Dear students, before discussing about the Public Administration, first of all we want to understand the meaning of the term ‘Administration’. The lives of the people are closely connected with the administration of their government. It is a complex process involves different things and a lot of activities. Human beings are living in accordance with the policies and activities done by the administrators. Administration, as an activity, is as old as the society itself.

Administration is a part and parcel of our daily life. The food we eat, the cloths we wear, the goods we buy, the streets and highways on which we travel, the automobiles in which we ride and the many services we enjoy-education, medical care, housing and many others – are made possible by administration. Thus administration is everywhere with us from ‘womb to tomb’.

# Meaning of Administration

The term ‘Administration’ has been derived from theLatin word ‘*ad’*and*‘ministare*’ which means ‘*to serve’. In simple words it means ‘care for’* or to ‘*look after’* people, to ‘*manage affairs’.* Administration may be defined as“group activity which involves cooperation and coordination for the purpose of achieving desired goals or objectives.” Any cooperative human effort towards achieving some common goals is also known as administration. Thus every group activity involves some kind of administration whether it is in a family, factory, hospital, company, university or in agovernment department. Thus Administration permeates all organised human activities.

# Definitions of Administration

Pfiffner and Presthus define administration as“organization and direction of human and material resources to achieve desired ends.”

According to L D White , Administration is “the direction,coordination and control of many persons to achieve some purpose or objective. Herbert a Simon said “in its broadest sense, administration can be defined as the activities of groups cooperating to accomplish common goals”.

E.N.Gladden defined “Administration is a long and slightly pompous word, but it has a humble meaning, for it means to care for or look after people, to manage affairs……is determined action taken in pursuit of conscious purpose”.

According to Brooks Adams “ Administration is the capacity of coordinating many, and often conflicting , social energies in a single organism, so adroitly that they shall operate as a unity”.

Felix A Nigro defined “Administration is the organisation and use of men and materials to accomplish a purpose”.

Luther Gulick pointed out that “Administration has to do with getting things done, with the

accomplishment of defined objectives”.

F.M Marx said Administration is determined action taken in persuit of a conscious purpose. It is the systematic ordering of affairs and the calculated use of resources, aiming at making those things happen which one wants to happen and foretelling everything to the country”.

A brief analysis of the above definitions reveals that the administration comprises two essentials, namely (1)cooperative effort,and (2) pursuit of common objectives. Thus administration is a common process ,common to all group effort; public or private ,civil or military ,largescale or small-scale.

Broadlyspeaking, the term ‘administration’ appears to bear at least**four** different meanings or different senses depending upon the context in which it is used. They are:-

1. **As a Discipline:** The name of a branch of a learning or intellectual discipline as taught and studied in colleges and universities.
2. **As a Vocation:** Type of work/trade or profession/occupation,especially one that involves knowledge and training in a branch of advance learning
3. **As a Process:** The sum total of activities undertaken to implement public policy or policies to produce someservices or goods.
4. **As a Synonym for word Executive or Government:** Such other body of person in supreme charge of affairs; for exampleNagendra Modi Administration, Donald Trump Administration etc.

# What is Public Administration?

Now let us discuss what Public administration is. Public Administration is an activity as old as our ancient civilisation. But as an independent discipline or a branch of study public administration cannot claim for a long history. Public administration gained immense importance since the emergence of administrative state. The former American President and the political scientist, Woodrow Wilson published an article in political science journal in 1887titled as ‘the study of administration’ is considered as the first article mentioning of Public Administration. Public Administration is government in action.

# Definitions of Public Administration

According to Woodrow Wilson, the father of public administration; “Pubic Administration is the detailed and systematic application of law. Every particular application of law is an act of administration.”

Encyclopedia Britannica defines public administration as “the application of a policy of a state through its government”. Therefore, public administration refers to that part of administration, which pertains to the administrative activities of the government.

L.D. White said “Public Administration consists of all those operations having for their purpose the fulfilment or the enforcement of public policy”. It includes military as well as civil affairs, much of the works of the court, and all the special fields of government activity-police, education, health, construction of public works, conservation, social security and many others.

Luther Gulick defined, “Public Administration is that part of the science of administration, which has to do with the government and, thus, concerns itself primarily with the executive branch, where the work of the government is done; though there are obviously administrative problems also in connection with the legislative and judicial branches.

To Wright Waldo “Public Administration is the art and science of management as applied to the

affairs of State.”

M.E. Dimock opined, “Public administration is concerned with ‘what’ and ‘how’ of the government. The ‘what’ is the subject matter, the technical knowledge of a field, which enables the administrator to perform his tasks. The ‘how’ is the technique of management, the principles according to which co-operative programmes are carried through to success. Each is indispensable; together they form the synthesis called administration”.

According to J.M Priffiner,” Administration consists of getting the work of government done by coordinating the efforts of people so that they can work together to accomplish their set tasks”.

M. Ruthanaswami defined it as, “when administration has to do with the affairs of a stateor minor political institution like the municipal or country council(district board), it is called public administration. All the acts of the officials of the government,from the person in a remote office to the head of a state in the capital, constitute public administration”.

Corson and Harries defined, “Public administration……is the action part of the government, the

means by which the purposes and goals of the government are realised”.

According to Nicholas Henry, “Public administration is a broad-ranging and amorphous combination of theory and practice; its purpose is to promote a superior understanding of government and its relationship with the society, it governs, as well as to encourage public policies more responsive to social needs and to institute managerial practices attuned to effectiveness, efficiency and the deeper human requisites of the citizenry”.

The traditional definitions of the public administration reflect the view that the public administration is only involved in carrying out the policies and programmes of government. It reflect that it has no role in policy making and also locates the administration only in the executive branch but today the term public administration is used in a broader sense that it is not only involved in carrying out the programmes of the government, but it also play an important role in policy formulation and covers the three branches of the government. In this context, it may reflect on the definition offered by F.A. Nigro and L.G.Nigro.

According to Nigro and Nigro Public administration:

* -is co-operative group effort in public setting:
* -covers all the three branches-executive, legislature and judicial and their inter-relations
* -has an important role in the formulation of public policy and thus is a part of the policy process;
* -is different in significant ways from private administration, and
* -is closely associated with the numerous private groups and individuals in providing service to the community.

# NATURE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

There are two views regarding the nature of Public Administration, that is

# Integral view and 2. Managerial view

According to the **integral view**, ‘administration’ is the sum total of all the activities- manual, clerical, managerial, technical etc., which are undertaken to realize the objectives of organization. In this view, all the acts of officials of the government from the Attendant to Secretaries to the government and Head of the State constitute Public Administration. Thus the activities of the errand boy, the foreman, the gatekeeper , the sweeper , as well as the IT professionals, the secretary to the government and the managers in an enterprise constitute administration. It count the work of all persons from the lowest to the highest positions working in an organization as part of administration.

Henry Fayol and L.D. White are the supporters of this view. According to L.D.White Public Administration “consists of all those operations having for their purpose he fulfilment or the enforcement of public policy”. This definition cover a multitude of particular operations in many fields- the delivery of a letter,, the sale of public land, the negotiation of a treaty, the award of compensation to an injured workman, the quarantine of a sick child, the removal of litter from apark, manufacturing plutonium and licensing the use of atomic energy”. Thus it is a broader view of administration.

On the other hand the **managerial view** considers the administration in a narrower sense. According to this view of administration, the managerial activities of people who are involved in planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating, and controlling constitute public administration. It considers only the work of those persons engaged in performing managerial functions. This view regards things are getting done and not doing things. Managerial view excludes Public Administration from non-managerial activities such as manual, clerical, and technical activities.

Luther Gulick, Herbert Simon, Smithburg, and Thompson are the supporters of this view. Luther Gulick writes, “Administration has do with getting things done , with the accomplishment of defined objectives”. Simon ,Smithburg and Thomson observe ,”the term ‘administration’ is also used in a narrower sense to refer to those patterns of behaviours that are common to many kind of cooperating groups; and that do not depend upon either the specific goals towards which they are cooperating or the specific technological methods used to reach these goals”.

The two views differ from each other in many ways. According to Professor M. P. Sharma the difference between the two views is fundamental. Integral view includes the activities of all the persons engaged in administration whereas the managerial view restricts itself only to the activities of the few persons at the top. The integral view depicts all type of activities from manual to managerial, from non-technical to technical whereas the managerial view takes into account only the managerial activities in an organization. Furthermore, administration according to integral view would differ from one sphere to another depending upon the subject matter, but whereas that will not be the case according to the managerial point of view because the managerial view is identified with the managerial techniques common to all the fields of administration.

The difference between the two views relates to the difference between management and operation or we may say between getting things done and doing things. The correct meaning of the term administration would however, depend upon the context in which it is used.

Dimock, Dimock and Koening sum up in the following words:

“As a study public Administration examines every aspect of Government’s effort to discharge the laws and to give effect to the public policy; as a process, it is all the step taken between the time and enforcement agency assumes jurisdiction and the last break is placed (but includes also that agency’s participation, if any, in the formulation of the programme in the first place); and as a vocation, it is organizing and directing the activities of others in a public agency.”

# SCOPE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

As we have seen earlier, Public administration has a border view and a narrower view. In the modern developing age we have to make public administration as a scientific, growing discipline. For this our approach to the study of public administration has to be broader, modern and scientific. In the broader terms mutual dependence and the intensive interaction between the three branches of the government is essential for good administration. Thus, the scope of public administration is wide enough. By the scope of Public Administration, we mean the major concerns of public administration **as an activity** and **as a discipline**.

# SCOPE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AS AN ACTIVITY

Broadly speaking, Public Administration embraces all the activities of the government. Hence, as an activity the scope of public administration is no less than the scope of state activity. In the modern welfare state people, expect many things- a wide variety of services and protection from the government. In this context, public administration provides a number of welfare and social security services to the people. Besides, it has to manage government owned industries and regulate private industries. Public administration covers every area and activity within the ambit public policy. Thus the scope of public administration is very wide in modern state.

# SCOPE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AS A DISCIPLINE

Writers have defined the scope of public administration indifferent terms. The scope of public administration as a discipline, that is subject of studies, broadly comprises of two views. They are:

* 1. POSDCORB view
  2. The Subject Matter view

# POSDCORB view of Public Administration

This is a narrow view of public administration and takes into account only the executive branch of the government. In other words this view corresponds with the managerial view. Hendry fayol ,L.Urwick, Fercey M. Queen and Luther Gulick are the main supporters of this view.

According to Henri Fayol the main categories of administration are: Planning, Organization, Command, Coordination and control. L. Urwick fully support Fayol’s view . F.M. Queen says that the study of administration deals with ‘Men, Materials and Methods’.

Luther Gulick’s view on the scope of public administration is very important because he has explained that in detail. He sums up these techniques in the word POSCORB, each letter of which describe one technique. These letters stands for:

**P**= Planning,

**O**= Organisation, **S**=Staffing, **D**=Directing,

**CO**= Co-ordination

**R**=Reporting **B**= Budgeting.

Let us see the real meaning of these terms:-

Planning means the working out in broad outline the things to be done, the methods to be adopted to accomplish the purpose.

Organization means the establishment of the formal structure of authority through which the work is sub-divided, arranged, defined, and coordinated.

Staffing means the recruitment and training of the personal and their conditions of work. Directing means making decisions and issuing orders and instructions

Co-ordination means the interrelating the work of various divisions, sections, and other parts of the organizations.

Reporting means informing the superiors within the agency to whom the executive is responsible about what is going on.

Budgeting means fiscal planning, controlling, and accounting.

According to Gulick the POSDCORB activities are common to all organizations. They are the common problems of the management, which are found in different agencies regardless of the nature of work they do.

POSDCORB gives unity, certainty, and definiteness and makes the study more systematic. The critics pointed out that the POSDCORB activities were neither the whole of administration nor even the most important part of it. The POSDCORB view overlooks the fact that different agencies are faced with different administrative problems, which are peculiar to the nature of the services, they render, and the functions they performed. The POSDCORB view takes into consideration only the common techniques of the administration and ignores the study of the ‘Subject Matter’ with which the agency is concerned. A major defect is that the POSDCORB view does not contain any reference to the formulation and implementation of the policy. Therefore the scope of administration is defined very narrowly, being too inward looking and to conscious of the top management.

# The Subject Matter View of Public Administration

This function comprises line functions or services meant for people. We all know that public administration deals not only with the processes but also with the substantive matters of administration, such as Defence, Law and Order, Education , Public Heath ,Agriculture, Public works, Social Security, Justice , Welfare, etc... These services require not only POSDCORB techniques but also have important specialised techniques of thereon which are not covered by

POSDCORB techniques. For example, if you take Police Administration it has its own techniques in crime detection, maintenance of Law and Order, etc., which are much and more vital to efficient police work ,than the formal principles of organisation, personnel management, coordination or finance and it is the same with other services too. Therefore the study of Public Administration should deal with both the processes (that is POSDCORB techniques and substantive concerns).so emphasis on the subject-matter cannot be neglected. We conclude the scope of public administration with the statement of Lewis Meriam: “Public administration is an instrument with two blades like a pair of scissors. One blade may be knowledge of the field covered by POSDCORB; the other blade is knowledge of the subject matter in which these techniques are applied. Both blades must be good to make an effective tool".

Thus the activities of the Public administration will be wide in scope.Prof. White supports this view; “in their broader context the ends of administration are the ultimate objects of the state itself , the maintenance of peace and order, the progressive achievement of justice, the instruction of the young, protection against decease, and insecurity, the adjustment and compromise of conflicting groups and interests in short , the attainment of good life”. Thus, it is obvious that though public administration studies the administrative branch of the executive organ, yet its scope is very wide and it varies with people’s connection of good life.

We may conclude the discussion with the observation of Herbert Simon who says that Public administration has two important aspects, namely deciding and doing things. The first provides the basis for the second. One cannot conceive of any discipline without thinking or deciding. Thus Public administration is a broad- ranging and amorphous combination of theory and practice.

# PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION: ART OR SCIENCE

Public Administration has two dimensions – as a practice and as a study. As a practice it stands for a process or activity administering governmental affairs. As a study it stands for an area of intellectual enquiry. As a practice, public administration is an art, but as a study of governmental affairs, it is surely a science. It is clear that social sciences which study the complex human behaviour are not exact sciences like physical sciences. But social sciences are trying to become more and more scientific by using scientific methods of study.

Woodraw Wilson, the pioneer of Public administration, as a subject of study called it as the ‘Science of Public Administration as early as 1887. He laid emphasis on the study of Public Administration “to rescue executive methods from the confusion and costliness of empirical experiment and set them on the foundations laid deep in principle”. W.F. Willoughby, LutherGullick and L. Urwicketc are contributors who laid emphasis on the Science of Administration. Willoughby asserted that “ in administration there are certain fundamental principles of general application analogous to those characterising any science.” In 1939, Charles Austin Beard spoke of “Philosophy, Science and Art of Public administration”.

The question raised is whether Public Administration is a true science? The most important features of science are absence of normative (or ethical) value, predictability of behaviour and finally universal application. All these three factors are not fully present in public administration. Values cannot be fully eliminated from public administration. Public Administration is ultimately a politics and normative values cannot be completely sacrificed. On the other hand science is value- free or has no ethical content.

Yet another issue is that public administration, like any other social science, studies human behaviour. As Robert Dahl remarked, the concern with human behaviour limits the immediate

potentialities of a science of Public administration. To Dahl, no science of Public administration is possible unless: (1) the place of normative values is made clear, (2) the nature of man is the area of public administration is better understood and his conduct is more predictable and (3) there is a body of comparative studies from which it may be possible to discover principles and generalities that transcend national boundaries and peculiar historical experiences”.

Moreover, public administration has had its growth in the cultural framework of the West. As such its findings and principles may not be valid in other parts of the world, where different cultures prevail. Public administration is culture bound. In short, public administration can be entitled to be called a science only after its principles are directly derived from studies and investigations made in the different societies of the world-in Asian, Latin, American and African countries.

Public Administration is not an exact science like Physics. But part of which has already become mechanized can be classified as science. The impact of computer and the statistical and Mathematical techniques like operations research, linear programming etc is gradually making increasing part of public administration scientific.

To conclude the different arguments, Public Administration cannot be called a science until the following three conditions are fulfilled. 1. The place of normative value should be clearly identified and made clear. 2.Greater understanding should be gained of human nature in the field of public administration . 3.there should be developed a body of cross-cultural studies from which should be derived the principles of administration not suffering from ‘culture bound’.