

# A Research on Organization Theory of Democracy and Public Administration

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***Abstract – Scholarly literature has looked into nascent democracies and public administration in developing countries. However, the link between public administration institutions and sustainability of new democracies in developing countries, especially countries with ancient traditions of public administration, has not been fully explored. This paper argues that the institution of district magistracy is better suited to improve the levels of instrumentation and protracted consultation in the country and hence better able to sustain its democracy.***

***Modern democratic system is the most appropriate system from the point of view of good governance. With reference to western democracies, it may be opined that they are very near the models of good governance, but in developing countries like India they are still far from the goal of good governance. Indian democratic structure of governance, which is the largest democracy of the world, achieved good level during the last six and half decades.***

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## INTRODUCTION

The role of public administration in governance is a continuing topic of discussion and debate. The current worldwide reassessment of the functions of the State and of public officials and civil servants arises from two major sources: one is globalization and its impacts on what governments must do to adapt and respond to rapidly changing international economic, social, political and technological trends; the other is increasing dissatisfaction among citizens in many countries with the functions of government and the services that public administrations provide.

Globalization – the movement toward greater interaction, integration, and interdependence among people and organizations across national borders – is increasing transactions among countries in trade and investment and in the international flows of capital, people, technology, and information. It is evident in the growing levels of international political interaction and widespread social and cultural interchange that have occurred over the past quarter of a century.

Globalization has brought both benefits and challenges to countries around the world. Globalization offers new economic opportunities but also imposes new political, social, technological, and institutional complexities, especially on poorer countries, that governments must

address in order to stimulate more equitable economic and social development. In order to benefit from more open and widespread economic interaction, governments must support an economic system that promotes and facilitates the ability of business enterprises to compete effectively in international markets and of people at all economic levels to earn a decent livelihood.

Over the past two decades, in the wake of pressures of globalization and technological innovation and more widespread access to communications, citizens in many countries began demanding more of their governments. These rising expectations, too often, have led to growing dissatisfaction with or lack of trust in government. In its review of government reinvention experiences in nine countries, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) noted that “a growing disenchantment with government performance” increased pressures for reform. But such widespread public dissatisfaction with government is seen in other regions of the world as well.

The World Economic Forum’s tracking of public opinion in 14 countries – Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Mexico, Nigeria, Russia, Spain, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States – found a strong deterioration in public trust in government between 2001 and 2005 in all but a few of the countries.

Many political leaders and government officials know that doing things the "old way" no longer meets the demands of a more complex and interconnected international economy or the expectations of a more globally-linked and politically aware citizenry. Globalization has brought stronger competition among businesses and pressures on governments to create economic, political and social conditions within which the private sector can compete more effectively and in which people can develop their human resources to benefit from participation in productive activities. Over the past quarter of a century international organizations and progressive political leaders have called for government reinvention.

The need to improve governance and public administration and to enhance the State's capacity to carry out new functions and roles is now widely recognized. The United Nations Millennium Declaration calls for respect for human rights and the promotion of democracy and good governance (including efficient and effective public administration). Good governance is a necessary condition for the achievement of each of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – eradicating extreme poverty and hunger; achieving universal primary education; promoting gender equality; reducing child mortality; improving maternal health; combating HIV/AIDS and other diseases; ensuring environmental sustainability; and promoting global partnership for development. Governments in developing countries and their international development partners have significantly increased their financial support to strengthen governance and enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of public administration.

In the 21st century, there are four important roles through which governments can contribute to achieving sustainable economic and social development. The most crucial of these roles is developing institutional capacity because this creates the context and the foundation for all of the others. Without strong institutions neither government nor the private sector can stimulate economic growth or social progress. A second important role is enacting and implementing policies that create an enabling environment for effective participation in a globalizing economy. The inability of some countries or population groups to benefit from international economic interaction virtually assures their inability to achieve economic or social progress. Third, in order to achieve socially equitable economic growth, especially in the poorest developing countries, the government must focus on pro-poor policies that combat poverty and enhance the capacities of people who are normally bypassed in the distribution of the benefits of economic growth to participate more effectively in productive activities on which their livelihoods depend. Fourth, government has a crucial role in strengthening the capacity of public administration to promote socially equitable economic

growth, enable participation in the global economy and combat poverty.

## **PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

It conditions of activity, Public Administration is a characteristic of a more generic concept - administration. Administration has been defined as a cooperative effort towards achieving some common goals. Therefore defined, administration can be found in several institutional settings such as a business firm, a hospital, a university, a government department, etc... As a characteristic of this more generic concept Public Administration is that species of administration which operates within a specific political setting? It is an instrument for translating political decisions into reality; it is "the action part of government, the means through which the purposes and goals of government are realized".

Public Administration is a dedicated academic field. It essentially deals with the machinery and procedures of government activities. Administration has been defined as a cooperative human effort towards achieving some common goals. Therefore defined, administration can be found in several institutional settings such as a business firm, a hospital, a university, a government department and soon. As a characteristic of this more generic concept, Public Administration is that species of administration which operates within a specific political setting. It is a means through which the policy decisions made through the political decision makers are accepted out.

Public Administration is decision creation, planning the work to be done, formulating objectives and goals, working with the legislature and citizen organizations to gain public support and funds for government programmes, establishing and revising organization, directing and supervising employees, providing leadership, communicating and getting communications, determining work methods and procedures, appraising performance, exercising controls and other functions performed through government executives and supervisors. It is the action part of the government, the means through which the purposes and goals of the government are realized.

## **DEMOCRACY AS A WAY OF LIFE**

In its broader sense, it means faith in man. A genuine is an active, growing and progressive force responsive to the will of the people. Its aim is mutual service and public welfare. Democracy is a way of life in the sense that it is based on the dignity of human personality. It means a society in which men have equal opportunities for developing the faculties in them and in turn contributing their due share to the welfare of the society. Such a society is called democratic society. In such a society criticism of all kinds are tolerated and encouraged.

Democratic society provides training in discipline, love sympathy, co-operation and benevolence. In a democratic society, individual is an indispensable part of the society like the organ of human body. Dewy has aptly remarked that “democracy is nearest to the social organization in which individual and society have organic relation.”

### **ENHANCING PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION CAPACITY**

Public administration or management must be strengthened, especially in developing countries, if governments are to perform the functions required to promote socially equitable and sustainable economic growth, create enabling policies for participation in a globalizing economy, and combat poverty. Among the most important of those functions are: a) developing human resources; b) protecting human rights and political freedoms; c) protecting security, health, safety and welfare; d) building social capital by strengthening civil society; e) protecting the natural environment; f) mobilizing financial resources for development; g) creating partnerships and collaborations with the private sector and non-governmental organizations for service delivery; h) democratizing and decentralizing government; i) providing or facilitating the provision of physical and technological infrastructure; and j) enabling private sector development. Although each of these functions is important in its own right, they are all interrelated and together affect the ability of governments to achieve social and economic development goals. Achieving socially equitable economic development depends on the ability of the leaders of national and local governments, NGOs, civil society organizations, and businesses and industries to adjust rapidly to complex international social, political, and economic changes.

The challenge facing all governments in the 21st century is to create a system of governance that promotes and supports efficient economic interaction and that, at the same time, advances the health, safety, welfare, and security of their citizens.

All states face continuing challenges in renewing political institutions, finding new modalities of governance, and expanding political capacities to guide national economic activities without undue intervention and control. Innovative governments create a political system that can elicit at least a minimum level of public consensus on social and political goals; encourage political, business, and civic leaders to articulate social and economic priorities; and guide the actions of public and private organizations toward economic objectives that benefit society.

Among the means available to strengthen public administration are constitutional, electoral, governance,

administrative, and civil service reforms. Constitutional reforms restructure and revise the basic principles and institutions of governance; establish the structure of government as a federal, federation, or unitary system; identify the purpose and powers of the State; delineate the powers and limitations of and relationships among legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government; and clarify the responsibilities and obligations of government and citizens. Electoral reforms create new types of and bases for representation; establish or revise the qualifications for registration and voting; modify election rules and voting procedures; determine the process of candidate selection; prevent corrupt or unfair voting practices; guarantee voting rights; and determine how the public can hold elected officials accountable.

Governance reforms delineate the units of government at national, regional and local levels, their roles and responsibilities, and the relationships among them that can strengthen mechanisms for decision making, interaction, coordination and cooperation and create procedures for dispute resolution and settlement.

Administrative reforms improve the quality of government by specifying the procedures of bureaucratic accountability, of decision making by rule of law, and of the role of the judiciary in maintaining them. Innovative governments concerned with quality strengthen the efficacy and transparency of financing, procurement, contracting, accounting and other management functions. Civil Service reforms establish or adjust the duties, responsibilities and obligations of public employees, pay levels, recruitment procedures, incentives, training and career development rules, and ethical standards.

### **LINKING GOVERNMENTS AND CITIZENS THROUGH DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE**

Effective and efficient public administration, including public sector management, promotes and strengthens democracy and good governance. An effectively functioning civil service is essential in order to ensure that democratically elected leaders are able to protect the rights of citizens and mobilize resources through taxes and other sources in order to pay for police, judges, and the provision of services. A consolidated democracy requires the administrative capacity of the State to maintain law and order, and to promote and protect public goods such as the environment. Public confidence in the political system – and subsequently the political legitimacy of the government – is increased where the public service delivery system is effective, public officials are accessible to local citizens, and government agencies and departments work together in well-coordinated, complementary ways. Equally important is the “capacity to govern” – to make important policy choices, design and implement programmes and actions to achieve policy

objectives, and anticipate emerging trends and challenges.

However, public sector management capacity to perform the above and related tasks requires merit-based recruitment of qualified personnel, effective human resource development strategies, motivation and commitment of civil servants, and transparent processes for policy formulation, budgeting, and implementation.

Over the past few decades, improving public administration capacity has been one of the most critical issues facing developing economies.<sup>1</sup> With the rapid pace of globalization, the public sector is under even greater pressure to increase its capacity to deal with the new challenges and opportunities presented by globalization, such as new information and communication technologies, expansion of trade and investment, an increased focus on such public goods as the environment and human rights, and the proactive role of global institutions, such as the World Trade Organization, which affect development processes at the country level. For example, Transparency International (TI), a Berlin-based international NGO, has national chapters in about 70 countries that provide a forum for civil society, private sector, and government functionaries to interact with one another to create public awareness about corruption in the country.

## THE NETWORK MODEL OF ORGANIZATION THEORY

Since the mid-1990s, there has been a proliferation of writing about the network model of organization. From the organizational structure standpoint, the network model creates the possibility for reduced layers of communication, ease of information flow, and, ideally, better access to services. The value of such a model is the optimization of resources, including human resources. Catherine Alter and Jerald Rague's notable text, *Organizations Working Together* (1993, p. 46), defines organizational networks as "the basic social form that permits interorganizational interactions of exchange, concerted action, and joint production. Networks are unbounded or bounded clusters of organizations that, by definition, are nonhierarchical collectives. Of legally separate units." In Alter and Rague's definition, two overriding characteristics of the network model are an emphasis on horizontal rather than hierarchical relationships and an emphasis on exchange-based assumptions about human behavior.

As networks seek the optimal mode of operation, each component of the network tries to function in its best possible fashion. There is an emphasis on lean operations and optimal linkages. Hierarchical organizations are flattened; redundant systems are exorcized. How does

today's public administrator cope with the demands of administering in a decentralized system wherein both normatively and operationally lines of authority are more fluid and where democratic representativeness and accountability-the staples of administrative legitimacy-are rendered both more complex and more ambiguous? Two answers surface in the literature. In the United States the emphasis has been primarily instrumental. That is, the focus has been on techniques for network managers (Agranoff & McGuire, 1999; Berry et al., 2004; McGuire, 2002).

McGuire (2002) maintains that there is a core set of behaviors that the current public administrator must possess in order to manage successfully in the network setting. First, an administrator must hold activation skills. Activation is a set of behaviors employed for identifying and incorporating the persons and resources (such as funding, expertise, and legal authority) needed to achieve program goals. The single organization parallel to activation would be personnel issues of staffing. Activating involves identifying participants for the network and including key stakeholders in the process. The removal of network participants is known as "deactivating." Second, McGuire claims an administrator must also have framing behaviors. Framing behaviors are used to arrange and integrate a network structure by facilitating agreement on participants' roles, operating rules, and network values. Third is mobilization. Mobilizing develops commitment and support for network processes from network participants and external stakeholders. The last core behavior is synthesizing. Synthesizing behaviors build relationships and interactions that result in achieving the network purpose. The crowded schedule of the public manager must include room for these support-building activities.

## BENCHMARKS OF EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY

Public service delivery exhibits the supply side of citizen centric administration. This includes the parameters, laws, policies and institutions that the government puts in place in keeping with its commitment for enhancing citizens' participatory role in the governing process.

Effective public service delivery implies involvement of citizens at all stages of a programme, that is, planning, implementation and monitoring. Granting of such agency to the citizens needs to be operationalized through institutionalization of a variety of mechanisms to encourage people's participation in governance across public agencies at all levels. To start with, institutions need to follow the principle of subsidiarity, wherein a larger body does not exercise functions that can be carried out efficiently by one smaller and lesser body; the former must support the latter and help to coordinate its activity with the activities of the whole community. Once institutions are



decentralized and powers devolved in this manner, it would be easier for the citizens to associate with them at a more local and familiar level. This, in turn, would lead to a more clear exposition of the functions of different institutions and particular public officials within them. Internal procedures of government organizations require simplification for the benefit of citizens and public officials alike. Government agencies across the country are doing so by engagement of external experts, getting feedback from citizens, constitution of an in-house team of people well-versed with internal procedures and such like. Along with systems like that of citizens' charters- voluntary, written documents, reinforcing citizens' existing rights, by various government agencies to let people know the mandate of the concerned ministry/department/organization, the procedure for getting in touch with the officials, what to expect in terms of services and grievance redressal- this has assisted citizens in making legitimate demands for service delivery. Transparency and accountability in its affairs provides legitimacy to the government.

It is as significant as service delivery to realize that citizens would have queries that would need clarifications and complaints that would need addressing. Inculcating the ability to follow-up on the services delivered is equally crucial as delivering them in the first place. This is the idea of responsiveness of the government. An effective public grievance redressal system includes identification and analysis of grievance prone areas, setting up of a consumer protection system in the form of *lok adalats* and consumer forums for rapidly dealing with consumer complaints, and setting up of a well-functioning consumer feedback system. These mechanisms must necessarily be inclusive of marginalized sections of the society- women, physically challenged, lower castes, remotely located and such like.

## CONCLUSION

Placing citizens at the centre of administrative and decision making processes of the government is the hallmark of a living and thriving democracy. It is inextricably linked to a development paradigm that works to create an inclusive environment where people can develop to the fullest of their capacities, with people having efficient and equitable access to public services. Indian democracy has extensive legal and institutional provisions at various levels of administration to include citizens in the processes of governance.

The government transforms into a connected entity. India stands at a very nascent stage in this trajectory but impressive strides are being made to leverage e-governance. ICT is not the solution to everything that is wrong with participation, governance and accountability. However, they do give us a channel for democracy that

we would otherwise not have. ICT is an important addition to the public sphere that has the potential, in convergence with traditional media, to provide significantly increase citizens' opportunities to hold their government accountable.

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