

Administrative Theory

Trinath Meher

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BBA, MBA, B.Com, BMS, M.Com, BCA, MCA
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Published by:



NEERAJ PUBLICATIONS

(Publishers of Educational Books)

Sales Office : 1507, 1st Floor,

Nai Sarak, Delhi-110 006

E-mail: info@neerajbooks.com

Website: www.neerajbooks.com

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Sample Preview of The Chapter

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ADMINISTRATIVE THEORY

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION: MEANING, NATURE, SCOPE AND IMPORTANCE



INTRODUCTION

Public administration is a discipline concerned with the organisation and procedures of the formulation and implementation of public policies. It originated with the publication of Woodrow Wilson's on his essay, "The Study of Administration" in 1887. Wilson is considered the founder of the academic discipline of public administration. He made a distinction between politics and administration. According to his opinion, administration is concerned with the implementation of political policy decisions. As a process, administration deals in both public and private organisations. It is also related with different institutions of settings as a business firm, labour unions, religious or charitable organisations, educational institutions, etc.

Administration is commonly divided into two types—public and private administration. Public administration relates to the activities carried out by the government and private administration refers to the management of the private business enterprises. The public administration is an integral part of a society which emerges the administrative state. Administrative state is that state which deals with the executive, legislature and judicial branch. The motto of the

administrative state is to create "welfare of man". Its basic function is to monitor law and order in the society. Its nature is to solve the problems of the modern government.

Public administration is the business of state and is concerned with the ends and strategies of government policies and decisions. Its institutions are political in nature the so far as they enjoy the sanction of the government; it includes heads of state and government as well as a large number of government departments, agencies and public corporations and autonomous bodies like municipal authorities. The supreme government bodies exercise surveillance and control over institutions of public administration through laws, legislative bodies and fiscal policies.

Public administration is an ancient activity common to just about all countries and all levels of governments. As a result, public administration's structures and activities varies from one nation to another. It is a discipline like History, Economics, Political Science, etc., and as such is a subject of study. As a separate discipline, Public Administration is a part of social science and it especially deals with one aspect of human behaviour, i.e., administrative. It is no doubt that, public administration as an aspect of

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governmental activity is very old. It is as old as human history. The term Public Administration has been developed during the 17th century. It was period when the church was separated from the state and the government was superimposed on all other institutions with a definite territory. In every society there are some activities like maintenance of law and order and defence which have to be undertaken in public interest. At the present stage of man's evolution, public administration has proved to be inseparable. The scope of public administration has expanded with the rise of the modern administrative state. It especially growing importance in the conduct of human affairs. Its purpose is to promote a superior understanding of government and its relationship with the society it governs.

The role of public administration is crucial in the contemporary society, which is discussed in the following points:

- (1) Preservation of the polity;
- (2) Maintenance of stability and order;
- (3) Institutionalisation of socio-economic change;
- (4) Management of large scale commercial services;
- (5) Ensuring growth and economic development;
- (6) Protection of the weaker sections of society;
- (7) Formation of public opinion;
- (8) Influencing public policies and political trends.

So that, the public administration playing a significant role especially in the contemporary society. It bring development economic and help weaker sections of society. It aim to change the socio-economic condition of the societies. However, public administration is a young social science. It is an instrument of government is mostly concerned with the performance of these activities.

WHAT IS ADMINISTRATION?

The word "administer" is derived from the Latin word ad+ministrare, 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.

Broadly speaking, the term administration depending upon the four different meanings such as

- (1) As a Discipline.
- (2) As a Vocation.

(3) As a Process.

(4) As a synonym for Executive or Government.

Definitions of Administration provided by various scholars are as follows:

According to **L.D. White**, "The art of administration is the direction, coordination and control of many persons to achieve some purpose or objective."

Luther Gullick: "Administration has to do with getting things done, with the accomplishment of defined objectives."

Felix A. Nigro: "Administration is the organisation and use of men and materials to accomplish a purpose."

J.M. Pfiffner and R. Presthus: "Administration is the organisation and direction of human and material resources to achieve desired ends."

Herbert A. Simon: "Administration as the activities of groups cooperating to accomplish common goals."

E.N. Gladden: "Administration is a long and slightly pompous word, but it has humble meaning, for it means to care for or to look after people, to manage affairs."

Brook Adams: "Administration is the capacity of coordinating many and often conflicting social energies in a single organism, so adroitly that they shall operate as unity."

F.M. Marx: "Administration is determined action taken in pursuit of a conscious purpose. It is the systematic ordering of affairs and the calculated use of resources, aimed at making those things happen which one wants to happen and foretelling everything to the country."

Thus, it is clear from above definitions that "administration" is a collective activity which involves rational organisation and management of men and material. In the simplest terms, administration is determined action taken in pursuit of a conscious purpose. Administration has to do with getting things done, with the accomplishment of defined objectives. Administration is the specialised vocation of managers who have skills of organising and directing men and materials.

ADMINISTRATION, ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

Administration is associated with performing routine things which deals with certain procedure, rules and regulations. Organisation is the work of connecting

interdependent parts so that each has a special function, act, office or relation to the whole. Organisations have generally the structure of a pyramid— a large field staff working under the supervision, coordination and direction of fewer and fewer persons at the higher levels of the hierarchy. The chief executive is the highest official at the head and performs the functions of making final policy decisions, exercising control and command and bears the responsibility for the overall direction and performance of the organisation. In other words, the chief executive is the leader of the organisation, the captain of the ship.

Management is associated with the business activity which has to show the economic performance, whereas administration is associated with the non business activities like activities of the government. Thus, administration is a process common to all group effort, public or private, civil or military, large scale or small scale. It is process of work in a department store, a bank, a university, a high school, a restaurant, a hospital, a hotel or a local government. Therefore, administration is a determinative function. Management is an executive function which primarily concerned with carrying out the broad policies and organisation in the machinery through which coordination is established between administration and management.

DEFINITIONS OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Public administration is the management of affairs of the government at all levels—national, state and local. It is a branch of the wider field of administration. It is any kind of administration in the public interest which mean government administration. Public administration, therefore, refers to that part of administration, which deals with the administrative activities of the government.

Public administration is the non-political bureaucrate machinery of the government for implementing its laws and policies in action, e.g. the collection of revenues, maintenance of law and order, running the railways and postal services, maintaining of army, running schools and hospitals. These are all acts of Public Administration. Public administration is decision-making, planning the work to be done, formulating objectives and goals, working with the legislative and citizen organisations to join public support. It is the action part of government by which the purposes and goals of government are realised.

The definitions of Public Administration provided by various scholars are as follows:

According to **L.D. White**, “Public Administration consists of all those operations having for their purpose the fulfilment or enforcement of public policy.”

Gladden: “Public Administration is concerned with the administration of the government.”

Dwight Waldo: “Public Administration as the art and science of management as applied to the affairs of the state.”

Marshall E. Dimock: “Public Administration is the fulfilment or enforcement of public policy of declared by the competent authorities. It deals with the problem and powers, the organisation and techniques of management involved in carrying out the laws and policies formulated by the policy-making agencies of government. Public Administration is law in action. It is the executive side of government.”

Woodrow Wilson: “Public Administration as detailed and systematic execution of public law, every particular application of general law is an act of administration”.

Luther Gullick: “Public Administration is that part of the science of administration which has to do with government and thus concerns itself primarily with the executive branch where the work of the government is done.”

Percy McQueen: “Public Administration is related to the operations of government whether local or central.”

J.M. Pfiffner: “Administration consists of getting the work of government done by coordinating the efforts of people so that they can work together to accomplish their set tasks.”

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

Nicholas Henry: “Public Administration is a broad-ranging and amorphous combination of theory and practice, its purpose is to promote a superior understanding of government and its relationship with society, it governs, as well as to encourage public policies more responsive to social needs and to institute managerial practices attuned to effectiveness, efficiency and the deeper human requisites of the citizenry.”

According to **F.A. Nigro** and **L.G. Nigro** Public Administration

- is cooperative group effort in a public setting.
- has an important role in the formation of public policy.

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- covers all three branches—executive, legislative and judicial;
- is different from private administration; and
- is closely associated with numerous private groups and individual in providing services to the community.

In sum, **Public Administration**

- is the non-political public bureaucracy operating in a political system;
- deals with the ends of the state, the sovereign will, the public interests and laws;
- is the business side of government and it concerned with policy execution and also policy-making;
- covers all three branches of government;
- provides regulatory and service functions to the people in order to attain good life;
- differs from private administration; especially its emphasis on the public, and
- is interdisciplinary in nature and it draws upon other social sciences like political science, economics and sociology.

NATURE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

There are two views regarding the nature of public administration. These views are mainly two types such as integral view and managerial view.

(a) Integral View: According to this view, public administration is a sum-total of all the activities undertaken in pursuit of and in fulfilment of public policy. These activities includes not only managerial and technical but also manual and clerical. Henri Fayal and L.D. White are the supporters of this view.

(b) Managerial View: According to the managerial view, public administration deals with the activities of people who are involved in planning, organisation, commanding, coordinating and controlling. In this view, Administration is getting things done and not doing things. Luther Gullick, Herbert Simon, Smithburg and Thompson are the supporters of this view.

Dimock said, Administration is concerned with the “what” and the “how” of government. The “what” is the subject-matter, the technical knowledge of a field which enables the administrator to perform his tasks. The “how” is the technique of management, the principles according to which cooperative programmes are carried to success. Luther Gullick defines Public Administration by the word **POSDCORB**, which

means Planing, Organisation, Staffing, Direction, Coordinating, Reporting and Budgeting.

SCOPE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Broadly speaking, Public Administration is based on government administration mainly in the executive branch of government. It does not includes the study of judicial or legislature administrations. Several thinkers have explain the scope of Public Administration in various ways which are discussed as:

(a) Luther Gullick: According to Gullick, he explains the scope of Public Administration by the using the word “**POSDCORB**” by which he means Planning, Organisation, Staffing, Directing, Coordinating, Reporting and Budgeting.

Planning means to adopt the method to accomplish the purpose.

Organisation means the establishment of the formal structure of authority through which the work is subdivided, 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 interrelating the work of various divisions, sections and other parts of the organisation.

Reporting means informing the agency to whom the executive is responsible about what is going on.

Budgeting means fixed planning, control and accounting.

(b) Walker: Walker also analysis the scope of Public Administration by dividing it into two parts:

- (1) Administrative Theory, and
- (2) Applied Administration

Administrative Theory: The administrative theory includes the study of structure, organisation, functions and methods of all types of public authority, at all levels i.e., national, regional, local, etc.

Applied Administration: According to Walker, he has to classify the main forms of applied administration on the basis of ten principal functions which he calls as political, legislative, financial, defensive, educational, social, economic, foreign, imperial and local.

He elaborates these functions under:

- (i) Political Functions:** It study of executive-legislative relationship and minister-official relationships.