick is placed (but includes also that agency’s participation, if any, in the formulation of the programme in the first place); and as a vocation, it is organizing and directing the activities of others in a public agency.”

SCOPE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Scope of Public Administration as an activity Broadly speaking, Public Administration embraces all the activities of the government. Hence as an activity the scope of public administration is no less than the scope of state activity. In the modern welfare state people expect many things – a wide variety of services and protection from the government. In this context public administration provides a number of welfare and social security services to the people. Besides, it has to manage government owned industries and regulate private industries. Public administration covers every area and activity within the ambit public policy. Thus, the scope of public administration is very wide in modern state.

Scope of Public Administration as a Discipline The scope of public administration as a discipline, that is subject of studies, comprises of the following:

The POSDCoRB view Several writers have defined the scope of public administration in varying terms. Gullick sums up the scope of the subject by the letters of the word POSDCoRB which denote: Planning, Organisation, Staffing, Directing, Co-ordinating reporting the Budgeting. Planning means the working out in broad outline the things to be done, the methods to be adopted to accomplish the purpose.

Organisation means the establishment of the formal structure of authority through which the work is sub-divided, arranged, defined and coordinated. Staffing means the recruitment and training of the personnel and their conditions of work. Directing means making decisions and issuing orders and instructions. Coordinating means inter-relating the work of various divisions, sections and other parts of the organisation. Reporting means informing the superiors within the agency to whom the executive is responsible about what is going on. Budgeting means fiscal planning, control and accounting. According to Gullick the POSDCoRB activities are common to all organisations. They are the common problems of management which are found in different agencies regardless of the nature of the work they do

POSDCoRB gives unity, certainty, and definiteness and makes the study more systematic. The critics pointed out that the POSDCoRB activities were neither the whole of administration, nor even the most important part of it. The POSDCoRB view overlooks the fact that different agencies are faced with different administrative problems, which are peculiar to the nature of the services, they render and the functions they performed. The POSDCoRB view takes into consideration only the common techniques of the administration and ignores the study of the

‘subject matter’ with which the agency is concerned. A major defect is that the POSDCoRB view does not contain any reference to the formulation and implementation of the policy. Therefore, the scope of administration is defined very narrowly, being too inward looking and too conscious of the top management. The Subject Matter View We all know that public administration deals not only with the processes but also with the substantive matters of administration, such as Defence, Law and Order, Education, Public Health, Agriculture, Public Works, Social Security, Justice, Welfare, etc. These services require not only POSDCoRB techniques but also have important specialised techniques of their own which are not covered by POSDCoRB techniques. For example, if you take Police Administration it has its own techniques in crime detection, maintenance of Law and Order, etc., which are much and more vital to efficient police work, than the formal principles of organisation, personnel management, coordination or finance and it is the same with other services too. Therefore, the study of public administration should deal with both the processes (that is POSDCoRB techniques and the substantive concerns). We conclude the scope of public administration with the statement of Lewis Meriam: “Public administration is an instrument with two blades like a pair of scissors. One blade may be knowledge of the field covered by POSDCoRB, the other blade is knowledge of the subject matter in which these techniques are applied. Both blades must be good to make an effective tool”. We may conclude the discussion with the observation of Herbert Simon who says that Public administration has two important aspects, namely deciding and doing things. The first provides the basis for the second. One cannot conceive of any discipline without thinking or deciding. Thus Public administration is a broad-ranging and an amorphous combination of theory and practice.

IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

The study of administration assumed significance, according to Woodrow Wilson, as a consequence to the increasing complexities of society, growing functions of state and growth of governments on democratic lines. This exhaustive list of functions made to think as to 'how' and in what 'directions' these functions should be effectively performed. To this Wilson suggested that there was a need to reform the government in the administrative field. As per Wilson, the object of administrative study is to discover what government can properly and successfully do and how it can do these things with utmost efficiency and the least possible cost either of money or of energy.

ROLE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Since the 1980s a number of countries, have been influenced by the concept of liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation. In the 1980s India has also started the process of liberalisation, privatisation and globalization (LPG). One form of LPG has entrusted the management of public sector enterprises partially or fully to private companies. Another form of LPG is disinvestment in public sector enterprises, which is followed in India. As a result of this the public sector enterprises find themselves in a competitive and challenging environment. However, the role of public administration under LPG continues to quite significant. It requires dismantling of a regime of regulations, controls, restrictions, licenses, secrecy and delay. The bureaucracy has to play an investor friendly, responsive, transparent, open and competitive role. So, this requires necessary administrative reform, which should aim at elimination of redundant practices, procedures, administrative laws and corruption. Thus, the policy of LPG affects the

role, values and skills of public bureaucracy. It also decreases the scope of the functions of the state, resulting in minimum of state interference in the lives of the individuals. The state is called upon to oversee the operational side of the enterprises. This gives the state a new role as regulator.

Today, the role of public administration is towards more of governance, then of direct involvement. The public administration has to play enabling, collaborative, cooperative, partnership and regulatory roles. Coming to the core areas such as defense, atomic energy, law and order, foreign policy it has a direct role to play. In certain other areas such as telecommunications, airlines, insurance, etc., it has to compete with the private sector, for which there should be regulatory commissions to provide for equal level playing fields for both the sectors. There are other areas which it can have partnership with the citizens for efficient delivery of services, for example, maintenance of schools, hospitals, irrigation water and civic amenities. An example we can give is the 'Bhagidari Scheme' adopted by the Delhi Government. In certain areas like electricity, water and transport it can have partnership with the private sector. A number of states have partnership with the private sector in providing these services. Other such areas are protection of forests, empowerment of women, micro credit, health schemes, and awareness programmes, it can have partnership with the Non Governmental (NGO) and Voluntary Organisations.

In analysing the emerging role of public administration in the new millennium, we are dealing with governance. And governance implies that public administration has to operate in a wider context and coordinate efforts and activities of the governmental agencies at various levels with that of the market/the private sector, civil society groups, NGOs and contextual participant or elected local government bodies, self-help groups, etc. The role and character of

public administration had seen a major transformation. Although it appears that its directly handled operations have declined in some of the nontraditional areas, public administration has to provide synergy and direction for many collaborative, cooperative and regulatory activities with other segments of the society.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEORIES OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Theories are analytical tools for understanding, explaining, and making predictions about a given subject matter. There are theories in many and varied fields of study, including the arts and sciences, public administration included. Having categorized theories into: classical, modern and postmodern, this part of the paper therefore analyses the three approaches.

Classical Theory

The classical approach is based upon the ideas similarly generated in the late 1800's and early 1900's and are primarily based upon the economic rationality of all employees. This evolved around the classical assumption of Adam Smith, that people are motivated by economic incentives and that they will rationally consider opportunities that provide for them the greatest economic gain. The rational economic view is summarized as below, based on Schein (1970)'s position, as quoted by Smit, et.al (2007): i. people are motivated by economic gains; ii. Because organizations control economic incentives, an individual is primarily a passive resource to be manipulated, controlled and motivated by the organization; iii. Irrational emotions must be kept from interfering with economic rationality; iv. Organizations can be designed in ways to control irrational emotions and thus unpredictable, dysfunctional behaviors of employees. There are three branches which feed on the same underlying principle of classical theory, these are: Scientific management, Administrative principles, and bureaucratic organization.

Modern Theory

The modern theory of public administration emphasizes more on behavioral and quantitative schools of thought. Modern management theory has changed the way public

administrators look at their jobs (Denhardt, 2008). Advancements and refinements in management theory and practice have enabled managers and managerial systems to evolve. The modern approach to public administration is oriented to results, focusing on clients, outputs and outcomes. The adoption of new form of public management means the emergence of a new paradigm in public sector.

Postmodernism

Postmodern theory is a broad and somewhat ambiguous belief system tied to the philosophical and cultural reaction to the convictions of Modernism (sometimes equated with Humanism). Postmodernism is the philosophical proposal that reality is ultimately inaccessible by human investigation, that knowledge is a social construction, that truth-claims are political power plays, and that the meaning of words is to be determined by readers not authors (James, 2006). In brief, postmodern theory sees reality as what individuals or social groups make it to be

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

The importance of Public Administration as a discipline and as an activity has been discussed. Subsequent developments in the discipline in response to both practical problems and academic questions have further enhanced its importance as a vibrant and meaningful field. In the contemporary world, the burden of public duties on government has been steadily increasing. It seems that public administration is indispensable because contemporary civilization cannot progress without a sound administrative system. According to Gerald, E. Caiden “The positivistic-interventionist role of government would automatically find reactions in academic inquiry. And as history has shown, the importance of Public Administration as a discipline has been closely associated with the increasing activist role of government everywhere. In the context of the newer and the wider duties and responsibilities thrown on the state, the role of public administration is more vital and important than of almost any other branch of government. As a growing field of knowledge and practice, Public Administration has attempted to meet this challenge”.

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