

Public administration- politics dichotomy

[Science](#), [Social Science](#)



Public Administration/Politics Dichotomy Introduction The relationship between public administration and politics has been one of the great issues in public administration. Public administration has two parties to it; on one side are the administrators while on the other side is the public and politicians. The latter of the second party to public administration tends to influence public administration. However, more than the relationship between politics and administration is how these two issues can be used to make better public policies.

Relationship between public administration and politics

The relationship between public administration and politics can be traced back to the 19th century when Woodrow Wilson penned his thoughts on administration. His intention was to protect administration from political interference. He further indicated that administrations and politics are two distinct disciplines. His main concern was the influence that politics had on administration (Wilson, 1887). He argued that the plans of the government are not administrative and so the two should be kept apart. He later realized that the two cannot be kept apart and embraced dichotomy and agreed that they should be used to improve policies. Public administration dichotomy means that public administrators should be involved in policy processes and politicians should also be involved in administrative processes (Wilson, 1966). Other authors of public administration like (Yang and Hozler, 2005) agreed that administration should be used to protect politics and democracy from its own excesses. Another public administration proponent of the separation of public administration and politics was Goodnow who was of the opinion that politics had a strong effect on public administration.

Dichotomy between public administration and politics

Separating politics and public administration has not been achievable and the debate to keep the two apart continues. However the reality is that they influence each other. According to (Overeem, 2005), the dichotomy between public administration and politics mean that public administrators be politically neutral. Public administration should be impartial and not get involved in politics and its controversies.

The insistence on the separation of public administration and politics lays emphasis on specialization and order in policy making and government administration. Since public administration and politics cannot be kept apart, they can be dichotomized in five ways; there has to be a distinction between policy and management, extend it from the inner workings of the government to the political body, keeping administration from political control, call for accountability and specifying what actions are political and the ones that are administrative (Hughes, 2003). The proponents of public administration and politics dichotomy argue that the distinctions between the two should be able to make it clear that they are different things with different personalities meaning politicians come up with the policies and the administrators implement these policies.

Conclusion

Politics and public administration have to coexist without interference. Public administration should not be influenced by politics and vice versa. Public administrators should be neutral in political matters whereas politicians should stick to policy making and leave implementation to the public administrators only then can the two be used for the good of the public.

References

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