

1. Details of Module and its Structure

Module Detail	
Subject Name	Political Science
Paper Name	Public Policy, Governance and Indian Administration
Module Name/Title	Administrative Reforms in India since Independence: Issues in Implementation.
Pre-requisites	Knowledge about public administration in general and administrative structure of India
Objectives	To study administrative reforms after Independence and issues in the implementation of these reforms
Keywords	Administrative Reforms, Administration Reforms after independence, Committees, Commissions, Issues in Implementation

Structure of Module / Syllabus of a module

Administrative Reforms in India since Independence	Introduction, Need for administrative Reforms, Administrative reforms in India since independence, Committees and Commissions on Administrative Reforms
Issues in Implementation	Issues in Implementation

2. Development Teams

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1. Introduction
2. Need for Administrative Reforms
3. Administrative Reforms in India Since Independence
4. Committees and Commissions on Administrative Reforms
5. Issues in Implementation
6. Conclusion

Objectives of the Module

After reading this module you will able:

- To study administrative reforms.
- To study administrative reforms after Independence in India.
- To study issues in the implementation of these reforms.

Summary

In India, the reform in administration has been a continuous process. Many reforms occurred during British period and many after independence. During British period the reforms accords for the personal need and benefit of the British Empire. But after independence need for an administration arise, which is more adaptive, capable, flexible, innovative, effective and efficient. A need was felt to shift from the colonial administration system to welfare oriented administration.

To achieve these objects, various Committees and Commissions were formed. The Economic Committee, Secretariat Re-organisation Committee, N. Gopaldaswamy Ayyangar Report and A.D. Gorwala Committee were among the few initial Committees. They recommended various reforms like Grouping of ministries into four bureaux and introducing Organisation and Methods (O & M) procedure in various government organisations. Paul H. Applyby submitted his reports on Indian administration and gave recommendations among which are, streamlining administration, recruitment and training, and the relationship of administration with parliament, need for delegation of power and greater coordination among the ministries. Administrative Reforms Commission in 1966 submitted 20 reports which led to major or minor changes in the existing administration.

Though recommendations of committees and commissions were implemented but they didn't get implemented in their complete form. It will not be false to say that more than half of the recommendations by these committees and commissions didn't even get implemented at all. All recommendations get influenced by external factors like politics, administration, bureaucracy, corruption etc. and by its own limitations.

Administrative reform is an important part in any administration to enhance its capabilities and become effective and efficient to the changing environment and facing new problems but equally important is proper implementation of such reforms.

1. Introduction

An administrative reform is a conscious, well considered change that is carried out in a public sector organization or system for the purpose of improving its structure, operation or the quality of its workforce¹. According to Caiden (1968), “Reform is based on the simple idea that man should not wait for change to take place naturally but should seek to speed, by artificial means, improvements in the world order.”

Each nation indulges in administrative reforms for the sake of sheer survival. These reforms are always based on some belief system or an ideology. In brief, for launching reforms a blueprint is needed as the basis and nations needed to know where they wish to go and which path they want to take to achieve that goal.²

Every administrative reform have some aspects like political, legal, institutional, technical, personnel, financial, social and psychological etc. Also each administrative reform passes through some stages before it become reality. Stating a administrative reform and actual implementation of those reform are two very different things. During the process, the recommendations for administrative reform get affected by various factors like political influence, administrative factor, miscommunication, corruption etc and the implemented reform get distanced from the actual reform. This is a major issue for reforming administration according to the needs and requirements of changing world.

Even in India the issue of implementation of administrative reform is persistent. In India various measures have been taken by the Indian government in the series of various committees and commissions for administrative reforms. Yet the recommendations given by these committees and commissions either got ignored or molded under the influence of various factors.

2. Need for Administrative Reforms

Administrative reforms are needed to meet the challenges of change in technology, infrastructure, methods of work, and attitudes of succeeding generations to work, the objectives of the organisation and in the social context in which the organisation operates. To deal with continuous systematic transformation and adapt to new environment and conditions are the distinguishing characteristics of a modernised social system. Therefore with the change in environment, society has to change itself and must adopt fresh innovative culture, new knowledge and technology and crave for a new order through elimination of the old structures and system. Administrative reform is considered a part of the universality of this change needed for:

- a) Ensuring the highest standards of efficiency and integrity in the public service;
- b) Making public administration a fit instrument for carrying out the social and economic policies of the Government;
- c) Considering the machinery of the Government and its procedures of work, the machinery for planning at all levels- Centre-State relationship, financial and economic administration and administration at the State and district levels and agricultural administration;³
- d) Maintaining the thin line of demarcation between political neutrality of administration and party politics;
- e) Curbing corruption; and

¹ Administrative Reform, Encyclopaedia Dictionary of Public Administration on URL http://www.dictionnaire.enap.ca/dictionnaire/docs/definitions/definitions_anglais/administrative_reform.pdf accessed on 28 October 2015.

²Administrative Reform in Developing Nations edited by ALI FARAZMAND on URL http://tinhoc.dyndns.tv:8080/dspace/bitstream/TVHG_07113876976/1524/1/idoc.vn_administrative-reform-in-developing-nations.pdf accessed on 26 October 2015.

³Essay on Need for administrative reforms in India by Swati Gupta on URL <http://www.publishyourarticles.net/knowledge-hub/essay/essay-on-need-for-administrative-reforms-in-india.html> accessed on 20 October 2015.

- f) Improving the efficiency of administration internally and in relation to service delivery to the citizens⁴

3. Administrative Reforms in India since Independence

Administrative reforms have been going on in India since Vedic period and have been continued in British period and after independence. So many transitions have been seen by India in respect of administrative form in all these periods. When Mauryan Empire was formed in 321 BC i.e. vedic period, it resulted in the change in administration and form of government. This process of reform in administration continued during change in empires, dynasties and kings. The process remains active even after the periods of Mauryan empire as Guptas, Mugals and British Empire bringing new forms of approaches to administer the kingdom.

In British period, bureaucratic form of government was in existence. Various Committees and Acts were formed and implemented during this period which brought various reforms in the administration of India. These were- Pitt's India Act of 1784, Charter Act 1833 and 1853, Government of India Act of 1858, Indian Councils Act of 1861, 1892 and 1909, Government of India Act 1919 and 1935, Indian Independence Act 1947, Lee Commission and Simon Commission.

In 1947, when India became independent, it faced various problems such as migration, refugees, partition, retirement of a great number of administrative personnel, problem of integration of the princely States, etc. The ideology of welfare of the people was adopted by the new government through socio-economic development, led to a greater proliferation of tasks and functions. To take up the welfare program and challenges, the current administrative machinery needed to be revamped and reinforced as it was still inherited the colonial regime procedures and rendered weak by erosive circumstances and stressful situations arises after the independence.

4. Committees and Commissions on Administrative Reforms

In India after independence various committees and commission were formed to give recommendations for administrative reforms. Some important committees and commissions on administrative reforms are as following:

1. The Secretariat Reorganization Committee
2. The Economy Committee
3. Shri N. Gopaldaswamy Ayyangar Report
4. A.D. Gorwala Committee
5. R.A. Gopaldaswami Report
6. Paul H.Appleby Report
7. Committee on Plan Project
8. Committee on the Prevention of Corruption
9. Administrative Reforms Commission
10. Kothari Committee
11. National Police Commission
12. Economic Reforms Commission
13. Commission on Centre-State Relations
14. Satish Chandra Committee
15. Conference on Chief Secretaries
16. Chief Minister's Conference
17. Second ARC

5. Issues in Implementation

⁴ Administrative Reforms in India by Mahendra Prasad Singh <http://www.socialsciences.in/article/administrative-reforms-india-accessed> on 23 September 2015.

Effective implementation of reforms is a serious problem of administrative reforms. The major issues in implementation of administrative reforms in India can be broadly categorized into these categories:

5.1 Political Issues

5.1.1. Lack of Political will

The first and foremost issue in the implementation of reforms in India is the lack of political will on the part of senior cabinet ministers. The responsibility for piloting the reforms vested on them. As they enjoys high political prestige and possessing wide administrative experience, still they were averse to change and they want to maintain the status quo of the administration. This led to the ineffective and partial implementation of recommendations of various committees and commissions. Politicians hold the authority over the administration and it's working so they don't want to lose that. Various committees and commissions recommended reforms which will make politicians more responsible and accountable toward public and their working more transparent. With such changes the politicians will not be comfortable and pleased. So, instead of going whole heartedly in implementing such recommendations and reforms, politicians try to hide from such responsibility and became inactive or partially active in the process of implementing such recommendations. For example, the recommendation of forming an institution of Lokpal was accepted but it has yet to see the light of the day since more than half a century.

5.1.2. Dispute among different political parties

Different political parties are always engaged in dispute among themselves which directly affect the implementation of any recommendation given by a Committee or Commission. Each political party has a tendency to take credit for the work or idea which was done or innovated by them. So, if a committee is formed by a political party who was in power but in next election a new political party came in power. Even though the committee gives some good recommendations, the existing political party in power will try to avoid implementing those recommendations just because of the conflict with the previous political party. They are afraid that the previous political party will try to take all the credit for the work done by them.

5.1.3. Absence of responsibility of acceptance or rejection of recommendations

Accepting or rejecting any recommendation is left out to the concerned ministry/department. There is no check over the acceptance and implementation of these recommendations. Department may or may not accept recommendation fully or partially and while doing so it is not accountable to anybody for its actions. In India, departments are hold by bureaucrats which will reject any reform that will oppose their stronghold. This kills the very spirit of administrative reforms. In this regard, Administrative Reforms Commissions (ARC) recommended the set up of all-party parliamentary committee to keep a watch over the implementation of the accepted recommendations and reports.

5.2 Administrative Issues

5.2.1. Lack of Bureaucratic will

Lack of bureaucratic will also create hurdle in the proper implementation of reforms. As they have a tendency not to be the servant of the public but to be the master of the public which was result of the colonial legacy. So they don't want to lose that privilege, status and power. Bureaucrats hold the ultimate power vested with them, get extra privileges and also feel comfortable working in the colonial aged routine which they are following from ages. Administrative reforms will pull them out of their comfort zone and demand them to work in different, complex and new situations and handle new multi faced problems. Bureaucracy is not willing to go for these extra steps or step out of their comfort zone.

Therefore they lack that will and motivation which is needed to implement the reforms suggested by the committees and commission.

5.2.2. Bureaucratic stranglehold over administrative reforms

As India is governed by delegate legislation thus each and every policy and planning shifted from legislation to administration which is in the hold of bureaucrats (Civil servants). It also applies to recommendation made by any committee and commissions. All the recommendations has to pass by this bureaucratic stronghold before reaching parliament and in this process, the recommendations get molded and twisted by bureaucrats for their own convenience and status quo of their status and power. They will allow soft level reforms for example formation of any institute or department and oppose/ reject hard level reforms which they feel that this reform will curtail or endangered their power and status.

5.3 Social Issues

5.3.1. Communication gap between government and people

Reforms have the motto for the welfare and better development of the people. Lack of communication between government and administration with people resulted into the lack of information among public, of reforms being carried out. Lack of information among people makes the reforms less effective and less efficient when implemented. For example, Freedom to Information Act, 2002 got passed by the parliament yet it wasn't so much popular and effective because most of the citizens were not informed of this Act.

5.3.2. Lack of awareness among public about their rights and public official's duties

A well educated and active citizen is one of the basic building blocks for the effective and efficient implementation of administrative reforms. In India, most of the citizens are unaware of the political or administrative news and activities happening around them. Many even lack the basic knowledge like political system of India, constitution of India, working of administration, duties of a public official and even their own rights. And this lack of awareness among public also causes problem for the proper and better implementation of the reforms.

5.4 Miscellaneous Issues

5.4.1. Idealistic or theoretical recommendations

In India, the committees and commissions formed for any purpose or issue are mostly filled by the top official members or other persons with high education or high expertise in their fields. Sometimes, they form or give recommendation without knowing the practical issues and situations rather on the basis of their expertise and theoretical knowledge they hold and information supplied or gathered by them. It is very rare to get a chance to witness any situation or event on the subject they giving their recommendation for. Therefore, their recommendation may become more idealistic or theoretical far away from reality which in turn results toward impractical to implement.

5.4.2. Corruption

Corruption is always been a major issue in various fields whether economic, political, social, administrative and so on. Corruption either affects directly or indirectly. Bribery, embezzlement, theft, fraud, blackmailing etc. are the various forms of corruption. Even in the implementation of any recommendation, corruption played an important role directly or indirectly. Corruption may influence the vary recommendation given by the committee, the form in which the recommendation was accepted or the process of implementing that recommendation.

6. Conclusion

Administrative reform in India is a major concern which needed to be dealt with as soon as possible. Various Committees and Commissions were formed in India since independence. Frequent formation of Committees and Commissions will not solve the problem rather there is need for proper and effective implement the these recommendations made by the previous Committees and Commissions. Overlapping and repetition in the recommendations are visible in previous Committees and Commissions and this is going to continue unless the previous recommendations will be implemented. Therefore, major issues such as efficiency, effective coordination, responsiveness and public accountability etc. can be dealt with when the recommendations given by the Committees and Commissions will be implemented properly and effectively. Also there is need for some accountability of government for accepting recommendations.

