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Public Administration Discipline in India: Notes Towards a New Agenda

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Abstract

This paper examines the status of Public Administration discipline in the context of India's development strategies and public institutions, particularly in the unfolding context of globalization. The development models have undergone changes from planned economy to market economy. The government, since 1991, has been either downsizing/abolishing or launching new institutions to suit the market economy. These changes not only impacted the economy and socio-economic conditions of the people but also reduced social science knowledge to a monochromatic form drifting from their epistemological agenda and relative autonomous positions. The fundamental challenge of the discipline is to understand the neoliberal policy of the state and its institutions and analyze their implications—causes and effects—to people, particularly common man. Public administration scholars hardly recognize these changes—both in teaching and research; and also not adequately equipped with the theoretical frameworks, research methodology and tools for understanding and analyze the changes and their consequences to the administrative systems and the people at large; thus, the relevance of the discipline to the society is under question. The paper argues that, despite these concerns, there are opportunities for the discipline to grow by identifying challenges of PA in the Indian context, attracting the appropriate talented personnel, developing teaching and research competence, organizing seminars on real life concerns and cross-cultural context studies, exchange of faculty between the universities and government officials, etc.

Keywords: *Administrative thinkers, Development models, Globalization, Downsizing, Real life concerns and cross-cultural studies.*

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1. Introduction

Social science disciplines as a body of knowledge about society and individual came into existence as a separate identity during the 17th century—pre-capitalist or feudal system—in Europe. In India, it began with the British attempts to understand their colonial experience. Over the period, the body of Social Science knowledge was disciplined and institutionalized in the form of established departments in the Western universities and some universities of developing countries, during the 19th and 20th centuries. The disciplines

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have had epistemological philosophy and were autonomous in giving Social Scientific knowledge; but this situation is gradually disappearing, in the globalization context (Chalam, 2002). The public administration discipline is no exception to this phenomenon.

The paper is structured in three sections. The first section deals with the changing context of public administration theories and contesting views of the scholars on their domain knowledge. The public administration in the globalized context, particularly in India and the status of the discipline is analyzed in the second section. This exercise is done to contextualize the discussion on the subject matter and set the agenda for the academic community to revise the syllabus in tune with the changing context; the least is assessing the merits and demerits of the globalization and public institutions. The need for rejuvenating the discipline is presented in the last section.

2. The Context of Public Administration Discipline

Public administration discipline, one of the youngest branches of social sciences, developed largely in the twentieth century, but as a generic field it has blossomed with the modern industrial growth. The normative side of the discipline that emerged at the beginning of the twentieth century as an engineering approach focused on the scientific approach to administration and management (Fayol, Taylor, Gilbreth). It took a very mechanistic view of improvement and developed as an ideal of the man-machine model of interaction check (Mohit, 2008). Later these developments evolved into models of public administration—separation of public administration from political science (Woodrow Wilson), principles of organization (Luther Gulick, Urwick, Mooney), rational-legal authority (Weber), limited rationality in decision-making (Herbert Simon), cooperative system integrating the contributions of individual participants towards a common purpose (CI Barnard), ecological approach/ comparative and development administration (FW Riggs), system approach and public policies (David Easton), new public administration (Dwight Waldo), new public management (Hood, Christopher) new public service (Denhardt, Robert B, and Janet Vinzant Denhardt), critical theory (Hebermas), Situational Leadership model (Hersey and Blachand), and the like (Ravindra et al, 2010; Mohit, 2008). In the context of ongoing globalization process, the discipline has embraced a range of reforms, such as contracting and partnerships, strategy and strategic planning, performance management, public participation and citizen satisfaction, new public management (Geert, 2020).

The New Public Management (NPM), today, has become extremely popular the world over in theory and practice of contemporary public administration and views the domain knowledge as a monochromatic form. Its approach is that government should run like a business—efficiency and economy and minimize the differences between public and private sectors, as well. But, there is difference between public administration and NPM. The latter neglects the discussion on social values, equity, responsiveness, policy elites, laws, institutions, political bureaucratic process and the need for close ties with other social sciences (Lynn, 2006).

2.1. Contesting Discipline Domain Knowledge

The epistemology of the public administration discipline is under question, particularly in the developing countries. The administrative models advocated the normative principles of public administration—economy and efficiency—and a political governance of free trade in execution of policies, ignoring the diversity of the country. The main problem is that the European and American models/scholars influenced the thrust of discipline till 1990s. The administrative thinkers/scholars, by and large, viewed the development of the societies and public institutions from the roots of capitalism.

Indian scholars have questioned the relevance of administrative/management theories developed in the West that draw the organizational concepts from commerce, management, business administration overemphasizing the structures/ instruments and goal-driven technical exercise. The conceptual-framework of western theories is to legitimize and maintain the existing relations of production and expansion of capitalism (Satya, 1982; 1985). In fact, theories have been essentially an ideological response which rendered the technological changes not only possible but organizational structures effective in the western world. Their main goal is to construct a structure of hierarchical relationships among the workers according to mechanically developed principles of organization. However, in practice the pattern of organizations and the nature of technological development kept the worker/employees constantly at a disadvantage (Haragopal, 1991). The scholars have ignored the special features of public organizations like democratic governance, responsiveness, and instruments of social change. The public institutions and bureaucracy subjects are analyzed in isolation

losing sight of larger socioeconomic context of administrative actions and the changing nature of the state (Mathur, 1986). The American and European scholarship has not shown concern to validate theoretical frameworks in the developing countries (Chakrabarty, 2014).

In India, public administration as academic subject is close to 100 years. Its study began as a Political Science paper in 1930s at University of Lucknow, UP and Diploma course at the University of Madras, Tamil Nadu. It was, for the first time, a separate Department of Public Administration and Local Government in Nagpur University, Maharashtra, in 1949. The discipline today is finding dilemma resulting from globalization process. Across the country it is facing a predicament resulting from externally dictated macroeconomic management, which advocates monochromatic form of management practices to the administrative challenges (Chakrabarty, 2014; Prabhat and Pansukkim, 2016). Earlier several scholars (Maheshwari, 1979; Mathur, 1986; Haragopal and Prasad, 1980; Mishra, 2013) observed that Paul Appleby framework and bureaucratic approach of public institutions have devastated the growth of the discipline in India. The challenge before public administration/social sciences is to resist such hegemonic ambitious strategy (Dipanker, 2021).

However, the scholars have observed that the relevance of the subject depends on the timing of public policies from the perspective of their implications for the different classes and social groups of the society with humanistic and constitutional core values. The public administration as a member of social sciences family has to respond to the social realities of third world—realities of class conflicts, realities of inequalities in the distribution of incomes and assets (Mohit, 1987; Dipanker, 2021). The other measure is to identify the main challenges of public administration in the Indian context in the coming decades (Alasdair, 2019).

3. Globalized Context and Public Administration Discipline

The globalization process has impacted not only the economy, socio-cultural and political systems of various nations but also academic disciplines—natural and social sciences. Its implications for social sciences are immense and challenge the very survival and sustenance of the disciplines. This requires the systematic attention of academia to the global context and its implications to the disciplines, particularly public administration.

The rationale of global economic reform is to reduce the state to a ‘minimalist state’ initiating policies for deregulation, privatization and lowering taxation; it has become a uniform model, the world over, irrespective of the societal needs and constitutional goals. The World Bank observed that the “governments with both centrally-planned and mixed economies are shrinking their market role because of failed state interventions” (World Bank, 1996; 1997). Throughout the era of economic liberalization (1978-2007), a significant amount of governmental power was transferred to technocrat-graduates who are carefully buffered from elected officials. Democratic governance, it was said, had to be disciplined through such reforms if nations were to thrive in a globalized economy (Alasdair, 2010).

Although the globalization has incited economic growth and development in many countries, it has equally disrupted the living conditions of people, particularly the poor and the marginalized communities the world over. The cross-broader flow of capital and technology are not neutral to all the classes and groups. Several people lost their employment and income owing to increased international competition. The World Bank has foreseen possible consequences of such globalization: growing inequality, pressures in labor markets (World Bank, 2006). The three major global economic crises—Asian financial crisis in late 1990s, collapse of Lehman Brothers in 2008 and Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, have exposed the consequences of globalization.

3.1. Indian Situation

India’s development models, during the post-Independence period, underwent changes in their approaches—viz, growth with trickle-down (1947-1969), growth with social justice (1970-1990), new economic reforms (1991-2004), economic reforms with human face (2005-2015) and faster pro-market reformism (2019 onwards). However, the contemporary economists divide the history of India’s development models into two phases: one, planned and mixed economy model—1950-1990—and, two, market economy model-1991 onwards- (Balaramulu, 2021).

Under the planned and mixed economy model, commanding heights of the economy were entrusted to the public sector and government regulated private sector; market mechanisms were adjusted so that both public and private institutions were used for realizing the national objectives and priorities as envisaged in the preamble of the constitution. The government has accorded highest priority to the structural reforms such as

abolition of zamindar system, ceiling on land holding, tenancy reforms, democratic decentralized institutions, nationalization of banks, insurance, transport, power and oil. It also launched growth with social justice strategies—specific policies, programs and institutions and budget allocation to the hitherto unreached regions and social and economic groups. This period was described as the Welfare state (Baldev, 1988; Haragopal, and Balaramulu, 1989).

The New Economic Policy (NEP), 1991-neoliberal model of development- has become new normal agenda of the government to promote the market economy. It denotes a conception of freedom as an overarching social value associated with reducing state functions to those of a 'minimalist state'. A close look at the provisions of NEP reveals that it has both macroeconomic concerns (reforms in core sectors of the economy- agriculture, industry, trade, banking, insurance etc.) and non-economic concerns (restructuring administrative institutions and governance practices, repealing laws, law and order, environmental protection, human rights, decentralized governance, voluntary retirement service, combating corruption, civil services, etc.) to promote market economy. Towards this end, the governments have initiated corresponding reforms in public institutions- revamping/ downsizing the existing institutions or creating new institutions, civil services reforms- to improve the quality of governance (Balaramulu, 2004; 2021). The government's approach to the development is on 'Minimum Government but Maximum Governance'; the official version is that: for decades, 'we have had extraordinarily large governments while ironically the quality of governance has been quite poor' (2014 <https://www.narendramodi.in/minimum->). In fact, the Central Government budget 2021-22 is based on this philosophy (The Union Finance Ministry, February, 2021). The thrust of the budget is facilitating the private sector to invest in various sectors—coal, minerals, chemical, defense, railways, science- of the economy.

The Government of India, in the aftermath of Covid-19 pandemic initiated reforms in 2020 to make India self-reliant (Atmanirbhar Bharat) reviving every sphere of the economy and emerging as a hub for manufacturing and investments (info@aatmnirbharsena.org). In tune with self-reliant India vision, the Central Government launched GatiShakti-National Master Plan for multimodal connectivity project, on October 13, 2021, (movement of goods and services from one mode of transport to another) and announced 100 lakh crores to expedite the infrastructure development such as roads, railways, airports, seaports power, by 2024-25 and create strong foundation of India for the next 25 years (info@aatmnirbharsena.org).

These and other measures are aimed at promotion of market economy. There is a paradigm shift from public welfare, democracy, popular participation in governance to individual welfare and privatization or disinvestment in public sector. Thus, the changing context of Indian state from planned economy (controlling the economy and provider of services) to market economy (free economy and facilitator of services) has accelerated the crisis in the social science disciplines, particularly public administration discipline-concerned with policy formulation and execution of programs.

The scholars observed that the globalized context has drifted the social science disciplines from their original mandate-development of philosophical framework and reducing knowledge to a monochromatic form. Market forces are dictating epistemological agenda and the relative autonomous position of social sciences hitherto enjoyed is gradually declining. The universities are designing the academic courses to suit the needs of market forces giving priority to the science and technology. The private educational institutions, during the post-economic period, are in forefront in designing and revising the courses based on the market demand. They are mostly offering engineering, information technology, pharmacy, medical, fashion design technology, hotel and tourism management, beautician and make-up, business administration etc. The rich and well-to-do sections of the society are opting for the disciplines which bring immediate returns (Chalam, 2002; Prasad, 2018).

The budget allocation for the social science departments is very low vis-à-vis science and technology departments. Since the mid-1990s, there has been a significant decrease in the budget allocation to the social science faculties across the country (DFID, 2011). There is also subtle conspiracy against a particular type of Social Science discourse that raises issues of the underprivileged and the nature of hegemony of international agencies, etc. Naturally, Social Science research projects, which raise the basic issues of the marginalized and underprivileged, are starving (Chalam, 2002).

Further, there is wide disparity in Social Science research activity and output, across the country, both in terms of quantity and quality. Majority of institutions are not able to contribute to significant social science research and they do not seem to conform to international academic standards. There is a tendency to publish books rather than paper in refereed journals and large number of publications appears in low-impact journals.

Some premium Universities, particularly Central Universities located in cities foster academic teaching and research culture, including interdisciplinary work; while the State Universities, except the established are lagging behind. The existing faculty members are yet to make a mark in the international academic community in terms of teaching and research. These trends are defeating the original mandate of Social Sciences (DFID, 2011). The position of public administration discipline, in this regard, is much disturbing.

In the global era, the development projects unleash and strategize the steep conditionalities with professional cultural parameters of higher academia to constrain autonomy and weaken radical expression in social science pedagogy and research. It shrinks the scope and space for the slow placed nature of Social Science explorations, deliberations and outcomes. The social sciences are subjected to the process of de-politicization of perceptions, disciplines and mythologies and gradually declining their epistemological and pedagogical position (Dipankar, 2021). This changing context is undermining the public administration both as a discipline and as a profession.

3.2. Status of the Discipline: Issues and Challenges

In the first phase of development model-planned economy, the public administration discipline was dynamic/self-motivated to incorporate the public concerns, policies and institutions in the curriculum and research concerns corresponding to planned and mixed economy model (Haragopal and Prasad, 1980); While in the second phase of development model-market economy, it is in distress as it is standing apart from the public concerns, policies and institutions that emanate from the market economy model. With regard to the education sector, the Central and State Governments are promoting private investment at all levels of education. The National Education Policy- 2020 is according priority to internationalization of education (promoting private educational institutions); integration of vocational/professional educational programs into mainstream education, particularly science and technology. It expects that at least 50% of the learners starting from school education shall have exposure to vocational education (<https://www.mhrd.gov.in>). Most of the students are opting for market demand courses; that too in private institutions, despite the high fee structure. The poor and marginalized communities are not able to get access to these institutions, and they end up with social science courses in neglected or poorly managed public institutions or conventional courses from the distance mode Universities.

In many Universities, public administration discipline is a semi-independent academic department- offered as part of the political science. In the recent past, it is mostly offered through Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC)—a web-based platform for self-learning, organized by University Grants Commission (UGC). Today, the subject is least preferred among the Social Sciences. Out of one thousand higher educational institutions/ Universities—public and private—offering an array of undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral degrees, across the nation (www.ugc.ac.in) hardly a hundred universities offer the subject as an independent course.

Further, many university departments are still continuing the same papers that were designed prior to pre-economic reforms period with minor changes in the nomenclature and content of the papers. It is evident in the recent designed Public Administration (Hons.)—Bachelor of Arts course—(UGC July 30, 2019). The nomenclature and content/topics of the core papers are, by and large, similar to the early phase of the discipline; and, the elective courses are related to sectoral administration. This situation deprives the students of acquiring adequate knowledge in the changing context, distancing them consequently to the job market. However, the skill enhancement courses are useful for all the disciplines, in the ongoing competitive–market world (fordetails www.ugc.ac.in).

The studies unfold a lack of any buoyancy in the discipline as a whole losing relevance to the needs of the country (Pai Panandikar, 1973). The discipline is facing multiple concerns and challenges—*one*, the way the discipline took birth in the Universities often through bitter separation from discipline of Political Science, Economics or History (Mathur, 1988); *two*, paucity of serious scholars—both in teaching and research; lack of intellectual concern among the scholars in locating administrative actions within the larger framework of society, economy and the polity as well as validating the theoretical frameworks embedded in the western administrative systems to the Indian situations resulting in an arid intellectual field (ICSSR Survey Report 1973; Mohit, 1987); *three*, overwhelming focus on American and Eurocentric theories in the curriculum, reflecting the state of American field half a century ago, and lack of significant academic work for decades, resulting in outdated and mismatch of theory and practice, as well (Alasdair, 2019); *four*, lack of a comprehensive and holistic assessment of government actions in terms of their sensitiveness to the changing socioeconomic

dynamics and over-emphasis on the normative principles of Public Administration without raising the questions like the actual beneficiaries of government policies and programs and their consequences to the society. Most of the studies/analyses are myopic ignoring cross-disciplinary methods (Prabhat and Pansukkim, 2016); and five, gross negligence of the Central and State Governments in promoting the subject at the school and college level education coupled with the indifference of the National and State Governments to fill the existing vacancies in the Universities. On the whole, the Public Administration discipline shed little light on understanding the administrative phenomenon and failed to provide alternative strategies of implementing programs.

It is clear from the foregoing discussion that public administration discipline today is confronting 'an identity crisis', more so in the context of globalization. The fundamental challenge of the discipline, therefore, is to understand the neoliberal policy of the State and its institutions and practices, collaborative and network operations, public perceptions on the policies and the intricacies at all levels of public and private institutions as well. These factors suggest the need for Public Administration scholars to acquire knowledge and skills more than the scholars of other social sciences. Prabath and Sukkim (2016) rightly observe that public administration needs to equip more knowledge which is academically relevant and meaningful.

4. Rejuvenating the Discipline: The New Agenda

Unlike the Business Management Public Management, Public Administration deals with the constitutional goals-equity, public laws, socio-cultural and economic context, administrative structures and processes and democratic and responsive governance; hence, it needs to be rejuvenated. The fresh stock-taking should begin with a question as to why and with what objectives it should be taught. The objectives of the syllabus could be as follows: *one*, to update the changing context of the public policies and institutions and widen the mental horizon of the student; *two*, to equip the student with the ability to undertake research; and *three*, to prepare him/her as a professional for the public and private services. The socioeconomic change should be a frame of reference in developing the syllabus and research areas. The overall purpose of discipline-teaching and research—is to equip the graduates with the body of knowledge and make them instruments of change. Based on my (author of this paper) three sequential exposures—as a student, research scholar and teacher for about five decades—suggest the following factors for revitalizing the discipline.

4.1. Inclusive-Development Thrust

The aim of the discipline is to study human societies and institutions through scientific explanation and suggest measures to ensure inclusive development. The development here is not simply implementation of programs—economy and efficiency, but social change-transformation of an unequal, unjust socioeconomic system. This requires clarity about the purpose and contents of papers and the appropriate theoretical framework to study the subject with inclusive perspective. Presently, there is no consensus on the core thrust of the papers in framing the syllabus in the universities. The basic problem with the existing syllabi in different Universities is that the emphasis is more on the study of the structures and functions of the Central, State, Local Governments and institutions than on the changing demands of the society and nature of the state in addressing them.

4.2. Consensus on the Core Papers

There are some shortcomings in framing the core of papers: *one*, in the core papers/subjects such as administrative theory, organization behavior, management science, Indian administration, finances, personnel, public enterprise, rural and urban local governments, etc., the emphasis is more on their administrative features and less on the development thrust and theoretical dimensions; *two*, an attempt for inter-disciplinary approach is made with other social sciences which bear no relation to public administration; *third*, in the combined departments—where the public administration is part of the political science department-, political theory is imparted without relating it to Public Administration; *four*, in the paper/subjects such as comparative administrative systems and development models, the emphasis is on the western/developed societies, particularly, the United Kingdom, the United States, France and China, excluding large number of developing countries. All these factors point to the lack of consensus on the core of the discipline and inability to meet the requirements of the demands of the profession.

4.3. Conceptual Clarity on the Themes

While framing the syllabus of papers/courses, focus should be on the clarity of the concepts/theories. In the existing syllabus, relating to personnel administration, certain topics like recruitment do not deal with the basic components of merit, nor do they impart the necessary skills. Similarly, budgeting topic in financial administration neither fully covers the aspect of public accountability and the optimum utilization of resources, nor equips a student/person with the knowledge to formulate budget in a given organization.

4.4. Updating Syllabus with the Changing Context

Public administration syllabus requires to be updated keeping in view the growing and changing demands of the society and state. The changing experience should be constantly pumped into the curriculum to keep it alive and up to date (Edward, 1975; Haragopal and Prasad, 1980). In the context of market economy, the Indian State is initiating reforms- downsizing/abolition of institutions. In fact, canvas of changing context is more important for the learners as well as the discipline dynamism. The faculty is not paying adequate attention to these factors. For instance, the Indian administration paper is not updated in tune with the changing context. The regulatory institutions were launched during the post-economic period in different sectors; Real Estate Regulation and Development Act (RERA), 2016; Repealing laws and Amending Bill, 2019; Electricity (Amendment) Act and Electricity Contract Enforcement Authority, 2020, and others are not taught. The current Indian administration syllabus mostly includes historical context of administration, constitutional framework of administration, organizational structures of Central, State and Local Governments and constitutional bodies.

Similarly, reforms in financial sector are not included in the current syllabus—such as revitalizing banking sector (1991); establishment of Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) (1992); Foreign Trade (Development and Regulation) Act, 1992; Disinvestment commission (1996); Foreign Exchange Management Act (1999); Competition Act, 2002 and repealing of Monopolies Restrictive Trade Practices Act, 1969 in 2009; Indian Patent (amendment to 1970 and 1972 Acts), 2005; Companies Act, 2013; Tax Administration Reform Commission (TARC), 2013; Goods & Services Tax Council, 2016; Demonetization, 2016; Development Finance Institution for Infrastructure, and Bad Bank, 2020; National Monetization Pipeline, 2021, etc.

4.5. Updating Teaching Material

The bulk of the available literature in the Universities/Colleges is drawn from foreign source which is outdated. The topics/books prescribed for administrative theory subject were published in late 19th and early 20th centuries and not updated. There is a need to update the material as well as to develop the indigenous teaching and instructional materials both for academic and training programs.

4.6. Recruitment of Talented Faculty

The quality of the discipline would depend a great deal on the quality of the persons attracted to the discipline. The perception of the academic elite is that the discipline does not find favor with the better University students. This is mostly due to the limited career opportunities; the credibility and the status of the discipline, generally, depend on this matter. The Central and State Governments and national bodies like the UGC have to open the departments in all the universities and colleges and increase the faculty positions. Presently, only a few university departments are imparting exclusively postgraduation and research programs in the subject.

4.7. Development of Teaching and Research Competence

This is the real concern of the universities/governments. In the early period of the discipline, most of the faculty members were drawn from Political Science or Economics. Most of the existing faculty joined the profession by chance but not by choice. In this regard, two steps are needed. **One**, impart training to the faculty in the theoretical frameworks of the discipline and basic issues of the society and changing policy and administrative institutions; **two**, government/institutional support to the faculty to study the administrative concerns in real time situations, both for solving problems and testing the theoretical constructs.

4.8. Cross-Cultural Studies

Undertaking systematic studies on key areas in cross-cultural context and validating their applicability to the present situation is important. This would enable the faculty to develop theoretical constructs out of such

studies. However, it has to be a continuous and long-term process. Extending financial support to the scholars/teachers to undertake research on the priority areas is crucial in this regard.

4.9. Seminars on real-life Concerns

Organizing professional seminars involving academics from Social Science disciplines and professionals/civil servants with a view to identifying the real-life problems and administrative concerns and alternative ways of their solutions is utmost important. This would enable us to evolve a common frame of reference to study the concerns. However, this requires organizing short-term research methodology training to the participants linking with the training schedule to the specific concerns of real-life and administrative concerns.

4.10. Extra-Academic Activities

This includes the study of good biographies—academics, administrators, who made a difference in the society, book reviews, lectures of eminent scholars, week-end debates, field studies on real-life situations and administrative practices, etc.

4.11. Documentation of Research

Each University/research institution needs to identify the thrust areas of research and documentation of related research works/books/literature, at least 20-30 books of the discipline, so as to enable the research scholars and young faculty to have easy access to the literature and save their valuable time.

4.12. Exchange Programs

The important concern is the discipline calls for greater interaction between theory and practice. This is possible only when practitioners/administrators share their experiences with the faculty/learners and vice-versa. This will have healthy impact on both the discipline and profession. In this regard, the organized arrangements for periodic assignments/postings of academics, especially those in the early years of their career, in government agencies and professionals/civil servants, especially those who have considerable experience in their departments, in teaching and research institutions, even on supernumerary basis will be highly useful. This would benefit not only the academicians but also professionals to get exposure to the theoretical concepts and ideas on administrative concerns and ground realities.

4.13. Training to Professionals

The strengthening of Public Administration discipline and profession would depend considerably on the growth of the discipline itself. Improvements in research and training would by themselves provide a strong base to the profession. The important concern is the development of training policy, its objectives and linking them to the career development of the professionals/civil servants and offering problem solving solutions. The policy research inputs will be useful to anticipate and resolve the practical problems of public/private institutions. There is a need for making analysis of administrative behavior, particularly higher-level bureaucracy and its attitude, values, culture, as they would determine the character of the administrative system. The faculty needs to evolve training programs based on the public policy framework and policy research. Professional development, thus, is closely linked with policy research, especially in the areas of national importance.

5. Conclusion

In India, the public policies and institutions, during the pre-economic period, are mandated to fulfil the constitutional goals; while in the globalized context, they seem to be mandated to promote market economy. The implications of this changing context in the administrative institutions and the social groups have to be analyzed systematically to contribute to policy research inputs for the policy makers.

One of the important tests of the strength of any academic discipline is its ability to develop concepts and ideas that enable an understanding of real-life problems and show the way to resolve them. The public administration discipline in its early development has demonstrated dynamism focusing on the study of day-to-day administration, social concerns, public policies and institutions and emphasized 'publicness' and public good in the policy analysis. However, the discipline is in distress under neoliberal development model as the public administration is viewed as a management orientation-emphasizing efficiency and economy. Further, the academic work-both teaching and research- is not related to real-life problems and without this

the efforts of the faculty would be futile/pointless. The academic credentials of the scholars in terms of development of theoretical framework and appropriate research methodology and tools for the purpose are under question. They are not adequately trained to analyze the changing nature of development models and institutions of governances and their consequences to administrative systems and the people at large. The poor quality of teaching at graduation and research levels and gross negligence of state/local governments and national educational bodies to promote the discipline are causing the discipline an identity crisis.

Unlike the natural sciences, public administration and other social science disciplines are essentially ethical sciences. At the university level, what is needed is that the discipline should be sensitive to social crises and radical enough to analyze the myths and realities of changing context and implications to the common man and suggest the methods of social transformation. Further, if it has to be academically worthwhile, it needs to have anchorage in broader social science interactional field. The comparative studies in the cross-cultural context both within and outside the country need to be deliberately encouraged and supported. Only then can we strive for the formulation of appropriate concepts and theories for explaining the structure and operation of administration in real socioeconomic situation.

The relevance of the discipline depends on our attempts to modernize the syllabus, using the socioeconomic change as a frame of reference. The measures such as widening the mental horizon of the students by updating the changing context of public policies and institutions, imparting necessary skills of the learners to take-up research and preparing them as professionals for the public and private services, undertaking the studies with right theoretical perspective and searching for solutions to administrative concerns and others would be of great help to strengthen both the discipline and the profession.

Further, the strength of the discipline and the profession would depend on the quality and commitment of personnel and the ability of the Universities/research institutions to attract such persons and creating conducive environment to pursue the knowledge. It is hoped that rational nature of public administration faculty and scientific studies will rescue the discipline from losing its identity in the melee of globalization.

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