

SCOPE AND IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

There is no unanimous opinion regarding the scope of public administration. There are two different views explaining the subject matter of public administration. They are POSDCORB view and the subject matter view. Broadly speaking, Public Administration embraces the entire area and all the activity of the government. But by established usage the term has come to signify primarily the organisation, personnel, practices and procedures essential to the effective performance of the civilian functions entrusted to the executive branch of government. Public Administration is in fact the executive in action. It does not include the study of judicial or legislative administrations, although they too share in the implementation of public policy. We study in it the actual administration or the actual administrative machinery of the state.

POSDCORB View Luther Gullick sums up the scope of the subject by the letters of the word 'POSDCORB' by which means: Planning, Organisation, Staffing, Direction, Co-ordinating, Reporting and Budgeting. Planning means the working out in broad outline the things to be done, the method 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 condition of work. Directing means making decisions and issuing orders and instructions. Co-ordinating means inter-relating the work of various divisions, sections and other parts of organisation. Reporting means informing the agency to whom the executive is responsible about what is going on. Budgeting means fixed 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 the different agencies regardless of the peculiar nature of the work they do.

There are several thinkers who are of the opinion that the POSDCORB view of the scope of public administration 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 perform. This view takes into consideration only the common techniques of administration and ignores the study of the 'subject matter' with which an agency is concerned. The Subject Matter View The subject matter view is more or less similar to the integral view of the nature of the public administration. According to this view public administration studies the sum total of the entire activities of the government; the executive, legislature and judiciary. Thus the scope of public administration is very wide.

However, the POSDCORB view and subject matter view are not mutually exclusive, but complement each other. They together constitute the proper scope of the study of public administration. Thus Lewis Meriam rightly said, "Public administration is an instrument with two blades like a pair of scissors. One blade may be knowledge of the fields 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." Public Administration as a discipline consists of five branches:

- (I). Organisational theory and Behaviour
- (II). Public Personal Administration
- (III). Public Financial Administration
- (IV). Comparative and Development Administration
- (V). Public Policy Analysis

The scope of public administration varies with people's expectations of what they should get from government. Throughout the world the demands made by the people upon governments have

continually increased and in time to come they would further increase.

IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Public administration has a very important place not only as an instrument of governance but also as an important mechanism for preserving and promoting the welfare of community in the era of welfare states. It has a great impact upon the life of the people as well. It is a vital process charged with the implementation of great objective. The importance of public administration may be studied under three heads:

- (I) Its importance to the people.
- (II) Its importance in a democracy
- (III) Importance of Public Administration as a Subject

Public Administration and the People

Public administration has a very important place in the life of people. It is the branch of government that touches more directly and more strikingly than any other the lives of human beings. All people use the service of public administration almost in their in their activity. There are several departments of administration like the employment exchanges, industries department, medical department, and agriculture department etc, which affect almost every citizen in one way or other. With the advancement of science and technology the problem of maintaining effective coordination between the administration and the rest of the community has become great important. So the pursuit of knowledge of public administration becomes most essential element in the modern time.

Public Administration and Democracy

The ideals of democracy, i.e., progress, prosperity and protection of the common man can be obtained only through impartial, honest and

efficient administration. An administrator should be neutral in politics and serve faithfully any political party which comes in power. In the field of government he must possess some aptitude for getting along with politicians. Modern democracy has brought in the concept of a welfare state. It has increased the scope of state activity leading to ever increasing demands on public administration for more and more of services. Undue intervention of politicians in administration and it may cease to be an effective instrument for the realisation of nations' ideals.

Importance of Public Administration as a Subject

Almost for all his needs the citizen depends upon public administration. In view of the important role of public administration in the life of the people, its study cannot be ignored by the citizen of a state. Therefore, its teaching should become a part of the curriculum of education. The study of public administration will help the people to become better administrators.

Causes of its Growing Importance Industrial revolution and technological developments have contributed the importance of public administration. The ordinary person can feel secure only if large scale organisation based on sound principles of administration caters his interests. The rapid means of transport and communication have made the existence of large scale administration possible. Emergence of concept of planning for the socio- economic amelioration of the common man has led to the development public administration. Formulation and execution of these plans widens the sphere of public administration. With the inception of welfare states the concept of police states has suffered setbacks. The welfare states look after the individuals in all way of life. These are the factors responsible for the development and growing importance of public administration.