**THE CONCEPTS OF ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT AND THEORY**

**The Concept of Administration**

The word ―administer, derived from the Latin words adminis-trare, means to care for or to look after people to manage affairs. Administration is a universal process permeating all collective efforts, be it public or private, civil or military, large scale or otherwise. It is a cooperative efforts directed towards the realization of a consciously laid down objective. To Professor Dwight Waldo, 1956, Administration is organization and management of human and material resources to achieve a stated objective. If the objective is public oriented, then it is public administration, and if the objective is private oriented, then it is private administration. Specifically, if the set objective is profit maximization, then it is business administration. Thus Administration is the umbrella covering organization and management. Organization is the structure, the skeleton, the anatomy of administration while management is the process, the flesh and the physiology of administration. Hence Administration = Organization + Management. None of them in isolation can form administration without the other. Despite the above given definition out of many others, Administration is one of the most controversial concepts because it has no universal definition. In common parlance the word administration‘ appears to bear at least four different meaning according to the context in which it is used:

First, administration is a synonym of the word cabinet‘ or some such other body of persons in supreme charge of affair as, for example, when we say that the first Nehru administration included the leaders of all the major political parties in India.

Second, the name of a branch of learning or intellectual discipline, e.g., when we say that public administration is one of the social sciences.

Third, the sum-total of the activities undertaken to implement public policy or policies, or to produce some service or goods as, for example, when we speak of the Nigerian administration, railway administration, educational administration, etc.

Fourth, the art of management, e.g., when we say that so and so has no capacity or aptitude for administration‘. The four meanings differ from one another so widely that it is difficult to combine them into a single definition of administration.

**Characteristics of Administration**

There are four basic characteristics of administration which include; coordination, search for better ways, functions, and control.

(1). **Co-ordination, Not Specialization**: The first essential for administration is the recognition of the fact that it is something more than expertness and superiority in a specialized area. An administrator need not be a better specialist in each area than those he directs; in fact, the really wise administrator seeks to surround himself with specialists, each of whom may be superior to himself in his assigned area of responsibility. However, some administrators fear this policy; they think their power of direction depends on being able to "show up" each subordinate occasionally. Consequently, such an administrator attracts and retains inferior subordinates; his methods get rid of those who can do anything that the administrator thinks important better than he can. He finds himself busy most of the time doing the tough jobs for his subordinates. Of course, that makes him feel important and keeps others catering to him. But it kills administrators before their time (at least chronologically); it fails to prepare subordinates to take over; and it limits the expansion of the organization's services because the administrator believes that he must be able to give personal attention to all administrative emergencies. The modern administrator does nothing he can get others to do. His major job is coordination of capable specialists, some of whom are potentially able to take over his job. His usefulness is not measured by his indispensability or by the seriousness of what would happen if he should step out of the picture, but rather by the outstanding capacity of his subordinates and the smoothness of their operations. Today it is recognized that the basic qualifications for administration are separate from, they are different from, and they are over and above experience and abilities in specialized areas.

**(2). The Search for Better Ways**: A second requirement is the tendency to continuously look for improvements. The president of a large corporation states that this is the "first and most important responsibility of administration." It is one of the most difficult characteristics to find in older persons, particularly those who have assumed that their positions are held by virtue of superiority in one or more specialized fields. All they expect of their subordinates is that they should "do about as well." That is why some older persons of long experience are supplanted by younger persons who believe that even the good performance of the past can be improved, not necessarily through their own superior knowledge and experience, but through the process of constantly challenging "old ways," and combining the critical thinking of the best obtainable associates in looking for better ways.

**(3). Functions:** A third characteristic of this new type administrator is that he thinks in terms of functions rather than in terms of specific operations, and specific methods, which should be the responsibilities of subordinates. The successful administrator thinks fundamentally in terms of:

i) Objectives and goals

ii) Planning of work (services), resources and facilities

iii) Guiding policies

iv) Principles of sound organization structure and relationships

v) Selection, assignment, and development of key personnel

vi) Wholesome human relations and morale

vii) Executive direction largely through consultative management (democratic administration)

viii) Co-ordination

ix) Controls as represented by reports, audits, appraisals, and remedial actions rather than by repressive measures

x) Public relations.

A good way for an administrator to test whether he is doing his job or his associates' jobs is to keep a careful record for a month of what he actually does. Not more than one-third of his time should be spent on checking up on regular operations-assigned to others and that third should be spent mainly in coordination and control -not in actually making the decisions or doing the work of his employees. A second third may be required to do those things which no subordinate is supposed to do, such as maintaining relationship which cannot be deputized-with the board of directors and representatives of the public or with professional groups. The final third of his time should be available for thinking, looking ahead, revising objectives and goals, mailing new over-all plans, and mailing improvements -preferably in personnel and policies, seldom in specific methods of operation. "It's nice work if you can get it," says the practical-minded administrator whose work day is overcrowded with the necessity of making decisions for hesitant subordinates and checking up to see that they have done what they should and in the way they should. Such an administrator is likely to say, "Democracy is fine, but I can't get people to accept responsibility and to make decisions.

**(4) Control:** A fourth characteristic of the administrator is the way he exercises control. Too often the word "control" means "prevention" or "restriction" by a person who has authority and power over others. The old "boss" in industry had considerable control and the authoritarian type of administrator in nonprofit institutions has copied many of the control attitudes and methods of the economic organizations. Today, however, the concept of control is undergoing radical changes. There is space here merely to mention, not to develop, the fact that authoritarian restrictive control is giving way in industry and even in the military organizations to the more effective influences of leadership. At the same time, the concept of control is moving from the negative basis of restriction and prevention to the more positive concept of "knowing what is going on, as compared to plans and standards, in time to take remedial action where needed to prevent unsatisfactory results." Control then is: first, being informed of progress; second, interpretation of trends and prediction of results; and, third, knowing where, when, and how to initiate remedial action in time. The new administrator exercises this kind of control with a minimum of restriction and he does it quite differently than did the old authoritarian.

**The Concept of Management**

Different meanings have been attributed to the word "Management". Some people see it as referring to a group of people. They think of a management team or a group of individuals in an organization. Management is also seen as a process demanding the performance of a specific function. Here management is a profession. To a student and others, management is an academic discipline. In this instance, people study the art of managing or management science. Management can be defined as "getting things done through others." It can be more scientifically defined as the co-ordination of all the resources of an organization through the process of planning, organizing, directing, and controlling in order to attain organizational objectives. Management is the guidance or direction of people towards organizational goals or objectives. It can also be seen as the supervising, controlling and coordinating of activity to attain optimum results with organizational resources. Management is a comprehensive activity, involving the combination and co-ordination of human, physical and financial resources, in a way which produce a commodity or a service which is both wanted and can be offered at a price which will be paid, while making the working environment for those involved agreeable and acceptable.

**CONCEPT OF THEORY**

**Definition of Theory**

A theory, according to Reuben, is a statement of assumed causal relationship between two or more variables. It is the substitution of variables of a model for real life corresponding and explaining the relationships. (A model is a system or objects that stand in place of another usually more complicated or systematic object). The Advanced Learners Dictionary of current English defines a theory as explanation of the general principles of an art or science (contrasted with practice) or reasoned supposition put forward to explain facts or events or simply defined as an idea (not necessarily based on reasoning) Examples of theories are:

1. Darwin‘s theory of evolution – (explaining events)

2. Wearing hats makes men bald (an idea)

3. The theories of motion and gravity (explaining principles)

The theory of administration has been developing for years and still is far from complete. Inputs come from diverse fields psychology, sociology, anthropology, economics, political science and mathematics and from the practice experience of managers. Therefore management and organization theory is initially eclectics; it draws from many sources and is gradually evolving into a cohesive and defined field of its own. A theory is the end result of a search for generalization and is a plausible or scientifically acceptable general principle offered to explain phenomena. So a theory explains and/or predicts, the more precise a theory is and the broader its scope, the better the theory.

Hence a theory is coherent statement or set of ideas that explains observed facts or phenomena, or which sets out the laws and principles of something known or observed. A theory attempts to explain why. It consists of a set of definitions stating clearly what we mean by various terms, and a set of assumptions about the way in which the world behaves. The next step is to follow a process of logical deduction to discover what is implied by these assumptions. These implications are the predictions of our theory which can be tested by the process of observation and statistical analysis of the data. If the theory passes the test no consequent action is made necessary. If the theory is refuted by the fact, it is either amended in the light of newly acquired facts or is discarded in favour of a superior competing theory. For example, in economics we seek by the use of theory to explain, understand and predict phenomena in the real world, and our theory must therefore be related to, and tested by empirical observation of the world around us.

**Theory Construct**

The various steps required to construct a theory which are detailed below.

**(1)Selecting the Problem**

The first step in the formulation of a theory is the selection of the problem which must be stated clearly and correctly. The problem to be explored may be very wide like poverty, unemployment, inflation, etc., or it may be narrow relating to an industry. The narrower the problem, the better it would be for a researcher to conduct his enquiry satisfactorily. It is desirable that investigators should concentrate upon narrow problems – narrow in area or period or aspect of a problem – and the scope for further intensive rather than extensive work should be an important criterion for selecting a problem.

**2. Collection of Data**

The second step is to collect data or facts pertaining to the problem to be explored. If the problem is simple, the data can be easily collected. However, complicated problems may require many months or even years to collect the necessary data. Sometimes, facts‘ can be known only after careful observation.

**3. Classification of Data**

After collection, the data are enumerated, classified and analyzed. Classification is a way of knowing things. It is the grouping of data or facts according to their resemblances and differences, and to note comparisons and contrasts. For instance, if the problem is to study the trend in population growth, the census data may be collected and classified by sex, age groups, literacy, marital status, occupational distribution etc. Thus enumeration, classification and analysis of data are crucial to scientific theory.

**4. Formulation of Hypothesis**

The next step is to formulate hypothesis about the phenomena to be analyzed. A hypothesis is a suggested answer to a problem by the aid of which we endeavour to explain facts by discovering their orderliness. The hypothesis arises from the observed facts, experience or previous knowledge of the researcher.At this stage, simplifying assumptions may be introduced so that a particular hypothesis may be developed fully. It is these special assumptions which become formulated consciously as a hypothesis. For example, the assumption that producers aim at maximizing their profits is a plausible hypothesis on which the theory of business behavior can be constructed.

**5. Testing of Hypothesis**

The next step is the testing of the hypothesis formulated. The hypothesis formulated should be such that deductions can be drawn from it and a decision reached as to whether it explains the facts considered or not. The hypothesis should be tested by well established techniques of logic and statistics which may then be subjected to confirmation. Further, the hypothesis should provide the answer to the problem which led to the enquiry. This requires prediction. Prediction may refer to past, present or future events so long as it is not known previous to or at the time of prediction. A hypothesis is said to be verified, and not proved, through the successful prediction it makes. Of the various hypothesis formulated that hypothesis should be referred which can predict what will happen, and from which we can infer what has already happened, even if we did not know what has happened when the hypothesis was formulated. A successfully tested hypothesis is a theory.

**6. Verification of Theory**

The tested hypothesis or theory should be verified. If, it turns out to be true, the theory is said to be confirmed or verified. The process of verification may be carried out by observation or by checking the consistency of the theory with related facts that are believe to be true. If a theory is proved to be wrong, it stands rejected. But it is a gross error to suppose that a theory which is rejected is useless. Rather, a wrong theory may direct our attention to unsuspected facts or new facts and lead to the amendment of the theory.

**Characteristics of Theories**

The characteristics of theories are as follows:

1. Theories interrelate concepts in such a way as to create a different way of looking at a particular phenomenon.

2. Theories are logical in nature.

3. Theories are generalizable**.**

4. Theories are the bases for hypotheses that can be tested.

5. Theories increase the general body of knowledge within the discipline through the research implemented to validate them.

6. Theories are used by the practitioners to guide and improve their practice.

7. Theories are consistent with other validated theories, laws, and principles but will leave open unanswered questions that need to be investigated.

**Importance of Theories**

The important of theories are as follows:

1. Theories provide concepts to name what we observe and to explain relationships between concepts. Theories allow us to explain what we see and to figure out how to bring about change. Theories are tools that enable us to identify a problem and to plan a means for altering the situation.

2. Theories are to justify reimbursement to get funding and support -need to explain what is being done and demonstrate that it works -theory and research.

3. Theories are to enhance the growth of the professional area to identify a body of knowledge with theories from both within and without the area of distance learning. That body of knowledge grows with theory and research. Theory guides research.

4. Theories also help us understand what we don‘t know and, therefore, they are the only guide to research. Relating to theory, it increases its ability to solve other problems in different times and different places (Moore, 1991).

**Development of Theories**

Theory is constantly revised as new knowledge is discovered through research. Three stages of theory development are as follows:

1. Speculative Theory attempts to explain what is happening.

2. Descriptive Theory gathers descriptive data to describe what is really happening.

3. Constructive It revises old theories and develops new ones based on continuing research.

**Scientific Research as a Base for Theory**

**T**o regard any study as complete research, we must be able to find in it several definite factors. The first of these is a problem to be solved. The second is evidence, consisting usually of provable facts and occasionally of expert opinion. The third is a careful analysis and classification of the evidence by means of which the evidence is arranged in a logical pattern and tested with regard to its application to the problem. The fourth is the use of reason and logic to arrange the evidence into argument or factual supporters leading to a solution to the problem. The fifth is a definite solution, and answer to the question which the scholar’s problem poses.

**What is research?**

Ordinarily research means seeking for knowledge; hence it is described as a process of discovery. The Advanced Learner’s Dictionary defines research as “an investigation undertaken in order to discover new fact and get additional information”. This definition seems to have limitation. In the first place it has not mentioned how the facts or additional information is gathered. Secondly, it raises the question of “what next after the additional information?

In the Encyclopedia of Social Sciences, research has been defined as “the manipulation of things – concept or symbol - for the purposes of generalization and to expand correct or verified knowledge whether that knowledge is in the construction of a theory or in the practice of an art.”

Research can be described as a process of discovery. It must follow certain rules of conducting investigations. It is generally based on scientific enquiry where available facts are closely examined or investigated”. Nachmias (2007) also consider research as “a process of finding out a solution to a problem. The action word is finding out or put in other words the searching for something. It is not a purposeless action but action aimed at contributing to or constituting the solution of a real problem.

Research is the process of systematic inquiry by which we increase our knowledge of how things are, why things are the way they are, and how they might be changed. It is an ordered and logical study of a subject or problem aimed at learning new facts and testing existing propositions. Research is the operational application of the scientific method to discover reliable knowledge. (UNESCO, 2002).

We can summarize by saying that a research is a useful inquiry or examination to discover new information or relation and expand or verify an existing knowledge. It involves a systematic and objective process of gathering, recording , and analyzing data in order to arrive at a conclusion on either the causes or consequences of a problem, the state of being or behaviour of an object ,situation or of a given phenomena.

**Methods of Seeking for Knowledge.**

***Method of Tenacity***

This involves knowing or believing that something has always been done that way, or it has always been the truth perhaps due to frequent repetition or occurrence of the truth or out of experience. An example is the weather, annual rainfall, spring summer, autumn and winter which have been occurring during specified months of the year.

***Method of Authority***

Here, the knowledge is gotten from a well recognized or established authority, say the Holy Qur’an or the Bible or a statement from a professor who is a recognized authority in a certain field of learning, or a statement of exact state of affairs from a person of political or administrative authority. Other examples are statements made by Heads of State or Presidents, Ministers, Governors, Heads of Service, Secretary to the Government etc.

***Method of Intuition or a-Priory Method***

In this case, facts are accepted on the assumption that they are agreeable to reason or “self evidence” the fact in this case are believed upon and accepted without verification. Examples are customary and traditional practices and laws inherited from grandparents or copied from a well-respected community leader.

***The scientific method***

This is a knowledge got through a systematic and refined use of specialized tool and procedure to provide a more adequate solution to a problem. Here something is not to be believed until it is investigated by the use of refined tools and procedures. Even the solution got is not taken to the final. So scientific research is a systematic, controlled and empirical investigation of hypothetical conclusion about the presumed relationship of natural phenomena.

Obviously academic research refers to the scientific research and not that of tenacity, authority, etc., although method of authority is always used as a reliable source of information under scientific research.

**Types of research (Scientific Research)**

**Fact Finding/ Exploratory Research**:

This consists of a research for facts without any attempt to generalize or use these fact to solve a problem. e.g. investigation of theft in an office or theft of PHCN installations.

**Critical Interpretation /Descriptive Research**

This makes use of largely the method of logical reasoning to arrive at the solution of problems, and is applied usually when ideas rather than facts are to be dealt with. e.g. finding and stating out the nature of a problem in an organization.

**Complete Research /Causal Research**

This aims at solving problem and stating generalization after a thorough search for the relevant fact, an analysis and logical classification of all the evidence found, and the development of a reasonable pattern of support for the conclusion reached.

Anything other than one of these three types of research, while not necessarily wasted effort in terms of scholarship, is nevertheless no research.

**Research Process**

The steps in research process are highly interrelated and each step leads to the next. The stages in research process often overlap. Disappointment encountered at one stage may mean returning to previous stages, or even starting over.

The process of research, often follow a generalized pattern of stages:

(1) The first of these is *a* ***problem* to be solved**. This is the problem definition stage.

(2) The second is ***evidence***, consisting usually of provable facts and occasionally of expert opinion

* This stage involves planning of the research design,
* selection of a sample,
* data collection

(3) The third is a **careful analysis and classification of the evidence**, by means of which the evidence is arranged in a logical pattern and tested with regard to its application to the problem.

(4) The fourth is **the use of reason and logic to arrange the evidence into argument** or factual supporters leading to a solution to the problem.

(5) The fifth is a **definite** solution, and answer to the question which the scholar’s problem poses.

i. This is the stage of drawing of conclusion and preparing of final report,

ii. The report is in form of thesis, dissertation, research project, committee research reports etc