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BHM 783



Comparative Public Administration **Module 2**

BHM 783

Comparative Public Administration

Module 2

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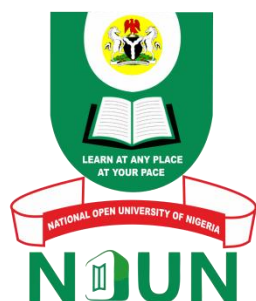
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Unit I Behavioural Approach

1.0 Introduction

The public nature of administration and the need to understand the social, cultural and political settings of organisations make the enterprise of comparative public administration somewhat special. The borrowing of concepts from more general managerial, behavioural science approach and organisation theories must be done carefully and with a proper concern for contextual and situational factors. In this unit, let us examine the behavioural science approach.

2.0 Objectives

at the end of this unit, the students would be able to:

- Understand the internal dynamics within an organisation;
- Understand the use of scientific method of analysis in comparative public administration; and
- Know how to compare administrative behaviour in organizational settings.

3.0 Main Contents

3.1 Behavioural Approach

The modern behavioural science movement was an outgrowth of the earlier human relations movement after the Second World War and evolved out of the Hawthorne Experiments. It was found during these studies that if supervisors developed effective human relations skills in counselling employees and established their authority on a basis of social skills and securing cooperation among employees, rather depending on technical and coercive authority, employee's productivity would increase.

Among the prominent behaviouralists are Abraham Maslow, Chris Argyris, Douglas McGregor, Rensis Likert, Hugo Munsterberg, Mary Parker Follett, Chester Barnard and others.

The behavioural scientists stressed the importance of emotional element such as feelings and sentiments to explain human behaviour and performance in organisations. The approach argues that beyond economic or material needs, man has some socio-psychological needs which must be satisfied for him to achieve optimal performance. As Nwizu (1998:26) rightly noted, human beings who work in organizations have aspirations and desires. Their behaviour is conditioned by their psychology, motives and social environment. The administrative sciences should study these "facts" of behaviour without getting involved in the question of "values". They used the knowledge of psychology, socio-psychology, anthropology and management.

The behavioural approach emphasizes "facts", rigorous scientific methods of data collection and analysis, quantification, experimentation test, verification and an inter-disciplinary orientation. It focuses on the analysis of human behaviour in administrative settings. It is concerned with internal dynamics within administrative organisation; the behaviour of the individuals within an organization, the impact of the organisation on individual and the overall internal environment. It aims to develop knowledge that is verifiable, systematic and general.

The behavioural approach takes a more dynamic and organic view of organizations, their managements, work groups and individuals. It emphasizes psychological needs, intrinsic rewards and self-motivation much more than any of the other theories.

3.2 Levels of Analysis

Three basic levels of analysis are involved in the behavioural approach. The first level is that of the individual, with his personality, motives, drives, attitudes, values, learning and adaptation abilities. The second level is the group level with its norms, values, sentiments, interaction patterns, problem solving and decision-making processes, adaptation and change mechanisms, conflicts, formal and informal behaviour. The third level is the total organization which is generally viewed as a complex human system.

3.3 Contributions of Behavioural Approach

This approach has made some useful contributions:

- Its emphasis on the use of participation and ways to handle conflict arising from strong differences of opinion within an organisation;
- It recognizes the important influence of the environment and constraints on behaviour
- The approach recognizes the importance of informal leadership for setting and enforcing group standards of performance;
- It made us to understand the importance of individual motivation, group behaviour, interpersonal relationships at work and the importance of work to human beings;
- It was this school which produced the concepts of job enrichment, management by objectives and rewarding good performance; and
- It was this approach which virtually laid the foundation of the discipline of Human Resources Management

3.4 Criticisms

However, behavioural approach suffers from certain criticisms. Scholars observed that its assumption that all employees will seek self-actualization at work is not based on facts. People have diverse needs. It is wrong to assume that everyone is motivated by the same need in the same manner. Their assumption of great deal of compatibility between individual and organizational goals is not based on reality. The fact is that every individual has the desire to be autonomous and creative which is in conflict with the need of an organization to be efficient, orderly and predictable.

This theory does not attach any importance to non-human aspects of organization like technology. Finally, it has the same weakness as that of the classical approach and that is its assumption that the one best way of managing as humanizing organizations.

Self-Assessment Test

Describe the behavioural approach to comparative public administration?

4.0 Conclusions

The unit has examined behavioural approach in comparative public administration. The approach is concerned with internal dynamics within administrative organizations; the behaviour of the individuals within an organization; the impact of the organization on the individual and the overall

internal environment. The approach has engendered greater scientific research and systematic theory construction (SHARMA, et. Al, 2011).

5.0 Summary

The behavioural approach debunked the traditional approach to administration, as well as earlier theories of formal organization. It brought into the forefront the role of the individuals and small groups in achievement of organizational objectives. The approach argues that beyond economic or material needs, man has some socio-psychological needs which must be satisfied for him to achieve optimal performance.

The behavioural approach borrowed most of its methods and techniques from sociology and social anthropology. The approach aims at developing knowledge that is verifiable, systematic and general. It is, therefore, theory-oriented and concerned with pure rather than applied research.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

Explain the relevance of behavioural approach to comparative public administration?

7.0 References/Further Readings

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Unit 2 Systems Approach

1.0 Introduction

Public Administration as a field of human activity is the product of environmental factors, such as: social, cultural, economic and political of which it is a part. These environmental factors impinge on the public administration. Political system refers to the whole collection of related, interacting institutions and agencies. It is concerned with formulating and implementing the collective goals of a society or of groups within it. In this unit, we shall examine how the system approach can be used to analyze and compare the political systems of two or more countries.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, students would be able to:

- Know what political system means;
- Understand the component parts or sub-systems of a political system;
- Know how these sub-systems interact with one another and the environment; and
- Understand how the political system can be used as a framework to analyze and compare government activities in two or more than two countries.

3.0 Main Contents

3.1 Meaning of a Political System

The concept of administrative system originates from the theoretical work that is most frequently cited in Political Science – System Analysis by Easton (1965). According to Easton(1965), political system comprises of those identifiable and interrelated institutions and activities (government institutions and processes) in a society that make authoritative allocations of values (decisions) that are binding on the society. A system is made up of a combination of elements: inputs, outputs, environment, conversion process and feedback. A system framework shows how these elements relate to and interact with one another. An entire set of these elements and their interactions in an environment is called a system.

A system, therefore, is not simply the administrative unit contained in the conversion process. An administrative system is the combination of the administrative processes that interact with the unit: that is, the environment within which the administrative unit operates, which influences and is influenced by the unit and the inputs to the outputs. From the unit, they are connected to each other by the conversion process and by feedback mechanisms.

Inputs and feedback suggest the kinds of stimuli likely to influence activities in the conversion process. Outputs are merely a label for that category of phenomena that reflect the products of Administrator's work.

3.2 Conceptual Framework

A system, such as this is useful framework for treating administrative activities in all governments in certain settings. The system is a conceptual framework, whose purpose is to help the explain Public Administration activities. With the system as a guide, information about items that seem to function as conversion components, inputs, outputs, and feedback mechanisms are collected.

The interaction of these elements with one another may appear in a closed system in which decision-makers respond continuously to the impact that their previous decisions have had upon their environment.

However, in the real world, there are numerous features that can influence the decisions of the participants. Environments change in response to national and international politics, economic events and natural disasters. New inputs continuously come from the demands of citizens and citizen organizations. Officials have many options in reviewing the feedback from their previous decisions: officials differ in the weight they assign to precedent, to the demands that come from citizens or from other officials and to their own assessment about the success of current activities.

3.3 The Political System and Comparative Public Administration

To examine the systems that link administrative units with their environments, it is necessary to recognize the borders that surround the conversion process and that separate it from inputs and outputs. The conversion process includes units that provide services, collect taxes and impose regulations. Administrative units are variously termed: “departments, bureaus, agencies, Commissions, offices, services, etc.

The system views an administrative system as a sub-system of the society. It looks at various parts of an administrative system (formal organisation, informal organisation, roles, individuals) and examines the inter-linkages among various parts. Besides, the approach analyses the dynamic interactions between the administrative system and its external environment.

In conversion process, these administrative units are found within the Executive branch of national, state and local government in Unit. These administrative units constitute what Riggs (1964:31) suggests that should be identified and compared with the kinds of function they do in another administrative system of another country. Rigg’s suggestion is possible in developed countries where there is a correspondence between the form and procedures within government structures. Even in United Kingdom where the executive and legislative branches are merged, it will be possible to separate the “line” units of the administration and compare them and their environments with their counterparts in other governments.

Self-Assessment Test

Describe what you understand as the political system approach in Comparative Public Administration?

4.0 Conclusion

The political system is a set of institutions and agencies concerned with formulating and implementing the collective goals of a society or of groups within it. Governments are the policy making parts of political systems. A political system consists of inputs, conversion process, outputs, environment and feedback. These component parts are interdependent and interact with one another. They influence their environment and also are influenced by their environment. An important element in the system approach is the emphasis on input-output analysis.

However, the usefulness of political system approach in studying public policy or decisions is limited because it does not say much about the procedures and processes by which decisions are made and policy is developed. Nonetheless, it is helpful in organizing enquiry into policy formation and decisions of a particular government, which can be compared with another country.

5.0 Summary

A system is essentially an assemblage of things interconnected or independent so as to form a complex unity (Koontz et al, 1983:70). It refers to the whole collection of related, interacting institutions and agencies. Political system is a particular type of social system that is involved in the making of authoritative public decisions. Central elements of a political system are the institutions of government such as bureaucracy, parliaments, courts, political parties, interest groups, etc. These institutions are involved in formulating government policies and decisions. The study of administrative system help us to know which institution would best flourish in a particular environment in comparison with that in another country or countries.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

What is the relevance of a political system approach in the study of comparative public administration?

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Unit 3 Structural-Functional Approach

1.0 Introduction

Structural-functionalism was developed from the work of the anthropologists, like Malinowski and Redcliffe Brown in the early years of the present century. The important followers of this approach includes: Gabriel Almond, David Apter, Talcott Parsons, Robert Merton and Fred Riggs. Almond (1965) adopted input-output model of David Easton's system approach into the political system vis-a-vis demands and support. The main thrust of Almond's structural-functionalism centres on his assertion that all political systems must perform specific set of functions or they are to remain in existence as a system in equilibrium or working order. These functions may be performed by different kinds of structure within different types of political systems. In this unit, we shall examine the concept of structural-functionalism and its relevance in comparative public administration.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, students would be able to:

- Understand the meaning of structural-functionalism;
- Understand the features of structural-functionalism; and
- Know how structural-functional theory can be used as framework for comparative public administration

3.0 Main Contents

3.1 Meaning Of Structural-Functionalism

Almond and Powell (1965) defined structural-functionalism as “a form of system analysis which looks at political systems as a coherent whole, which influences and is in turn influenced by the environment”. To Almond and Powell (1965), the premise of structural-functionalism is to provide a consistent and integrated theory from which can be derived explanatory hypotheses relevant to all aspects of a political system.

3.2 Conceptual Framework

The Structural-functional framework provides an important mechanism for the analysis of different social processes. In Structural-functionalism, social structure is viewed as any pattern of behaviour which has become a standard feature of a social system.

The two concepts basic to the approach are structure and function. While functions concern the consequences of patterns of action, structures refer to the patterns of actions and the resultant institutions of the systems themselves.

Almond and Powell (1966), the proponents of structural-functionalism pointed out that political system can be compared in terms of how functions are performed. Premising their analysis on modern Western political systems, they assert that political systems perform two sets of functions, namely: input and output functions.

The input-output model of Almond (1965) was taken from David Easton's distinction between two classes of inputs into the political system, viz demands and supports. Demands are classified under four headings:

1. Demands for goods and services, such as wage and hour laws, educational opportunities, recreational facilities, roads and transportation;
2. Demands for participation in the political system for the right to vote, hold office, petition governmental bodies and officials, organize political associations and the like; and
3. Demands for the regulation of behaviour, such as provision of public safety, control over markets and labour relations, rules pertaining to marriage and the family
4. Symbolic inputs, such as demands for the display of the majesty and power of the political system in periods of threat or ceremonial occasions, or demands for the affirmation of norms or the communication of the policy intent from political elites (Almond, 1965:193).

Support inputs also may be classified under four headings:

- a. Material supports, such as the payment of taxes or other levies and the provision of services; such as labour contributions or military services;
- b. Obedience to laws and regulations
- c. Participation, such as voting, joining organizations, and communicating about politics; and
- d. Manifestation of deference to public authority, symbols and ceremonials (Almond, 1965:194).

The inputs consisting of demands and supports are converted by the political system into Policy outputs (extractive, regulative, distributive and symbolic outputs). In other words, the political system processes inputs and convert them into outputs. The demands entering the political system are articulated, aggregated or combined, converted into policies, rule-making, rule-application, rule adjudication, regulations, applied and enforced. The conversion functions of the political system, thus, may be divided into:

1. The articulation of interests or demands
2. The integration of interests or combination of interests into policy proposal;
3. The conversion of policy proposals into authoritative rules;
4. The application of general rules to particular cases
5. The adjudication of rules in individual cases and
6. The transmission of information about these events within the political system from structure to structure and between the political system and its social and international environments (Almond, 1965:194-5).

Thus, the authoritative output usually affect the environment as outcomes and in turn excite some form of feedback, that is, changes in the intensity and volume of demands and support from the environment. Almond added that political communication must be undertaken to inform all within the political system and outside of these diverse activities. Additionally, every system performs system maintenance and adaptation function through political socialization and recruitment of people.

According to Almond and Powell, (2008)), the functioning of any political system may also be viewed in terms of its capabilities defined as "the way it performs as a unit in its environment. The concept of regulative, extractive, distributive and responsive capability are employed as criteria to assess how a system is performing within its environment, how it is shaping its environment, and how it is being shaped by it.

According to Almond and Powell (1966), political systems can be compared in terms of the degree to which their political structures are specialized, political roles are differentiated and functions are specific. Actual comparison would depend on how outputs are performed by each

political system. They further argued that political change occurs because of the challenge on the capabilities of the political system. The sources of such change are:

1. The Elites within the political system
2. The Social groups in the environment
3. Other political systems

They conclude that a political system is stable when inputs are converted to outputs without any problem. In other words, strains are not imposed on the system's capacity to respond to them. They suggested a series of functions that might serve as the framework of comparative analysis, namely: political socialization and recruitment, interest articulation, interest aggregation, political communication, rule-making, rule-application and rule adjudication. To some, this list depends too much on American pattern of competitive political theories, election campaigns and interest groups plus legislative, executive and judicial branches. To others, it is so general to be of little help in clarifying issues for comparison among the less-developed countries (Shankansky, 1978:42).

3.3 Structural-Functionalism and Comparative Public Administration

Structural-functional approach has shown that there is no clear and direct relationship between structures and functions. All similar structures do not necessarily perform similar functions. A social structure may perform multiple functions and similarly one function may be performed by more than one structure. In other words, this approach focuses on description of structures of governmental administration as a basis both for comparison and prescription. When applied to the study of public administration, it will be possible for example, to describe the formal structure of local government and the civil service in different African countries. When this is done, it becomes possible to do a cross-country comparison of structures.

Self-Assessment Test

Explain what you know by the term structural-functionalism?

4.0 Conclusion

Structural-functionalism as an analytical tool was borrowed from anthropologists and adopted into political system by Almond(1965). However, the input-output model of Almond was taken from David Easton's system model (1965). The main thrust of Almond's structural-functionalism centres on his assertion that all political systems must perform specific set of functions or they are to remain in existence as a system in equilibrium or working order. These functions may be performed by different kinds of structure within different types of political systems. At times, these functions may even be performed by structures that are not overtly recognized as political. The premise of structural-functionalism is to provide a consistent and integrated theory from which can be derived explanatory hypotheses relevant to all aspects of a political system. However, the formal structural-descriptive approach has been criticized for not paying attention "to the process of administration notably the critical factor of human relations" (Ademolekun, 1983:20).

5.0 Summary

Structural-functional approach has shown that there is no clear and direct relationship between structures and functions. All similar structures may perform multiple functions and similarly one function may be performed by more than one structure. Thus, structural-functionalism has helped to clarify the general misconception that similar structures in diverse environments perform

similar functions or that absence of certain structures implies that particular functions are not being performed in particular social systems.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

What are the contributions of structural-functionalists in comparative public administration?

7.0 References/Further Readings

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Unit 4 Development Administration Approach

1.0 Introduction

The development Administration approaches of the 1950's and 60's focused on two major approaches. The first development administration felt that policy implementation in the developing countries could be improved through the transfer of administrative procedures and techniques from industrialized countries. These theorists followed the Weberian model. They emphasized the role of bureaucracy as instrument of development.

Another group of theorists argued that political processes and administrative structures had to be thoroughly transformed and modernized before the developing nations could achieve economic and social progress. The theorists looked at development as “social engineering” and the national government as the “prime mover of change”. Development administration was thus, viewed as the instrument for transforming traditional societies into modern ones. This approach focuses on certain characteristics of a dynamic administrative system. For example, goal orientation, change orientation, progressiveness, innovativeness, participation and responsiveness. The approach tends to look at the development administrative system in advanced countries (USA) as ideal while it is despicable in the third world countries. It exaggerates the irrelevance of Third World studies to the understanding of the advanced world (Streeten, 1984) and down-plays the potentialities for irrational bureaucratic performance in advanced world. The approach further views government bureaucracy for sustaining development programmes as ideal for Third World countries to import into their system.

However, the focus of development Administration has changed over the years. As it was once confined to deployment of foreign aid and technical assistance, development administration now focuses on planned change to meet the nation's broad political, economic, social and cultural objectives (Bjurand and Guiden 1978: 357-365). Many organizations, such as non-government, community, cultural are now involved in development projects. Now participative, decentralized and localized administrative approaches to development are encouraged. In this unit, we shall examine the meaning of contemporary development administration and its relevance to comparative public administration.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, students would be able to:

- Define development administration;
- Know the characteristics of development administration
- Understand the difference between development administration and non-development administration; and
- Understand the use of development administration framework in comparative public administration

3.0 Main Contents

3.1 Meaning of Development Administration

Weidner (1962) defined development administration as an “action-oriented, goal-oriented administrative system”. He further viewed development administration in government as “the process of guiding an organisation toward the achievement of progressive political, economic, and social objectives that are authoritatively determined in one manner or another”. Fainsod (1963) viewed development administration as “a carrier of innovating values.....It embraces the array of new functions assumed by developing countries embarking on the path of modernisation and industrialisation. Riggs (1979) viewed development administration both to administrative problems and governmental reform. Arora (1979) observed that development administration has been used in two inter-related senses. First, it refers to the administration of development programmes, to the methods used by large scale organisation, notably governments to implement policies and plans designed to meet their developmental objectives. The Second, it, by implication, rather than directly, involves the strengthening of administrative capabilities. These two aspects of development administration –the administration of development and the development of administration are intertwined in most definitions of development administration. Students of development administration have recognised that these two aspects are functionally inter-related to each other. Thus, development administration ordinarily involves the establishment of machinery for planning, economic growth and mobilizing and allocating resources to expand national income.

3.2 Development and Non-Development Administration

Sometimes a distinction is made between development administration and non-development administration or “traditional” administration. It is said that both are similar so far as these are concerned with how rules, policies and norms are implemented by government organisations but they differ in their objectives, scope, complexity and degree of innovation in the developmental administration. It may, however, be said that the differing mixes of administrative departments will be seen as developmental for non-developmental processes start only when a country has achieved political freedom. The apparent developmental non-developmental dichotomy is due to the impression that development administration is concerned solely with the administration of developing countries. The difference between the two concepts may really be in the degree of emphasis or the ecological setting in which an administration functions.

3.3 Characteristics Of Development Administration

The following characteristics of development administration can be identified:

3.1.1 Change Orientation

The distinctive feature of development administration is its central concern with socio-economic change. It is this special orientation which distinguishes it from regulatory or traditional administration which is basically concerned with maintenance of status quo

3.3.2 Result Orientation

Development administration has to be result oriented since changes have to be brought rapidly and within a definite time schedule. Its performance is directly related to productivity, for example, increase in per capita income, etc.

3.3.3 Commitment

In development administration, the organisational role expectation is commitment to socio-economic change and concern for completing time bound programmes. Bureaucracy is expected to be “involved” and emotionally attached to the jobs they are called to perform.

3.3.4 Client Orientation

Another characteristic of development administration is that it is client-oriented. It has to be positively oriented towards satisfying the needs of the people in specific target groups. The satisfaction of these needs is the criterion for evaluating performance of the development administration. The people are not the passive beneficiaries, they are the active participants in the development or public programmes. It is thus close relation between the “public”. and “administration” that is an essential attribute of development administration.

3.3.5 Temporal Dimension

Since socio-economic changes have to be brought as quickly as possible, time assumes considerable importance in development administration. All development programmes are prepared for a certain time frame and must be completed within that.

3.2 Development Administration And Comparative Public Administration

It is a very common practice now a days to classify the modern states into two broad categories on the basis of their development –“developed” and “developing” . As earlier discussed, the nature of administration of a country is influenced by its environment. This implies that the “developed” and “developing” countries will have administrative sub-systems peculiar to them This also explains the fact that there are differences within the administrative sub-system of both developed and developing countries that can be compared.

In contemporary world, development administration approach is viewed in economic terms, using Human Development Index (HDI) as framework of analysis. Both developed and developing countries can now assess their human development based on Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), such as:

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Achieve universal primary education
- Promote gender equality and empower women
- Reduce child mortality
- Improve maternal health
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Ensure environmental sustainability and
- Develop a global partnership for development

All these indicators are used by UNDP indices for assessing and comparing the performances of developed and developing countries on human development

Self-Assessment Test

What do you understand by the term development administration?

4.0 Conclusion

In this unit, it is obvious that there is no single comprehensive theory of development. The contemporary theoretical approaches to development are pluralistic, recognizing many pathways to development and less western in their cultural assumptions.

5.0 Summary

Development approach has passed various stages. The first development administration felt that policy implementation in the developing countries could be improved through the transfer of administrative procedure and techniques from industrialized countries. Another view was that political processes and administrative structures had to be thoroughly transformed and modernized before the developing nations could achieve economic and social progress.

However, development administration has changed over the years. There is now a shift from the blue print approach to people-centred approach. The central theme of people-centred development are empowerment of people, development of administrative processes which responds to the needs of the people and human development. Many organisations, such as: non-government organisations, community, cultural organisations are now involved in development projects. Now, participative, decentralized and localized administrative approaches to development are encouraged.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

What is the relevance of development administration approach to comparative public administration.

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Unit 5 Bureaucratic Approach

1.0 Introduction

The origin of the term “bureaucracy” is not entirely very clear, with some insisting that it originated from the French word “Burokrate”. However, as a subject for scholars, the term is primarily associated with the German social scientist Max Weber (1947). In this unit, we shall examine the meaning of bureaucracy, its characteristics and how the approach can be used to analyze and compare bureaucracies of two or more countries.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of the unit, students would be able to:

- Know the meaning of bureaucracy
- The features of bureaucratic organisation; and the relevance of bureaucratic approach in comparative public administration

3.0 Main Contents

3.1 Meaning

The concept of bureaucracy has been used in so many different ways that it is difficult to provide acceptable meaning of the term. In the field of Sociology, bureaucracy has been understood as particular type of organization- as a system of administration rather than a system of government. In Social Sciences, bureaucracy is usually understood as a mode of organization. Modern political analysis, however, use the term bureaucracy to mean the administrative machinery of the state,; bureaucrats, being non-elected state officials or civil servants, who may or may not be subject to political control. Bureaucracy can also be used as a general invective to refer to any inefficient organization encumbered by red-tapism.

The most systematic study of bureaucratic phenomena is traced back to German Sociologist, Max Weber (1864-1920). To Weber, a person could be said to have “power” if within a social relationship his own will could be enforced despite resistance. If this power is exercised for the structuring of human groups, it becomes a special instance of power called “authority”. Thus, Weber distinguished between power and authority . Authority is instrumental in the emergence of organisation. The rules of an organisation are termed “administration”. The most important aspect of the administration is that it determines who was to give commands to whom. Thus, every form of authority expresses itself and functions as administration.

According to Weber, all authority is “legitimate” because it is always founded on a popular belief structure. People may believe that obedience was justified because the person giving the order had some sacred or altogether outstanding characteristics. This authority of that person is “charismatic”. That authority would be “traditional” if the command is obeyed out of reverence for old established patterns of order. The third type of authority is legal authority to which Weber attaches “rational” character”. In this case, men might believe that a person giving an order was acting in accordance with his duties as stipulated in a code of legal rules and regulations. Weber thought that an ideal bureaucratic organisation can most effectively achieve a prescribed goal while eliminating arbitrariness and discord in interpersonal and inter-group relationships.

Max Weber, who used an “ideal type” approach to extrapolate from the real world the central core of features that would characterize the most fully developed bureaucratic form of organization. This ideal type is neither a description of reality nor a statement of normative preference. It is merely an identification of the major variables or features that characterize bureaucracy. The fact that such features might not be fully present in a given organization does not necessarily imply that the organization is not bureaucratic. It may be an immature rather than a fully developed bureaucracy.

Bureaucracies are found in all large and complex organisations – political, religious, business, military, educational and others. However, public sector bureaucracies tend to operate in a somewhat different climate from those in the private sector. In short, bureaucracy is best conceptualized as a specific form of organization, and public bureaucracy should be considered a special variant of bureaucratic organization. Yet, in the popular imagination a bureaucracy is any organization in which people arranged in hierarchical ranks have to obey lots of rules. According to Weber, the ideal bureaucratic organisation, called the rational-legal bureaucracy could contain certain characteristics.

3.2 Characteristics of Bureaucracy

Weber’s ideal type of bureaucracy possesses the following characteristics:

A Hierarchical Chain of Command: The bureaucratic organization is structured as a pyramid with an absolute Boss on top, who divides up the overall task of the organization and gives responsibility for each sub-tasks to sub-bosses who divided responsibility yet more finely and so on through an unbroken chain of sub-bosses that stretches down to every employee. The Boss provides coordination between units that is, coordination from above. In other words, all coordination must rise up and pass through the next higher boss.

Specialization by Function: Bureaucracy achieves efficiency through specialization of labour. In fact, the organizational structure of a bureaucracy is created by dividing the overall task into a series of well-defined specialties or functions. Each function is given responsibility for a defined set of tasks and given the tools needed to accomplish that task. The Boss gives orders and assigns tasks in such a way that all the parts add up to a coherent whole.

Uniform Written Rules and Policies: A bureaucracy is governed by uniform written rules and policies that in a corporation, profit or not for profits are set by the board and the management. These rules define the rights and duties of employees and manage. The most basic rules concern who can give order to whom. In bureaucracy, the Boss is responsible for the actions of all the people under him or her and has the right to give them orders that they must dutifully obey. The employee’s primary responsibility is not to do what is right or what needs to be done but only to follow exactly the orders of his or her immediate Boss, the written policies of a bureaucracy also guarantees employee’s regular wages as long as they are employee and in some cases, even a pension for long-term service.

A Standard Procedures Defining Each Job: In a bureaucracy, fixed procedures govern how employees are to perform their tasks, sometimes to an astonishing degree. Standardized procedures serve to make lessons learned in one part of the organization more broadly effective and to overcome irrational resistance to more effective ways of doing things.

A career based on promotion for technical competence: Success in the bureaucratic organization is defined as a lifetime career of advancing to higher levels in the chain of command.

Rising in the ranks provides both power and symbols of status. Promotion is achieved through technical competence in one's specialty and efficiency in carrying out orders. The professional career provides a "contract" between employee and organization. In its simplest form, a person devotes himself or herself to the organization in exchange for structured work and wages. The full-time professional management was married to the organization for life. In return, the organization promised a stable or rising salary, a pension, lifetime employment and a chance to rise in the hierarchy. The time of rising in the hierarchy and the security of a professional career was an important element in bureaucratic success, providing a strong motivation for long-term loyalty to the organization.

Impersonal Relations: In bureaucracy, relationships are from role rather than from person to person. The organizational structure and job description defined what is expected of an individual in each role and the holder of a particular role is expected to carry out its responsibilities in a rational and unemotional manner. Impersonal relations helped move bureaucracy beyond nepotism and favouritism by preventing family feeling or friendship from getting in the way of enforcing rules and making tough decisions. It kept managers' sentiments from getting in the way of their duties.

3.3 Criticisms of Bureaucracy

To the critics, bureaucracy was efficient for certain kind of repetitive tasks that characterized the early industrial revolution. It no longer works so well because its rules and procedures are often dramatically opposed to the principle needed for workers to take the next step toward greater organizational intelligence (Gifford and Pinchot, 1994: 37). To them, the changing nature of work has made bureaucratic model unrealistic, such as:

- a. Hierarchical chain of command cannot handle complexity of work of modern organization. Again, domination is not the best way to get organization tasks done. In modern organizational context, visions and values, teamwork (self-managing), lateral coordination, informal networks, choice and free enterprise have replaced hierarchical chain of command.
- b. Specialization by function – does not provide intensive cross -functional communication and continual peer-level coordination. In modern organization, multi-skilling, specialists and entreprenuring organization in market-mediated networks, team work, lateral communication and collaboration have replaced specialization of organizations by functions.
- c. Uniform Rules – though, organization still needs rules, but needs different rules that would guarantee the rights of employees and institution, of freedom and community, a say in social responsibility.
- d. Standardized procedures—responds slowly to change. Bureaucracy does not deal well with complexity or foster interconnection. In modern organization, self-direction, self-management, force of the market and ethical community have come to replace standardized rules.
- e. Professional Career – Fewer managers need and more educated workforce expects promotions, therefore, there is not enough room for advancement. In modern organization, there is group need for competence, group network to get more done and more pay for more capabilities.
- f. Impersonal Relations: information – intensive jobs require in-depth relationship. There is need now for personal relationship to enable a choice between options and alternatives that will facilitate results. The nature of work in modern high-tech workplaces calls on people to marry positions in the organization to take responsibility for processes and services that intimately affect the customer and the wider community. Even in small service business and government agencies, the goods and services produced are knowledge and

information intensive by virtues of the skills and intelligence of the people with their hands on the work processes. Hence, what worked before in bureaucratic era will not work in a society of knowledge workers.

3.4 Bureaucracy and Comparative Public Administration

Despite all these criticism, scholars are yet to find real substitute for bureaucratic approach. Bureaucracy in a political system offers the large-scale complex administrative capacities for performing government duties. Inherent in bureaucracy is the existence of certain organizational features and behavioural traits of the participants – known as bureaucrats. Administrative roles are highly specialized or differentiated and hierarchal relationship thoroughly understood; the service in the bureaucracy for professionals, who are salaried and have tenured status, whose service will only be terminated subject to laid-down procedures.

However, given the fact that bureaucracies interact with the political system (that is, the external control usually emanates from the legitimate political authority), it is expected that the political sub-types even amongst modernized polities will exert some variations on the bureaucracies. The Weberian bureaucratic model applies essentially to the countries of the Western Europe, most of which epitomizes developed or modern politics. Hence, as one moves away from the core western countries to Russia and most communist Europe, the model becomes less applicable, although it is still useful for purposes of comparison. Riggs (1964) also noted the inadequacies experienced in applying the Weberian model of ideal-type bureaucracy to developing countries of the world. This is because of “ecological” problems. According to him, it can be used to compare bureaucracies of developed countries (USA, Britain, France, Germany, etc) because of the relative similarities in the ecology and culture of their regions.

Self-Assessment Test

Explain the major “thesis” of Weberian Bureaucratic theory?

4.0 Conclusion

In this unit, we have been able to understand that the concept of bureaucracy has different meanings. However, Weber’s definition has been found most useful for rational-legal organisation. Though, it has certain inadequacies when used as framework of comparison between developed countries and developing countries. It is most useful for comparing two or more developed countries because of their relative similarities in their ecology and culture.

5.0 Summary

The bureaucratic theory was one of the earliest theories of organisation. This theory was popularized by the German Sociologist, Max Weber. According to him, every organisation can be defined as a structure of activities (means) directed towards the achievement of certain objectives (ends). To understand an organisation, one needs to understand the procedures and activities of bureaucracy since bureaucracy gives meaning to organisation. Weber’s bureaucratic model was intended to be an ideal construct. This ideal type of bureaucracy is the starting point not the end of organisational analysis and comparison. However, Weber’s bureaucratic model is most useful to comparison between two or more developed countries because of their ecology and culture.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

Is Weberian bureaucratic model a useful framework of comparison for developing countries? Discuss.

7.0 References/Further Reading

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