

# Post apartheid public administration and batho pele



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## DEFINITION OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

According to Nigro (1988): “ Public Administration (i) is a cooperative group effort in a public setting; (ii) covers all the three branches – executive, legislative and judicial, and their inter-relationship; (iii) has an important role in the formulation of public policy and is thus part of the political process; (iv) is different in significant ways from private administration; and (v) is closely associated with numerous private groups and individuals in providing services to the community.” Nigro, F. A., 1988. Modern Public Administration. 5th ed. x: Harpercollins College Div

As per Willoughby (1927): “ The term administration may be employed in Political Science in two senses. In its broadest sense it denotes the work involved in the actual conduct of governmental affairs, regardless of the particular branch of government concerned. It is, thus, quite proper to speak of the administration of the legislative branch of the government, the administration of justice or judicial affairs, or the administration of the executive branch as well as the administration of the affairs of the administrative branch of the government, or the conduct of the affairs of the government generally. In its narrowest sense, it denotes the operations of the administrative branch only. As students of Public Administration we are concerned with the narrowest meaning of the term.” Willoughby, W. F., 1927. Principles of Public Administration. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press

Jayapalan, N., 2000. Public Administration. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers and Distributors. Page 2

Rosenbloom (1989) said: “ Public Administration does involve activity, it is concerned with politics and policy-making, it tends to be concentrated in the executive branch of government, it does differ from private administration, and it is concerned with implementing law. Public Administration is the use of managerial, legal and political theories and processes to fulfil legislative, executive and judicial governmental mandates for the provision of regulatory and service functions for the society as a whole or for some segments of it.”

David H Rosenbloom, 1989. Public administration: Understanding management, politics, and law in the public sector. 2nd Edition. Random House.

To sum up the 3 definitions, Public Administration is carried out in the public interest, irrespective of the governmental system of that nation. It is also seen as the policies, procedures, rules and regulations of governmental functions or operations, in action. It interacts with various groups or individuals, including the private sector in providing a better service to the community or public.

## HISTORY

The concept of Public Administration dates back to the early Greeks. About 400 B. C Plato identified a split between management and a democratic system. The Greeks became more cultured and started nominating leaders and grasp the idea of Public Administration. (10 Interesting Facts About the History of Public Administration 2008) According Popejoy (2013), most experts believe Woodrow Wilson to be the founder of modern Public Administration. He suggested that the first secretary of Treasury in the

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United States of America, Alexander Hamilton, were the first person to coin the phrase “ public administration”, to define his responsibilities as a Cabinet Minister. Hamilton, together with Thomas Jefferson, the first Secretary of State in the United States, created a support system where electorates are bartered with by the promise of jobs, better public service and other tactics by politicians running for administration. (10 Interesting Facts About the History of Public Administration 2008) In 1887, Woodrow Wilson, published an essay in the Political Science Quarterly entitled “ The Study of Administration”, where he attempted in explaining the study of administration. He noted the more complicated and evolving the society become, the responsibility and duty of the government, will increase. He further addressed the issue of public administration as the ordering of government to ensure that business rules are followed and the fortifying of the organisation to fulfil its duties. (Akindele, Oloapa & Obiyan 2002)

Frank Goodnow’s Politics and Administration (1990), highlighted “ the will of the state” and recognised politics as the representation and administration the implementation of this will. He also identified the possible battle between these two areas to achieve accord. Leonard, D. White’s book: Introduction to the Study of Public Administration (1926) and W. F. Willoughby’s Principles of Public Administration (1927), added to the work of Goodnow. There was however, a considerable disagreement in how they saw the legitimate control of public administration. White considered the President of the United States as the Chief Administrator, but Willoughby the Congress. The crux of the matter is that there are two different roles of government, namely

outcome and implementation. Implementation is the area of public administration. (Akindele, Oloapa & Obiyan 2002)

Since post-World War II, the nature of Public Administration has changed. One of the reasons were the incapability to separated politics from administration and that it was only a false border between these two divisions. Emphasis are placed on how ethical and independent are public administration officials with regards to politics and policy-making. This places some challenges on the practice of public administration as well as conflict of interest which require impartiality from the public. (International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences 1968)

#### PUA IN POST APARTHEID SYSTEM

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996), gives a clear indication of how Public Administration should be managed and executed. Some of these principles are; “ A high standard of professional ethics must be promoted and maintained. (b) Efficient, economic and effective use of resources must be promoted. (c) Public administration must be development-oriented. (d) Services must be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias. (e) People’s needs must be responded to, and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy-making. (f) Public administration must be accountable. (g) Transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information. (h) Good human-resource management and career-development practices, to maximise human potential, must be cultivated. (i) Public administration must be broadly representative of the South African people, with employment and

personnel management practices based on ability, objectivity, fairness, and the need to redress the imbalances of the past to achieve broad representation. (Department of Justice and Constitutional Development n. d.) According to Popejoy (2013) “ In addition, section 195(1) of the Constitution prescribes basic values and principles for Public Administration”. Through the Bill of Rights, it offers civilians of South Africa the right to act against the State if they deem their rights were disregarded. Public Service to the South African citizens is not a benefit, but a legal right. Service delivery should be of high importance to all national and provincial departments.

After 1994, the State’s focus with regards to Public Administration was to first convert and unite the different administrations of the previous government as well as the management of the different homelands into one administration system. According to Chapter 10 of the Constitution, the Public Service Commission (PSC), an independent institution, was created to concentrate on the Public Service and supervision of public administration. This institution is neutral and no other department of the State can intervene in the operations of the PSC. (Public Service Commission 2014: 1)

Franks (2014: 50) reminds us that South Africa had to create a proper structure, based on the ideals of the Constitution to rule and oversee conflicts of interest to ensure public service delivery to the South African public. The process of change in the public service were clouded by the conflict between the need for a well organised, competent and politically impartial public service versus a new political period and change in the society of South Africa.

Therefore, with regards to the above evidence, we can deduce that Public Administration is still very relevant in the contemporary society in South Africa. It is part our Constitution and has a legal implementation attached to it. It is funded by the taxes of the public and therefore must be accountable to the public.

## BATHO PELE

In October 1997, the Department of Public Service and Administration realised that they had to get their house in order and therefore the need to document the philosophy of service delivery to improve their proficiency and responsibility in implementation of their duties. The Public Service was perceived as not being approachable and required expertise, skill and the right mind-set to meet the challenges of the old bureaucratic culture. Thus the operational ability had to change. Therefore the department launched the Batho Pele Principles, also called the “ White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery”. (Batho Pele 1997)

Batho Pele, a SeSotho word meaning “ putting our people first”, was an effort to improve the implementation of service levels and delivery to a more acceptable level. A culture of putting the customer (the people) first, needed to be embraced, much like the private sector, to ensure they serve the needs of the public. (Education Training Unit n. d.)

According to Batho Pele (1997) their slogan were: “ We belong, we care, we serve.” Describing it as follow: “ We belong: we are part of the Public Service and should work together and respect fellow colleagues. We care: caring for

the public we serve – our customers. We serve: all citizens will get good service from public servants.”

Batho Pele (1997) identified eight principles to develop within the different departments to operate as an adequate policy and judicial structure concerning service delivery in the public service. These ideologies are in line with the concepts of the Constitution, mentioned earlier in this paper.

The eight Batho Pele Principles are as follow: (Batho Pele 1997; Education Training Unit n. d)

### 1. Consultation

The public are allowed to say what they want with regards to public service. The public can be asked for their opinions on existing public services as well as other basic services they would like. All levels of the public will be interviewed or surveyed and their views will then be communicated to the Ministers, MEC's and legislators.

### 2. Service Standards

This is to ensure that promises that were made are kept. All national and provincial departments will publish their service standards for new and existing services. Standards will be examined and cannot be lowered and will be monitored on an annual basis and will be raised increasingly.

### 3. Access

Each individual in the country should have access to receive their fair share of services. Departments will be targeted to offer citizens access to public servants and services. Special programmes must be implemented to develop  
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service delivery to physically, socially and culturally disadvantaged individuals

#### 4. Courtesy

The public can expect not to be treated with disrespect, but with kindness and understanding. All departments had to incorporate these standards of treatment into their various Codes of Conduct and training programmes. Regular on-going staff performance appraisals had to be monitored

#### 5. Information

The public are entitled to complete and correct facts about services they are permitted to receive. Information should be provided at service points, as well as the local media in the different languages and all departmental communications must include comprehensive contact details.

#### 6. Openness and transparency

Administration should be an open book to the public and they have the right to know the departmental numbers and particulars of officials. Furthermore, access to the expenditure and performance against the prescribed standards must also be available. Reports will be published and submitted to the legislature.

#### 7. Redress

The public's complaints must lead to action. Public dissatisfaction must be recorded and all staff must be trained on how to handle the grievances fast and efficiently. The public can also expect feedback on the outcome of a complaint.

## 8. Value for Money

The public's money, such as VAT and taxes, should be spend sensibly in the administration of the country. Departments must be able to provide the public with proof of improved service delivery and proper expenditure of the funds. The public has the right to insist that their money should be used suitably.

By improving the public service delivery will benefit the whole society. Improved delivery from national and provincial departments is essential for the future prosperity and development of the country. The monitoring is done by the Department of Public Service and Administration in conjunction with the Public Services Commision. (Education Training Unit n. d.)

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