

A Different Approach to the Problem of Theory in the Discipline of Public Administration

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Abstract

Since many years ago, people have debated whether the public administration is experiencing an identity crisis. Policy analysts and political scientists often supply their perspectives to the study and discussion of public administration. Additionally, it has been acknowledged as a specialized area of study within the disciplines of management science and organizational studies. Policy and policy concerns were topics that unequivocally dominated the field of public administration for several years; nevertheless, public administration as a science, an art, and a profession is now going through significant shifts. It has been noticed that administrative and economic consequences, in addition to cultural and social inputs, induce the establishment of an interdisciplinary orientation in the field of public administration studies.

Keywords: *Quality of Public Administration, Theory Problem in Public Administration Discipline, Positivist Approach*

1. Introduction

articulating and organizing the fundamental aspects of the public administration area From the beginning of recorded history till the present day, keeping discipline has been a challenging endeavor. Due to the gradual evolution of this field over the course of many years, its aim, content, and method have been described in a variety of diverse ways by assorted styles and schools, and there has been unable to be an agreement reached on this topic (Kirkhart, 1971: 127). The primary purpose of scientific study is the development of

hypotheses and hypotheses. Many scientific observations are directed by previously developed hypotheses, and they are not considered "scientific" until they have been repeatedly verified by experimentation (Ferit, 2011). According to Fisher (1978), it is not possible to grasp the scientific theories of a particular field until after that field has accumulated a significant body of information in the form of empirical generalizations and basic principles. Fisher makes this argument in his book. Neither qualitative nor quantitative research findings are of any real significance in the absence of ideas that have been said in sufficient detail. When not provided in the context of a particular theory or a mixture of ideas, the results of study have extraordinarily little relevance from a scientific perspective (Van der Waldt, 2017).

Theoretically speaking, Public Administration describes the historical foundations of government studies along with epistemological issues related to civil service as both a profession and an academic field. This is done by focusing on the field of public service as both an academic and professional arena. Research in this field is often difficult due to the complexity of the phenomena being studied, which calls for various dimensions, methods, models, and theories to be used in the analysis of these phenomena. According to Sakl (2011), public administration is an interdisciplinary field of study that is defined as a multidimensional field of study that includes various research traditions and approaches focusing on administrative, political, economic, technological, legal, social, and cultural systems. In other words, public administration is a multidimensional field of study.

calls for the coming together of organizational theory, social theory, political theory, and research relevant to these topics. It has been suggested in academic research that public administration suffers from an identity crisis because of the diverse and multidisciplinary character of the field itself. According to Pollitt (2010), the Public Administration "suffers from multiple personality disorder" in this setting. Despite this, public administration, although being a relatively recent field of study, has undergone a significant metamorphosis as a science, an art, and a profession during its historical development. Because of this, the field of public administration is distinguished by its variety and can trace its roots back to several distinct schools of theoretical thought, which are collectively referred to as the "mini-paradigms family" (Vienaindien and Čiarnienė, 2007).

2. Basic Concepts

The word "theory" originates from the Greek word "theoria," which may be translated as either "contemplation" or "speculation" (Bell and Bryman 2011:34). A concise and organized overview of a topic is presented in the form of a series of theorems known collectively as a theory. Theories are statements of assumption that may be shown to be predictive, logical, and testable. Theories are often formulated as a methodical and codified articulation of past observations. In general, scientific hypotheses should be considered provisional. They may undergo alterations or be included into a more comprehensive theoretical framework (Bell 2005). As a result, the primary purposes of theory are to describe, explain, forecast, or otherwise govern occurrences in a variety of settings.

The typical structure of a theory is made up of philosophical presuppositions that may be arranged in several diverse ways. These classifications might be formulated as epistemology (questions about knowing), ontology (questions about existence), and axiology (questions about value) (questions of values). Problems about the way events are explained are referred to as epistemological questions, while the ontological underpinnings of a theory pertain to what the researcher believes to be true and what he thinks exists. Knowledge is generated via the process of building one's own reality (Anil, 2017; Siegel & Ingham, 1987), which is predicated on a person's ontology.

The term "paradigm" refers to the framework of fundamental assumptions that is used to assess feelings, characterize connections (and values), and apply these concepts to a particular field of study or line of activity. While "theory" may be understood to relate to the conceptual aspect of a phenomena, "approach" refers to the precise strategies and procedures that are used to carry out a predetermined objective. According to Oztürk (2012), the method that a researcher takes is decided by the theory of the issue being investigated. Normatism, empiricism, and behaviorism are the three primary categories that make up the larger category of methods. To conduct an analysis of a phenomena, these groupings are used as instruments. In the field of public administration, one may often choose from one of twelve different methods (Lan, 1997). The following is a list of possible methods to this problem (Christensen and Laegreid, 2007):

- ✓ The politics/management dilemma.
- ✓ Historical (evolutionary).
- ✓ Institutional (bureaucratic).
- ✓ Behavior systems.
- ✓ public policy.

- ✓ Management Organization (business management).
- ✓ Comprehensive.
- ✓ Traditional.
- ✓ Political and political economy.
- ✓ structural functional.
- ✓ General administrative (administrative).
- ✓ Legal.

These approaches, in turn, guide the development of theories in related subfields of the discipline.

3. Nature of Public Administration

The study of the past of public administration is an endeavor that dates to the beginning of ancient civilization. However, one cannot assert that public administration has a lengthy history as a separate field of study or research. This is because of the following: As a result of the rise of the administrative state and the consolidation of bureaucratic power, the function of public administration assumed a position of increasing significance. It is generally agreed that Woodrow Wilson, a former President of the United States who was also a political scientist, wrote the first essay to discuss public administration. Wilson's piece, titled "The study of administration," was published in a magazine of political science in the year 1887. One definition of public administration describes it as "government in action." Considering this, public administration may be seen as a relatively recent field of study in comparison to other areas of study within the social sciences. In general, the emphasis of public administration is on the nature, institutions, and roles that are associated with the public sector in all its manifestations (Basu, 2016).

Research must be conducted in a wide-ranging and sometimes multidisciplinary subject for the academic field of public administration. This field encompasses governmental and administrative systems (such as regulatory, institutional, and administrative), particular social systems (such as human dynamics in society), political systems (such as power dynamics in society), and economic systems (such as wealth distribution, etc.) (Vigoda, 2003). The study of public administration draws on a wide range of research traditions and methodologies. Because of its depth and breadth, the field of public administration has been accused of lacking boundaries and suffering from an identity crisis (Sakl, 2011).

4. Theory Problem in the Discipline of Public Administration

Public administration studies are considered by some academics to be the "Israel of Academic Disciplines" because to the fact that they include many different fields of study. Because of the way that this structure makes the limits of the field of public administration ambiguous, it causes the field to struggle with its sense of identity (Raadschelders, 2010). For this reason, the discipline of public administration has spent a great deal of time and effort over the last several decades fighting to keep its autonomy within the area of social sciences. According to Rodgers and Rodgers (2000), the study of public administration is a discipline that is always defining its identity and debating the distinct and invaluable boundary lines that separate it from other fields.

A positivist conviction in the unity of knowledge underpins the criticisms leveled against public administration. According to positivists, the field of public administration research does not have the epistemological coherence that would qualify it as a genuine scientific discipline. It is possible to do so by approaching public administration as an interdisciplinary field of research and practice, incorporating not just the practices advised by positivists but also all the ideas, models, and concepts that are now in use (Vigoda, 2003). The common objection that the work is unscientific because it lacks bounds is only valid if public administration is considered as an old-fashioned academic field that is working toward a positivist consensus of knowledge. On a positivist foundation, it is difficult to combine the many methods being taken. Because interventions at the work level (first-level formal objects) are lacking, while interventions at the specialized level (second-level formal objects) are very uncommon. In addition to this, he rejects the positivist view of science and instead defines science in the more traditional meaning of a branch of the scientific discipline. Traditional positivists' critiques of the infinite of the discipline are worthless when weighed against the breadth, multidimensionality, and adaptability of public administration (Raadschelders, 2010).

The standard technique for deciding the identity and, by extension, the limits of a conventional field of study guarantees the integration of relevant information via the development of models that are coherent epistemologically and methodologically but are distinct from those used in other fields. Criticisms of the absence of limits and identity in

public administration are so prejudiced towards the accomplishments of disciplines that rely on a certain degree of epistemological and methodological coherence (Vigoda, 2003).

Because of its theoretical variety (Frederickson & Smith, 2003) and richness, presence, and application of management systems (Gocke and Turan, 2008), the study of public administration often exposes quite distinct ideas and models. This is something that must be accepted. On the other hand, according to the positivist definition of science, which describes it as knowledge that is aim, repeatable, and independent of context, this variety and richness is often called into doubt. The idea of science, on the other hand, encompasses not just positivism but also a variety of different methodologies and approaches. This is since knowledge may be roughly segmented into three categories: the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities (Raadschelders, 2008). This more comprehensive comprehension of science requires not only the discussion of diverse theories and models, but also their conceptual framework, and, more specifically, an awareness of the interdisciplinary character of public administration research (Raadschelders, 2004). Because of the nature of the phenomenon that researchers look to investigate, it is not possible for the phenomenon to be included in a field, and it may take the phenomenon beyond the bounds of the discipline. Because of this, Public Administration has the potential to make the borders of the field murky.

Within an organization, the borders between disciplines are quite essential. Because they contribute to the acquisition of enough financial and human resources in comparison to other organizations, they are helpful. This confers a status while also fostering independence by providing the connected discipline with an identity. However, there is some debate on who exactly sets these boundaries. When scientific communities have developed to their full potential, members of the same scientific community almost totally decide and assess issues about the community's borders, identity, choice of study subjects, and overall research quality. In contrast, in the field of the social sciences, these four components are not just the purview of scientists but also of other members of society and members of political institutions. The selection of research questions as well as the quality of the results they produce may be justified not just in terms of what other researchers with a similar worldview perceive to be essential, but also in terms of "the socio-political relevance of finding a solution" (Kuhn, 1970). When it comes to a multidisciplinary field like public administration, this is without a doubt the case.

The interdisciplinary perspective has the potential to integrate many levels of analysis to build an integrative strategy that is more suitable for the actual world. The purpose of this section is to supply light on the multifaceted nature of the topic that is being investigated. As a result, the multidisciplinary aspect of public administration might be helpful for a contentious subject that is undergoing significant transformation. It also has the potential to inspire fresh and practical ways of thinking, which may result in more good innovations in bureaucracies that follow older models.

5. Conclusion

Since many years ago, people have debated whether the public administration is experiencing an identity crisis. Policy analysts and political scientists often supply their perspectives to the study and discussion of public administration. Additionally, it has been acknowledged as a specialized area of study within the disciplines of management science and organizational studies. Policy and policy concerns were topics that unequivocally dominated the field of public administration for several years; nevertheless, public administration as a science, an art, and a profession is now going through significant shifts. A multidisciplinary approach to the study of public administration has arisen as a result, not only of cultural and social influences, but also of administrative and economic repercussions. During this phase of the process, it is important that a comprehension of public administration draws on the body of literature that has been collected throughout the many social science subfields. Within the context of this scenario, an integrative strategy has a great deal of value and promise.

6. Resources

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