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Role of Bureaucracy in India

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ABSTRACT: The separation of powers of the government is made by distribution of power among three major branches of government namely, the legislature, the executive, and the judiciary but it's all in the past. Now our structure still prevails the same though the executive body has escalated considerably and today, not only do we treat the executive as an important branch, but also, we see them as a branch with numerous employees and departments. In a democratic state, the ministers are generally elected and re-elected periodically and there is a chance that after every election the state may experience a new government. Hence, for this very reason, the ministers have little knowledge about the administration of a state and can't be considered as mature administrators. So, there arose a need to have a permanent administrative body that helps the ministers to run the state. This permanent body consists of people known as civil servants or bureaucrats. The civil service system or bureaucracy has its origins rooted in the times when the British were ruling over India. The British took complete control of India's administration through the Government of India Act, 1858. This was the beginning when the British ruled over India through a group of appointed experts. Within a span of less than a hundred years, the British had nurtured a capable body of administration that comprised mostly Indians who owed their allegiance to the British Government. This administrative body could be very well called as the sine qua non of British Rule in India. After India gained independence, at a time when the third-world states were struggling to build qualified and capable career services, the stand of India's senior bureaucracy was strong and exceptional. It gave and is still continuing to give India an autonomy and continuity that has not been shaken even at times when there is uncertainty and unsteady political control at the National and State level.

KEYWORDS: Bureaucracy, India, democratic, administrators, government, independence, national, state, civil

I. INTRODUCTION

Bureaucracy means arranging a lot of people who are required to work together. Bureaucracy means "rule by offices". The bureaucrats assign government policy to consider the laws made by the elected officials and do it practically. These consist of permanent professional people who are part of the government's executive. The main job of these people is to facilitate the working of government departments. Though they work under the ministers. The civil servants hold perpetual positions in government offices. They generally join their administrations during their young people and keep on functioning as government servants till the time of retirement which is normally 58 to 60 years. [1,2]

There are 6 main characteristics of bureaucracy. They are:

Specialization & division of labor

In bureaucracy each person has their own job. In that particular part they are masters and experts. Here different people are assigned for various works. One single component of work is broken down & given to different people to perform or do their part. Together they combine their works. This is done so that the work can be done properly and one person will not have all the burden on him. This also does more work in less time.

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Hierarchical authority structures

Bureaucracy has a chain of work. Each person has given their own work in the chain and each one's work will be observed by their senior one. In a hierarchy, the power flows from the top and approaches the bottom. This is organized properly because work can be done in a better way and communication will be easier.[3,4]

Rules and regulations

The standard procedures are clear, formal and written in the instruments at each level of the hierarchy. The workers will communicate among themselves to go with a flow and see who is lagging behind. Without these rules, nothing can perform systematically. Due to these rules and regulations, things can be made over-controlled.

The idea of technical competence

The bureaucracy has many offices but it takes specific works on the basis of their rules. The bureaucracy is impersonal. People working there don't know each other properly. You have to hire someone who has adequate qualifications. Once you are hired, your activity will be monitored. And this idea is technical competence.

Impersonality and personal indifference

It doesn't matter who you know, what you know, who you are, you are always different, unique. This is the reason a uniform way is followed by everyone. Bureaucracy does not discriminate. No special treatment is given to anyone. You have to do it in the same way as others do. This is the idea of impersonality.[5,6]

A standard of formal, written communication

Bureaucracy prefers written communication more as compared to actual in person. This communication depends on the briefs made, emails sent, paperwork, etc, but needs to be done in written format. Here everything is systematic & documented. Every small detail also needs to be done through written communication not face to face.

Government policies

Once a government that is elected takes decisions on policy, bureaucracy gets the responsibility of implementing those policies. The political executive heads the policy-making but they need bureaucracy for its formulation. Hence, after bureaucracy plays an important role in forming those governmental policies.

Bureaucrats give necessary feedback regarding the effects of the policy to the ministers. It gives all the positive as well as the negative impacts of the policies. They also formulate alternative policies and then the minister can execute or adopt the policies that are made.

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Functions

- Role of bureaucracy in running the administration

The bureaucracy has the responsibility to make sure that the administration is running perfectly without any disturbances. They make the administration running as per the rules and regulations that are implemented by the government.

- Role of bureaucracy as advisors to political executives

The bureaucracy advises the political executive for making decisions for the betterment of government and for smoothly running the government. Political executives have no knowledge regarding the functions of the government. Hence these bureaucrats guide them properly because they are highly educated and are experienced enough. Even the ministers take their advice for the proper work or utilization of the government policies. These bureaucrats provide adequate information to the ministers also.[7,8]

- Role in law-making

Here also they have a major indirect role. All the bills are drafted by them which the minister needs to submit to the legislation for making the law. The ministers contact the civil servants for help to provide all the necessary information to the legislation for the lawmaking.

- Role in policy-formulation

The policies that are made need to be included in specific situations. This is a function of political executives. These political parties collect the data from the civil servants for implementing those in the policies. These civil servants help the political executives to identify the merits and demerits of the policies. After going on all the merits and demerits one by one, the political executive can choose any policy as the governmental policy.

- Role in record-keeping

Bureaucrats maintain and keep governmental records. They collect and categorize the datas of government activities. They also look on the socio-economic statistics which are used for public policies and for future developments.

- Financial administration

Bureaucracy plays a vital role in case of the financial administrations. The political executives who have very little knowledge take advice from bureaucrats for financial settlements, tax structures & also administration purposes. While dealing with respect to tax structures they collect the taxes and solve the disputes which have arisen or which may arise during the recovery of the taxes. They manage all the paperwork.

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- Responsibility for public relations

It is the responsibility of the bureaucrats to maintain relations with the general public. The ministers are somehow dependent on them because they inform their decisions regarding policy & try to communicate the interests, views, & needs of the public. The civil servants are the main agents who direct contact with people. They provide a two way link. They communicate to the government regarding the needs of the people and also communicate to the people the decisions that have been made by the government. Hence, after bureaucracy plays an active role here.[9,10]

- Collection of taxes and disbursement of financial benefits

The civil servants advise the political executives in respect of financial administrations. They provide advice regarding the tax administrations, dispute settlements, recovery of taxes etc. They also prepare the budget and taxation proposals. They also grant subsidies, tax reliefs, and many other concerns to the people.

- Fixed salaries

Every individual from the Bureaucracy gets a fixed amount. Directly at the hour of the arrangement, he has apportioned a size of pay, which relies on the nature and level of his employment obligation. All the civil servants having a place with a specific class of managerial chain of importance are set in one size of pay. Each occupation likewise qualifies them for certain stipends.[11]

- Judicial work

The development of the arrangement of managerial equity, under which a few sorts of the cases and questions are chosen by the chief, has additionally been a wellspring of expanded semi-judicial work of the bureaucracy. The disputes including the award of grants, licenses, charge concessions, standards and so on are presently settled by the government employees.

- Job roles

Weber accepted that obligations should be designated dependent on expertise and capacity. There should be no adaptable jobs. Workers should know about their position's obligations and stick to them. Wandering outside of their assigned jobs just upsets the chain of importance of power. Joint effort, inventive reasoning and thought pitching are likewise firmly debilitated. Laborers should regard their chiefs and not violate limits.

- Hiring basis

Weber pushed the best competitors with a specific range of abilities needed for the position should be employed to guarantee the best outcomes. There should be no special cases, just those people with the correct abilities and skills who satisfy the high guidelines of the association should be recruited. In the event that an individual isn't completely qualified, they are not a fit.

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II. DISCUSSION

Control over Bureaucracy

Bureaucrats have a lot of responsibility for themselves. This is why they also need to be checked or else they can misuse the power that has been given to them. This is a control barrier on them. Each & every state takes care & keeps a watch over the bureaucracy. Every state exercises it both internally and also externally.

Internal control

This means the control is made internally within the organization and not outside it. The organization is hierarchical and is divided into parts for its better function, the tools of internal controls are their need to be disciplined among them, there should be a leadership control, someone should be there to manage the budget issues and control the accounting and auditing part.[12]

External control

It is not inside the organization, it happens outside the agencies. These can be the law making system, the legislature, the executives and the judiciary. There are many agencies that look after the works of bureaucracy. These bureaucrats are responsible for all big & small policies in both state and center. This acts as a communication link between the people & the government.

The bureaucracy of India post-independence can be rightly considered as the legacy of British rule in India. The system created, as a result, was of superior quality and extremely helped India after independence. The changeover of the bureaucrats from the colonial administration system to the newly gained democratic culture was smooth and this wouldn't have been possible without the expertise of the civil body. Post-independence, most of the Indian administration was dominated by the ICS (Indian Civil Service) officers for almost two decades.

Gradually, the ICS officers retired and by the end of the 1970s, most of them had retired and the responsibility of the entire Indian Administrative System came on to the shoulders of IAS officers. This could be called the start of the advent to the new age of Indian Bureaucracy. Today, the Indian Bureaucracy is not only powerful but also is capable of controlling the Indian administration through its ups and downs.[13]

III. RESULTS

A bureaucrat is a member of a bureaucracy and can compose the administration of any organization of any size, although the term usually connotes someone within an institution of government.

The term bureaucrat derives from "bureaucracy", which in turn derives from the French "bureaucratie" first known from the 18th century.^[1] Bureaucratic work had already been performed for many centuries. In countries such as Pakistan, India and Bangladesh, bureaucrats are known to be the officials that run the government sector at administrative levels as well as ministerial levels and also they are known as executives that run the corporate sector at managerial and directorial level. Bureaucrats play various roles in modern society, by virtue of holding administrative, functional, and managerial positions in government.^{[2][3][4]} They carry out the day-to-day implementation of enacted

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policies for central government agencies, such as postal services, education and healthcare administration, and various regulatory bodies.^[5]

Bureaucrats can be split into different categories based on the system, nationality, and time they come from.[14]

1. Classical – someone who starts at a low level of public work and does not have to express opinions of their own in their professional capacities. They follow policy guidelines and gain increasing ranks within the system. Tax collectors, government accountants, police officers, fire fighters, and military personnel are examples of classical bureaucrats.
2. American bureaucrats – these are different from other types because they operate within a republican form of government, and the political culture traditionally seeks to limit their power.
3. Chinese bureaucrats, also called “Mandarin bureaucrats” – Mandarins were important from 605 to 1905 CE. The Zhou dynasty is the earliest recording of Chinese bureaucrats. There was a 9 rank system, each rank having more power than the lower rank. This type of bureaucrat went on until the Qing dynasty. After 1905, the Mandarins were replaced by modern civil servants. In 1949, the Communist Party took over China, and by their theory, all people were bureaucrats who worked for the government.
4. European – originally referred to as “Mandarin” stemming from the Chinese word for government employee. Bureaucracy didn't catch on in Europe very much due to the many different governments in the region, and constant change and advancement, and relative freedom of the upper class. With the translation of Confucian texts during the Enlightenment, the concept of a meritocracy reached intellectuals in the West, who saw it as an alternative to the traditional ancien regime of Europe.^[6] Voltaire and François Quesnay wrote favourably of the idea, with Voltaire claiming that the Chinese had “perfected moral science” and Quesnay advocating an economic and political system modeled after that of the Chinese.^[6] The implementation of His Majesty's Civil Service as a systematic, meritocratic civil service bureaucracy, followed the Northcote–Trevelyan Report of 1854 which was influenced by of the ancient Chinese imperial examination.^[7] This system was modeled on the imperial examinations system and bureaucracy of China based on the suggestion of Northcote–Trevelyan Report.^[8] Thomas Taylor Meadows, Britain's consul in Guangzhou, China argued in his Desultory Notes on the Government and People of China, published in 1847, that “the long duration of the Chinese empire is solely and altogether owing to the good government which consists in the advancement of men of talent and merit only,” and that the British must reform their civil service by making the institution meritocratic.^[8] In 1958, though, after the formation of the European Union the job of the Bureaucrat became extremely important to help organize and govern such a large and diverse community. In 1961 the term Eurocrat was coined by Richard Mayne, a journalist at the time. A Eurocrat is a bureaucrat of the European Union.
5. Modern Bureaucrat - Bureaucrats gained increasingly negative reputations throughout the second half of the 20th century. As populations grow it becomes harder for bureaucratic systems to work because it often involves a lot of paperwork, which increases processing times, which eventually will be nearly impossible to manage. The digital age and the Internet have revolutionized Bureaucrats and the modern Bureaucrat has a different skill set than before. Also, the internet lowers the corruption levels of some Bureaucratic entities such as the Police Force due to social media and pro-am journalism.[14]

German sociologist Max Weber defined a bureaucratic official as the following:^[9]

- They are personally free and appointed to their position on the basis of conduct.
- They exercise the authority delegated to them in accordance with impersonal rules, and their loyalty is enlisted on behalf of the faithful execution of their official duties.
- Their appointment and job placement are dependent upon their technical qualifications.

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- Their administrative work is a full-time occupation.
- Their work is rewarded by a regular salary and prospects of advancement in a lifetime career.
- They must exercise their judgment and their skills, but their duty is to place these at the service of a higher authority. Ultimately they are responsible only for the impartial execution of assigned tasks and must sacrifice their personal judgment if it runs counter to their official duties.
- Bureaucratic control is the use of rules, regulations, and formal authority to guide performance. It includes such things as budgets, statistical reports, and performance appraisals to regulate behavior and results.

As an academic, Woodrow Wilson, later a US President, professed in his 1887 article *The Study of Administration*:^[10]

But to fear the creation of a domineering, illiberal officialism as a result of the studies I am here proposing is to miss altogether the principle upon which I wish most to insist. That principle is, that administration in the United States must be at all points sensitive to public opinion. A body of thoroughly trained officials serving during good behavior we must have in any case: that is a plain business necessity. But the apprehension that such a body will be anything un-American clears away the moment it is asked. What is to constitute good behavior? For that question obviously carries its own answer on its face. Steady, hearty allegiance to the policy of the government they serve will constitute good behavior. That policy will have no taint of officialism about it. It will not be the creation of permanent officials, but of statesmen whose responsibility to public opinion will be direct and inevitable. Bureaucracy can exist only where the whole service of the state is removed from the common political life of the people, its chiefs as well as its rank and file. Its motives, its objects, its policy, its standards, must be bureaucratic. It would be difficult to point out any examples of impudent exclusiveness and arbitrariness on the part of officials doing service under a chief of department who really served the people, as all our chiefs of departments must be made to do. It would be easy, on the other hand, to adduce other instances like that of the influence of Stein in Prussia, where the leadership of one statesman imbued with true public spirit transformed arrogant and perfunctory bureaux into public-spirited instruments of just government.[15]

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The term bureaucracy refers to a body of non-elected governing officials as well as to an administrative policy-making group.^[10] Historically, a bureaucracy was a government administration managed by departments staffed with non-elected officials.^[12] Today, bureaucracy is the administrative system governing any large institution, whether publicly owned or privately owned.^{[13][14]} The public administration in many jurisdictions and sub-jurisdictions exemplifies bureaucracy, but so does any centralized hierarchical structure of an institution, e.g. hospitals, academic entities, business firms, professional societies, social clubs, etc.

There are two key dilemmas in bureaucracy. The first dilemma revolves around whether bureaucrats should be autonomous or directly accountable to their political masters.^[15] The second dilemma revolves around bureaucrats' behavior strictly following the law or whether they have leeway to determine appropriate solutions for varied circumstances.^[15]

Various commentators have argued for the necessity of bureaucracies in modern society. The German sociologist Max Weber (1864-1920) argued that bureaucracy constitutes the most efficient and rational way in which human activity can be organized and that systematic processes and organized hierarchies are necessary to maintain order, to maximize efficiency, and to eliminate favoritism. On the other hand, Weber also saw unfettered bureaucracy as a threat to individual freedom, with the potential of trapping individuals in an impersonal "iron cage" of rule-based, rational control.^{[16][17]}

Like every modern state, a liberal democracy is highly bureaucratized, with numerous sizable organizations filled with career civil servants. Some of those bureaucracies have a substantial amount of influence to preserve the current political system because they are primarily focused on defending the country and the state from threats from both within and beyond. Since these institutions frequently operate independently and are mostly shielded from politics, they frequently have no affiliation with any particular political party or group. For instance, loyal British civil officials work

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for both the Conservative and Labor parties. However, on occasion a group might seize control of a bureaucratic state, as the Nazis did in Germany in the 1930s.^[18]

Although numerous ideals associated with democracy, such as equality, participation, and individuality, are in stark contrast to those associated with modern bureaucracy, specifically hierarchy, specialization, and impersonality, political theorists did not recognize bureaucracy as a threat to democracy. [16] Yet democratic theorists still have not developed a sufficient solution to the problem bureaucratic authority poses to democratic government^[19]

One answer to this problem is to say that bureaucracy has no place at all in a real democracy. Theorists who adopt this perspective typically understand that they must demonstrate that bureaucracy does not necessarily occur in every contemporary society, only in those they perceive to be non-democratic. [17,18] Because their democracy was resistant to bureaucracy, nineteenth-century British writers frequently referred to it as the "Continental nuisance."^[20]

According to Marx and other socialist thinkers, the most advanced bureaucracies were those in France and Germany. However, they argued that bureaucracy was a symptom of the bourgeois state and would vanish along with capitalism, which gave rise to the bourgeois state. Though clearly not the democracies [18,19] Marx had in mind, socialist societies ended up being more bureaucratic than the governments they replaced. Similarly, after capitalist economies developed the administrative systems required to support their extensive welfare states, [20] the idea that bureaucracy exclusively exists in socialist governments could scarcely be maintained.^[20]

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