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**AN ANALYSIS UPON VARIOUS PERSPECTIVES
AND PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC PERSONNEL
ADMINISTRATION**

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An Analysis upon Various Perspectives and Principles of Public Personnel Administration

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Abstract – Public personnel administration, which is a significant aspect of public administration in the modern state, is rightly described by Herman Finer, a renowned British social scientist, as the sovereign factor in public administration. It is also called by such names as manpower management, personnel management, labour welfare management, and so on. The term personnel administration is known to have a wider connotation as it deals with numerous elements as classification is civil servants, recruitment, training, promotion, compensation, discipline and retirement benefits of the personnel in the government.

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INTRODUCTION

Personnel administration (also called human resources management and human capital management) encompasses all activities related to people in organizations. It entails the use of human resources to accomplish an organization's objectives as efficiently and effectively as possible. Because successful management of people is the key to an organization's effective operation, good personnel management is essential to good administration. In turn, good personnel administration requires both technical and interpersonal skills. Personnel managers must know how to recruit, select, evaluate, promote, train, discipline, and dismiss employees. They must be adept at motivating, counseling, and bargaining with workers. In addition, personnel managers classify positions, develop compensation plans, measure productivity, and handle grievances and complaints. In short, personnel management involves all aspects of managing an organization's human resources, and public personnel administration refers to that function in government.

Personnel administration is also a universal management activity. Every supervisor is, in effect, a personnel manager. Whereas personnel offices develop and monitor personnel policies, supervisors are responsible for carrying them out. Supervisors are the critical links in the personnel process because they deal with employees daily. The organization's effectiveness, in turn, hinges, in part, on how well supervisors perform their personnel functions.

Those who perform personnel activities in the public sector do so in a political environment as stakeholders

compete for favorable treatment or consideration from public bureaucracies. Therefore, bureaucrats have a stake in the process and engage in politics to maintain their status. The reactions to secret service agents engaging in inappropriate behavior in Colombia just prior to a summit attended by President Obama in 2012 illustrate the case. Congressional leaders quickly began hearings on the incident citing security concerns. But at the same time, they were also attempting to score political points with constituents and embarrass administration officials. In response, the Secret Service moved to institute new policies to prevent such incidents in the future. The actual agents involved also took steps to protect themselves against legal action. Unfortunately for the Secret Service, incidents at the White House in 2015 again embarrassed it as one intruder made it into the White House unimpeded and two other agents crashed a car into a barrier at the White House as others were dealing with another security breach. Both agents were intoxicated and Congress held more hearings. Another good example of the political environment of public personnel administration was the dramatic shift in policy toward public sector unions and collective bargaining after the 2010, 2012, and 2014 elections in which many conservative governors and legislatures were elected and immediately began a process to curb the bargaining rights of public employees.

Those efforts led to protracted political fights over the issue. Over the decades the personnel administrative system in the country has developed sure functionalities and dysfunctional ties. To create public personnel system effective, the dysfunctional ties have to be properly recognized and removed. The

Conference on Personnel Administration held in 1968 under the auspices of Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi, lay that “the existing personnel system did not meet the necessities of a desirable personnel administrative system. The existing system leaned too heavily on cadres. Our elite are more “status-oriented” rather than “attainment-oriented”. The cadre system’s sanction is based on the criterion of an outdated selection system through means of a purely academic examination. The necessities i.e. the desirable ingredients of a good and sound personnel system were recognized as follows, namely:

- The best man for the job
- Rising professionalization
- Competitiveness in selection for higher administrative positions
- Placement to be job-oriented and not status trapped
- Motivation for better performance
- Equal pay for equal work
- Objective evaluation of performance
- Rational promotion and personnel development system
- Appropriate organization of functions of government and appropriate policies and practices to enable optimum personnel performance.

FEATURES OF PUBLIC PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION IN INDIA

Public personnel administration in India comprises the public services of the country. Through now you necessity is familiar with the meaning and scope of public services in India, their role in the administrative system necessity has also become clear. The public personnel administration has sure features which are dissimilar from the private administration in several ways.

Public personnel administration has to cater to the needs of larger number of people and is engaged with the supply of varied services. Public personnel administration does not exist in a vacuum. It is the product of vital public policy, it operates under public scrutiny, it mirrors general social and economic circumstances, and it has a continuous impact upon the general welfare. The government is dependent on the public personnel system for the implementation of its programmes, without proper utilization of human services, no policy, programme or rule can be made successful.

Present Public Personnel Administration is a Legacy of the Past- The bureaucracy in India, especially the top bureaucracy is a spillover of British rule. The East India Company promoted a service structure for meeting their commercial and trading interests. In 1858 when the British Government took over the reins of administration in India, the political consolidation of the country and use of the country’s possessions to serve its own interests became its aims. This described for minimum economic, social, and developmental activities but maximum administrative stranglehold. The superior civil services that are the higher civil services were manned through either British or Indians recruited from higher economic and feudal strata of society. The lower subordinate stages comprised only the Indians. The whole system was an excellent instance of high and low, top and bottom, master and servant.

The preponderant features of public personnel system were:

It was “elitist”, exclusive in outlook and approach

It displayed despotism in action and behaviour

It maintained safe and wide aloofness from the people

It developed structural rigidity and functional frigidity

It was too hierarchic and precedent adherent

It had no human relations orientation

It had feudalist, and separatist attitude and temper

It had no welfare or development motivation.

India became independent in 1947, but could not develop or structure a novel public personnel system. Our Independence was accompanied through painful partition of the country, communal riots, and massive migration of displaced persons and influx of refugees. Moreover we had to tackle with the complicated troubles of integration of states, depletion of administrative personnel due to voluntary retirement of British ICS officers and transfer of Muslim ICS officers to Pakistan. If the health of the economy was bad on account of the after effects of the Second World War and partition, the condition of administration, particularly personnel administration was worse.

The vital administrative structure remained the same. There were gaps in the cadre; experienced senior stage officers were very few in number and competent personnel were just not accessible. With the adoption of the Constitution in 1950 and commencement of our first five Year Plan, lot of pressure came to be laid on the personnel system.

The elitist hierarchic authoritarian and rigid administration now had to be revamped in order to meet the Constitutional objectives of liberty, equality,

fraternity, and justice. Our plan objectives viz. economic development, industrialization, modernization, and social justice put the administration under considerable strain, the administration had to be converted into a development, and welfare oriented administration. We can say that after Independence, two vital changes took place which greatly affected the role of civil service. First, with the adoption of the system of parliamentary democracy, the civil service became accountable to the political executive.

Secondly, civil service became an instrument of development. Personnel system, for that matter any system necessity have a purpose which has to be related to the objectives of the organization. In the case of public personnel administration in India, its vital aim is the facilitation and fulfillment of the goals of government. This is the rationale for creating the government services; this is the justification for their subsistence. Once the goals have been formulated, the public personnel system necessity rise to implement the programmes and achieve the qualitative and quantitative targets through judiciously harnessing the accessible possessions, keeping two dimensions in view, time, and cost. For this purpose, public personnel system is involved with the functions of recruitment, selection, placement, training, health, safety, performance-rating, promotions, and general welfare of the employees.

Augment in Development Functions- The extension of social security benefits and an enlarged public aid to education have become very significant functions of the government. The government has assumed the larger responsibility of achieving security and well-being of all citizens. Implementation of these changes is not an easy task.

The skills and experience of public service is required for this purpose. The public service is an essential social instrument, it bridges the gaps flanked by legislative content and its fulfillment. Public service can help to establish and strengthen the minimum circumstances required for economic development. It is responsible for laying down circumstances for the maintenance of law and order, development of infrastructural facilities and favorable administrative structure. The public services through fixing sure general or specific output objectives play an significant role in modifying the resource structure of the country. The public services have now taken control of government undertakings or semi-government bodies.

Rising Number of Public Personnel- Due to the augment in the social and economic functions of the government, the number of public personnel is rising at a very fast rate. As the tasks of the government are rising, the need for personnel to perform these tasks is also rising. A large number of new departments, corporations, commissions, and boards are now being set up. The Second Pay Commission had estimated

that on April 1, 1948, there were 14, 45,050 employees in the Central Government. On June 30, 1957, this figure had increased to 17, 73,570. On January 1, 1965, it increased to 22, 64,795. On January 1, 1981, it further increased to 32, 27,539. This shows that with every new activity of government that aims at providing new services for the welfare of people, the number of government employees is constantly rising.

Rising Number of Specialists in Public Services- The concept of Welfare State, augment in the aspirations of people and the growth of science and technology has brought forth the demand for rising role of specialists in administration. New specialism, new techniques, new methods are now being expected from the civil servants. The role of the specialists in public services has therefore become very crucial and their number in the services is constantly rising.

Role of Public Service Commission in Public Personnel Administration- The Public Service Commission is an independent statutory body. In India, the Public Service Commission has been so intended as to function only as an advisory body. All rights concerning the appointments of personnel are vested in the Government. The Constitution does not envisage vital role for the Commission in personnel administration. The Constitution of India gives for a Union Public Service Commission and for State Public Service Commission's beside with a Joint Public Service Commission on the request of two or more state governments.

THE FIELD OF PUBLIC PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION

Critics of public personnel administration have accused the field of not having a sense of identity, being too narrow in scope, and lacking a theoretical foundation. These problems resulted in large part from a slavish attachment to principles that seemed appropriate to developing civil service systems in the nineteenth century to replace the abuses of the spoils system. In a zealous effort to remove partisanship from the personnel process, administrators focused almost exclusively on techniques such as testing and selection methods that could be applied to personnel activities. Lost in the shuffle was a focus on serving the purposes of management generally. As a result, the rest of management came to perceive personnel administration as a nonpolitical, technical service rather than as management per se. Nineteenth-century reform established a foundation of moral fervor among personnelists who labeled politics as evil and devotion to "neutral" principles of personnel management (as defined by personnelists) as good. As Wallace Sayre noted, public personnel management became a "triumph of technique over purpose" (1948). Public personnel management lost

touch with its environment and became isolated. It assumed a policing role in which it seemed more interested in telling management what it could not do than in finding positive ways to assist management.

It is little wonder that the personnel office became regarded with scorn. Modern personnel managers realize that public personnel management is very closely connected with the environment in which it operates. For public personnel administrators, that environment is characterized first and foremost by politics. Whereas the reformers eschewed politics, contemporary personnelists recognize the political nature of the field and criticize traditionalists for ignoring the relevance of political concerns.

The environment of public personnel managers also includes many other forces. Employer and employee values affect the personnel system. These values affect the types of personnel policies developed, the decision-making rules, and the results of processes. Conflicts over values to be represented are resolved through politics, and the error of many personnel reformers has been equating politics with partisan politics. By focusing on partisan politics, the reformers forgot that decisions were being made by compromising the differing values and interests of those participating in personnel decisions, a basic form of politics.

Changes in society also affect public personnel management. As will be noted throughout the book, factors such as the civil rights movement, the women's movement, affirmative action and diversity efforts, cutback management and privatization of public services, and ever-changing technology all affect personnel management.

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, as well as subsequent threats, have had many effects on the public service. The culmination of these environmental changes results in changes in the way the public service functions. Paul Light suggests that we have seen the end of government centered public service and the beginning of a multicenter public service (1999). By this, he means that government managers no longer can decide how to approach the public service from only their perspective. If government is to compete for employees, it must compete for talent and recognize that the diversity of the workforce requires focusing on what potential employees want from their jobs. Decent pay and security are no longer the only things potential employees seek. They now expect flexibility, interesting work, and the opportunity for professional growth and personal fulfillment.

Changes in management approaches have also had a significant impact on the organization of the personnel function. It is now recognized that managing human resources is a partnership between the personnel or human resources department and department managers and supervisors.

Today, civil service and merit concepts prevail in public personnel management. Nonetheless, many challenges to both concepts regularly occur. Numerous states have experimented with removal of civil service protections to use "at will" employment, in which employees can be easily terminated (Kim & Kellough, 2014; Nigro & Kellough, 2000; Rau, 2012). Public sector labor unions enjoyed tremendous growth during the 1960s and 1970s. Although civil service systems have been under attack in some states since the 1980s, the public sector remained a major growth area for union membership until dramatic political changes in 2010 brought into office elected officials hostile to unions and bargaining. As a result, many public sector unions saw declines in their membership by 2012. Governor Scott Walker of Wisconsin uses his successful efforts against public sector unions in his state as a major issue in his presidential candidacy for 2016.

Private sector unions have been on the decline for decades. Taking measures to curtail union activity is one way politicians have attempted to exert control over public sector personnel management. As the rest of the book demonstrates, the fortunes of management, employees, elected public officials, citizens, and the bureaucracies themselves are affected by the changing manner in which personnel are managed.

Although traditional personnelists exhorted public personnel administrators to apply neutral principles, the presence of competing values makes such an approach impractical. Value judgments must be used to implement differing selection systems, affirmative action, performance evaluation, and all other elements of personnel systems. Someone will gain and someone will lose with each decision made. For example, how should an agency respond to a cut in its budget? Are the newly hired let go? Are older employees urged to retire early? Are those hired under affirmative action programs protected? Are all departments required to contribute equally to the reduction? Are private vendors to be used for service delivery? All these and many other concerns affect the final decision, and each involves a value judgment. Decisions regarding competing value judgments are political decisions, so a modern personnel administrator is a participant in the political process.

EVOLVING AN EFFICIENT PUBLIC PERSONNEL SYSTEM

The public personnel system has to perform several vital tasks, human element is the mainly crucial part of any system, and it has to be adequately utilized. Several dysfunctional ties that have developed in the public services over the decades are posing a lot of hurdles in the pursuance of administrative objectives. The troubles like the rising gap flanked by the administration and citizens, the immobility of public services, red-tapist, obsolete methods of operation etc. have to be tackled properly. In order to evolve an

efficient public personnel system a much closer interaction is described for flanked by the public servants and the citizens. The concept of isolation of civil servants from the public has to be done absent with. Constant interaction flanked by the public personnel and government can also solve the difficulties to a great extent, a positive and cordial relationship flanked by the minister and the public servant is needed. According to H. Finer, "Though adequately organized the political side of the government, though wise the political philosophy, high leadership and command, these will be of no effect without the body of officials who are experts in applying power and wisdom to the scrupulous cases and are permanently and specially employed to do so."

PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION

While the development and development of personnel administration in U.K. and U.S.A. was largely voluntary, in India, the growth of personnel administration can be attributed to the efforts made through the government.

While in the West, the pioneering work in the field of personnel management was motivated through the managerial preoccupation with the concept of welfare, in India, unsystematic recruitment practices, rising labour unrest, loss of production etc., initiated some interest in personnel management. In U.K., personnel administration had its origin in the concept of welfare as propounded and practiced through some of the enlightened entrepreneurs, who sought the establishment of modern personnel administration. The term personnel management actually originated in the U.S.A.

Mainly significant breakthrough for personnel administration was Elton Mayo's Hawthorne experiments and the human relations movement. These experiments paved the way for using the disciplines of sociology, psychology, industrial psychology, social psychology etc., with a view to understanding employees and organizational behaviour and influencing them through a motivational approach. All this led to the gradual development and development of a theory and practice of personnel management. There were also other events and influences which led to the growth of personnel management. Several revolutionary concepts like mass production, mass sharing and mass financing were evolved through industrial and business empires. The labour shortages throughout the world wars and several labour troubles posed a challenge to management. With the Great Depression in 1929) big business suffered a severe setback. The State, the public and the trade unions, aimed at efficient professional management. Their demands were elimination of waste and maximum utilization of possessions, particularly human possessions. All

these growths in America emphasized the fact that management of people or personnel management is just as significant as the management of production.

Now the number of personnel is rising at a very fast rate, expenditure on personnel is also correspondingly rising. There has also been a trend in regard to the diversification in the personnel as more and more specialists, experts and technicians are being appointed in government departments, public, and private organizations. Modern personnel do not just deal with welfare of employees but also aim at achieving profits for the organization. The motive is to earn profits as well as benefits for the organization and its employees.

CONCLUSION

Public personnel administration is the heart of public administration. It has been defined, its distinct features explained and the role of the civil services in developing societies was attended to. Each of the major elements of personnel administration has been treated briefly and separately. These elements include classification of personnel; recruitment; training; promotion; compensation; discipline; and retirement benefits of the personnel in the government services.

Public personnel management resides in a complex environment and is part of a larger governmental system. Because the system in the United States contains a variety of interests competing for position and power, the personnel system becomes entwined in the political process. The various political actors and forces outlined in this chapter obviously have different interests in the personnel system. The personnel function cannot be viewed as a neutral instrument of management; instead, it is at the center of the decision-making process and can easily become a pawn in the struggle for political power and influence. Although all actors, such as the president and members of Congress, insist that they want only the most efficient and responsive public service possible, they could actually be concerned primarily with maintaining or improving their political positions. Thus, expressions of outrage from either side regarding personnel actions often are calculated more for political advantage than for improving personnel practices. Similarly, other participants in the political environment have conflicting interests, which can lead to compromise and accommodation in public personnel management.

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