

Research Trends in the Discipline of Public Administration in Universities – A Study

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Abstract: The study of Public Administration has advanced to an extraordinary degree since 1920. Then recognized in the curricula of only a few universities, it has now become a staple subject in college and university studies. In 1939 the American Society for Public Administration and its quarterly journal 'Public Administration Review' were founded. Specialists in personnel management, municipal administration, budget procedures, and other fields now have their organisation and publications. The study of public administration, as a separate academic discipline received a remarkable boost with the establishment of the Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA) in 1954 and the establishment of the Indian School of Public Administration in 1957 within the IIPA. Public Administration, as a discipline, is witnessing dawn of a new era in its study, which now by stepping out of its orthodox/conventional mould seeks to create an independent space in Social Sciences. The overzealous endeavour at making Public Administration an instrumental and goal-driven technical exercise has taken out the dynamism of the discipline as an organic search for administrative solutions for socioeconomic problems in the country. The discipline is reduced to efforts at building specific skills which are required to address the identified problems without recognizing their socio-economic and political roots. The discussion that follows revolves around those major issues which remain critical in the framing of syllabus and in class teaching.

Keywords: Create, public administration, skills, social science, teaching, universities

INTRODUCTION:

Wilson who is acclaimed as the 'founding father' of Public Administration, identified it as a discipline.

The study of Public Administration has advanced to an extraordinary degree since 1920. Then recognized in the curricula of only a few universities, it has now become a staple subject in college and university studies. Bureaus of Government research have multiplied across the nation. Systematic works, monographic studies, official inquiries, and special reports abound. In 1939 the American Society for Public Administration and its quarterly journal 'Public Administration Review' were founded. Specialists in personnel management, municipal administration, budget procedures, and other fields now have their organisation and publications. During the 1930's the constellation of public service organisations popularly known as 1313, including public administration clearing house, were established in Chicago. These organisations published a large volume of valuable material. From many and varied sources, a vast body of writing has taken place in the last half century that now provides an ample base for the study of this field, corresponding works are less abundant in other countries, the study of public administration is still primarily American.

The evolution and growth of the subject in India also was largely due to the patronage extended by USA. In the recent decades public administration attracted the attention of the people at large and has registered an impressive growth as a subject of study both from the point of view of academic and applied aspects. While accepting the growing importance of the subject, several social scientists deny the status of an independent discipline to Public Administration on the ground that it does not possess universally acceptable concepts and theories. It is alleged that most of the contexts of the subject are American oriented and not many attempts were made to modify them to suit the Indian ethos.

Since, its emergence as an independent academic discipline in America, Public Administration gained similar status and recognition in Europe, Africa, Asia and other parts of the world. In India, the study of some of the important aspects of public administration like local self-government has started in the early decades of the 20th century. Teaching of public administration in India began humbly as it appeared with an optional status at the Master Degree level in Political Science, History or Economics.

The study of public administration, as a separate academic discipline received a remarkable boost with the establishment of the Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA) in 1954 and the establishment of the Indian School of Public Administration in 1957 within the IIPA. Subsequently in several universities the departments of Public Administration have been established and it is being taught at under graduate level and post graduate levels. Research is also undertaken in the Public Administration discipline in several universities and institutes throughout the country. Public Administration subject is also offered as one of the optional

subjects in the competitive examinations conducted by the Union Public Service Commission in 1987 as well as other government recruiting agencies in the country.²

Public Administration is a young discipline in India. Yet its advancement over a period has been gradually expanding. At present the subject is taught in more than 50 universities in the country. Thousands of students have obtained their undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in Public Administration. Hundreds of scholars have obtained research degree in the discipline and several others have chosen this subject for their career. The subject is also taught in the training courses for civil servants. The public personnel recruitment agencies also offer this discipline as a part of their training program for competitive examinations. Thus, it can be said that the importance of public administration discipline has been growing gradually and progressively.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The broad objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To examine the growth and development of research programme in the discipline of Public Administration in Universities.
2. To examine and classify the research studies into broad and sub areas of specialization.
3. To analyse the research studies and output of the scholars of the discipline of Public Administration.
4. To identify and suggest future research studies to be undertaken in the discipline of Public Administration.

METHODOLOGY

The present research study is purely based on secondary source of information. For this purpose the researcher has visited the Central Library, Kakatiya University and referred to all the dissertations / theses submitted by previous research scholars of the department of Public Administration at Kakatiya University. The Scholar has also visited Osmania University library and collected information from various books, journals and reports related to the research problem.

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN UNIVERSITIES:

Public administration education was started in India towards the late 1940s when the University of Madras started a Diploma Course in Public administration and the University of Allahabad started a diploma course in Local self-government. The University of Nagpur started a two year programme in public administration in the year 1949. In the year 1955, the University of Nagpur set up a separate Department of Public Administration and the suit was followed by other universities like the University of Rajasthan, Osmania University, Punjab University, South Gujarat University, etc. Even then it can be stated that some universities were teaching public administration as a part of political science and such a trend is visible in Central Universities where public administration is a part of the department of political science. Public administration education got boost with the establishment of Indian Institute of Public Administration in the year 1954 which to act as a forum for the exchange of experience among practitioners and teachers of Public Administration. To enhance such an exchange among civil servants and private sector managers, the Administrative Staff College of India was established in the year 1960.

Public Administration is organized at the post-graduate level as a part of instructions given in the Political Science Departments in some Universities. 56 Universities teach Public Administration at the Master's level in Political Science courses. Of these, 47 Universities have Public Administration being taught as a compulsory/elective course. 8 Universities teach Public Administration as a compulsory subject, and 9 Universities provide Public Administration as an elective in the course. It is also interesting to note that most of the Universities provide only one course in the compulsory stream at the MA Political Science level in Public Administration. This course mostly deals with the principles of Public Administration.

However, there are Universities which provide more than one paper in the compulsory stream. The University of Madras has two compulsory courses, namely, Principles of Public Administration and Modern Government. It is equally interesting to see that there are some Universities which do not have a compulsory paper in their scheme of teaching Political Science. Among these are the Jawaharlal Nehru University, Madurai Kamaraj University, and the University of Mysore. Some of the Universities which have fullfledged courses in Public Administration at the post-graduate level, however, organize teaching again in two streams. Some papers have been labeled as compulsory papers, whereas the students have the freedom to select optional papers from the various groups.

Mostly the course study is restricted to eight papers and the viva-voce examination. The students are given the freedom to opt for undertaking a project work in lieu of one optional paper. The students are given the freedom to take one of the two groups as electives. Group I includes Studies on Rural Government and Administration. Group II contains elective on Planning, Administration and Public, and Rural Development Administration. The students have to take one paper from the course on Research Methodology, Political Sociology, Politics and Development in India, and Development Administration. In similar fashion, at the Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupathi, four courses are taught in MA (Previous) in the nature of compulsory papers. These include Comparative and Development Administration, Comparative Political Systems, Administrative Theories, and Local Government in UK, USA and France. In MA (Final), the courses taught include Local Government in South Asia, Financial Administration in India and Policy Studies. There is an option offered to the students between Urban Local Government in Andhra

Pradesh or Panchayati Raj in Andhra Pradesh. A suggestion has been made that the Public Administration education at the post-graduate level should be organized in the form of core courses and optional papers.

The core courses could include Administrative Theory including State Theories, Administrative System of India, Public Personnel Administration, Comparative Public Administration, Public Policy Analysis, and Research Methodology. The optional papers could include Indian Constitution, Bureaucracy: Theories, Functions and Role, Administrative Thought, Rural and Agricultural Development Administration including Irrigation, Health, Labour and Social Welfare Administration, Educational Administration, Financial Administration, State Administration, Rural and Urban Local Administration, Development Administration, Crisis and Emergency Administration, Organization of the Public Sector, Sociology of Administration, and Politics and Administration.

To strengthen the quality of research at the post-graduate level, the M. Phil teaching started in Public Administration in the 1970s. 9 Universities provided for Public Administration teaching in their M. Phil Political Science Programmes. The MS University of Baroda has three papers in their M. phil programme in the elective group, which includes Public Administration and Social Change, Development Administration, and Issues in Local Government. Dibrugarh University follows the same approach, but their courses include three papers on Social Administration in India, Management of Public Enterprises in India, and Rural Development in India. The Jawaharlal Nehru University provides two papers in the elective stream, namely, Bureaucracy: Its Institution, Function and Changing Roles, and Leadership: Problems of Recruitment, Socialization, Role and Function. The Marathwada University provides in its elective a course entitled Recent Advances in Public Administration. All these institutions exercise a quality check far and few between and more in the nature of review than an ongoing exercise with the purpose of bringing about a continuous improvement.

GROWTH OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION EDUCATION IN ANDHRA PRADESH:

The evolution and growth of public administration education at university level has started with the establishment of Osmania University in October, 1918. This was the first university in Andhra Pradesh state to offer academic programmes in Public Administration in 1956 with a two-year postgraduate diploma in government and private organisations. It soon became a full-fledged department with the introduction of public administration as an independent subject at the undergraduate level in 1958 and postgraduate courses in 1961. In 1968 research facilities were offered in the department leading to a Ph.D degree. The M.Phil. course was introduced in the department from 1971. The department also started a postgraduate diploma (P.G) course in local self-government and urban administration in 1961 and, an M.Phil course in 1971.

A two-year P.G. diploma course in Public Personnel Management was started as an evening programme at P.G. college, Basheerbagh in 1984 which was converted into an M.A. course in 1987 and now it is offered at Prof. G. Ram Reddy, Centre for Distance Education, Osmania University, Hyderabad.

OSMANIA UNIVERSITY:

At present, a postgraduate course in Public Administration is being offered at three colleges affiliated to the Osmania University. They are Arts College, Nizam College and postgraduate college, Secunderabad. The Department of Public Administration at Osmania University had the privilege of having distinguished academicians. At present the Osmania University is catering to the higher educational needs of the people of the Hyderabad, Nizamabad, Medak, Ranga Reddy, Nalgonda and Mahaboobnagar in Telangana state.

Osmania University introduced correspondence courses with effect from 1977 – 78 by establishing the Institute of Correspondence courses in 1977. At first degree-level admissions were open for B.A. and B.Com., in 1978. Later P.G courses were introduced from the academic year 1987-88. Subsequently from 1990-91 M.A., Public Personnel Management was introduced. An interesting point worth mentioning is that while all other universities offer the postgraduate course in Public Administration for only those candidates who complete their undergraduate course with Public Administration as one of the coequal optional subjects, this centre offers Post Graduate degree in Public Personnel Management programme to any graduate from any discipline.

KAKATIYA UNIVERSITY:

In Kakatiya University, the department of Public Administration was established during the academic year 1968-69 as part of the then Osmania University postgraduate centre at Warangal and offered courses of study in Public Administration leading to B.A., M.A., M.Phil., and Ph. D. degrees in Public Administration.

Subsequently, the department started offering several courses of study viz., the postgraduate diploma in Office Management from late 1980's, the postgraduate diploma in Personnel Management and Industrial Relations from mid-1979. Consequently, the department had become a composite department of Political Science and Public Administration. However, it was subsequently bifurcated into two independent departments the Department of Political Science and Public Administration.

In January 1992, in order to professionalise the academic programmes of the Public Administration department, a two-year M.A., degree programme in Personnel Management and Industrial Relations (M.A., PM&IR) was introduced. The M.A., PM&IR course was later renamed as M.H.R.M. To further reflect the expanded scope the department, the Public Administration department was rechristened renamed as the department of Public Administration and Human Resource Management in 1993. Under the expansion programme of the department, the Kakatiya University started University P.G centre at Nirmal, this offered the course at postgraduate level. At present the Kakatiya University caters to the higher educational needs of the Warangal, Khammam, Karimnagar and Adilabad districts.⁴

The Department of Public Administration and Human Resource Management at Kakatiya University is marching towards academic excellence especially in the discipline of Public Administration. Since its inception in 1968, the department has conducted over 26 national seminars and workshops and ran one UGC-sponsored summer institute for advanced teaching in Public Administration besides organizing dozens of state and local level seminars, symposia and workshops. The department also organised one refresher course in Public Administration and H.R.M to update the competencies of the teacher. So far, it has undertaken 43 research projects, both major and minor, sponsored by national agencies like UGC, ICSSR, the Planning Commission, the Government of India and the Government of Andhra Pradesh. The books authored, co-authored and edited by the faculty number more than 70. The number of research articles published by the faculty far exceeds 450. From 1993 onwards the department started offering post graduate course in HRM under the department of Public Administration. The teachers of the department have been playing a crucial role in academic associations like the Society for Social Science, the Indian Distance Education Association (IDEA), The New Public Administration Society of India (NEPASI), the Rationalist Forum, Centre for E-Governance, the Kakatiya School of Public Administration (KSPA), the KRISHI, Society for Women's Studies and Development.

The third panel of the University Grants Commission on the status of Public Administration and Political Science appointed on the eve of the sixth plan has acknowledged the services of the department for the growth of Public Administration as a discipline with the co-operation of the university. The department has been organizing Prof. P.A. James memorial endowment lectures by inviting eminent academics in the discipline. So far eight such lectures were conducted.

RESEARCH IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION:

The strength of the discipline of Public Administration depends as much on teaching as on research. It is for the community of the scholars in Public Administration to engage itself in fruitful and imaginative research in order to develop the discipline in its width and depth, but it depends on the socio-economic and political background of the scholars in Public Administration.

The department of Public Administration enjoys a national level reputation and status for its unique contribution in teaching, research and extension activities related to the discipline. Since 1981, the department produced 75 M.Phil. degrees and about 100 Ph.D. degrees in the discipline. The research contribution of the department is useful for the policy makers, administrators and academicians. It is with this background to throw light and analyse the research works carried out by research scholars, the present study entitled "Research Trends in the Discipline of Public Administration in Universities – A Study" has been undertaken.

CONCLUSION:

Public administration education and training is one of the critical areas, wherein the seats of higher learning i.e., universities and training institutions play an important role in teaching not only in structural and procedural aspects of public administration but also inculcating various value dimensions of the functioning of the state. The effectiveness of such activities can be enhanced if a concerted effort is made by the countries sharing similar background with regard to public administration. The countries have exhibited tilt towards the elite generalist civil service, the personnel of which staff the higher echelons of public administration and also play a critical role in the process of policy formulation and implementation. The pattern of examination for the recruitment of public servants is also similar where the candidates intending to enter into public bureaucracy after they complete their graduation and such an examination is conducted by an independent recruitment agency. Last but not the least, the institution of public administration is a legacy of the colonial rule, hence a cooperative action aimed at enhancing the quality and standards of theory (university level education which prepares students for the entry into public services) and practice (training institutions level which impart training to public servants once they are selected through competitive examination) of public administration is possible if a joint action is launched.

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