

Meaning and Definition of Public Administration:

Public administration is a broad field within the broader field of administration. Its

connection is with governmental activities. In any political system, public administration is

required to implement government policies. According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, public

administration is the organization and management of a country's policies through the

government. Therefore, public administration refers to the part of administration that is related to

the administrative activities of the government. Public administration, as a field of study, is not as old as its practice, which has been in

existence for thousands of years. This is why defining public administration in a way that gains

universal acceptance is challenging. The 20

th century brought about significant changes in the

field, with events like the Great Depression of 1930, the clash between socialist and capitalist

systems, the breakup of the Soviet Union, the end of colonialism in developing countries, the

privatization trend, and globalization. These rapid developments at the global level significantly

impacted public administration, making its nature change over time. Dwight Waldo observed

that these changes create dilemma for public administration, making it difficult to define in a

universally accepted manner. On the contrary, some scholars, such as Frederick C. Mosher, believe that these dilemmas strengthen public administration. Different scholars have defined public administration in various ways:

1. Alexander Hamilton: Public administration involves activities that aim to fulfill public

objectives. Therefore, organizing governmental affairs is considered public

administration. 2. Woodrow Wilson: "Public Administration is detailed and systematic application of law". Every particular application of law is an act of administration

3. L. D. White: "Public Administration consists of all those operations having for their purpose, the fulfillment or enforcement of public policy as declared by competent

authority." 4. Percy McQueen: "Public administration is administration related with the operation of government whether central or local." 5. Luther Gullick: "Public

administration is that part of the science of administration, which has to do with the government; it concerns itself primarily with the executive

branch where the work of the government is done..." 6. J. M. Pfiffner: "Public administration consists of getting the work of government done by co-ordination the efforts of people so that they can work together to accomplish their

set tasks." 7. Dwight Waldo: "Public administration is the art and science of management as applied

to the affairs of state." 8. Marshal Dimock: "Administration is concerned with 'the what,' and 'the how,' of

government. The 'what' is the subject-matter, the technical knowledge of a field which

enables an administrator to perform his tasks. The 'how' is the technique of management..." 9. Nicholas Henry: "Public Administration is a

broad-ranging and amorphous combination of theory and practice, its purpose is to promote a superior understanding of government

and its relationship with the society..." Traditional definitions of public administration consider it as a manifestation of the bureaucracy, responsible for the implementation of government policies, having no say in formulating and

legislating policies. In contrast, modern theories suggest that public administration encompasses

a broader sense and involves all three branches of government: legislature, executive, and

judiciary. It plays a significant role not only in the implementation of public policy but also in policy formulation, legislation, and decision-making. In this perspective, public administration is relevant to all aspects of government's 'what' and 'how' and has an important role to play even in the designing, legislating, and decision-making of policies. Advocates of this theory believe that the formulation of public policy is the responsibility of the legislature and that public administration has no role in it. On the other hand, they argue that public administration is crucial in all aspects, including policy formulation, legislation, and decision-making. In this context, A.F. Negro and L.G. Negro believe that “public administration:

- i. is a cooperative group effort in a public setting;
- ii. covers all the three branches – executive, legislative and judicial, and their inter-relationship;
- iii. has an important role in the formulation of public policy and is thus part of the political process;
- iv. is different in significant ways from private administration; and
- v. Closely associated with numerous private groups and individuals in providing services to the community.”