READINGS IN

PUBLIC
ADMINISTRATION

English Program – First Year – Second Part : English Section
Week 12

25 April 2020   **Compiled by: Dr. Soliman Rakha**

Chapter Two:

Scope, significance, and challenges of Public Administration

Learning Objectives

After reading the current chapter you would be able to:

- ☐ Discuss the role of public administration.

- ☐ Discuss the impotence of public administration.

- ☐ Define the Public Officer's role.

- ☐ Discuss Public Officers' General Working Conditions.

- ☐ Discuss the challenges to the public sector and solutions.

- ☐ Discuss the key challenges facing public sector leaders.

- ☐ Learn what public sector leaders need to respond to challenges.

- ☐ Learn about the need to reform the public sector.

Challenges to the public sector and Solutions

Despite attraction provided by public service jobs, there remain certain disadvantages in the public service that deters young people to be attracted to government jobs.

- *Lower wages compared to the private sector*

When competing for new staff, especially young graduates, salaries are important.

Pay systems need to be developed to include elements based on individual performance, team performance or even results.

- *The image of the public sector is neither positive, clear, nor stimulating*

Although there are exceptions among OECD countries, young people do not rate public employment very highly.

The public sector is deemed dull, bureaucratic, and old fashioned, and the prestige of civil service is low.

Challenges to the public sector and Solutions

- *Slow advancement including how seniority is more important than merit*

The common belief is it is impossible to advance by promotion, and there is a fixed order to advance, this is independent of performance.

- *The public sector is not reaching skilled and well-educated students and graduates in the way commercial companies do*

This applies to the marketing of vacancy positions. Methods used to attract students are often more passive than active, for example, the use of electronic recruitment to attract skilled and well-educated graduates to public organizations.

Relying on online recruitment might lead to a client hiring the perfect candidate. You have more people to choose from, and you can even use social media like Facebook and LinkedIn to learn more about candidates. If you and the candidate are satisfied, then you will decrease the chance of an early turnover, which is a win for everyone.

Challenges to the public sector and Solutions

- *Changes in employee attitudes and values toward work*

A major challenge for government organizations is to create workplaces that meet the preferences of both the organization and the employees.

- *Career paths are unclear, career planning insufficient*

To make career path opportunities clearer, we need strategic actions at several stages. Recruitment situations give employers the opportunity to explain career prospects.

- *Staff development will be an increasingly important competitive factor*

The public sector is challenged to use knowledge management to ensure everyday development is kept competitive and public organizations are at the edge of knowledge creation.

Key challenges facing public sector leaders

There are six major challenges facing public sector leaders include:

☐ *Increasing pace of change*

In particular, it can be said that the public sector is currently entering a significant era of change. For example: "Leaders in the public sector are having to deal with accelerated change: facing new pressures to learn and innovate to keep up". *"Leadership… is about coping with change…. more change always demands more leadership".*

☐ *Technological developments*

It is clear how modern change has been driven largely by technological developments mostly in information and communication technologies (ICTs). Discussions on ICTs should focus on "Better using technology to deliver public services and policy outcomes that have an impact on citizens' daily lives".

Key challenges facing public sector leaders

- *Changing perceptions*

E-Governance has become yet another feature of modern governance. She describes facilities for citizens, such as online payment of tax, availability of information on public service recruitment, public procurement of goods and services which "help in reduction of opacity and enhancement of transparency of governance".

- *Increasing expectations and personalization*

Citizens as a group are becoming an increasingly complex and diverse population, with growing, shifting and contradicting expectations. Such changes in behaviors have occurred at most because citizens may now view themselves as 'private consumers'. Indeed, there is a citizens' increasing need for personalization, i.e., citizens are no longer satisfied with one size fits all solutions to service needs.

Key challenges facing public sector leaders

- *Citizen empowerment*

Information technology has played an important role in changing the relationship between citizens, politicians and public servants. This can be describes as 'citizen empowerment' – where citizens play a more active role in the shaping and delivery of public services.

- *Changing workforce*

The impact of younger generations working in the public sector cannot be ignored, as the older generation 'Baby Boomers' will retire, younger generations 'Generation X' and 'Generation Y' workers will be needed to fill middle and upper management roles.

- *Changing environment*

Leaders of public services have to struggle with a changing environment. In brief, the leader has to consider the economists' dictum 'infinite demand but finite resources'.

How public sector leaders need to respond to challenges

Several scholars provide recommendations of where public sector leadership should be heading over the next years:

☐ *The need for a new type of leadership*

The basis of these leadership styles is largely dispositional. Gone is the autocratic leader who rules with an iron fist and what they say goes. Instead, we see a model that is collaborative, inclusive and yet visionary.

☐ *Building relationships and trust*

A prevalent topic is that of how to build and sustain trust. Scholars refer to the need for accountability and integrity, with leaders more visible, approachable and communicating with followers openly and fairly.

☐ *Innovators and entrepreneurs*

There is much need for the public sector to attract and support innovators and entrepreneurs in order to develop and improve public services.