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## EVOLUTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

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**ABSTRACT :** Public Administration as a practice is as old as our ancient civilization. But as an independent discipline it cannot claim a long history. The origin and evolution of Public Administration as a distinctive subject can be traced from 1887 onwards. Prior to 1887, almost no written materials existed on the art and science of Public Administration. The major turning point in the history of public administration came with an essay written by a young and dynamic leader, Woodrow Wilson (1887), which became symbolic in the evolution of public administration. As a field of systematic and scientific study, public administration is a modern discipline. It is regarded as among the newest of the social sciences.

**KEYWORDS :** Public Administration, Dichotomy, Science, POSDCORB, Proverbs, Crisis, Social Science, Interdisciplinary.

**INTRODUCTION :** Public administration as an activity consists of actions that the purpose or aspiration of a government. It works through the system of organization and management. Therefore, it is both an activity and a discipline for systematic study. Public administration, since its inception, has been primarily concerned with problems of how to validate law qualitatively, honestly and efficiently. Today, public administration has become more concerned with the processes by which it participates in formulating and interpreting law to make it more correct with reference to public interest.

As a practice, public administration has always helped the governments to carry out actions on the basis of validated laws. The objectives of public administration in a simple society are limited, but in a large and complex society, institutions and their processes become more specialized and differentiated leading to the creation of new organizations, departments, council, commissions, agencies and so on, especially for the administrative tasks.

As a structure of government or element of political system, public administration has been an established institution since time immemorial. Even the earliest framers of the U.S. Constitution inscribed its developmental path. However, the major turning point in the history of public administration came with an essay written by a young and dynamic leader, Woodrow Wilson (1887), which became symbolic in the evolution of public administration. Wilson's essay, 'The Study of Administration', published in the Political Science Quarterly was written at such a juncture, when there was an urgent need for restructuring the institution in quest of public interest, in order to eradicate corruption, cleanse the system and improve the efficiency of the government.

Wilson observed that till the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the major concerns of the study of politics were political philosophy, constitutional arrangements and law-making. However, the rising complexities in society and an associated increase in governmental size and activity demanded a change. He suggested that European countries had accepted the change and were seriously working on training civil servants and expressing concern for the scientific study of administration. This paper will trace the evolution of public administration through six distinct paradigms. It will also try to examine the future prospects of the discipline.

PARADIGMS OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION : The following six paradigms in evolution of public administration are-

1. Dichotomy between politics and public administration (1887-1926)
2. Principle of public administration (1927-1937)
3. Era of Challenge (1938-1948)
4. Crisis of Identity (1948-1970)
5. Public Policy Perspective (1971-1990)
6. Rowing to Steering (1991- continuing).

FIRST STAGE: POLITICS –ADMINISTRATION DICHOTOMY (1887-1926):-This is the beginning of evolution of public administration as a discipline. The basic theme during this stage was the advocacy for the separation of politics from administration, popularly known as the 'politics-administration dichotomy'. This stage began with the publication of Woodrow Wilson's essay 'The Study of Administration' in the political science quarterly in 1887. This essay laid the foundation for a separate, independent and systematic study in public administration. Hence, Wilson is regarded as the 'Father of Public Administration'.

Wilson separated administration from politics. He argued that politics is concerned with policymaking while administration is concerned with the implementation of policy decisions. In his Words "...that administration lies outside the proper sphere of politics. Administrative questions are not political questions. Although politics sets the tasks for administration, it should not be suffered to manipulate its offices."

The Wilsonian line of thought was further continued by Frank J. Goodnow in his book 'Politics and Administration' published in 1900. He made a sharp conceptual distinction between two functions of government, that is, politics and administration. To quote Goodnow, "Politics has to do with policies or expressions of the state will", whereas, "administration has to do with the execution of these policies". The basis of this distinction was provided by the classic separation of powers. Like Wilson, Goodnow also argued for the promotion of public administration as an independent and separate discipline. He came to be regarded as 'Father of American Public Administration'.

In 1926, L. D. White's 'Introduction to the Study of Public Administration' was published. It was the first textbook on public administration. With its publication, the subject picked up academic legitimacy, that is, the American universities began to offer courses of instruction in public administration.

SECOND STAGE: PRINCIPLE OF ADMINISTRATION(1927-1937):- The second period in the history of public administration has as its central theme the Principle of Administration. The central belief of this period was that there are certain 'principles' of administration, and it is the task of the scholars to discover them and to promote their application. This period opened with the publication of W.F. Willoughby's Principles of Public Administration(1927). The title of the book is very suggestive, and indicates, very correctively, the new thrust of the discipline. This period saw the publication of a number of works, the more important among them being Mary Parker Follet's 'Creative Experience', Henry Fayol's 'Industrial and General Management', Mooney and Reiley's 'Principles of Organisation'. This period reached its climax in 1937 when Luther H. Gulick and Lyndal Urwick's

'Papers on the Science of Administration' appeared. The use of the word 'science' is significant, for Gulick and Urwick implied that Administration was science. Gulick and Urwick coined that acronym POSDCORB to promote seven principle of administration.

In short, the years 1927-1937 were the golden years of principles in the history of public administration. This was also a period when public administration commanded a high degree of respectability and its products were in great demand both in government and politics.

**ERA OF CHALLENGE (1938-1948):-** The advocates of the principles of administration began soon to be challenged, and the period from 1938 to 1947 was, indeed, one of continuous and mounding challenge and questioning. In 1938, Chester I. Barnard's 'The Function of the Executive' was published. The book discusses the broader issues of administration such as formal and informal functions, functional overlay, organizational environment, equilibrium among organizational units and inducement contributions. Chester Barnard does not in the least uphold the stand taken by the writers of the second period like Willoughby, Gullick, Urwick etc....Herbert A Simon wrote an article entitled, 'The Proverbs of Administration' in 1946, and its argument was further developed in his 'Administrative Behaviour' which was published in 1947 and on which he was awarded the Nobel Prize in the year 1978. The principal thesis of Simon is that there is no such thing as principles of administration; what are paraded as 'principles' are in truth no better than proverbs. Herbert Simon developed a rationalistic theory of administration along with 'bounded rationality'. The claim that public administration is a science was challenged by Robert Dahl in 1947, and he argued that the quest for principles of administration was obstructed by three factors. These were values permeating administration while science is value-free. Besides, human personalities differ and so do the social frameworks within which organizations have inevitable to operate. As a result of criticisms, Public Administration found itself in a deflated position, and the morale of the discipline was low. It was on this note that Public Administration entered the fourth phase in its history.

**FOURTH STAGE : CRISIS OF IDENTITY (1948-1970):-** With the rejection of politics-administration dichotomy and principles of administration, public administration suffered from the crisis of identity. Consequently scholars of public administration reacted in two ways:

(i) Some of them returned to the fold of political science (the mother science). However, they were not encouraged by political scientists. John Gaus in his article entitled Trends in the Theory of Public Administration (1950) developed a thesis that "a theory of Public administration means in our time a theory of politics also." Further, Rosco Martin in his 1952 article, called for continued "dominion of political science over public administration."

(ii) Some others moved towards the administrative science. They argued that administration is administration irrespective of its setting. They founded the Journal of Administrative Science Quarterly in 1956. The major works influenced by this perspective are – Organizations (1958) by March and Simon, Behavioral Theory of the Firm (1963) by Cyert and March. Handbook of Organisations (1965) by March, and Organisations on Action (1967) by J.D. Thompson.

However, in both cases (i.e. either towards political science or administrative science), public administration lost its separate identity and distinctiveness and it had to merge with the larger field. This is why, this stage in the evolution of public administration is called as the "stage of crisis of identity".

Various developments took place during this phase of the evolution of public administration. They are :

- (i) Rise of New Human Relations Approach advocated by Chris Argyris, Douglas McGregor, Rensis Likert, Warren Bennis, and others
- (ii) Growth of Comparative public Administration
- (iii) Advocacy of Ecological Approach to the study of public administration by F.W.Riggs
- (iv) Conceptualization of Development Administration by Edward Weidner, F.W.Riggs, and others
- (v) Crystallisation of the concept of Administrative Development by F.W.Riggs
- (vi) Emergence of New Public Administration
- (vii) Advocacy of Public Choice Approach by Vincent Ostrom, and others
- (viii) Rise of Critical Perspective of public administration.

FIFTH STAGE: PUBLIC POLICY PERSPECTIVE (1971-1990):- Despite the uncertainty and turmoil of the preceding period, public administration during period 1971-91 registered progress and entered the seventies with an enriched vision. Public administration attracted within its fold scholars from various disciplines and thus was becoming truly interdisciplinary in its nature. Indeed, of all the social sciences, it is public administration which is most inter disciplinary, it is also drawing heavily on the management science. Public administration has come closer to policy science and related areas and has been showing ample concern for issues in the field.

SIXTH STAGE : GOOD GOVERNANCE (1991- CONTINUING):- Enormous changes in many sectors and the development of technology, communication ,global economy and most importantly, the power and role of government has led to self-analysis of business and government sectors. These changes have influenced the dynamics of government facilitating its entrepreneurial growth in 1992, with the publication of 'Reinventing Government'. Osborne and Gaebler reconstructed the functions of government. They argued that as governments have become entrepreneurial (Birth of Entrepreneurial Government), Various radical changes can be witnessed Changes such as improvement of public management by performance; reduction of budgets, downsizing of government, contracting out in selective areas were being observed. Thus, the major thrust was on decentralization, de-bureaucratization and democratization of administration, largely taking into account citizens' interests.

The 1990s also saw a moving away from government towards governance by creating laws, policies , organization, institutions, cooperative arrangements and agreements that control citizens and deliver public benefits; government being institutional and governance institutional and networked (Henry,2002).In the process of assisting the developing countries to achieve their developmental path, a new tool of Good Governance was adopted by the World Bank that was based on neo-liberal attributes. The concept of Good Governance was first highlighted in the World Bank document on Sub-Sahara Africa in 1989.The document gave a comprehensible meaning to the concept.

It incorporated four major facets to the context, namely (a) public sector management: (b) accountability, (c) legal framework for development and (d) information and transparency .

The political and economic development in the West in the 1990s, gave a boost to certain developmental policies that incorporated features such as Good Governance and democratization. According to Adrian Lefiwich (2008), contemporary western aid and overseas development has defined three major features of governance, firstly, the use of aid to support and promote market friendly and competitive economies, and the other two are support for democratisation and maintenance Good governance.

CONCLUSION:- If we talk of the prospects of public administration, we can observe that all the paradigms of administration have not only added quality to the evolution of public administration, but also strengthened its future prospects. Today, public administration oscillates between two theories. The first theory is based on its independence as a discipline of study and the second theory rests on its dominant purpose of formulating and implementing social change and social welfare. These theories actually complement each other, as one is irrelevant without the other.

Public administration is striving for a right combination of theory and practice. The promotion of better understanding of the government and its focus on the relationship with society has enormously defined its purpose. However, to reinforce its domain, it will have to inculcate a different type of professional training and education to prepare public administrators to work with a range of institutions and individual actors, across governance domains and sectoral boundaries. These emergent changes in governance have made the field of public administration more specialized than in the earlier paradigms. However, specialization does not signify greater democratization, even though governance is modifying itself across political structures, philosophies, cultures and citizenship.

Many of these political and administrative structures are demanding more active citizens' engagement and participation, while some other structures are evolving well. It is a clear indication that while governance has become more global deep-rooted, diverse and represented by intricate governing arrangements and ethics, it is also a departure from the long dominant standards entrenched in the western approach towards democratic governance. Finally, these transformations will definitely necessitate more research and interaction between scholars and administrators. It will also lead to essential changes in teaching prospects of public administration for the next generation. The future public administration conferences such as Minnowbrook IV will have several new challenges to mull over.

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