

Public administration

Politics



Woodrow Wilson says that Administration is the most obvious part of government; it is the executive, the operative, the most visible side of government, and of course as old as government itself (Stillman, 2010). Controversy arose when monarchy was equal to democracy. The Politics-administration dichotomy has never been able to completely go away. It may have been expanded upon over the years, rises and falls with ups and downs of life but it has been able to with stand a lot of criticism. Public administration is related to administrators, and on the other end politicians and the public on the other end of the spectrum.

During the late 1940's Woodrow Wilson wrote an essay with the title of " The Study of Administration". President Wilson was determined to protect administration from political interference. Mr. Wilson wrote: The Field of administration is a field of business. It is removed from the hurry and strife of politics...Administration lies outside the proper sphere of politics. Administrative questions are not political questions. Although politics sets the tasks for administration, it should not be suffered to manipulate its offices (Wilson, 1887: 18).

Mr. Wilson saw Congress as a weak branch of Service in the government because they mishandled their duties for establishing core legislative functions. Wilson felt like administrators should be involved in the policy process and the elected officials should be involved in the administrative process. Wilson believed that the real function of administration was adaptive, guiding, and discretionary. Wilson and Goodnow was degetermined to take politics out of administration. The dichotomy was a practical imperative.

In the late 40s and early 50's the politics-administration Dichotomy was criticized and came under harsh scrutiny by many other authors. Sometime in the 1980's the dichotomy emphasized on privatization, decentralization and productivity. The Reinventing Government wanted to change the administrator's role within the dichotomy in five ways: distinguishing between policy and management, extending it from the inner workings of government to politics, freeing up administration from political controls the red tape, redefine accountability, and congressional action as politics and presidential action as management (Carroll, 1995).

The Dichotomy has been able to survive over the years because it's convenient to explain the division of roles in terms of total separation. The dichotomy idea shields administrators from scrutiny and serves the interests of elected officials who can pass the responsibility for unpopular decisions to administrators. In these recent years the politics and administration apart is undesired because it's complementary rather than dichotomous.