Bureaucratic System: Principles and Practice in Nepal

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Abstract

Purpose: The goal of this study is to examine and comprehend the composition, operation, and difficulties of Nepal's bureaucratic system. The overall goal of this topic is to provide a thorough understanding of Nepalese bureaucracy's workings and suggest methods for improving its efficiency in carrying out public policies and serving the public interest.

Research Design: The research design employed in this study combines both exploratory and descriptive methods.

Findings: This study has attempted to determine the history, function, and structure of bureaucracy at various points in time. In addition, it has made an effort to investigate the causes of bureaucracy's success in several states, including Nepal. Additionally, it has made an effort to define the benefits and drawbacks of bureaucracy for all nations worldwide. Different nations may have different bureaucracies in terms of their types and nature. Though some still use caste- or patronage-based bureaucracies, most democratic countries have bureaucracies that are based on merit. For example, the President and Prime Minister of the United States and the United Kingdom, respectively, still appoint officials by patronage.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: In order to translate governmental goals and policies into practical reality, bureaucrats are essential. They facilitate societal transformation by acting as change agents, implementing government policies, supplying crucial information, and acting as clandestine policymakers. Red tape, delays, and corruption are commonplace in Nepali politics and administration. The public's outcry over corruption has not seemed to worry the government much.

Keywords: *Enhance, Streamline, Strengthen, Implement, Facilitate, Bureaucracy, Conflict, Government, Impersonal, Paramedical*

Introduction

Bureaucracy functions as the administrative arm of the executive branch of government, serving as a crucial mechanism for implementing governmental plans and policies nationwide. This system is staffed by paid officials, commonly referred to as bureaucrats, many of whom are classified as civil servants. Their roles encompass critical aspects such as recruitment, promotion, dismissal, grading, and working conditions, all governed by uniform regulations across the national government. These regulations are enforced by central bodies, such as ministries and public service commissions, in Nepal and other countries.

In democratic states, bureaucrats undertake various roles and functions that are essential to the stability and effectiveness of the government. Their performance is vital for the government's success, influencing its efficiency, effectiveness, and overall operation. Bureaucrats are not only responsible for executing government policies but are also considered the permanent apparatus of the state, ensuring the continuity and functioning of government operations.

This system is often criticized as a government led and managed by bureaucrats themselves, rather than elected representatives. Despite this perception, bureaucrats play a crucial role in implementing policies and delivering services at all levels of government. Initially, the term "bureaucracy" was used by French economist Vincent D. Gourney in 1945, who applied it with a critical tone, describing it as a "malady" afflicting France, which he termed "bercaumania" (Bhimdev Bhatta, 2005, *Development Administration*, p. 50). The concept gained wider recognition and a more nuanced understanding through the work of German sociologist Max Weber, who later popularized and refined the term.

Bureaucracy plays a crucial role in public administration by shaping government policies and plans to enhance state governance. It is responsible for providing better opportunities to citizens by managing various administrative affairs. Bureaucrats, who operate at all levels and across all areas of government, execute these administrative functions. Essentially, bureaucracy represents a system where administrative authority is concentrated within government departments or bureaus. The term "bureaucracy" combines "bureau," meaning office or desk, and "-cracy," meaning rule or government, to signify a government managed by paid officials.

However, bureaucracy often exhibits a tendency among bureaucrats to view themselves as the masters rather than servants of the public. This can result in bureaucrats perceiving themselves as the protectors and custodians of the people, where the prosperity and progress of citizens are seen as outcomes of bureaucratic decisions rather than governmental policy.

Addressing the challenges of bureaucracy in Nepal is as intricate as the issues described by Adhikari et al. (2020), who compared the complexities of bureaucratic conditions to environmental and ecological crises. These challenges are further compounded by the observations of Adhikari et al. (2022), which highlight the difficulties in managing governmental systems globally. The issues are exacerbated by the influence of foreign superpowers and a lack of effective management strategies, as analyzed by Adhikari (2020) in relation to the deteriorating global environmental and ecological systems.

Research Questions

The researchers and the critics have discussed about the system of the bureaucracy but they have not explored the challenges and its solution of the proper handling of the bureaucracy in Nepal. So, the research has got the following research questions:

A). What are the existing challenges of the bureaucracy for the proper implication in Nepal?

B). How can have the different forms of the solutions for the right ways of implication of the bureaucracy in Nepal?

The Objectives of the Research

The overriding objectives of the research are to analysis the concept of bureaucracy throughout the world as well as its practice prevalent across the world. This research would be helpful to import theoretical knowledge to the readers. Likewise, it provides apple knowledge to the policy makers too. The specific objectives of the research are:

A). To identify the existing challenges of the bureaucracy for the proper implication in Nepal.

B). To explore the different forms of the solutions for the right ways of implication of the bureaucracy in Nepal.

Methodology

This research has been based on both descriptive and exploratory research design. This research has made an attempt to find out the origin, status and form of bureaucracy at different stage of time. At the same time, it has tried to explore the origin of merit of bureaucracy   in different states in including Nepal. It has also attempted to define the merit and demerit of bureaucracy ever facing by the Nations across the world.

Analysis

The analysis has been carried out on the basis of the different categories of the concept of the bureaucracy and the merits and demerits of it in exploring the goals of the research with various subtopic wise in tracing out the condition of the challenges of the nation due to the bureaucracy and its defects.

Definition

Scholars have provided various perspectives on bureaucracy:

E.N. Gladden has described bureaucracy as "a government of officials," emphasizing the role of officials in the governance process.

Max Weber has defined bureaucracy as "a system of administration characterized by its professionalism, impartiality, and lack of personal involvement," focusing on its formal and detached nature.

Pfiffner has viewed bureaucracy as "a systematic organization of tasks and individuals into a structured pattern designed to achieve collective goals most effectively," highlighting its structured approach to task management.

Laski has critiqued bureaucracy as "a system of governmental control so thoroughly dominated by officials that it endangers the liberties of ordinary citizens," pointing to potential risks to individual freedoms.

The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary has defined it as "a system of official rules and procedures used by a government or organization," reflecting its procedural and regulatory aspects (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 7th ed., p. 1991).

Willoughby has described bureaucracy as "a body of public servants organized in a hierarchical system that operates beyond effective public control," underscoring the separation between the bureaucracy and public oversight.

Bureaucracy

Bureaucracy is a structured system composed of professional officials organized within a hierarchical and scalar framework, operating under impersonal and standardized rules and procedures. It represents a form of government where control is largely vested in officials who may view themselves as the governing authority over the populace. This structure can potentially impede individual liberty and freedom by concentrating power in the hands of these officials, who are responsible for implementing government functions. (Guragain P. et al, 2022).

Characteristics of Bureaucracy (Max Weber's Theories)

The systematic formulation of bureaucratic characteristics was first established by German sociologist Max Weber (1854-1920). His theories and designations laid the foundational framework for understanding bureaucracy. Weber identified and categorized the key characteristics of bureaucracy as follows:

a. The division of labor in the organization-

One of the key features of bureaucracy is its highly developed and scientific approach to the division of labor and specialization of tasks. This involves a clear and precise definition of the duties and responsibilities associated with each position and office. Functions are allocated based on established principles and administrative regulations that determine jurisdictional boundaries. Additionally, bureaucratic organizations are marked by a rational and impersonal approach to managing internal relationships, in contrast to traditional administrative systems where relationships are personal and authority is legitimized by customs and beliefs.

b. Bureaucratic authority structure

Bureaucratic organizations are structured in a hierarchical pyramid, operating under uniform and impersonal rules and regulations that govern relationships between superiors and subordinates. This contrasts with traditional administrative systems where authority is often legitimized through personal beliefs and loyalty is directed towards individuals rather than the position they hold. In bureaucratic systems, adherence to administrative rules is paramount, and loyalty is aligned with the impersonal office or role rather than the person occupying it.

c. The position and role of the individual member

Bureaucratic positions are distinguished by specific features starting with the recruitment process. Bureaucrats are chosen based on formal qualifications that demonstrate the requisite knowledge for performing their specialized roles effectively, rather than on family background or political connections. Once a candidate joins a bureaucratic organization, the role becomes their primary occupation, often pursued as a long-term career. The system generally includes a structured promotion process grounded in seniority and accomplishments. Salaries for bureaucrats are typically determined by the status of their positions rather than their individual performance or productivity**.**

d. The type of rules that regulate the relations between organizational member

A key characteristic of bureaucracy is its reliance on rational rules to structure and regulate the entire organization, aiming for maximum efficiency through technical expertise. Max Weber contends that bureaucratic administration is fundamentally about exercising control based on specialized knowledge, which inherently makes it rational. The core attributes of Weber's ideal bureaucracy are often present in actual bureaucratic organizations, although real-world entities may vary in their level of adherence to these ideal, exhibiting varying degrees of bureaucratic characteristics.

F.M. Marx, one of the prominent scholars, has characterized bureaucracy in four explanations -

i. Bureaucracy as a Specialized Organizational Form: Bureaucracy is a distinct type of organizational structure designed specifically for public administration.

ii. Bureaucracy as a Hindrance to Effective Management: Bureaucracy can be seen as a problematic organizational condition that impedes efficient management.

iii. Bureaucracy in Large-Scale Entities: The concept of bureaucracy, often referred to as 'Big Government,' is prevalent in large organizations such as major corporations, trade unions, political parties, and extensive governmental bodies.

iv. Bureaucracy as a Restriction on Liberty: Bureaucracy is frequently viewed as a negative force that undermines personal freedom, as the liberties of individuals are often curtailed by bureaucratic actions.

Laski also characterizes the features of Bureaucracy as below;

a. Commitment to Routine in Administration: There is a strong adherence to established procedures and routines within the administration.

b. Loss of Flexibility Due to Rules: The strict adherence to rules often comes at the expense of adaptability and flexibility.

c. Procrastination in Decision-Making and Aversion to Innovation: There tends to be delays in making decisions and a reluctance to undertake experimental approaches.

d. System Characterized by Rigidity and Formality: The system is often described as rigid, mechanical, and impersonal, lacking warmth and a human touch.

Type of Bureaucracy

The evolution of bureaucracy varies across different countries. Initially, government positions were frequently assigned based on personal connections or family ties rather than merit or efficiency. Additionally, appointments were sometimes made through patronage. F.M. Marx categorized bureaucracy into four distinct types (Bhatta, pp. 56-57).

i.   The Guardian Bureaucracy

Bureaucrats often view themselves as protectors and stewards of public interest and opinion. They are generally regarded as efficient, competent, incorruptible, and authoritative. For example, the Chinese bureaucracy during the Sung Dynasty around 460 A.D., and the Prussian bureaucracy from 1640 to 1740 A.D., were both seen as exemplars of guardian bureaucracy.

ii.   The caste Bureaucracy

Caste-based bureaucracy is prevalent in oligarchic or aristocratic political systems, where caste affiliation is a primary criterion for entering the bureaucracy. In such systems, only individuals from upper or higher castes are permitted to become civil servants. This practice was observed in colonial India and persists to some extent today. The United Kingdom also has historically utilized a similar system, though it has evolved over time. Although Nepal adopted a merit-based system in 1956, elements of caste-based bureaucracy can still be found in practice there.

The rise of bureaucratization in modern societies and the emergence of totalitarian regimes in both Eastern and Western countries have often led to the perception of bureaucracy as an instrument of political domination. In these contexts, bureaucracy can shift from being a tool of governance to becoming the dominant force itself, transcending traditional capitalist or socialist distinctions. Max Weber viewed the political dominance of bureaucracy as a problematic development, while German sociologist Robert Michels (1876-1936) argued that such domination is an inevitable result of the internal dynamics within bureaucratic systems. Michels focused on this thesis in his analysis of bureaucratic structures (Michels, 1911).The "Iron Law of Oligarchy," proposed by Robert Michels, asserts that as organizations become more complex and bureaucratic, power becomes increasingly centralized at the top among a small elite. This elite governs in a manner akin to a dictatorship. Michels contends that such organizational oligarchy inevitably leads to societal oligarchy. When political parties fail to operate democratically, they tend to evolve into oligarchic regimes, where organizational and social elites, sharing common interests, form a powerful group resistant to any demands for change from the broader public. Once these elites gain control, Michels argues, their primary goal is to solidify and maintain their own power.

iii. The Patronage Bureaucracy

Patronage bureaucracy is characterized primarily by the method of recruitment, where appointments are made based on factors such as family connections or political loyalty. Unlike merit-based systems, where candidates are selected based on qualifications, patronage relies on nepotism and favoritism, akin to the "spoils system" where public positions are

given as rewards for political support. However, patronage systems provide more stability in tenure compared to the spoils system.

In the United States, before the Pendleton Act of 1883, the spoils system was prevalent, but the Pendleton Act marked a shift towards merit-based recruitment. By the mid-19th century, patronage systems were also common in the UK, where government positions were often filled based on personal or family connections rather than competence. Throughout the 19th century, patronage became a significant issue, as political loyalty was prioritized over efficiency. In response, the U.S. implemented the Hatch Act in the 1930s and 1940s to prevent bureaucrats from engaging in political campaigns. More recently, President Bush in 2001 and President Obama in 2008 appointed thousands of patronage positions with each new administration.

In Nepal, despite the restoration of multiparty democracy in 1990, patronage remains a significant issue. Political appointees are often placed in key positions within public corporations and projects, and civil servants are frequently transferred to advantageous positions based on political connections, undermining rational administrative principles.

iv. The merit Bureaucracy

Merit bureaucracy represents one of the most prominent and widespread forms of bureaucracy, where individuals are appointed based on their merit. Recruitment in merit-based systems relies on formal qualifications, such as diplomas and university degrees, which ensure that applicants possess the necessary knowledge and skills for their specialized roles. Once appointed, a bureaucrat's position becomes their primary career, reflecting a commitment to long-term stability and continuity.

The merit system was first introduced in the United States with the Pendleton Act of 1883, followed by the United Kingdom in 1870, and later adopted by Nepal in 1956 with the enactment of the Civil Service Act and the Civil Service Regulation in 1964. These regulations aim to establish a rational and systematic approach to administration.

Bureaucratic recruitment is carried out through two main sources:

a. Internal Recruitment: This involves filling vacancies by promoting or transferring existing civil servants within the organization. This method utilizes surplus employees to fill open positions.

b. External Recruitment: This process involves hiring new candidates from outside the organization based on merit. External recruitment is conducted to bring in fresh talent who meet the required qualifications for bureaucratic positions.

Scope of Bureaucracy

Bureaucrats function as the administrative branch of the executive government. Their roles are carried out by salaried officials, collectively known as the bureaucracy. These officials are governed by standardized regulations that cover various aspects such as salaries, grading, dismissal, retirement, personal benefits, training, and working conditions. These regulations

are implemented and overseen by government agencies to ensure uniformity across the nation.

5.1 Classification of Bureaucracy F.M. Marx further classifies bureaucracy into following categories on Political ground (Krishna Joshi, Public Administration: Modern study, PP-291,292).

a. Depoliticized Bureaucracy: This type of bureaucracy operates without political interference and is governed by established rules. It remains neutral and dedicated to serving the public impartially.

b. Semi-Politicized Bureaucracy: This system resembles the spoil system, where the winning political party appoints bureaucrats based on political loyalty. However, senior officials in this setup retain significant decision-making power.

c. Committed Bureaucracy: In this model, bureaucrats are dedicated to implementing the policies of the ruling party but are also allowed to engage in politics. Political influence extends to recruitment, promotions, and transfers, leading to potential corruption.

d. Fully Politicized Bureaucracy: Here, there is a close intertwining between political parties and bureaucrats. Members of either group can interchange roles, and bureaucrats may run for office. This type of bureaucracy is seen in both party-based and party-less systems.

e. Participatory Bureaucracy: F.R. Riggs introduced the concept of "Balanced Policy," where political parties maintain a balanced relationship with bureaucrats, ensuring their involvement in governance. Key features of participatory bureaucracy include:

  1. Representation

  2. Democratic organization

  3. Public participation in policy-making (public debates)

  4. Civic engagement

The Great Depression in the 1930s expanded the role of bureaucracy, which later faced criticism for undermining democratic values. By the late 1970s, Western countries, including the USA, began emphasizing participatory bureaucracy.

f. Military-Dominated Bureaucracy: This system involves military rulers directing the bureaucracy, as seen during military rule in Pakistan.

g. Ruler-Dominated Bureaucracy: Bureaucrats serve autocrats or dictators and prioritize the ruler's interests over those of the public. This type of bureaucracy was prevalent during the Panchayat era in Nepal, in India, and in Uganda.

h. Ruling Bureaucracy: In this setup, bureaucrats act as rulers themselves, governing on behalf of their colonial overlords. This model was observed in colonial states such as India and the USA.

i. Mack Bureaucracy: Also known as "Fake Bureaucracy," this type involves bureaucrats feigning loyalty to rulers out of fear of punishment while actually obstructing policy implementation and delaying decisions to demonstrate government inefficacy.

Merits of Bureaucracy (Shrestha, 2069 B.S P-229)

a. Advisory Role in Policy Making: Bureaucrats play a key advisory role in the formulation of government policies and decisions. They provide expert opinions and guidance that help shape governmental strategies and actions.

b. Implementation of Legislation: Bureaucrats are responsible for executing the laws and regulations established by the government. Their role involves applying these legislative measures to ensure they are effectively carried out.

c. Development Administration for Societal Transformation: Bureaucrats are tasked with implementing development programs aimed at societal improvement. Their role involves facilitating various initiatives that contribute to societal progress and transformation.

d. Speedy Service Delivery: Bureaucrats are expected to deliver services promptly to the public on behalf of the government. This responsibility emphasizes efficiency and effectiveness in meeting the needs of the populace.

e. Adaptation to Change: Bureaucracy often faces challenges in adapting to change due to its inherent rigidity and adherence to established rules and discipline. Bureaucrats must balance the need for stability with the pressures of evolving circumstances.

f. Hierarchical Structure and Authority: Bureaucratic organizations are characterized by a hierarchical structure where decision-making power is concentrated at the top levels. This power dynamic is more oriented towards maintaining authority rather than focusing on service delivery.

g. Formalities and Unity of Command: Bureaucracy operates based on formal procedures and adheres to the principle of unity of command. It emphasizes strict adherence to rules and regulations, often resulting in inflexibility.

h. Resistance to Change and Adherence to Rules: Bureaucratic systems tend to resist change and show reluctance towards innovation in their operations. Despite this, they remain committed to following established government rules and regulations to ensure efficient service delivery.

Scope of Bureaucracy

In Nepal, the Public Service Commission, the American Office of Personnel Management in the USA, and the Civil Service Commission in the UK are key institutions responsible for the recruitment of bureaucrats. Their roles in this process encompass several key areas, which can be categorized as follows:

    i.   **Recruitment (Appointment)**

One of the most critical elements of bureaucracy is the recruitment process for public administration roles. Bureaucracy involves staffing a wide range of positions across government ministries, departments, corporations, and other agencies nationwide. Appointments should be based on formal qualifications, such as university degrees or diplomas, which demonstrate that applicants possess the necessary expertise for their specialized roles. Once an individual is recruited into the bureaucratic system, it typically offers job stability and continuity, essentially forming a lifelong career.

There are different methods for selecting and recruiting candidates into bureaucratic positions, including the patronage system, the spoils system, and the merit system. Historically, the United States relied heavily on the spoils system but shifted to a merit-based approach with the Pendleton Act of 1883. Nepal adopted the merit system in 1956 but still experiences some level of patronage practices. Recruitment can be sourced from various methods, each influencing the selection process in different ways.

a. Internal Sources:

In an internal recruitment process, bureaucrats are assigned to vacant positions from within the organization itself. This process includes transferring or promoting existing civil servants to fill these roles. Such internal movements are designed to fulfill staffing needs while leveraging the experience and familiarity of current employees with the organization's operations.

b. External Source:

Bureaucrats are recruited from outside of organization from among fresh candidate on merit basis; Candidates have to go through subjective and objective testes (I.Q. Interview to prove their merit.)

c. Promotion:

The methods of recruitment and promotion can vary across different countries, but promotion remains a key feature of bureaucracy. It is highly valued by bureaucrats as it serves as a significant reward for exceptional performance. Promotion involves advancing from one grade or level to a higher rank, which comes with increased pay and responsibilities. It represents a crucial aspect of career development within the bureaucratic system.

Principles of Promotion

Promotion is based on following principles:

Promotion within bureaucracy is typically determined by either seniority or merit. The seniority-based system promotes individuals based on their length of service, with those having more years of experience being prioritized for advancement. Conversely, the merit-based system focuses on the effectiveness and efficiency of performance, where staff members are promoted based on their demonstrated competence and achievements. In this approach, the individual's performance directly influences their eligibility for moving to a higher rank or position.Transfer is a crucial element in civil service management. Staff transfers are typically carried out based on organizational needs. This practice helps prevent

job monotony and employee disengagement by providing staff with new responsibilities and opportunities for growth. However, it can also lead to dissatisfaction and frustration among employees if not managed carefully.

Training:

This method aims to improve and accelerate the working abilities of staff by offering them technical training and skills development. It encompasses several principles, including pre-service training, which is given to new employees to help them integrate and adapt to the organization's environment and culture. This initial training is designed to familiarize them with their roles and responsibilities, thereby facilitating their adjustment to the workplace.

Retirement:

Retirement is a key aspect of bureaucracy, governed by the principle that individuals may become less capable of performing their duties effectively due to age, and thus require rest and relaxation. In many systems, retirement is mandatory at a certain age—such as 50 in Nepal or 65 in European countries—and is accompanied by a pension system to ensure financial security for retired individuals. In addition to retirement, dismissal is another form of separation from service. Dismissal is a disciplinary action taken against employees who engage in misconduct, and it can also occur voluntarily**.**

Limitations of Bureaucracy:

Democracy operates as a system characterized by a mutually beneficial relationship between the government and the people. Similarly, bureaucracy reflects a strong interaction between political leaders, the public, and bureaucrats to achieve set objectives. Bureaucracy is grounded in the personal capacities of individuals, including family connections, official positions, and adherence to laws, rules, and regulations. Bureaucrats are salaried officials who join bureaucratic organizations, dedicate themselves to long-term careers, and develop professionally over time. Their activities must adhere to established regulations that govern the entire bureaucratic system, covering aspects from recruitment through to retirement.

The Modern Theories of Bureaucracy:

The concept of bureaucracy can be understood from both structural and functional perspectives.

From a structural standpoint, bureaucracy is seen as an administrative framework characterized by a hierarchical organization, specialized tasks, and a skilled workforce dedicated to executing government plans and policies. According to Carl Friedrich and Victor Thompson, this structural view emphasizes the hierarchy, division of labor, and the allocation of responsibilities based on official positions.

In contrast, the functional perspective focuses on the operational principles of bureaucracy. It highlights that bureaucracy functions as a subsystem within the broader social system,

addressing the functional aspects and roles it plays within this larger context. Michael Crazer Laski views bureaucracy through this functional lens, noting its association with red tape, rigidity in rules, and a tendency towards mechanical and conservative routines.

Morta Albro categorically classifies the concept and theories of bureaucracy 1into:

a. Bureaucracy as a Rational Organization

Bureaucracy is viewed as a methodically structured entity where operations are guided by rational principles and systematic procedures. This perspective emphasizes that bureaucratic organizations are designed to function with logical efficiency and consistency.

b. Bureaucracy as Rule by Officials

Bureaucracy is characterized by governance conducted by appointed officials. This view highlights that the administration and decision-making processes are managed by a cadre of professionals who hold authority and responsibility in the organization.

c. Bureaucracy as Ruling Administration

Bureaucracy can be seen as a form of administration that exerts control and authority over governance. This interpretation focuses on the role of bureaucracy in administering and enforcing policies and regulations, often wielding significant power within the state.

d. Bureaucracy as an Organization

Bureaucracy is regarded as a structured and formal entity within the administrative framework. This view underscores that bureaucracy operates as an organized body with defined roles, responsibilities, and procedures aimed at achieving administrative goals.

Theories, idea and concept of Max Weber: - Max Weber, the pioneer of modern concept of bureaucracy has characterized the features of bureaucracy as followings:

a. Clear Division of Labor

A well-defined separation of tasks and responsibilities, where each role is assigned specific duties and functions to ensure organized and efficient operations within the organization.

b. Hierarchical Structure with Defined Areas of Responsibility

An organized framework where authority and responsibilities are clearly delineated at various levels, with each tier having distinct roles and limitations within the organizational hierarchy.

c. Consistency in Abstract Rules

Adherence to standardized and uniform regulations that govern procedures and operations, ensuring that rules are applied consistently across all levels of the organization.

d. Clearly Defined Functions of Each Office

Every position within the bureaucracy has explicitly outlined duties and responsibilities, which helps in maintaining clarity and order in the execution of tasks.

e. Higher Degree of Efficiency

A focus on optimizing performance and productivity, achieved through structured processes and specialized roles, resulting in effective and efficient administration.

f. Career Service

A system where employment in the bureaucratic organization is viewed as a long-term profession, offering stability and opportunities for advancement within the career framework.

g. Spirit of Formalistic Impersonality

An approach characterized by a professional and detached demeanor, where interactions and decisions are made based on rules and regulations rather than personal relationships.

h. Appointment on the Basis of Merit

Selection of individuals for positions based on their qualifications, skills, and performance, ensuring that only the most capable candidates are chosen for roles within the organization.

i. Paid Officials (Salary, Pension, Grade)

Bureaucrats receive compensation and benefits according to their positions, including regular salaries, pensions, and structured grading systems that reflect their status and responsibilities.

j. Strict and Systematic Discipline and Code of Conduct

A rigid set of rules and ethical standards that govern behavior and performance, ensuring adherence to established procedures and maintaining order and accountability within the organization.

Contemporary theories of Bureaucracy Many contemporary theories have emerged to define bureaucracy and they are (Toyce 22001. chapter-10):

i. Oligarchic Theories

The growing prevalence of bureaucracy in modern societies and the emergence of totalitarian regimes have frequently led to the view of bureaucracy as an oligarchic system of political control. Instead of serving as a tool for governance, bureaucracy may evolve into a dominant force in its own right.

Robert Michels was among the first theorists to connect the rise in bureaucratization with oligarchic tendencies within contemporary societies. His theory, known as the "Iron Law of Oligarchy," suggests that as organizations become more bureaucratic, power becomes increasingly concentrated at the top. This concentration of power is held by a small group of elites who govern in a dictatorial fashion. According to Michels, these elites are focused on consolidating their power and influence. He argues that organizational oligarchy inevitably leads to a broader societal oligarchy. In democratic institutions such as political parties and trade unions, when these entities fail to function democratically, they tend to develop into oligarchic political regimes. Within these regimes, the organizational elites form a powerful group that resists any demands for change from the general populace. (Michels, 1911)

ii. Bureaucratic collectivism

Theorists argue that bureaucracy represents not just a privileged and oppressive group but also a new exploiting class, embodying a distinct form of oligarchic regime. This type of bureaucracy is neither purely capitalist nor socialist but is a global phenomenon. Italian Marxist Bruno Rizzoli (1940) expanded on this idea, asserting that Soviet bureaucracy constituted a new ruling class that exploited the working class similarly to how capitalists did historically. Unlike traditional capitalism, which is based on individual ownership, this new system involves collective ownership of the means of production. In this structure, the means of production are owned by the state and controlled by bureaucrats who wield significant power. These bureaucrats, including high-ranking officials, directors, and specialists, dominate both the party and state administration, exploiting the working class and appropriating the surplus value of their labor.

Conflict Theories:

Organizations often feature antagonistic groups that seek to advance their own conflicting interests through various strategies. These groups can exert influence over policies based on their power and status. American sociologist Melville Dalton describes how such conflicting interests emerge within organizations, with antagonistic groups vying for greater power and organizational rewards. (Dalton, 1959).

iii.   Dysfunctional aspects of Bureaucracy by Max Weber

Max Weber highlights the significance of division of labor and hierarchical structure within bureaucracy. In contrast, Robert K. Merton focuses on the bureaucratic characteristics that contribute to inefficiency and red tape. Merton argues that bureaucratic organizations, while primarily governed by rational rules, often become inflexible and focus on procedural rules as ends in themselves rather; than as means to an end. This can lead to a phenomenon known as "goal displacement," where the original objectives of the organization are overshadowed by adherence to procedures. The strict rule-based nature of bureaucracy can both enhance and obstruct organizational efficiency; it provides predictability but can also introduce rigidity and hinder adaptability**.**

Role of Bureaucracy and their linkage with Decision Making Process of the government

Advisory Role Bureaucrats perform significant role and maintain flowing linkage with decision maker by strong Implementation:

In order to guarantee that decisions are well-informed and efficient, the bureaucracy offers crucial advice to those in charge of the political executive. It is essential to carrying out plans, regulations, and policies because it converts political directives into practical results. Underpinning the entire structure of government operations, bureaucracy is the central component of the administrative framework. This process is facilitated by bureaucrats, who are highly motivated, technically skilled, and specialized in their fields. The end result is better governance and better outcomes.

Change Agent Development Facilitate

Effective distribution of development efforts across all regions, sectors, and communities is largely dependent on the competence of civil servants, which is why civil servant competency is critical to the success of development initiatives. Bureaucrats were positioned as key players in the development process when the idea of development administration was first introduced in Nepal in the 1970s. Bureaucrats are paid officials who administer policies and plans across the country. They are the government's representatives. Their role in furthering national development goals is crucial, as evidenced by the direct impact their effectiveness has on the success of these initiatives.

The Machinery of the Strengthen System

Bureaucratization within administrative organizations develops gradually as bureaucratic elites gain increasing influence in the political sphere. Governments respond by creating and establishing new departments through legislation, redistributing tasks among these entities. These organizations are structured hierarchically, employing standardized systems such as position classifications and grading to uphold a clear chain of command. Bureaucrats execute their duties across various departments and ministries, following formal reporting structures. Government policies are effectively implemented through ministries, departments, regional offices, and specialized agencies, with the dedicated assistance of bureaucrats who ensure the smooth operation of these frameworks.

Bureaucrats Influence over policy enhance

By advising legislators and other decision-makers, bureaucrats contribute to the formation of public policy in a variety of ways. They can also act as both implementers and policymakers, using their influence to hone and mold the details of public policy. Ministers and policymakers frequently accept their recommendations and view their decisions as legitimate. But sometimes, in a variety of governmental systems around the world, bureaucrats will try to keep policymakers from deviating from their recommendations. This dual role demonstrates how bureaucrats significantly affect both the governance structure and the policy-making process.

Bureaucrats act as a pressure group

Bureaucrats function similarly to pressure groups with specific interests and frequently focus on particular areas of public policy. They may even organize opposition to specific policies. They use a variety of tactics to sway policy, including purposefully postponing the execution of decrees and decisions made by the government. In order to advance their agenda, bureaucrats actively interact with legislators and ministers while arguing for causes that are important to them personally, such as bettering working conditions, elevating their status, obtaining benefits, and guaranteeing the continued existence of their organizations. Motivated by a self-preservation vested interest, high-ranking officials often keep ties with top political figures in order to expand their influence. Policymakers frequently rely on bureaucrats' insights to help develop new policies because of their political engagement, technical proficiency, and expertise.

Political control of the Bureaucracy

Ministers may try to hire their own advisors in an effort to offset the influence of bureaucrats, which could result in a diversity of viewpoints within government agencies. Approximately two thousand experts had been assigned to different government positions by 2000 in order to offer more knowledge and assistance. By being involved in hiring, appointing, promoting, transferring, and dismissing civil servants, the Chief Executive, including the Prime Minister, may also try to influence them. This can occasionally lead to the politicization of the bureaucracy. Furthermore, legislators possess a great deal of skill and knowledge that allows them to impact government operations through union actions such as work stoppages, strikes, and Dharma Bandhs, which further changes the dynamics within the bureaucratic and governmental domains.

Bureaucracy as Ruling Elite

Major policies are frequently shaped and decided by the administrative heads of these bureaucracies when a state primarily relies on its bureaucratic structure; this usually leads to limited and narrow public participation. Government decisions are heavily influenced by permanent bureaucratic staff, who are not directly answerable to voters but play a critical role in decision-making. When bureaucrats are powerful in military or bureaucratic regimes, they frequently perform similar roles to those of the ruling class. Strongly educated bureaucrats with middle-class or upper-class backgrounds can have a significant impact on public policy. For example, because of the elite's dominant role, France is called a "administrative state"; this is also the case in India and Nepal. The experience and knowledge of bureaucrats allow them to exert tremendous pressure on political leaders, making them indispensable to development initiatives. It is possible for elected officials to be ignorant in certain areas, so they must rely on bureaucrats to make well-informed decisions. Therefore, bureaucrat performance plays a major role in the success of government development policies, since efficient bureaucracy is necessary for successful development initiatives.

Criticism of Bureaucracy.

While bureaucracy has significant merits, it also faces considerable criticism. Ram Say Muir, in his book *How Britain is Governed*, argues that although bureaucracy has thrived within democratic systems, it now threatens the very principles that nurtured it (Joshi, PP-302).

Chester Barnard and Herbert Simon have sharply criticized Max Weber's model, favoring instead a more flexible and informal approach to bureaucratic relationships over Weber's rigid hierarchical structure. Robert Morton condemns bureaucracy for fostering inefficiency and excessive red-tapism.

Joseph La Palambara and William Delaney have also voiced criticisms. La Palambara believes that bureaucracy in the U.S. and Europe is less effective compared to other systems, while Delaney prefers classical bureaucracy due to its reliance on established rules and formal structures (Bjatt, 2050 1.5-58).

Further criticism is directed at bureaucracy for its resistance to modern concepts like 'Corporate Culture' and 'office at home'. As the idea of good governance gains traction,

emphasizing transparency, accountability, the rule of law, and public participation, bureaucracy is criticized for its rigidity and failure to adapt to changing environments. Max Weber's vision of bureaucracy as rigid and conservative has led to perceptions of it being outdated and impersonal. Despite these criticisms, bureaucracy remains crucial for implementing government policies and maintaining administrative functions, without which the effectiveness of governance would be severely compromised.

Conclusion

The effectiveness of public administration is largely dependent on the efficiency and integrity of bureaucrats. The success of civilization hinges on effective administration, which in turn relies on a competent bureaucracy. Hence, there is a fundamental interdependence between administration and bureaucracy; they cannot thrive without each other. While governments may change regularly through political processes, a capable bureaucracy ensures that the nation remains continuously governed. The nature and types of bureaucracy can vary across different countries. Most democratic nations adhere to merit-based bureaucratic systems, though some countries still practice forms of caste or patronage-based bureaucracy. For instance, in both the United States and the United Kingdom, the President and Prime Minister, respectively, continue to appoint officials through patronage. Bureaucrats play a crucial role in turning governmental visions and policies into actionable realities. They provide essential information, act as covert policymakers, implement government policies, contribute to development, and act as agents of change, thus facilitating societal transformation.

However, bureaucracy often suffers from issues such as red tape, corruption, delays, rigidity, lack of accountability, and conservatism. These problems can significantly hinder progress and leave citizens underserved, with basic needs unmet. Good governance is essential for effective administration. In Nepal, issues like corruption, delays, and red tape are widespread in both politics and administration. Despite public outcry over corruption, the government has shown little concern. Transparency International has identified Nepal as one of the most corrupt nations. Donor countries and agencies have made good governance a condition for aid. Recently, the Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA), an ombudsman body, has begun to take serious steps to investigate and address corruption across various levels of government. Despite the many flaws in bureaucracy, it is crucial for the government to actively work towards correcting these issues. Bureaucrats themselves must adapt to changing needs, as they are the primary service providers to the public at the local level.

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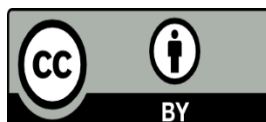Michels R. "*Iran law of oligarchy*"- Political Parties Book-1991

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