

1. Woodrow Wilson's essay was criticized to be haphazard. But the critics failed to observe the thin line of continuity that was hidden behind. Discuss.

15 marks (250 words)

Approach

The question asks to explain how various administrationists criticized Woodrow Wilson's essay for its inconsistency, ambivalence, and lack of continuity. Later, the second part of the question demands to weave a thread of consistency and continuity in-order to prove the critics wrong. In other words, we have to defend Woodrow Wilson in the second part.

From Paper2

We can bring in good examples and case studies from the second paper. By this you convey the examiner that your knowledge of public administration does work in silos; rather it is flexible and compatible in nature.

Introduction

Beginning from Dwight Waldo to Richard Stillman various administrative thinkers criticized the essay "The Study of Administration" for several reasons. They were of the opinion that the essay of Woodrow Wilson was just a careless attempt. Because the content of his essay deviated from its very title and also various concepts had been scattered haphazardly without any consistency or continuity.

Body

The essay was said to be haphazard for the following reasons;

Firstly, Waldo stated that the essay was about public administration, but in the whole essay, Woodrow Wilson spoke about dichotomy.

Secondly, there was a lot of ambivalence in the essay. It takes contrasting stands about the same concepts in different places. Wilson speaks of separating administration from the hurry and strife of politics, but he also states that politics is the basic principle of administration and it can't be separated from it.

Thirdly, R.Stillman alleges that in one place Wilson suggests the public administration to be scrutinized by the public. While in the other place he rejects the public opinion saying it as a clumsy nuisance.

Fourth, Wilson wanted the administration to be "unbusinesslike"; he also expected it to be an organic life. However, in some other place, he had said "the field of administration is the field of business".

Lastly, Wilson has used several concepts Viz, businesslike, merit system, responsibility fixation, etc. These words appear randomly in his essay without proper flow. This entire thing, Stillman says, just exasperates the reader.

However, the thread of continuity is visible if the essay is observed and studied from various angles and perspectives;

- Wilson wants just the basic principles of politics to be attached to the administration, not the day to day politics. Hence, the question of ambivalence doesn't arise here.
- When he says the public scrutiny to be a nuisance, it doesn't mean he was completely against the scrutiny of administration. In fact, the very intent of his to bring in dichotomy was, to create a means of check and balance between politics and administration. Ex: Parliamentary scrutiny, Neutral Election Commission, etc.
- And the usage of the word merit system was to indicate that the Spoils system doesn't provide for any fixation of responsibility. Such a system which is not responsible to anyone is nothing but an autocracy. But Wilson wanted an administration to be a business with efficiency, accountability, responsibility, etc. Thus, his ideas are linked to one another rather than being scattered.
- Lastly, the title, the Study of Administration is apt for the essay. Because dichotomy, scrutiny, merit system, and all other concepts, mentioned by Woodrow Wilson, dovetail to make an efficient administration.

Conclusion

Hence, we can conclude that starting from the title of the essay, to the concepts he used; Wilson's essay was relevant, consistent, and had a good continuity. And the critics failed to decipher these nuances in his essay.

2. 'Public administration is not only a science but also an art'. Comment.

20 marks (300 words)

Approach

Here we can divide the question into two parts. One, to explain how public administration is a science and second to prove how it is an art;

From Paper2

We can bring in examples, case studies, and incidents of contemporary relevance.

Introduction

The very definition of Public administration, as put forth by Dwight Waldo, states that "Public Administration is a science and art of management as applied to the affairs of state".

Body

Public administration can be considered a science because:

It can be studied: Robert Dahl says that 'if public administration is not studied, the logic of science of administration sounds hollow'. Hence, the concept of science of administration originates when public administration is discussed, deliberated and learned, and when diplomas and degrees are provided for this field.

It is amenable to inventions and discoveries: New strategies, new ideas, and new ways of administration can be invented in the field of public administration. Ex: Re-inventing, Re-engineering, NPM, NPS are nothing but the inventions here.

It has formulas to be applied: Beginning from classical administrationists to the postmodern thinkers. Several principles were being put forth; and these principles, the thinkers claimed, to act as formulas that can change the whole equation of an organization. Ex: principles of Taylor, Fayol, Gullick, and Urwick, etc.

It has many logics to be understood: public administration also deals with some of the logics like the contrast between a rational-economic man and a social-emotional man, rule orientation versus client orientation, difference between functional authority and the traditional authority, etc.

It provides solutions to various problems: Various problems among the workers, managers, and bureaucrats were solved using the advanced techniques of management and administration. Ex: Work-study, Differential piece wage plan, situational orders, privatization, e-governance, etc.

And it is an art because:

It is a philosophy: As said by F C Mosher public administration is an area of interest than a subject. Many public administrationists have thought, lived, and breathed public administration. Dwight Waldow, Fredrickson, Riggs are no less than Socrateses, Aristotles, and Marxes of their respective domains.

It is a part of our customs and traditions: Public administration originated from the way the families are managed, the way a community is disciplined, and the way a kingdom is ruled. Ideas like democracy, equality, justice, governance, etc are less the results of invention, and more the customs and traditions that were followed by our ancestry and that are being handed over to our posterity.

It has to be inculcated not just studied: various administrative skills like the leadership, client orientation, communication, public friendliness can't be taught in classes. Rather they have to be inculcated via continuous practice, learning, and habituation. Hence to become an administrator is to become an artist than to become a graduate.

It is less a logic and more an emotion: public administration is much more than understanding the cost and benefits. It is about understanding the needs of the

subordinates without them expressing it, knowing the difficulties of the public without them protesting in front of the government offices, etc. An able administrator understands those emotions much earlier than the reports and statistics do.

Conclusion

Hence, to put in the words of Marshal Dimock” public administration is what and how of the government”. Here, what depicts the science and how indicates the art; thus making it complete.

