
**EXPLORING THE CONCEPT OF EFFECTIVENESS OF CIVIL
BUREAUCRACY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WITH SPECIAL
REFERENCE TO PAKISTAN**

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ABSTRACT

The current debate on the effectiveness of bureaucracy indicates that the development of an effective bureaucracy is the most important determinant of good governance. Civil servants are required to perform their respective functions in accordance with their distinctive roles defined by the law of the land. They are not supposed to exercise their functions beyond the limits prescribed by the law. Ineffectiveness of the bureaucracy could badly affect the outcome of the policies. In fact the execution of policies depends on the way in which policies are implemented by bureaucracy. Thus, the bureaucracy has a key role in successful implementation of policies.

The main objective of present study is to investigate the effectiveness of bureaucracy in developing countries. The post-colonial literature, with the exception of a few works on Civil Service reforms and the role of higher civil servants, generally highlights the working of Pakistan's civil bureaucracy and the process of politicization in more general terms. Thus, this paper deals with the factors required for effectiveness i.e. political neutrality, exercise of powers and political accountability.

Keywords: Bureaucracy, Effectiveness, Colonialism, Political neutrality.

INTRODUCTION

The term effectiveness is defined as 'producing the result that is wanted or intended; producing a successful result' (Advance Learner's Oxford Dictionary, 2005). In simple words the administrative effectiveness is equated with the efficiency of administrators with which they achieve the policy goals. Keith Dowding in 'Civil Service' has discussed Weber's model of bureaucracy and the concept of "Pareto-efficiency". Keith Dowding cites Politt as saying: 'the effectiveness is the degree to which the final outcomes (not outputs) of a service or policy match the original objectives for that service or policy. The closer, the match, the more effective the policy' (Dowding, Keith, 1995). Thus, the performance of the civil servant could be evaluated on the basis of the

accomplishment of the goals of the policy. Another Effective participation of bureaucracy in the nation's development can also be considered as an indicator of performance. As a matter of fact, an efficient bureaucracy could help in minimizing the cost of the implementation of the development projects. Dowding argues that the "productive efficiency is the ratio between inputs and outputs" (Dowding, Keith, 1995). He further suggests the productive efficiency could be improved "by holding inputs steady whilst increasing outputs or by holding outputs steady whilst reducing inputs" (Dowding, Keith, 1995).

CONCEPT OF NEUTRALITY

Nevertheless, the efficient bureaucracy could be considered as a neutral in its dealing with a number of situations. Michael J. Hill believes that 'the strength of the bureaucratic form of administration, according to Weber, rests upon its formal rationality, a notion which a number of modern students of organizations have equated with efficiency'. (Hill, Michael J., 1972) Thus, the political neutrality has remained an important feature of the effective bureaucracies in the developed countries in the world. An efficient bureaucracy could be neutral and productive. According to Keith usually political leaders have their own definition of efficiency. 'When they demand greater efficiency of the civil service, they mean productive efficiency' (Dowding, Keith, 1995).

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The study of the Colonial impact on administrative systems in Asian States significantly contributes to the development of comparative literature on the Civil Bureaucracy. Braibanti selected five countries for the comparative analysis of the performance of Colonial bureaucracy. In these countries bureaucracies basically possessed the same ideology and structure as embodied in the Indian civil service (ICS) (Braibanti, 1966). These states include India, Pakistan, Ceylon, Burma, Malaysia and Nepal which did not come under the direct influence of British rule. The rule was established in the form of 'administrative discretion'. According to Braibanti 'the personalized rule of powerful district officers was an efficient and economical means by which a small handful of Colonial officials could control large numbers of peasants' (Braibanti, 1966). His argument indicates that the British administration was small in numbers, but it was so powerful and effective that it could control the almost entire population of India. The administration was more efficient perhaps because of the two reasons. The first, as suggested by Braibanti that the bureaucratic structure was economical. It was one of the factors

associated with the efficiency as argued by Keith Downing. The second reason could be a political neutrality of administrative system, which indirectly established the colonial authority in India. Although usually associated with the subcontinent, district officer rule was also found in the British Colonies of Africa” (Braibanti, 1966).

The district administration established by the British in India was primarily responsible for the revenue collection and maintenance of the order in the district. These objectives could not be achieved without the establishment of the state authority in the presence of local influences in the district. This view has been presented by Robert Eric Freedenberg in his study ‘Guntur District 1788-1848’. According to the author, state authority was weakened in the Guntur, when there was a clash of interests between the district administration and local elite, or between the two factions of local leaders. In the later case each faction tried to secure its own political objectives. It led to the corruption in the administration. Freedenberg further explores the means which the local leadership used to influence the administration.

‘It investigates and scrutinizes the way in which state power was exercised, the manner in which British rule accommodated itself to the peculiarities of a district area, and people, the capacity of East India Company and Servants in resolving problems or meeting needs and finally, the importance of the district collector in carrying out policy and upholding state authority” (Frykenberg, 1965). This tradition of influencing district administration at local level has continued even after the partition of India and independence of Pakistan. But the means of influence were changed considerably in a post-colonial political system. However, the Pakistan’s civil service could be differentiated from Indian civil service in two ways: firstly both the services worked in two different post-partition environments; and secondly they were given new tasks. Nevertheless, both shared common knowledge, skills and ideas inherited from Colonial legacy.

According to Percival, ‘Britain built up in India an administration distinguished from other Indian Systems of government by its impersonality, its recognition of personal liberty, its integrity and its insistence on equality before the law” (Griffiths, 1965). But Misra argues that British system was created at a time when rapid means of transport and communication did not exist, the district officer was responsible for practically everything that impinged upon the lives of the people living within the territorial limits of his jurisdiction” (Misra, 2000).

The civil servants remained culturally different from their subjects even during the process of Indianisation. The civil service established in Pakistan continued to maintain the traditions of its predecessor in a new environment marked by new socio-economic changes. It went through the process of 'politicization of bureaucracy or bureaucratization of politicians' (Hill, Michael J., 1972). The simple logic, supported by the some political scientists and historians, could be the acceptance of the bureaucratic intervention in politics by the successive governments in general and military regimes in particular. Anwar H. Syed in his 'Bureaucratic Ethic & Ethos in Pakistan believes that bureaucracy in Pakistan has 'played essentially a political role, having usurped that of the politicians' (Syed, Anwar H., 1971). He further argues that the bureaucracy cannot keep itself away from the impact of the decisions, it takes. He has gone so far as to suggest that during the Ayub regime the bureaucrats not only made policies but also they implemented these policies. The members of the civil service dominated every branch of the Government.

The logic behind this view was the government's acceptance of the bureaucratic position. Frank Goodnow also shares this view. The government leaders relied more on the civil servants and less on the politicians. In slight contrast to the view presented by Robert La Porte *et.al.*, Ziring argues that 'the civil bureaucracy did not usurp power but filled the power vacuum which was created by the turbulence of the parliamentary period and adjusted to the 'realities' of the military regimes of the 1958 to 1971 period' (Ziring Lawrence, 1974). Muneer Ahmed in his study of public servants and their attitudes has also repeated the same logic as presented by the Ziring. However, he goes on further saying that 'the politician has been weak or inept or altogether absent from the scene because of the constitutional machinery. This situation has enabled the civil servant to step in to fill the vacuum' (Ahmed, Muneer, 1964). However, it is clear that the bureaucracy in Pakistan emerged as a powerful group with less accountability. It did not continue a policy of political neutrality which was the one of the basic features of the Colonial bureaucracy.

BUREAUCRACY IN A DEVELOPING COUNTRY

The bureaucracy in developing countries has acquired a paramount importance. But the way it operated, has contributed significantly to its criticism. The conduct of bureaucrats and their exercise of power generated their image as a ruler and not as a servant. In his study of the

culture of power and Governance, Niaz Ilhan explains ‘the impact of the exercise of power by the elite on the effectiveness, quality and ethos of the state apparatus, as well as the reaction of society’ (Niaz Ilhan, 2008). However, his study does not focus on local level bureaucracy, which in practice could be responsible for the implementation of policy at the grassroots level.

The developing societies have been concerned more about the role of administration in development. Shaun raises the similar question ‘Is the bureaucracy a force for or a brake on, development? The answer is that the role of the bureaucracy is often variable but always important’ (Breslin, Shaun, 1992). But the monopoly of power it has enjoyed could result in the unhealthy growth of other institutions of these societies. Hence, Michael Hill in his study ‘Sociology of Public Administration’ suggests that the development of a powerful central bureaucracy must be checked by other independent institutions providing a source of countervailing power’ (Hill, Michael J., 1972). The growth of these institutions could undermine the growing power and privileges of bureaucracy. Accordingly, Braibanti writes that: ‘the application of law by the judiciary may also be a temporary restraint, but in the long run the risk here is great, for the burden on the judiciary may cause internal imbalance in the administration of justice, and it may be difficult to prevent a steadily expanding encroachment of the judiciary in the administrative realm’ (Braibanti, Ralph, 1966). Braibanti thus suggest that the ‘the rise of countervailing elites and a vigorous political process seem to be the most promising restraints on administrative behaviour’ (Braibanti, Ralph, 1966).

With regard to the nature of bureaucracy Shaun suggests ‘one problem confronting many developing countries is that their bureaucracy still reveals the footprint of colonialism’ (Breslin, Shaun, 1992). It means that the change is slow in the culture and bureaucratic structure. In these states Braibanti suggests, that: ‘bureaucratization has usually occurred first, accelerated by colonial or imperial rule: and politicization, long sedated by colonial or imperial rule, is only now gathering momentum’ (Braibanti, Ralph, 1966).

In emerging states, the bureaucracies are a major source of interaction between the government and the people. Hence the dependence on bureaucratic machinery for an effective relationship between state and its subjects has increased. This has resulted in a need for rejuvenation and reorganization of bureaucratic structure and rebuilding the capacity of local level administration. Braibanti argues in

clear terms that the ‘expanding capability for converting political demands into administrative actions is a fundamental state function, the technological complexities of which are such that only a modernized administrative apparatus can cope with them effectively’ (Braibanti, Ralph, 1966).

Here, it is imperative to note what Braibanti’s analysis suggests, that the political modernization did not keep pace with bureaucratic modernization because of the logic discussed above. However, he claims that ‘a system in which the bureaucracy is vastly superior to the political process cannot long maintain such imbalance without the risk of tyranny and eventual collapse’ (Braibanti, Ralph, 1966).

The developing countries in general and Pakistan in particular have experienced this situation. Nevertheless, the positive aspect of the bureaucratic modernization is that it ‘may not only increase the capability of bureaucracy in converting demands, as was earlier stated, but may also improve the quality of administrative decision-making by enlarging the component of rationality’ (Braibanti, Ralph, 1966) Moreover, the author further describes four attributes of ‘political modernization’ in the developing states. But “the expansion of popular participation in the political process” has been emphasized in the context of the developing countries (Braibanti, Ralph, 1966).

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