Book Review

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Public Administration: Fifth Semester Compulsory Paper
by Biswaranjan Mohanty, Jyoti Trehan Sharma, J.S. Chandan, Arun Kumar Gupta, Paulomi M. Jindal and Abdul Rehman Ansari
Published 2017
by Vikas Publishing House, 2023pp

Public administrators play a crucial role in connecting a society's goals and the workings of its government within the complex web of governance. The fundamentals of this important field are exposed in 'Public Administration: Fifth Semester Compulsory Paper', which also highlights how essential public administration is to the smooth operation of any nation. The book explores the core idea that competent public administrators are essential for any state to succeed, since they are the cornerstone of efficient administration. Getting right to the point, the book emphasises how important it is to study public administration since it can help find more effective ways to run government. Beyond its theoretical foundations, the book advances a story that underscores the significance of studying public administration as a conduit to discovering more efficient ways of governance.

Beyond its theoretical foundations, the book advances a narrative that highlights public administration's responsibility in training a nation's future administrators and leaders to tackle the many difficulties that may arise. In this context, public administration is shown not just as a theoretical concept but also as a dynamic, non-political apparatus dedicated to promoting society's welfare within the confines of laws established by the state. We explore the book's thematic landscape in this review, revealing its topical significance as a valuable resource for anyone looking for profound insights into the dynamics of governance in contemporary times and the changing role of public administrators in determining the course of different countries.

'Public Administration: Fifth Semester Compulsory Paper' offers a glimpse into the world of public administration, exploring its contemporary relevance and practical significance. The book's syllabi delve into foundational concepts, from the meaning and scope of public administration to new and comparative approaches, showcasing its awareness of evolving paradigms. As a beginner navigating through theories, the book introduces scientific management, classical management, and human relations theories, providing insights into the complexities of administrative structures. It inquires into the historical roots of bureaucracy through the lenses of Max Weber and Marx and addresses the challenges of public administration in the globalised era. In the practical realm, the book explores district and block administration, constitutional bodies under constitutional amendments, and the nuances of planning and development in both rural and urban

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contexts. These discussions not only lay theoretical groundwork but also offer a glimpse into the day-to-day complexities faced by administrators.

Overall, 'Public Administration: Fifth Semester Compulsory Paper' appears to be a valuable resource for beginners, striking a balance between theoretical foundations and real-world applications. The book's exploration of contemporary issues in public administration aligns with the challenges faced by administrators today, making it a relevant and insightful read for those taking their first steps into this field.

The initial unit of the book delves into public administration, emphasising its centrality in organising government policies and the conduct of non-elected officials. L.D. White defines public administration as operations aiming at fulfilling public policy. It is an academic pursuit focused on understanding the structure and functioning of government organisations, particularly the executive branch. The unit highlights public administration's pivotal role in development, reflecting a country's qualities and aspirations. Fundamental functions include providing education, healthcare, social security, infrastructure, and executing policies for economic growth. Divergent views on the nature of public administration – integral and managerial – are explored. The emergence of New Public Administration, originating from the 1968 Minnowbrook Conference, is discussed. It emphasises ethics, values, innovation, and social equality, advocating for human relations and creative administrative approaches. The Honey Report of 1967 broadens public administration's scope by integrating it into the total governmental process. Comparative administrative systems are introduced as the study of administrative systems across nations, seeking patterns and regularities. Characteristics of developing countries are outlined, highlighting the importance of impartial administration for social cohesion. Public administration's significance extends to developed nations, where citizens expect state support. Development administration, rooted in normative concepts and reality, is characterised by being time-consuming, result-oriented, and client-oriented. The unit concludes by stressing the need for an ideology of development for employing modern techniques to achieve societal objectives.

Unit 2 of the book explores key principles in the evolution of management thought. Frederick Taylor's Piece Rate System is highlighted as a revolutionary approach to wage payment, emphasising payment based on productivity. Taylor's principles are categorised into developing a science of management, scientific worker selection, friendly cooperation, and equal division of work responsibilities. Henri Fayol, another significant theorist, presents 14 principles, including division of work, authority, discipline, and unity of command. The collaboration of Frank and Lilian Gilbreth contributes to scientific management through time and motion studies, process charts, and merit-rating systems. Henry Gantt introduces the 'Task and Bonus Plan' and the Gantt chart, aimed at motivating workers and supervisors. Max Weber's classical theory emphasises division of work, rules, hierarchy, technical competence, record-keeping, and impersonal relations. Human relations theory shifts focus to psychological motivations and informal group behaviour. Maslow's hierarchy of needs becomes a widely accepted motivation theory, emphasising individual needs' impact on behaviour. Principles of organisation, like unity of command, span of control, authority, and responsibility, are crucial in structuring organisations. Centralisation and decentralisation reflect administrative authority distribution. The second unit concludes by emphasising management as a system essential for achieving organisational goals through effective resource utilisation. Folk management involves local stakeholders in community-based decision-making. Administration, defined as a top-level function, contrasts with management, which deals

with operational aspects, highlighting the distinction between policy formulation and implementation. Overall, Unit 2 provides a comprehensive overview of management principles, theories, and their historical evolution, laying the foundation for understanding organisational dynamics.

In 'Unit 3', the author explores the intricate world of bureaucracy, emphasising its pyramidical hierarchy, formal rules, and responsiveness to socio-political influences. Max Weber's groundbreaking analysis establishes bureaucracy as a defining feature of modern industrial societies, irrespective of ownership of means of production. The review highlights bureaucracy as a form of control with a hierarchical structure, acknowledging its evolution through different historical periods. The impact of globalisation on public administration becomes evident, with global institutions, IT, and efficiency concerns influencing developing countries. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) notes the shift towards New Public Management, emphasising a more managerial and participative style. The discussion on budgeting explores its annual nature, legislative control, and the importance of long-term planning. The budget, a democratic instrument, aims to bridge economic disparities and foster inclusive development. The separation of the Railway Budget in 1921 is explained, emphasising a business approach and the railways' contribution to their own development. The Ministry of Finance, led by the Finance Minister, holds the responsibility for framing the budget, involving various organs in the process. The book also delves into the administrative framework for budget preparation in India, involving the Finance Ministry, Administrative Ministries, Planning Commission, and Comptroller and Auditor General. Additionally, the Lokpal and Lokayukta, inspired by Ombudsman models, were proposed for addressing citizens' grievances, leading to the Jan Lokpal Bill – a civil society initiative against corruption. Overall, 'Unit 3' provides a comprehensive exploration of Indian bureaucracy, globalisation's impact on public administration, budgeting, and mechanisms for citizens' grievances redressal, offering valuable insights for students and scholars in the field.

Unit 4 delves into the intricate structure and pivotal role of district administration in India. It emphasises the district's significance as a fundamental administrative unit and explores its responsibilities in maintaining law and order, ensuring public welfare, and acting as a direct link between the government and the people. The historical evolution of the District Collector and District Magistrate roles is traced back to the East India Company era. The unit emphasises the need for a balanced partnership between state and local administrations to serve the people effectively. It stresses the importance of preventing malpractices while encouraging local initiatives. The narrative extends to the significance of decentralisation, urging the state and union governments to support municipal administration for efficient task execution. Addressing both urban and rural local governance, the unit highlights the feeble presence of local governments in India, particularly in the face of state government control. It sheds light on reservations for marginalised groups in rural areas, aiming to provide them with symbolic capital for a just order. The discussion expands to urban local governments, where municipal corporations play a crucial role in addressing complex civil issues arising from large populations. The unit underscores the democratic decentralisation strategy, exemplified by the recommendations of the Balwant Rai Mehta Committee, and notes the positive impact of the 73rd Amendment Act in enhancing citizen participation at the grassroots level. In summary, Unit 4 provides a comprehensive overview of the district

administration's vital role, the historical context of local governance, and the ongoing efforts to strengthen participatory development in both rural and urban India.

In conclusion, 'Public Administration: Fifth Semester Compulsory Paper' stands out as a paramount resource for students of public administration, offering a comprehensive exploration of key principles, theories, and practical applications. The book's emphasis on the centrality of public administration in shaping government policies, its role in development, and the evolution of management thought makes it an indispensable guide for understanding the complexities of governance in contemporary times. The book's relevance is underscored by its detailed examination of bureaucratic structures, globalisation's impact on public administration, and the critical aspects of budgeting and citizens' grievances redressal. Moreover, its focus on district administration in India provides valuable insights into the intricacies of local governance and the ongoing efforts to enhance citizen participation. As a student of public administration, studying this book becomes crucial in gaining a deep understanding of the theoretical foundations and real-world applications of the field. The evolving paradigms, historical perspectives, and contemporary challenges explored in the book align with the dynamic nature of public administration, making it an essential read for those aspiring to navigate the complexities of governance and contribute meaningfully to the development of nations.