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Genesis of bureaucratic power and its prospects of decline in India: A case study of Jammu and Kashmir

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Bureaucratic power is a fact of life in the present political and administrative processes throughout the world. It is inherent in all administrative systems and so is the case in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, India. Bureaucracy in J&K emerged as an offshoot of the British Colonial rule in India. The rule ended but the legacy still persists. Over-bureaucracy in the system led to the undue increase in the bureaucratic power. This excessive power became unacceptable to the common masses in J&K. The situation got aggravated due to the increasing inaccessibility of this bureaucracy and its recognition as elitism. The public in J&K, being vulnerable economically, socially and psychologically due to the past political turmoil of two decades and undue discrimination at the hands of the central government, portrayed a feeling and attitude of awe, fear, and disgust towards the rising bureaucratic structure. The bureaucracy in J&K needs to desist from rampantly using its power, which draws its vitality from the resources allocated to it. At the same time, it needs to make a judicious use of these resources. The present paper depicts the rise of bureaucratic power in J&K, with its inherent pitfalls, if used indiscriminately. This paper also portrays the probability of its decline in case the reins are taken over by the citizenry as a result of an administrative revolution.

Key words: Legal-rational authority, elitism, accountability, bureaucracy, bureaucratization, politicization, inaccessibility, popular control, sunshine laws, ombudsman, magic shield, performance indicators, government service, public service.

INTRODUCTION

The rise and expansion of public bureaucracies the world over have generated a great deal of hostility and awe amongst the public, for whom the services of the bureaucrats originated in the first place. The same stands true for the state of Jammu and Kashmir, an area in the northern-most part of India. The emergence and growth of bureaucracy could be attributed to the complex socio-economic and political needs and conditions that arose around the world. Bureaucracy did not exist in its basic practical form in the earlier periods, but gained prominence in the nineteenth century as a concept and an institutional format, for the accomplishment of large-scale multiple and complex tasks. The emergence of the

concept of efficiency in relation to time, resources and productivity demands efficient machinery for their effective co-ordination. Today, bureaucracy is the major institution and social technique for handling and controlling the affairs of modern nations [Kumar, 1985].

When India gained independence in 1947, Jammu and Kashmir was being ruled by *Maharajas* (kings). The emergence of a political leader at that time awakened the masses of J&K towards a new era of political enlighten-ment. But this visionary movement was short lived and the people were once again left in the lurch, as accession to India became inevitable. As the dynamic leadership of J&K, which had lately emerged, became coloured with

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certain motivating factors, the masses of J&K could resist no more. Newly exposed to the political movements and uprisings, the people lost their direction. With the complete accession of J&K to India, the reins were taken over by the Government of India. This started the era of political instability there. The government in J&K started with the non-local bureaucracy, whose impersonal attitude and apathy towards the locals aggravated the situation. The bureaucracy that arose in J&K was simply an extension of the British Colonial Administrative System. Thus, the bureaucracy came to be seen as a threat to democracy, and people's rights and dignity in J&K.

Bureaucratic power is the most fundamental ingredient present in the political and administrative processes. The power bases are mostly inherent in the nature of the bureaucracy itself. All bureaucracies share certain legal, material and strategic organizational resources. The legal system provides a basis for bureaucracy's existence and specifies its powers, subscribing a legal authority to it. Materially, bureaucracies have access to all the monetary and infrastructural resources. The strategic-organizational resources constitute the expertise, knowledge and specialization of the bureaucrats. They are the monopolistic providers of services and the public is largely dependent on them. They are also permanent actors and enjoy the power of continuity. Ultimately, the policies have to be executed by the bureaucrats.

In most of the countries of the world, there exists a politico-administrative relationship, characterized by more complex patterns of interaction and interdependence. It portrays a two-way street model phenomenon. On the one hand, there is "politicization of the bureaucracy"- the policy makers have increasingly come to realize that the public administration is a source of tremendous executive powers and capabilities which require strong political control to ensure that they serve the objectives formulated by the policy makers. On the other hand, there is "bureaucratization of politics" - the civil service has become politically more assertive, more engaged in creating networks and linkages to other organizations and more inclined to use its discretion to pursue its own interests and ideals due to its higher degree of continuity and specialized expertise [Pierre, 1995].

Max Weber, bureaucracy's most important academic expositor, gave the following statements in 'Economy and Society' about bureaucracy:

As an instrument of rationally organizing authority relations, bureaucracy was and is a power instrument of the first order, for one who controls the bureaucratic apparatus. Where administration has been completely bureaucratized, the resulting system of domination is practically indestructible [Talcott, 1968].

In view of the growing indispensability of the state bureaucracy and its corresponding increase in power

how can there be any guarantee that any powers will remain, which can check and effectively control the tremendous influence of this stratum [Malcolm, 1994].

Ultimately, political issues become bureaucratic issues because bureaucrats have action [Larry, 1992]. Policies have to be executed by the bureaucrats finally. Besides, politics is endowed with the characteristic feature of being all pervasive and thus it pervades into the bureaucratic system all too smoothly.

The increasing bureaucratic influence can be perceived both positively and negatively. While the positive impact of the bureaucratic power may be felt on wider platforms, where it acts as a check against the increasing politicization in the society, the negative impact is rampantly felt by the public. The creation of excessive power in the bureaucratic structure has led to fear and indignation among the citizenry and widened the gulf between the public and bureaucracy in J&K.

The then existing government made policies for J&K, which were not people-friendly, thus sowing the seeds of rebellion among the Kashmiri youths. The situation aggravated in the later decades and finally exploded in the form of militancy in the 1980s. Administration in J&K almost became defunct for more than two decades. The common masses became demotivated and demoralised. The administrative bureaucracy was associated with the remnants of the colonial rule and thus people started perceiving bureaucracy with hatred and disgust. They distanced themselves from the government. Thus, alienation of the common masses from them started and further gave rise to many vices in the whole administrative setup. People completely lost faith in the bureaucracy, as most of the bureaucrats had been selected through unfair means, were not people-friendly and depicted an unproductive elitist class.

Even the most democratically conceived government behaved as if its own survival, rather than the people's welfare, is the paramount good. This happens because the government's ordinary day to day operations depend on entrenched "public servants" – the bureaucrats – who are always most concerned about protecting and expanding their own power [Richard, 1976]. They come think of government as a kind of a private institution that exists for their sake and this makes them deeply committed to preserving the system, which they have come to believe of as "their system". Thus, they want nothing to threaten the system because that would threaten their self interests.

Analytical approach

The study is a sociological investigation based on the primary source information from the field. It is a "mixed-method research" as it includes both qualitative as well as quantitative elements. It is a qualitative study, as throughout an effort has been made to understand

human behaviour and the reasons that govern such behaviour in the society. On the other hand, it is a quantitative study, because there was a systematic empirical investigation, in which data were collected for analysis. The study is also "analytical" as the facts and information collected through the primary and secondary sources are used to analyze and make a critical evaluation of the whole material. A thorough analysis is done of the problems faced by the bureaucracy in J&K and the prospects of this institution in J&K in the future.

J&K state bureaucracy presently consists of a total of 580 male and female officers from the rural and urban areas of the state as well as other parts of the country. These officers belong to three different bureaucratic levels: senior, middle and junior, with the corresponding income categories and experience spans. The J&K bureaucracy is the focus or universe of the research and thus includes all the bureaucratic personnel belonging to both the divisions of the state: Jammu and Kashmir, and all the cadres and fields of administration.

The "Stratified Random Sampling" technique has been used for selecting the sample for the study. In this technique, the population, J&K bureaucrats, has been stratified into a number of non-overlapping sub-populations or strata, and sample items/units have been selected from each stratum. These items /units have been selected on the basis of simple random sampling procedure. Thus, 100 bureaucrats have been selected from the universe as a sample. They comprise 17.24% of the present J&K bureaucracy (total 580), which is the desired sample strength. The entry-level bureaucrats are completely excluded from the sample as they are devoid of the potential bureaucratic experience.

The "Interview Schedule Technique" has been used for the primary collection of information. A questionnaire was framed with the questions on the relevant themes and the data collected from the sample in the form of an interview, based on the questionnaire. The methods of observation and discussions were used to support the analytical results. The data and information gathered from the field were statistically treated and sociologically investigated.

Theoretical perspectives on bureaucratic power

The phenomenon of bureaucratic power is a complex process. Max Weber defined "power" as the ability to get things done your way in spite of resistance from others. Weber also discussed the concept of "authority" (power which is regarded as being proper, appropriate, legitimate etc. by subordinates or others). According to Weber, there are three kinds of authority: traditional authority, charismatic authority and legal-rational authority. *Traditional authority* refers to authority based on customs and traditions. *Charismatic authority* refers to authority which arises because a person is perceived as being one

who possesses extraordinary qualities by one's followers. *Legal-rational authority* arises from the position one holds in a bureaucracy or organization. High government officials and top managers in private companies exert legal-rationality because of the position they hold within the organization. It needs to be pointed out that these three kinds of authority can overlap [Malcolm, 1994].

Weber's view is that power does not arise from control of economic resources alone. Groups which do not possess much wealth can also be powerful. Weber's view of power is zero sum, that is, the exercise of power often benefits one group at the expense of another group. While recognizing bureaucracy as the most efficient form of organization and even indispensable for the modern state, Weber also saw it as a threat to individual freedom. He also saw the ongoing bureaucratization leading to dehumanization in which increasing rationalization of human life traps individuals in a bureaucratic, rule-based, rational control.

Parsons described bureaucratic power in his own terms. He emphasized social stratification system with highly specialized division of labour. According to him, it inevitably leads to inequality in terms of power and prestige [ibid]. Parsons associates social status in the society directly with power, while ignoring all other desirables for the same. Besides, he defines social inequality as inevitable for the social existence, which is quite irrelevant in the present scenario. Team work is given more impetus for effective cooperation and results, in the contemporary times, rather than exercise of power due to unequal status in the society.

According to Parsons (1947) and Gouldner (1954), authority due to the "legal incumbency of office" and "technical competence" only works if superiors have more knowledge and skill, but often this is not the case. Parsons draws attention to the possible conflict which might arise between a bureaucrat's authority derived from his position in the hierarchy and that derived from technical expertise. If these do not match and are nonexistent in the same person, it gives rise to an internal conflict between the boss and subordinates [Talcott, 1960].

Selznick identifies the dysfunctional consequences of bureaucracy. Most of the dysfunctions with regard to treatment of procedures and rules lead to delay, red-tapism, unresponsiveness, self-centeredness, corruption, avoidance of personal responsibility and quest for power [Philip, 1957]. This transition in the bureaucracy for the worse has resulted in the lack of public confidence and trust in the machinery of administration. This is further manifested through disgust and cynicism in the institution of bureaucracy.

More recent theorists think that formalization of power could degenerate into formalism and that bureaucratic forms could concentrate power at the top, thus causing an "iron cage" to imprison the low-level worker in obscurity and monotonous detail.
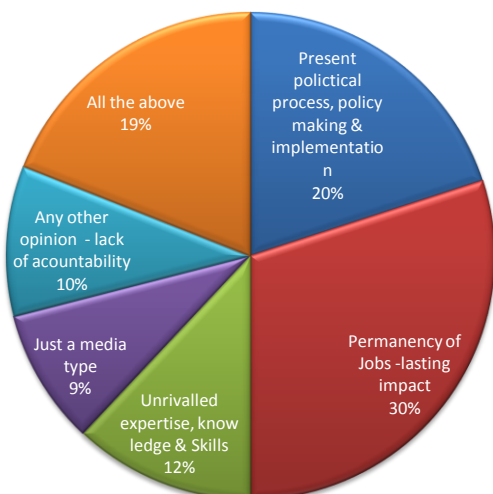
Figure 1. Excessive powers of a bureaucrat.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the study carried out on J&K bureaucracy, certain primary data were collected regarding the excessive powers attributed to bureaucracy, main factors responsible for it, the control system in bureaucracy, the resulting alienation and inaccessibility of bureaucracy, and the associated reasons for it. The findings have been depicted as a source of information to authenticate the perceptions.

Excessive powers of a bureaucrat

It has been observed that bureaucracy has been conferred with too much power, whether that is based upon law or convention. This excessive power can be attributed to various factors, according to the respondents, portrayed in Figure 1.

About 20/100 (20.00%) of the respondents stated that the power that the bureaucrats have over the present political process, that is, policy making and policy implementation, was responsible for their excessive power and authority. Most of these respondents were the retired bureaucrats. Their experience of more than 25 years had made them realize the influence politicians had over the crucial aspects of governance. According to them, this was mainly due to the strong nexus between the bureaucracy and the politics.

30/100 (30.00%) of the respondents attributed this excessive power to the permanency of jobs in the public governance. These were the junior level bureaucrats, who attributed bureaucratic power to job permanency. They actually belonged to the contemporary world of competition and uncertainty. In spite of this, they had entered a public sector domain of complete permanency and assurance. This assured service span created a

lasting impact. Respondents believed that the permanency of their jobs made the bureaucrats behave like autocrats, who could get away with anything.

12/100 (12.00%) of the bureaucrats were of the opinion that unrivalled expertise, knowledge and skills gave them a feeling of elation. This happened due to the utter lack of competition in the public services and assured timely promotions. The respondents believed that this led to excessive bureaucratic power in the administration. These were the highly qualified junior and middle level bureaucrats. They believed that none could compete with the administrative expertise, knowledge, and skill of a bureaucrat. Being highly qualified, it added to their confidence and power.

9/100 (09.00%) of the respondents waived it off as just media hype. They believed that the reality was far from this and there existed certain constraints over the power that the bureaucrats could actually exert. These were the senior level bureaucrats, who were very apprehensive of being labeled as the excessive power holders. They seemed to be uncomfortable with the idea of excessive power as that insinuated towards a lot of associated evils in administration.

10/100 (10.00%) of the respondents held the lack of accountability responsible for the excessive bureaucratic power. These were the non-state subject bureaucrats, as they were strong proponents of accountability and transparency due to their exposure to the tenets of good governance. They believed that if bureaucrats were not answerable for anything, they could excise undue authority whenever desired.

The remaining 19/100 (19.00%) of the respondents felt that all the given options were equally suitable and all of them put together led to an increase in the bureaucratic power. Most of these respondents were female belonging to the junior or middle level bureaucracy. They attributed the excessive bureaucratic power to almost everything associated with bureaucracy.

Control system in bureaucracy

Control over the bureaucracy can be established formally as well as informally. An official's conscience is one of the ways of informal control. Formal control is exercised through strict adherence to rules, law and accountability systems.

22/100 (22.00%) of respondents stated that necessarily a strict formal control was needed in bureaucracy all the time. This helps to keep the bureaucracy performance oriented and result-oriented. These were the retired bureaucrats and junior-level bureaucrats. The retired ones had no inhibitions in suggesting a strict formal control system over the bureaucracy as they were now out of the formal bureaucratic system. The junior bureaucrats were very enthusiastic and wanted no stone unturned for the better public governance. These respondents believed that to ensure complete consumer
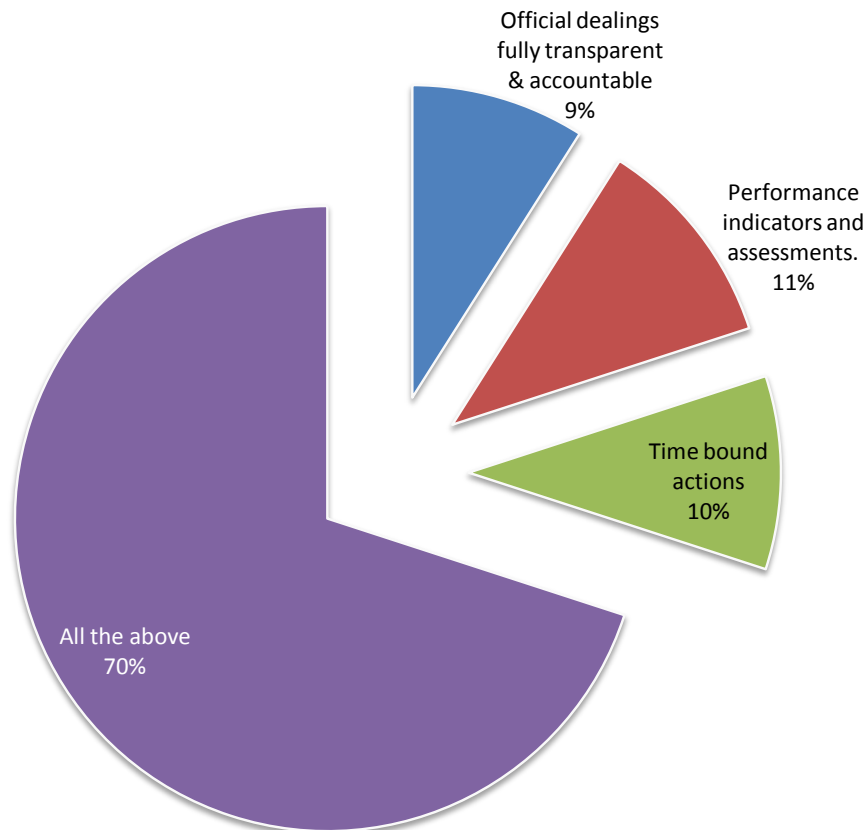
Figure 2. Ways to control public bureaucracy and its associated power.

satisfaction, nothing needed to be left to chance. Hence, a strict formal control system was the need of the hour.

56/100 (56.00%) of the respondents opined that at times bureaucrats should rely on the official's conscience too. These bureaucrats believed that by adhering to informal control systems, officials learn to take up personal responsibilities as trust has been reposed in them and they try their best to keep up to it. In any case, an official's conscience is the ultimate deciding factor in administrative matters. These respondents were the senior level bureaucrats and female bureaucrats from all levels of bureaucracy. Females seemed to be more conscientious than their male counterparts. Therefore, they presumed that a person's conscience acts as the best controlling mechanism. The senior bureaucrats throughout their lifelong experiences had learnt that all said and done, it was ultimately an administrator's conscience that became instrumental for positive results – rules and laws could fail you anytime. They also seemed to have become more God-fearing and religious, towards the fag end of their lives.

Another 22/100 (22.00%) of the respondents were of the view that both formal control systems and healthy conscience should coexist in carrying out the daily administration. Most of these respondents were the

middle level bureaucrats. They preferred to take the middle course and believed that both could simultaneously fetch results. These respondents believed that both were equally important and could not do without each other. Rules and accountability mechanisms were important but at the same time, these would not work too well if not complimented by the conscience.

Ways to control public bureaucracy and its associated power

There is a need to control the bureaucratic power lest it becomes out of bounds. The respondents of this research were asked about the ways of controlling the bureaucracy in a democracy so that it serves the people to the utmost level. All the findings are portrayed in Figure 2.

9/100 (09.00%) of the bureaucrats stated that public bureaucracy could be best controlled by making all the official dealings fully transparent and accountable. These respondents were the junior level bureaucrats having doctorate or master's degree as their qualification. Their enthusiasm at that stage of their career was the reason behind their perception. They also realized that without

transparency and accountability in the official dealings, they could not survive for long. These bureaucrats believed that making all the official work known to the public and open to criticism would eventually help in exercising control over the bureaucracy. This would keep them open for questioning by anybody.

None of the bureaucrats believed that proper practice of "Right to Information Act" by itself could be a way of controlling the public bureaucracy. They believed that much more than just an RTI Act would help in bringing about the needed control over the bureaucracy.

Only 11/100 (11.00%) of the bureaucrats perceived that setting up of performance indicators and assessing their performance would help in controlling the administration. This would automatically ensure that a bureaucrat is not a defaulter as he needs to work against set criteria, which make up the performance indicators. Assessing a bureaucrat's performance against these indicators would eventually lead to an efficient and effective performance, bringing the whole bureaucratic system under control. These respondents were the middle level non-state subject bureaucrats. Some of these belonged to the female gender. Being non-state subjects, they had wider exposures to the latest performance assessment techniques. And being middle level bureaucrats, they had gained the professional confidence and also were already performing well unlike their seniors, who had reached higher positions and thus were thinking of taking sabbaticals.

10/100 (10.00%) of the respondents opined that time bound actions in all dealings would help in controlling the public bureaucracy. They were the senior level, non-state subject bureaucrats. Most of them were females. It has normally been observed that the state subject bureaucrats show poor time management. In fact, females have been perceived to have better time management skills than their male counterparts. It is also very convenient for the senior level bureaucrats to demand time bound actions as they are there to show case the results achieved through the efforts of the sub-ordinates.

The majority of bureaucrats 70/100 (70.00%) stated that all the above mentioned ways put together would be able to bring about a control over the public bureaucracy in the most endurable manner. These were the junior and middle level bureaucrats besides the retired seniors. They were not confident about the efficiency of a single controlling mechanism. Therefore, they opted for all the given mechanisms including proper implementation of RTI Act.

Alienation and inaccessibility from state administration

The public needs to be constantly interacting with the public administrators and kept abreast regarding all the administrative happenings. Otherwise, the feeling of

alienation and inaccessibility created between the two can lead to disastrous results. One of the many initiatives taken to increase the bureaucratic accessibility is in the concept of 'Burgernahe' (closeness to citizens) in Germany. It has become the short hand expression for reducing the geographical, political and administrative distance between the citizens and the authorities [Pierre, 1995]. In the developing countries, there is a consistent effort towards reducing the tensions between the public and the bureaucracy. For this purpose, efforts need to be made for higher bureaucratic autonomy, which shall eventually lead to better service delivery, and hence better relations between the two.

75/100 (75.00%) of the bureaucrats stated that the public did feel alienated from the administration. Most of these were the junior level bureaucrats, with some from the middle level. All the retired bureaucrats were included in this group besides some of the females. Thus, a majority opined that a common man was alienated from the administration. This group of bureaucrats was empathizing with the public and putting forth their perspective objectively.

25/100 (25.00%) of the respondents believed that the common man did not feel alienated from the administration at all. This section of respondents mainly belonged to the service delivery level and hence the perception. They had their own rationale behind the response they gave. These were the senior and middle level, rural bureaucrats. They seemed to be hoodwinking the reality. Public being the most alienated from the senior bureaucrats, ironically this fact was least realized by them.

Inaccessibility of bureaucracy

One of the main preconditions for learning of the administrative techniques and processes by the bureaucrats is the complete consistent interaction between the public and the bureaucracy. Besides, acting as stimuli for the administrative behaviour, the public also provides the base for the feedback mechanism which entails better and improved bureaucratic performance in future. After independence, bureaucrats were gradually viewed as strangers and usurpers. The bureaucracy was accused of apathy to the public cause and unresponsive to the public problems and thus seen as a repulsive entity. Even today, the bureaucracy seems to have isolated itself from the common man and thus is unable to cope with the socio-economic changes and the ever rising aspirations of the people, in the developing nations.

The reasons behind the inaccessibility of the bureaucracy for the common man were asked from 75/100 (75.00%) of the respondents who had opined for the same. They had their own rationale, which is revealed in Table 1.

4/75 (05.33%) of the respondents, who believed that bureaucracy was inaccessible, stated that the reasons behind this were the feelings of awe that the common

Table 1. Reasons for inaccessibility of the bureaucracy.

Reasons	Number	Percent
a) Feelings of awe against status attributed to bureaucracy	4	05.33
b) Unapproachable attitude	23	30.66
c) High security surrounding the bureaucrats	14	18.66
d) Lack of humanism & human relations in administration	18	24.00
e) All the above	16	21.33
Total	**75**	**99.98**

people felt due to the high status attributed to bureaucracy. The power and aura surrounding the bureaucrats had given rise to elitism, attributing an unduly high status to this section of the society.

23/75 (30.66%) of the respondents attributed the inaccessibility of bureaucracy to the unapproachable attitude of bureaucrats. These bureaucrats start thinking very highly of themselves and develop an autocratic attitude. These respondents were the junior level bureaucrats of rural origin. They had yet to develop the idiosyncrasies of true bureaucrats and, therefore, felt no inhibition in revealing that a bureaucrat usually exhibits an unapproachable attitude.

14/75 (18.66%) respondents hold the high security surrounding the bureaucrats and security zones that they reside in responsible for their inaccessibility. The precedence of very high security surrounding the officers started during the period of militancy and has continued ever since. This automatically keeps the public at a distance from the bureaucrats. These respondents included junior level bureaucrats of urban origin and some non-state subjects of middle level bureaucracy. Being urban, high security systems had always been irksome. At the same time, non-state subjects were not used to or in favor of those high security scenarios around. The high security surrounding the bureaucrats was exclusively a feature of the J&K State due to the history of past turmoil. This precedence, suiting most of the senior and middle level bureaucrats, was not being given up, even after its need was over.

Lack of humanism and human relations in administration is quoted by 18/75 (24.00%) of the respondents as the reason behind this inaccessibility. The bureaucrats cannot empathize with the public, and show less concern and compassion when required. This creates a distance between the two. Most of these respondents were female bureaucrats. They seemed to have a natural tendency towards humanism and believed in empathizing to the maximum with the public.

The remaining 16/75 (21.33%) of the respondents opted for all the above stated reasons behind the inaccessibility of bureaucracy. They found all the given options equally suitable as the rationale behind their perception. These were the retired senior level bureaucrats besides some female ones. All options seemed equally feasible to them.

Ideally, bureaucracy requires neutrality, but in reality, it is rarely so. Sticking to neutrality would help to break the much talked about bureaucratic-political nexus, leading to a non-partisan bureaucracy. But the fact is that only most efficient bureaucracies can have the privilege of being neutral. J&K bureaucracy, being inefficient to a great extent, cannot afford to be completely neutral. At the same time, too much power has become an inherent part of bureaucracy, which indirectly tends to make it more inefficient. To top it all, lack of accountability and control renders it as a defunct part of the system. The excessive bureaucratic power can mostly be attributed to the permanency of jobs and power that they have over the political process, policy making and its implementation. This implies the misuse of power, at times. Actually, it happens quite often and the common man suffers. Thus, the bureaucratic power needs to be kept in check by efficient control mechanisms. All formal and informal control systems need to be kept in place. But these control mechanisms seem to be too weak in J&K. There seems to be little choice but to rely mostly on the informal control systems like the conscience or empathetic attitude of the bureaucrat. This renders the control mechanism weak, unstable and unreliable.

The recruitment pattern in the government is not fool proof at all. The locals are not given a place in the system for long periods or at lucrative postings, which has led to the alienation of the masses from the government business. Besides the creation of bottlenecks for the people of J&K in joining the administrative services, the menace of reservation policy has emerged. The policy of reservation leaves very little scope for the meritorious Kashmiris to enter the administrative services. This alienates the common masses from the administrative services even further.

Finally, all the factors put together create the vices of nepotism and corruption in Kashmir. All the lucrative positions are filled with people motivated by selfish gains. Thus corruption flourishes. Due to nepotism, all the efficient and honest officers are side-lined with no value for merit and talent.

There needs to be a control on the bureaucracy so that it serves the public in the best possible manner. The bureaucratic power has to be held in check through various formal and informal control systems. The best ways of controlling the bureaucracy were found to be the

setting up of performance indicators to assess the performance of the bureaucrats, aiming at time bound actions, making the official dealings fully transparent and accountable, and proper implementation of the RTI Act, and other laws.

It was found that the best control system that could be adopted in bureaucracy was the internal individual control system, i.e., reliance on the conscience of an officer. Although a strict formal control system was also needed to keep the bureaucratic power under check, ultimately everything trickled down to an individuals' conscience. The formal control system constitutes the internal controls (inside the bureaucracy) and external controls (surrounding environment and organisations).

All public servants need to create a sense of 'self-responsibility' that makes them morally obligated, even if they may not be legally or officially obliged. Therefore, selecting the right kind of personnel for the bureaucracy at the outset is very imperative as their value-system would naturally be inclined towards public interest.

Nomenclature transition of bureaucracy

The nomenclature transition from the 'government servant' to the 'public servant' actually signifies a transition in a bureaucrat's duties and responsibilities. The junior and middle level bureaucrats from the rural origin signified their conservative attitude by stating this. This also pointed out towards their sensitive nature. A lot of bureaucrats have readily accepted the transition of nomenclature, and consequently realised their changed duties and responsibilities. To some extent it also signifies that public is more important and significant than the government. Ultimately, the transition in the nomenclature enhances the importance of the public. It implies that the government is subservient to the public. The transition, therefore, needs to be adhered to very strictly so that it brings home the right message. This transition has been, to a great extent, instrumental in changing and improving the mindsets of the bureaucrats and making them realise that they are there to serve the public.

Bureaucracy involves a lot of power attributed to the permanency of jobs, which creates a lasting impact. It is also attributed to the power over the present political process, policy making and implementation. Excessive power associated with bureaucracy is due to a combination of other factors like unrivalled expertise, knowledge and skills that the bureaucrats have, and also the lack of accountability they face, besides the above given factors. The permanency of jobs is a real power yielder as it provides a kind of security to the official, which helps develop an autocratic mind-set.

On the other hand, it does not seem that an unrivalled expertise, knowledge or skill can be attributed to bureaucrats. They are simply generalists that do not possess any of the characteristics of a technocrat or professional.

They do not even seem to have much power over the present political process, policy making and implementation, as there is too much of politicization of bureaucracy seen these days and the political executive seems to possess greater power (due or undue) than a bureaucrat. It could, quite possibly, be just media hype or a false image created in the society by some interest groups. Bureaucracy needs to demolish the high walls of elitism and acts as part of the public by shunning the unnecessary extra security surrounding them and the false aura created by them.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Bureaucrats in J&K have come to be seen as the authority figures and, at the same time, belonging to the most elite class. Associating bureaucracy with elitism is mainly responsible for the dysfunctional characteristics being developed by J&K bureaucracy. Normally, a common man is made to wait for long hours before he can meet a civil servant. Then finally when he gets the chance, he is made to feel like an intruder in the domain of the official, by his attitude of snobbery and indifference. It has been seen that the prerequisite for any drastic or dramatic improvement in the quality of the performance of the bureaucracy, is a greater degree of assertiveness of the public opinion and the greater awareness on the part of the general public.

Although bureaucracy plays a constructive role too by providing consistency, accountability, order and stability, at the same time, due to excessive bureaucracy, its constructive role gets undermined most of the times. Bureaucracy is a phenomenon through which the bureaucrats abuse the power that they enjoy due to their position in the administration. This makes the bureaucracy dysfunctional and stifles the role of the administration. Due to its excessive powers, bureaucracy tries to over-power and over-tower the society eventually, thus hampering the developmental processes. A genuine and efficient leadership over bureaucracy would really help.

Control mechanisms need to be created internally as well as externally. It needs to be realized that no control mechanism can function successfully on its own. All mechanisms have to work simultaneously in coordination with each other so that the power and authority of bureaucracy is contained, and beneficial results are assured for the public. The legislature, judiciary, and media should act as control agents or watch dogs of the bureaucratic action. But, this is only possible when these agents are themselves corruption-free and righteous. At the same time, a mechanism of 'popular control' is very much needed. The results of the bureaucratic processes need to be valued by the public so that the bureaucratic power is legitimized. An effort needs to be made to keep all the sessions of legislature and bureaucracy open to the public. This can be done under the provisions of

'sunshine laws', where the passage of such laws lets in the 'light of day'. When decisions are made in open meetings, it automatically implements a control mechanism over the bureaucracy. Increase of the citizen participation would act as an important control mechanism. The public would themselves determine the administrative orientation and strategy, and see to its effective implementation. Creating an 'ombudsman' in every office would make the administration accountable. Being neutral by nature, an ombudsman would be responsible for taking and addressing the complaints of the citizens. As an internal informal control mechanism, the officials, in their own individual capacity, need to create a sense of responsibility and accountability for all their actions. This is expected from the conscientious officers. All these things put together would keep the bureaucracy under control, and check the misuse of their power and authority.

The most important power base of bureaucracy—the law and the constitution—creates a 'magic shield' for the bureaucrats, which empowers and protects them. But, as has started to happen in J&K, if they stray away from the legal commands and start misusing their power, this 'magic shield' disappears. This makes them more accountable and responsible.

The transition in the nomenclature of bureaucracy from "Government Service" to "Public Service" has been, to a great extent, instrumental in changing and improving the mindsets of the bureaucrats and making them realise that they are there to serve the public.

There has to be a trend towards 'popular control' which is no doubt very difficult to achieve. It has two interpretations. First is the ability of the people to make its preferences known to the bureaucracy and to have the bureaucracy make decisions consistent with those expressed preferences. Second is the ability of the citizens to obtain redress of grievances for certain administrative actions that violate the rights of individuals.

Fortunately, with the use of information technology and the spread of mass education and mass media, the role and functioning of bureaucrats and public servants is coming under effective public scrutiny. People are getting more exposed to the merits and attitudes and actions of the bureaucrats. Bureaucracy needs to show empathy towards the problems of the citizens and reduce the menace of red tapism.

In order to increase the points of contact between bureaucracy and the public, the concept of "seamless governments" has come into existence[11]. Seamless organizations provide a smooth, transparent, almost effortless experience for their customers. The staff stays in direct contact with their end users while performing their job. Seamless governments provide the seam less service i.e. any time, any place, through e-governance technology, using sophisticated software. This provides the administrators with too many new and imaginative ways to do the public's business. Thus, efforts are consistently on for increasing the bureaucratic accessibility the world over.

The public bureaucrats cannot undermine their duties, especially when it comes to the utilization of different resources allocated to them, including their time. Their power recedes if they are unable to utilize all these judiciously. Here, they may have to face certain vulnerabilities, which render their tasks difficult or unattainable. It may undeniably lead to an eventual end of the bureaucratic power or death of bureaucracy. It is, therefore, pertinent that all efforts are made to keep the bureaucracy under check. The replacement of the bureaucratic institution by an alternate institution, which is people-friendly, result- oriented, accessible, dynamic, and humanistic, may not be a far-fetched possibility. Bureaucracy with its power-packed structure may not persist for long. Hence, a complete transformation is required.

It was found that the best control system that could be adopted in bureaucracy was the reliance on the conscience of an officer. Although a strict formal control system was also needed, to keep the bureaucratic power under check, ultimately everything trickled down to an individuals' conscience, at the end. The formal control system constitutes the internal controls (inside the bureaucracy) and the external controls (external to the bureaucracy- the surrounding environment and organisations).

But the most important control system is the internal individual control system i.e. the conscience of an individual. Every public servant needs to create a sense of 'self responsibility' which makes him morally obligated, even if he may not be legally or officially obligated. Therefore, selecting the right kind of personnel for the bureaucracy at the outset, is very imperative, as their value-system would naturally be inclined towards public interest.

In order to persist and retain its powers, bureaucracy in J&K needs to adopt major changes and improvements, vis-à-vis its attitude, functioning patterns, exercise of powers and goal orientation. A sense of belongingness and responsibility towards the public is going to pave the way for better public administration and hence, enhance the institution of bureaucracy.

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