

Administrative law: essential for public administrators essay example

[Business](#), [Management](#)



Abstract

A knowledge about the public law is a crucial aspect for an effective public administration. Public administrators these days are beginning to realize that there is a growing demand for them to become skilled and learned leaders whose skill in public management heavily relies on their knowledge about the law. The field of administrative law demands from the public leaders to have the ability, knowledge and skills to apply the law for an efficient decision making process that is called upon to promote the interests of the public and the local affairs of their public office. The complexities of running a public office require a sound management and leadership from a public officer and public administration involves the study of administrative law which encompasses not only legal problems but political and administrative issues as well (Cooper, 2007). With the growing demands from a public administrator to possess the knowledge about the basic principles of law and public governance, administrative law becomes an important aspect of public administration. This paper will discuss about the relevance of administrative law among the public administrators and to focus the discussion on the 5 major reasons why a public manager needs to possess the knowledge about the law and how it may affect his efficiency in public administration practice.

Public managers exercise a broader scope of function in which a knowledge about administrative law is highly relevant. As managers, public administrators exercise complex forms of public management functions such as policy making, coordination, communication, implementation, planning, control and decision making just to name a few. Public service is the basic

core or purpose of public administration and to become an effective public manager or administrator, the knowledge about administrative law is highly relevant owing to the common challenges received by public leaders regarding their leadership and decision making process in terms of the implementation of the public policy, rules and regulations. In order to make public managers more competent in delivering their public administrative function, a background in administrative law is necessary. Dissecting through the relevance of the knowledge about administrative law in public service, here are the 5 major reasons why a public administrator must be well versed about the law.

First Reason: The principle of decentralization where there is a separation of state powers requires every public manager to have the ability to exercise their own decision making ability. Modern public service these days now demand for more efficient governance among local public leaders to exercise their own prerogative and initiative to build a stronger local governance in managing their own local affairs. Thus, public managers need to show competence in running their own office in order to deliver a more efficient public service to their local communities. This is necessary in line with the delegated power given by the mother state to the leaders of the regional and local subdivisions of the government. In order to possess their own ability to run the local affairs of the various instrumentalities or agencies of the government, public leaders need to develop their competence in terms of the legal aspects of public management system. Likewise, the exercise of local governance also requires managing political, legal and administrative affairs that are attached to the function of their public office. This makes

administrative law highly relevant in the lawful exercise of the powers and responsibilities of a public administrator by virtue of his public office.

Second Reason: The framing and implementation of public policies lies upon the good leadership of public managers. Government leaders need to enact laws prior to the exercise of their authority. Public managers exercise the executive powers in implementing the rules and regulations framed by the legislative body and the exercise of their powers to implement the law are safeguarded with limitations. Public administrators regularly exercise discretionary power, administrative interpretation of the governmental policies and regulations for its implementation. In view of this function, public managers are given the authority to exercise the power to fill in the gaps in the lawful implementation of these policies and regulations. Thus, a knowledge about administrative law is highly regarded as necessary in order to carry out this function. Administrative procedures are always required in the implementation of governmental policies and public administrators could effectively relate to the lawful administration of public policies and in performing its executive functions if they are knowledgeable about the proper administration of their public office. In the implementation of the public policies, a knowledge about the proper administration of the law is no doubt essential to a public administrator. The exercise of discretion must be defined to be within the bounds of the constitutional mandate to preclude arbitrariness and one taking into account the interest of the public as the priority. Administrative law is an essential guide among public managers on how to regulate and implement the law through an effective public administration.

Third Reason: Public managers need to understand the available legal tools necessary in the furtherance of public interest. As public administrators are concerned in the management of public affairs, it is necessary that they have the necessary legal tools in the administration thereof because their power to exercise their duties and responsibilities emanate from the mandate created by the law itself. Hence, their ability to manage its public affairs is also attached on their ability to interpret the law and upon adequate resources that will enable them to perform their administrative function more efficiently. Public managers are involved in the exercise of management functions that essentially includes the areas of planning, implementing, developing, reporting and budgeting. Whenever a public administrator exercises any of his management functions he has to fully integrate his knowledge about how to secure the effective administration of the policy mandates in the legitimate way within the bounds of law to accomplish the safeguards of the public interest in general.

Fourth Reason: Public managers are engaged in administrative adjudication. This pertains to the important decision making that public administrators usually exercise as part of their official function. Public officials cannot merely decide scantily without having to apply a critical thinking process about the matters and issues laid down before them. Because holding a public office always mandates that the interest of the public should always be a priority, the decision making process involved should be one with a lawful foundation. A public manager decisions are commonly under the close watch and subject to criticism by the public and administrators who are armed with the knowledge of the law can adequately protect themselves

against this kind of challenges that are hurled against them. It would then be suffice to say that every decision made by a public administrator should be lawful and safeguarded by the protection of the law. With his knowledge about administrative law, a public manager will be guided throughout his decision making which is essential in the exercise of his power for policy administration, personnel management and in safeguarding the social welfare and promoting the public interest.

Fifth Reason: Public managers are endowed with accountability to the public who are the people they serve and whose interest they have the responsibility to protect. Accountability to the public is inherent in the performance of all types of civil service most especially in the exercise of management reform and the promotion of the interest of the public welfare in general. Because the tax payers expect public administrators to manage their local and national governmental affairs in the promotion of social welfare, public managers are required to understand the demand for accountability in all their actions and performance of duties. The exercise thereof should likewise be in line with the various lawful and ethical guidelines and mandates that are necessary for the proper exercise of authority given to a public administrator. To become an accountable public manager, one should exercise responsible strategic power to manage the entire affairs of their public office with commitment and faithfulness to the mandate of the law and to safeguard the public interest in general.

In conclusion, the application of administrative law has become an inherent aspect in the exercise of public administration. The knowledge of the law will be deemed adequate in making a public manager competent in the

management of the local public affairs that will promote the interests of the public by exercising ethical and lawful management process, decision making and functions within the scope of his authority and public office.

References

Cooper, P. J. (2007). Public Law and Public Administration. Belmont, CA: Thompson Wadsworth.