

Unit No. 8

**ISSUES IN EDUCATIONAL
ADMINISTRATION**

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8.1 Introduction

The progress of a country is known by the level of management it has reached, and the quality of its national management that determines the magnitude and direction of its socio-economic status and development.

Importance of management which, we may often wonder, is what we are trying to achieve through it. The purpose of all management is to arrive at decisions leading to improve productivity.

Like most developing countries, Pakistan has resource constraints and limited means to satisfy many wants and fulfil diverse needs. To be able to accomplish this, the Pakistan management personnel would have to strive for modern know-how and skills leading to an efficient management administratively effective.

Persons engaged in the administrative process have a responsibility to themselves and to their country to ensure that how while public business is disposed of promptly and efficiently at low cost and with the least inconvenience to the public discussions should be made without fear or favour and based on human understanding and justice.

There are many areas that may be identified to be crucial in which administration creates problems and serve handicaps in the way of efficiency and effectiveness of the administrative system. Even there are no clear cut areas of responsibility demarcated among administrators at different hierarchical level. For example, in educational administration and supervision several organisations are reluctant to share their power and authority with each other. Federal/provincial, district/local administration are not prepared to share a part of their authority. Consequently, planned projects are doomed at the eve of implementation and schemes at operational stage.

In short, there are many such problems and issues which have been pointed out by the experts. Efforts have been made in this unit to highlight the issues particularly in educational administration. Such as:

- a) Centralisation vs decentralisation
- b) Bureaucracy and politics
- c) Bureaucracy and technocracy
- d) Human relation
- e) Educational administrator and pressure group, etc.

8.2 Objectives

After intensive study of this unit, you should be able to:

1. Explain the issues in educational administration.

2. Discuss following issues in educational administration:
 - a) Centralisation vs Decentralisation
 - b) Bureaucracy and politics.
 - c) Bureaucracy and technocracy
 - d) Educational administrator and pressure groups
3. Explain the issue of human relations in educational administration.
4. Evaluate the concept of training and professional growth of educational administrators.

8.3 Centralisation VS Decentralisation

The idea of centralisation appeals to many, because it appears to have, and sometimes may have, possibilities of efficiency and economy which can not be attained through a decentralised system. Those who believe in strict control of education tend to favour centralisation. They want decisions made at the top, handed down and followed by those positions of less importance and, eventually, by teachers in every institution. If decision are sound and defensible, this plan may seem, on the surface, to work very satisfactorily otherwise it leads to an uncertain situation. Therefore, this system needs to be carefully implemented.

Paula Silver, (1983, p-23) describe that "Centralisation refers to the extent to decision making within the organisation is done at the highest administrative level. An organisation in which most decisions must be referred to a very high level official is considered highly centralised, where as one in which the heads of separate units, such as middle management personnel, make many decisions is relatively decentralised".

Paula Silver further explains that "in UK centralised school districts for example, the superintendent and his immediate subordinates make most of the decisions, whereas in relatively decentralised school districts the principals and their assistants make many decisions. Indicators of centralisation would be the proportion of jobs that participate in decision making and the number of areas in which decision are made by employees at each level in the organisational hierarchy".

According to Govt. of Punjab's Report (1995, pp 102-103) "Education in Punjab, like all aspects of education, is very centralised, with top down direction from the D.E.O. Secretariat, not enough delegation, limited local discretion, and little scope for officially approved personal initiative at lower levels or local decision making. That is, authority and discretion rest with those in the headquarters of the organisation, this allowing for a maximum of central control and system wide conformity".

However, such centralisation is in flexibility, it causes unnecessary delay in the decision making process, it is usually remote from the field staff and clients. It increases the work load of the staff responsible at head-quarter which sometimes does not allow to take prompt decisions.

Lunneburg and Ornstein (1991, p. 26) explain centralisation as, "when school administrators retain most of the authority, depending on subordinates to implement decisions only the organisation is practising centralisation".

Decentralisation

Decentralisation may tend to result in confusion and often inefficiency and lack of economy. Under the best conditions, however, appropriate decentralisation may help to stimulate the development of local leadership, initiative, and creativeness.

According to Government of Punjab report (1995) decentralisation aims at retaining some central control; hence unless carefully worked out it can result in anarchy and can lead to widely different practices from decentralised unit to decentralised unit (which may be quite in order if local conditions differ considerably). In contrast it is expected that in a developed system there will be considerable differences between policies and practices in each of the various developed units".

Lunenburg and Ornstein (1991, p. 26) explains 'Decentralisation' as "if administrators in a school district (in UK) tend to delegate considerable authority and responsibility, more decisions are made at lower levels in the organisation. Subordinate in such districts possess considerable influence in the overall operation of the school district. In these cases, the organisation follows an administrative philosophy of decentralisation".

Decentralisation divides the school system into smaller units, but the focus of power and authority remains in a single central administration.

There is usually little controversy over decentralisation as long as jobs are not consolidated or expanded on the basis of racial or ethnic patterns. Even professional educators today see a need to reduce school bureaucracy and to accept decentralisation because it allows the professional and educators to retain power.

Lunenburg and Ornstein, (1991, p-310) conducted a research and summarise their finding supporting the decentralisation for the following reasons:

- a) To enhance school community relations.
- b) To provide greater community input at the local level.
- c) To provide local schools with more field and resource personnel.

- d) To provide efficient maintenance and support for local schools.
- e) To reduce administrative span of control.
- f) To provide greater linkages between local schools and the central school board (in UK).
- g) To redirect spending for local school needs.
- h) To provide greater curriculum continuity from Kindergarten through grade 12.

In short we may now wind up the discussion with the statement that centralisation and decentralisation represent opposite ends of a continuum. Let us study Carl Candoli to fully comprehend the topic.

Carl Candoli (1991)	<i>School Systems Administration, A Strategic Plan for Site Based Management.</i> Technomic Publishing Company, M Inc. pp. 30-34.	8.1
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8.4 Bureaucracy and Politics

Educational system operates in a political context. All major decisions are made by politicians, either nationally or locally and are part of complicated relationship between local and central government. The over-riding power of elected members of parliament and local councillor to decide the allocation of resources, the structure of school system, the procedures relating to the appointment and promotion of teachers, their pay and conditions of service have never been challenged as usually it is part of responsibility of Government. Expenditure on education depends upon the priority given by the politicians to education.

Educational programmes launched in the past could not receive due attention and favour of public representatives, political parties and local leaders. Political parties and public representatives, remained indifferent reason being, they did not take the responsibility of mobilising masses in their constituencies for promoting education. The achievement of favourable long-term results requires an organisational structure from top bottom and among the public as well. But politicians and bureaucrate rarely depend on each other. Bureaucracy separate itself from political institutions due to their lack of commitment and interest in educational sector. Bureaucracy maintains separate budgets and priorities. Bureaucracy plays different roles in various political situation. According to Lucio and McNeil, (1979, p-86) "A bureaucracy can also protect those teachers who are legitimately serving their function as representatives of the community by offering experiences and ideas of higher quality than are commonly available and by aiding students in the formation of concepts with which to interpret events around them critically. Without this protection, the community might lack the self-criticism necessary

for survival. As a matter of fact, however, the school is never an independent social system”.

But, today the term bureaucracy has a negative connotation. We tend to associate bureaucracy with rigidity, meaningless rules, red tape, paper work, and inefficiency. In fact there is almost no evil that has not, at some point been attributed to bureaucracy.

This is a fact that politics and education has positive co-relationship. If socio-cultural forces influence the education, then ideological pressures determine the direction of the influence.

Paula (1983) quotes Tapper and Setter, (1978 p-83) the most significant linking of class, education and politics is found in that literature which describes context within which behaviour is acquired as ideologically biased”.

Weber (1947) has evolved the concept of bureaucracy as an ideal form of organisation structure. He further mentioned ideal bureaucracy possesses the following characteristics (*ibid* 1983).

- a) *Division of Labour:*
Divide all task into highly specialised jobs, give each job holder the authority necessary to perform these duties.
- b) *Rules:*
Perform each task according to a consistent system of abstract rules. This practice helped ensure that task performance is uniform.
- c) *Hierarchy of Authority:*
Arrange all positions according to the principle of hierarchy. Each lower office is under the control of a higher one, and there is a clear chain of command from the top of the organisation to the bottom.
- d) *Impersonality:*
Maintain an impersonal attitude towards subordinates. This social distance between managers and subordinates helps ensure that rational considerations are the basis for decision making rather than favouritism or prejudices.
- e) *Competence:*
Base employment on qualifications and give promotions based on job related performance. As a corollary, protect employees from arbitrary dismissal, which should result in a high level of loyalty.

Silver (1983, p. 73) has also discussed, this issue and states that "Bureaucracy to some, the word itself evokes a rush of unpleasant images: long lines of waiting at clerk's desks, forms in quadruplicate with copies to every conceivable bureau; pity functionaries, callous and indifferent, citing rules from the company manual. Is there not a better way to administrate a massive enterprise"?

He further says that "each characteristic of the bureaucracy enhances the rationality and efficiency of the organisation. For example, a hierarchy of offices ensures that decisions effecting the organisations operations are made by those in the best position to weigh all the relevant factors, and that once a decision is made it can be enforced by directives throughout the organisation. Rules and regulations ensure that personnel are available to perform the required tasks as needed and that no one engages in behaviours that will endanger the equipment or other personnel or that will impede the performance of goal-related tasks".

Silver analysed the functional aspects of bureaucratic characteristics in the below referred pages.

Silver Paula. F (1983)	"Educational Administration" Theoretical Perspectives on Practice and Research, New York, Harper and row, Publishers. pp 87-91.	8.2
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8.5 Bureaucracy and Technocracy

Bureaucracy and technocracy both are the government organisations. The environment of both is typically stable, and the goal is to achieve internal efficiency.

Technocracy as professional bureaucracy has the operating core as its key part, uses standardisation of skills as its prime co-ordinating mechanism, and employees vertical and horizontal decentralisation. The organisation is relatively formalised but decentralised to provide autonomy to professionals, Highly trained professionals provide non routine services to clients. Top management is small; there are few middle managers; and the techno structure is generally small. The goals of technocracies are to innovate and provide high quality services.

Existing in complex but stable environments, they are generally moderate to large in size.

8.6 Educational Administrator and Pressure Groups

Administrator as problem solving, initiates the new structure or procedure for accomplishing an organisation's goals and objectives. An administrator is responsible for utilising existing structure of education of the Federal Government to achieve goals and objectives of education. So, he is also called the academic leader.

When we talk of pressure group it is generally in a derogatory sense, although there is no reason why it should necessarily be so. As a matter of fact they can play a positive role as well as a negative one. For one thing they can contribute in exposing all the facts of a problem and placing some concrete alternative before the decision maker. Decision maker is not a computer or an automatic machine. Machine has got no sentiments, no greed, fear, sympathy and anticipation etc. while human decision maker has all of these.

Pressure groups can have three objectives which are:

- a) To help the decision maker in taking a correct decision.
- b) To hold the decision maker from taking a bad decision.
- c) To cause withdrawal of bad decisions.

The pressure groups also play negative role and when doing so, their objectives are just converse of what are positive objectives.

Pressure groups are groups of human beings identifiable by their like - mindedness and community of interests and their desire to act effectively in modulating the affairs of the society or organisations to which they belong.

Zulkaif Ahmad discusses following pressure group in Plan Implementation and Management M.A. EPM course Code 503, Block 2 (pp 116-117) as under:

1. *Pressure groups within the institutions*

They are far more important than outside groups. They are strong enough where unity of workers obstruct the course of smooth decision making. Often they have outside links and without taking them into consideration no decision can be effective.

2. *Associations and unions*

The employees and workers of a department are allowed to form their associations and unions. The objective of these associations is generally to protect the rights of the workers and assure them a fair deal. Their interests do not necessarily coincide. Often there is a friction between the leaders and

the decision makers. In such conditions the unions are unduely prone to exercising pressure in favour of individuals rather than national goals.

3. *Politicians*

As the representatives of the people the politicians deserve due respect. However it is not an uncommon sight to see them visiting administrators for recommending or opposing a teacher, whom they hardly know. When facts are candidly explained to them their vehemence does not subside and they show no readiness to understand the rules, regulations and difficulties of a decision maker and they insist upon their immediate demand. In very few cases, however it must be stated that where administrators are slack or inattentive, they have saved some persons from injustice and red tapism and nepotism. On the national level the politics plays a vital role in decision making. Often in the presence of vested interests of a strong political groups many national schemes are either reshaped, curtailed and amended or abolished to suit their purposes and personal benefits.

4. *Press*

Press is the voice of the people. The press owned by powerful groups whether commercial, business or political can have a strong influence on decision making. In societies where press is free and is supported to reflect the feelings of the masses, the impact is really spectacular. In less free societies, the decision making authorities and the press work side by side even hand in hand. In such a milieu the press is expected to pave the way for a decision that has already been decided to be taken and afterwards pursue the task of justifying the decision before public.

Haider (1976, p. 5) has stated that "whether ideologically inspired or driven by a selfish motive force, whether appearing as a subtle current of opinion or in the form of moblstenia the pressure groups constitute a force to be reckoned in the process of decision making".

He further described "today it is hard to imagine any system of decision making in which the element of pressure groups would be wholly excluded. On the other hand it would be true to say that ever since man learned to make decisions, he has not made one without some kind of pressure operating upon him. This is quite understandable. After all decisions are not made in vacuum; they are made for human being by human beings in a social background with a view to regulate human. If a postoral society becomes more complex, human awareness improves and the man gets more deeply inter-wined with the social events around him the pressure groups then not only get multiplied but also get individually more powerful".

8.7 Human Relations

A school administrator/supervisor has contact with public in many ways. He works with many people individually and in informal and formal groups, both within and without the school system.

The supervisor/administrator in his or her work with his staff, and with community organisations, needs to understand how and why people behave so that or he may be in a better position to predict and, perhaps, control their behaviour.

According to Miser, Schneider and Keith (1966 p. 16), "The quality of staff relationships depends a great deal upon the administrator; his actions often speak louder than his work. The manner in which the administrator relates to other will demonstrate whether or not he has a sincere belief in the worth of the individual".

He further says that "one of the greatest services the supervisor/administrator can offer is the encouragement of his staff members, to be, spontaneously, themselves, so that relationships which are mutually satisfying and productive may be developed between the individual member".

But, however the extent mode and the nature of human relations of educational administrator with the staff, community and the students has always been a subject of interest and debate. Some of the administrator prefer to be more formal in their official relationship and do not cross a certain limit in that directions.

The more democratic, professional forward looking educational administrator make use of all sought of human relations formal, informal and non-formal with the view to eventually achieve the ultimate goal.

Anyhow, for further details of topics, please read the below referred material.

Gupta H.D. (1992)	<i>Educational Administration</i> , New Delhi, Oxfor and IBH Publishing Company Pvt. Ltd. PP. 163-166.	8.3
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8.8 Training and Professional Growth of Educational Administration

Man has always been in search of the right and competent way of doing things. He needs a few rudimentary skills to meet his professional requirements. He generally acquires a sufficient standard of efficiency in the field which he involves.

Expansion and development in the field of educational administration took place at a very slow speed for the last three decades. There arose need for training and professional growth of educational administration.

Competency, Competency Pattern and components of competency pattern are the main factors which helps an administrator in his professional growth.

Pattern means anything designed to serve as a model or guide.

Competency is a desired quality of job performance, and pattern is a model conduct or behaviour.

The competency pattern is a behaviour pattern designed to reflect the best in intelligent action. It has three characteristics. These includes:

- a) *Comprehensiveness*: It describes all the essential elements, philosophical, psychological, social etc. that influence one's behaviour, the task to be performed as well as the skills, understandings and attitudes needed for competent performance.
- b) *Consistency*: There must be basic unity and cohesion among all the elements in the pattern; it must also show the ability to function successfully in a variety of areas of human action.
- c) *Workability*: It must identify important competence elements, give direction to a programme of training, help in producing competent individuals.

The competency pattern is composed of three elements, i.e. theory, critical tasks and know-how.

Theory is a coherent group of general propositions that account for known factors phenomena.

A task is definite piece of work assigned to a person. As such "Critical tasks" of administrator are those pieces of work which an administrator must perform in order to accomplish his goals.

The 'know-how' is the knowledge of how to do something. It also includes understanding, skills and attitudes. The know-how of administrator is the personal equipment which an administrator brings to the job.

Professional development programmes for practising are often intended to foster changes in the administrator's attitudes/behaviour.

Silver (1983, p. 35) has identified three theoretical frame works based on administrator behaviour/organisational outcomes relationship. These are:

- i) the leader's behaviour patterns as the cause of situational factors that "cause" performance;
- ii) factors such as subordinates' dependencies and leader's capacities that moderate the relationships between leader behaviour and subordinate satisfaction and performance; and
- iii) the impact of leader's behaviour patterns on subordinates' work motivation.

Sharma (1994, p. 31) says that "leadership has traditionally occupied an important place in the preparation programmes of school administrators, but in the last three decades. It has become a major focus of attention. Co-ordinated with the new interest in leadership has been the study of organisations and organisational behaviour. The school administrator is no longer merely the caretaker manager of a public enterprise. The pressures and problems of his job demand that increased attention be given to his role of executive and less to his role as expediter".

However, to study in details about the topic, please read the below referred material.

Sharma B.M. (1994)	"School Administration" New Delhi, Commonwealth Publishers. pp. 215-223.	8.4
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For further details please study the below referred material.

Silver Paula (1983)	"Educational Administration" Theoretical Perspectives on Practice and Research; London, Harper and Row Publishers. p. 135.	8.5
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8.9 Activities

1. Discuss issues in educational administration, with professor of education and your tutor and then list these issues according to their priority.
2. Please discuss with the Headmaster of a secondary school and enlist the main points of centralisation vs decentralisation.
3. After discussing with the Education Officer, list the main characteristics of the following:
 - a) Bureaucracy and politics
 - b) Bureaucracy and technocracy
 - c) Educational administrator and pressure groups
4. Please consult any Educational Advisor dealing with education sector and then discuss human relations in the field of education. Write down the main points of the discussion.
5. Discuss with District Education Officer regarding various steps of training and professional growth of educational administration and enlist the main points.

8.10 Exercise

1. Discuss the main issues in educational administration.
2. Distinguish between centralisation and decentralisation.
3. Describe the effective role played by bureaucracy and politics in education.
4. What useful role technocracy can play for educational administration and supervision.
5. Explain the role of educational administrator and pressure group.
6. Discuss the main issues of human relation in educational administration.
7. What steps would you like to suggest to strengthen the present system of education by improving training and professional growth of educational administration.

8.11 Bibliography

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