

UNIT-1

Meaning, Nature & Scope of Public Administration

Public Administration refers to the organization, management, and implementation of government policies and programs. It plays a crucial role in the governance system and ensures the effective functioning of government institutions. It involves the coordination of human and material resources to achieve governmental objectives.

Key Definitions:

Woodrow Wilson (often called the father of Public Administration):

"Public Administration is detailed and systematic application of law. Every particular application of law is an act of administration."

L.D. White:

"Public Administration consists of all those operations having for their purpose the fulfillment or enforcement of public policy."

Pfiffner:

"Public Administration is the organization and management of men and materials to achieve the purposes of government."

Nigro and Nigro:

"Public Administration is a cooperative effort in a public setting, covering three branches – executive, legislative, and judicial – in the implementation of public policy."

Nature of Public Administration

Public Administration has evolved over time and has both narrow and broad views of its nature:

1. Narrow View:

- Focuses only on the activities and operations of the executive branch of government.
- It is concerned with rule implementation and policy execution.

2. **Broad View:**

- Encompasses all three branches of government: **executive, legislative, and judiciary**.
- Involves activities related to the formulation of policies, interpretation of laws, and regulation.

Scope of Public Administration

The scope of Public Administration is vast and can be understood in the following aspects:

1. **As a Discipline:**

- Public Administration is an academic field that studies the structure and functions of government, as well as the behavior of public officials and institutions.

2. **As an Activity:**

- It involves various functions like **policy-making, planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating, reporting, and budgeting** (POSDCORB).

3. **Public Administration and Other Social Sciences:**

- It is closely related to political science, sociology, economics, law, and psychology. Its interdisciplinary nature allows it to draw theories and concepts from these fields to effectively address public issues.

☐ **Managerial:**

- Involves management practices, decision-making, and leadership that are necessary for the successful administration of public policies.

☐ **Legal:**

- Includes the enforcement of legal and constitutional frameworks under which government institutions operate. Public administration ensures that the rule of law prevails in administrative processes.

Developmental:

- Especially relevant for developing countries, where public administration is a tool for socio-economic progress. It involves program implementation for economic development, infrastructure, healthcare, and education.

Importance of Public Administration

- **Policy Execution:** It ensures that government policies are translated into reality through effective administration.
- **Public Accountability:** Public administrators are accountable to the public and their actions are subject to scrutiny.
- **Social Justice:** Public administration ensures that services and resources are distributed equitably, contributing to social justice.
- **Efficiency and Effectiveness:** It seeks to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of government operations.
- **Economic Development:** Public administration plays a critical role in the economic development of a nation through planning and executing developmental policies.

Evolution of Public Administration as an Academic Discipline

Public Administration as an academic discipline has evolved significantly over time. From its initial focus on administrative efficiency to a broader approach that includes governance, policy-making, and public values, the discipline has gone through several important stages. Below is an overview of its historical development:

First Phase (1887–1926)

- **Woodrow Wilson** is often credited with the foundation of Public Administration as a distinct academic discipline. In his seminal essay, “**The Study of Administration**” (1887), Wilson emphasized the need for an effective and efficient government that is separate from political interference. He emphasized the necessity of developing the scientific foundations of the discipline. He originated the politics- administration dichotomy- the distinction between political activity and administrative activity in public organization by observing that it is getting harder to run a constitution than to frame one. Wilson’s view was further continued by Frank J. Goodnow, who in his book „Politics and Administration“, published in 1900 contended that there were two distinct functions of the government viz. politics‘ and administration‘. According to him, politics has to do with policies or expressions of the state will while administration has to do with the execution of these policies. In 1926 Leonard D. White’s

“Introduction to the Study of Public Administration” was published which is regarded as the first book entirely devoted to the discipline. The main thrust of White’s text book was Politics should not intrude on administration.Public Administration is capable of becoming a value –free science in its own right and the mission of administration is economy and efficiency. Thus, White strengthened the notion of a distinct politics /administration dichotomy.

Phase II: The Principles of Administration (1927-1937)

During this phase, scholars believed that Public administration is a separate activity with its own well marked field and principles. In 1927, W. F. Willoughby’s book „Principles of Public Administration“ was published in which he asserted that —in administration there are certain fundamental principles of general application analogous to those characterizing any science.¶ They could be discovered and administrators would be expert in their work if they learned how to apply these principles. The most notable contribution to the literature was F. W. Taylor’s „Principles of Scientific Management (1911).

Among the most significant works relevant to this phase were M. P. Follet’s „Creative Experience“(1924), Henri Fayol’s „Industrial and General Management“ (1930) and James D. Mooney and Alan C, Reiley’s „Principles of Organization“ (1939) all of which delineated varying number of overarching administrative principles. However, the landmark study in the field which enhanced the prestige of the discipline was the publication of Luther Gulick’s and Lyndall Urwick’s „Papers on the Science of Administration“ (1937). According to these scholars, the general thesis of this paper is —that there are principles which can be arrived at inductively from the study of human organization which should govern arrangements for human associations of any kind.¶ Further, they propounded the famous concept of POSDCORB – final expression of these principles. Resultantly, Public Administration touched its zenith and this phase is regarded as a golden era in the evolution of the discipline.

Phase III: Criticism and Challenges (1937-1950)

In 1938, the mainstream Public Administration was challenged with the publication of Chester I. Barnard’s “The Functions of the Executive”. The challenge came basically in two forms: first, rejection of the idea of politics

administration dichotomy and second, principles of public administration lacking in scientific validity. A book entitled "Elements of Public Administration" edited by Fritz Morstein Marx (1946) was one of the first major volumes to question the assumption that politics and administration could be dichotomized. It was argued that administration cannot be separated from politics because of its political nature. Further, administration is not only concerned with implementation of political policy decisions but also plays an important role in their formulation.

The second challenge to the field was that there could be no such thing as principles of administration. In 1946, Herbert Simon gave a foreshadowing of his Administrative Behavior in an article entitled "Proverbs of Administration" published in *Publication Administration Review*. However, the most formidable dissection of the principles notion appeared in 1947 when Simon's „Administrative Behaviour: A Study of Decision-Making in Administrative Organization“ was published. In this book Simon showed that for every principle of administration there was a counter principle, thus rendering the whole idea of principles redundant. He advocated the behavioral approach to public administration to make it a more scientific discipline. He focused upon decision- making as the alternatives to the principles approach.

Robert A. Dahl also countered the claim of principles of public administration as a science in his article entitled „The Science of Administration :Three Problems“. He observed: We are a long way from a science of public administration. No science of public administration is possible unless: (a) the place of normative values is made clear; (b) the nature of man in the area of public administration is better understood and his conduct is more predictable; and (c) there is a body of comparative studies from which it may be possible to discover principles and generalities that transcend national boundaries and peculiar historical experiences. The same theme was reflected by Dwight Waldo's in his book *The Administrative State* (1948) when he attacked the notion of unchanging principles of administration, the inconsistencies of the methodology used in determining them, and the narrowness of the values of economy and efficiency that dominated the field's thinking.

Phase IV: Crisis of Identity (1948 – 1970)

The discipline was in quandary and suffered from the crisis of identity due to the abandonment of politics-administration dichotomy and the principles of public administration. So the scholars of public administration reacted to this crisis by reestablishing the linkages of Public Administration first with Political Science and then with the Management. Speaking in terms of Political Science, it can be said that most of the writings on Public Administration in the 1950's spoke of the field as an emphasis, 'and area of interest' or even as a synonym of Political Science. John Gaus, for example, in his famous article "Trends in the Theory of Public Administration" (1950) observed that A theory of public administration means in our time a theory of politics also. However, they were not liked and encouraged by political scientists.

During this period two developments took place –the growing use of the Case Study Method and the rise and fall of Comparative and Development Administration. The emergence of the case study method reflected the response of Public Administration to the behavioral revolution going on in that time in social sciences. So far as the rise of Comparative and Development Administration is concerned, it may be pointed out that prior to the abandonment of the principles of administration, it was assumed that cultural factors did not make any difference in administrative settings. But, later on, scholars like Robert Dahl and Dwight Waldo pointed out that cultural factors could make public administration on one part of the globe quite a differenton the other part.' As a result of this revised thinking, the study of Comparative Public Administration started in Universities and Colleges. However, the real impetus came in 1960 when Comparative Administrative Group was founded which received liberal grants from Ford Foundation. The Foundation's emphasis on the Third World led to a semi-autonomous sub-field of the Comparative Public Administration called the Development Administration. The most notable contribution in this sphere was that of F. W. Riggs. But Comparative Public Administration from its very origin emphasized upon theory building and to seek knowledge for the sake of knowledge. The purely scholarly thrust of Comparative Public Administration led to its downfall so much so that in 1973 the Comparative Administrative Group was disbanded.

Phase V: Public Administration as an Independent Discipline (1970 Onwards)

However, even when the discipline of Public Administration was at its lowest ebb, it was sowing the seeds of its own renaissance. Couple of factors, complimentary to each other, contributed in this process. The first was the development of interdisciplinary programs focusing upon policy science. In this regard three distinct intertheoretical linkages – a) politics-administration union, b) Economics-administration confluence, and c) organization theory-administration intermixing -- can be identified. The second was the emergence of New Public Administration (NPA) an outcome of first Minnowbrook Conference held in 1968 sponsored by Dwight Waldo - which put more emphasis on values replacing the traditional goals of efficiency and effectiveness. Besides, it laid stress on relevance, social equity and change. The overall focus of NPA movement was to make administration less generic and more public, less descriptive and more prescriptive, less institution-oriented and more client-oriented, less neutral and more normative, but it should be no less scientific all the time. The above twin intellectual currents compelled the scholars of public administration to think in terms of academic autonomy by severing their ties both with political science and management. These, in turn, made the public administrators proud as they started asserting that their profession is useful to the society. All these developments led to the rise of an independent field of public administration.

In this backdrop, in 1970 National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) was established which comprises of institutions of higher learning of different countries offering courses on major public administration programs. It is worth mentioning that over the years, the efforts of NASPAA has led to the increase in the number of separate departments of public administration considerably. Even more and more political science departments are joining this association. Likewise, the number of public administration programs which are housed in department of management or school of business administration has declined noticeably. Thus, the formation of NASPAA represented the development of public administration as an independent area of study.

Relationship of Public Administration with other Social Sciences

Public Administration is closely related to several social sciences, such as political science, sociology, economics, law, psychology, and history. Below are key points outlining these relationships:

1. Public Administration and Political Science

- **Nature of the State:** Public administration is a practical manifestation of political theory and governance. While political science focuses on the theoretical aspects of the state, public administration deals with the implementation of governmental policies.
- **Policy Making and Implementation:** Political science emphasizes policy formulation, while public administration focuses on executing these policies, ensuring that public services are delivered effectively.
- **Power and Authority:** Public administration helps translate political decisions into programs that manage power and authority at various levels of government.

2. Public Administration and Sociology

- **Society and Bureaucracy:** Public administration is responsible for addressing social needs, while sociology studies social behavior, structures, and relationships. Sociological understanding helps public administrators in policy formulation, addressing social problems like inequality, education, and welfare.
- **Social Change:** Public administration is often a tool for managing social change. Sociological insights into class, caste, and community dynamics assist administrators in implementing change more effectively.
- **Social Institutions:** Administrators deal with institutions like education, healthcare, and welfare, which are central to sociological studies, creating an interplay between social theory and practical administration.

3. Public Administration and Economics

- **Resource Allocation:** Public administration is heavily involved in managing resources, much like economics, which deals with the efficient allocation of scarce resources.
- **Public Finance:** Administrators must understand fiscal policies, budgeting, and the economic implications of government spending and taxation, all of which are crucial aspects of economics.

- **Economic Development:** Administrators work to foster economic growth through policies related to infrastructure, employment, and welfare, drawing on economic theories to guide decisions.

4. Public Administration and Law

- **Legal Framework:** Public administration operates within a legal framework. Administrators must enforce laws, making knowledge of legal systems essential.
- **Regulation and Compliance:** Legal principles guide the creation of policies, and public administrators are responsible for ensuring that these policies comply with constitutional and legal standards.
- **Judicial Review:** Public administrators' decisions can be reviewed by the judiciary, emphasizing the interdependence between law and administration.

5. Public Administration and Psychology

- **Behavioral Aspects:** Psychology helps in understanding human behavior, which is essential in managing personnel and dealing with the public. Motivation theories, leadership styles, and group dynamics are central to public administration.
- **Decision Making:** Psychological insights into decision-making processes assist public administrators in making rational choices.
- **Public Opinion:** Understanding public attitudes and behavior helps administrators tailor policies and communication strategies.

6. Public Administration and History

- **Institutional Evolution:** The historical development of administrative institutions is critical to understanding modern administrative systems. Public administration evolves with changing social, political, and economic contexts.
- **Learning from Past Practices:** Historical examples of governance and administration provide valuable lessons for contemporary public administration.
- **Policy Precedents:** Administrators often look to history to understand the long-term impact of policies and reforms.

Conclusion: These interactions underscore that public administration is inherently interdisciplinary, relying on concepts and insights from various social sciences to manage public institutions and policies effectively.

Public Versus Private Administration

Public and Private Administration share common principles of management, but they differ significantly in terms of purpose, structure, processes, and accountability. Below are key points outlining the differences and similarities between the two:

1. Definition and Purpose

- **Public Administration:** Refers to the implementation of government policies and the management of public programs. It focuses on serving the public interest, delivering public services, and ensuring welfare and development. Its primary purpose is social service and maintaining public order.
- **Private Administration:** Involves the management of private organizations, such as businesses and corporations. The main goal of private administration is profit maximization, efficiency, and market growth, focusing on the interests of shareholders or owners.

2. Ownership and Control

- **Public Administration:** Operates under the control and ownership of the government. It is accountable to elected officials and, ultimately, the public.
- **Private Administration:** Operated by private individuals or groups, such as shareholders or company owners. It is controlled by the board of directors or top management, and is accountable to investors or stakeholders.

3. Accountability

- **Public Administration:** Highly accountable to the public, government agencies, and regulatory bodies. Public administrators are subject to laws, audits, public scrutiny, and legislative oversight. Their decisions and actions are often transparent.
- **Private Administration:** Accountability is primarily toward shareholders, owners, and clients. Although there are regulatory frameworks, private administration has relatively more autonomy, with less direct public oversight.

4. Goals and Objectives

- **Public Administration:** Focuses on public service, welfare, and equity. It seeks to provide essential services like healthcare, education, law enforcement, and social security, often emphasizing fairness and inclusion over efficiency.
- **Private Administration:** Primarily driven by profit-making and market competitiveness. Efficiency, cost-effectiveness, innovation, and customer satisfaction are the primary objectives, with a focus on maximizing financial returns.

5. Decision-Making

- **Public Administration:** Decision-making processes are often bureaucratic, slower, and more formalized due to the need for following laws, procedures, and ensuring accountability. Public administrators may face political interference or public pressures in decision-making.
- **Private Administration:** Decision-making tends to be faster, more flexible, and results-oriented. Private managers have greater discretion and can adapt quickly to changes in the market or business environment.

6. Flexibility

- **Public Administration:** Relatively rigid, with strict rules, regulations, and legal constraints that must be followed. Changes in procedures or policies often require legislative approval, making innovation slower.
- **Private Administration:** Generally more flexible, with the ability to adopt new strategies, practices, and innovations swiftly. Private firms can reallocate resources and redesign organizational structures to adapt to changing market conditions.

7. Motivation and Incentives

- **Public Administration:** Employees are often motivated by job security, public service, and social welfare goals. Incentives are usually non-financial, such as stability, pensions, and social recognition.
- **Private Administration:** Employee motivation is more often tied to financial incentives such as salaries, bonuses, promotions, and profit-sharing. Performance is closely linked to measurable results, often leading to a competitive work environment.

8. Legal Framework

- **Public Administration:** Operates within a complex legal and constitutional framework. Every action or decision by public administrators must be legal and justifiable. They are subject to laws such as the Administrative Procedure Act, audit laws, and transparency regulations.
- **Private Administration:** Subject to corporate laws and market regulations, but enjoys greater operational freedom. Legal constraints are generally related to corporate governance, labor laws, and consumer protection, but with fewer procedural hurdles than in public administration.

9. Scope of Operations

- **Public Administration:** Covers a vast scope, managing everything from national defense to social welfare programs. It deals with diverse and complex issues, often involving a larger number of stakeholders, including different levels of government and the public.
- **Private Administration:** Typically narrower in scope, focusing on specific markets, industries, or products. Its operations are usually more specialized, with a focus on delivering goods and services efficiently to a targeted customer base.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, while public and private administration share foundational management principles, their goals, accountability, and operational frameworks set them apart. Public administration is oriented toward serving the public interest, while private administration is focused on profitability and market-driven objectives.

New Public Management

New Public Management (NPM) is a set of administrative and management reforms aimed at improving the efficiency, effectiveness, and performance of the public sector by borrowing techniques from the private sector. Emerging in the late 20th century, especially in the 1980s and 1990s, NPM became influential as governments sought to reduce bureaucratic inefficiencies, make public services more responsive, and enhance accountability.

Key Characteristics of New Public Management

1. Efficiency and Cost-Effectiveness

- NPM emphasizes improving the efficiency of public services by reducing costs, cutting waste, and maximizing output with minimal input. This is inspired by the private sector's focus on efficiency and profit-making.

2. Market-Based Approaches

- It advocates for introducing market mechanisms within the public sector, such as competition, privatization, and contracting out public services to private firms or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to increase service quality and reduce costs.

3. Decentralization of Authority

- NPM calls for the decentralization of decision-making authority, giving more autonomy to lower levels of government and individual agencies. This leads to more flexible and context-sensitive decisions, moving away from centralized bureaucratic control.

4. Performance Measurement

- There is a strong focus on setting clear goals, measuring outcomes, and evaluating the performance of public agencies and civil servants. Performance indicators and benchmarks are used to ensure accountability and improve service delivery.

5. Customer Orientation

- Citizens are treated as "customers," and public services are designed to be more responsive to their needs. The public sector under NPM is supposed to be service-oriented, offering high-quality services that meet the demands and expectations of the public.

6. Accountability for Results

- Under NPM, there is a shift from accountability for procedural compliance to accountability for achieving results. Public sector managers are held responsible for the performance outcomes of their units, encouraging a results-driven culture.

7. Managerial Autonomy

- NPM encourages managerial autonomy, giving public managers more freedom to make decisions on resource allocation, staffing, and operations, akin to how private sector managers operate. This is intended to improve innovation and responsiveness to changes.

8. Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)

- NPM promotes collaboration between the public and private sectors, recognizing the potential benefits of private sector involvement in public service delivery. Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) are used to leverage the expertise, efficiency, and capital of the private sector for public projects.

9. Privatization and Outsourcing

- Privatization of state-owned enterprises and outsourcing of services to private contractors are key strategies under NPM. The rationale is that the private sector can often provide certain services more efficiently than the public sector.

10. Competition and Choice

- NPM introduces competition within the public sector and between public and private providers. For instance, public services may compete with private firms to deliver the best services, and citizens may be given a choice of service providers, fostering innovation and improving quality.

Underlying Principles of New Public Management

- **Public Choice Theory:** This theory, part of the foundation of NPM, argues that individuals act in their own self-interest, even in the public sector. NPM reforms aim to align public managers' incentives with those of service users.
- **Agency Theory:** This suggests that principals (government or public) should delegate responsibilities to agents (public managers), who should be monitored based on performance. NPM incorporates this theory by focusing on accountability through performance metrics.
- **Neo-Liberalism:** NPM reforms are rooted in neo-liberal ideas that emphasize the reduction of state intervention, market-oriented policies, and the promotion of private sector efficiency in the public sphere.

Comparison with Traditional Public Administration

- **Traditional Public Administration:** Focused on hierarchy, rules, and procedures, often prioritizing compliance over results. It operated under the assumption that a strong, centralized bureaucracy was essential for managing public services.
- **NPM:** Moves away from this model, favoring decentralized, flexible, and results-oriented management. It embraces managerialism, outcome-based evaluation, and a shift from process accountability to performance accountability.

Aspect	Traditional Public Adm	NPM
Focus	Rule-following, compliance	Efficiency, performance

Decision-Making	Centralized, hierarchical	Decentralized, managerial
Accountability	Process-oriented	Result-oriented
Service Delivery	Public sector monopoly	Market-oriented, competitive
Citizen Role	Subjects	Customers
Staffing	Permanent, career-based civil service	Contract-based, flexible
Innovation	Limited by rules	Encouraged, flexibility
Resource Allocation	Based on inputs, fixed budgets	Output-based, flexible budgets