Introduction:-

Personnel administration is concerned with the classification of positions, fixing of qualifications, standardization of scales of pay, recruitment and examination of candidates, training particularly of in-service training, probation, promotion, discipline and finally with the retirement of personnel(1).

In recent times personnel administration has come to occupy an important place in public administration. For, in a world made of technology, technically competent men and women are required to manage "the enormously complicated social life of a gigantic ministrant state"(2). Their

assistance and co-operation are sought after both by Statesmen and politicians to frame broad policies. It is the civil servant that furnishes the expert knowledge without which politicians cannot, in any adequate measure, create and enact policies. On the basis of information thus furnished by experts, politicians conceive plans and secure the sanction of the legislature for their execution. But it is the function of the civil servant to find working clothes for them. Thus, while statesmen and politicians create philosophy and programmes, define the destination and tell the people why and how they should travel towards it, it is the function of the civil servant to organize the will and direct the forces so that the end in view may be reached. Thus, in the ultimate analysis, wise political philosophy and sound leadership would be of no avail without a body of officials permanently and specially employed to carry on the programmes of statesmen.

We shall therefore consider all aspects of personnel administration briefly in this chapter.

Personnel administration is important for various reasons. Firstly, the major part of the total income of the educational institutions is spent on the payment of
salaries and allowances of the personnel. Second, the Universities and colleges employ a variety of persons. For administration there are officers, principals, office and laboratory staff and other employees lower grade usually called the fourth grade employees. On the technical side there are engineers, civil and mechanical and medical officers. For the teaching and research departments there are Professors, Readers and Lecturers and research scholars and Fellows.

From the establishment of the Universities no effort was made to build up a professionally competent and politically non-partisan service. In recent years efforts have been made to make the service professionally more competent by providing facilities for in-service training. So far as teaching side is concerned, a conscious effort was made to secure professionally competent persons.

Classification of Service:

Classification of services is of basic importance for such processes as examination, employment, training, service ratings, salary determination and promotions. The
scope of governmental operations have so much expanded that they demand systematic classification. Indeed it is the starting point on the basis of which the entire personnel administration depends. Otherwise there would be confusion and chaos.

From the very beginning there was systematic classification. On the administrative side the classification adopted by the State Government has been adopted by the universities. On the teaching side the classification that exists in well established universities has been adopted.

There is however one defect in the classification of clerks, upper division and lower division. So long as duties performed by them are the same or of corresponding character, it would be difficult to justify the retention of the present distinction which is a legacy of the past. At present the quality of the recruits entering the lower division is often quite as high as those persons in the upper division. This is owing to the fact that there has been a rapid growth of higher education during the past thirty years. As a consequence, the lower division now contains a good proportion of highly qualified young men.
It is, therefore, desirable that these two classes should be combined into one. Such combination would not result in the fall of the standard of efficiency associated with the Upper Division. On the other hand it is likely to create a great espirit de corps among the fellow workers and remove the stigma of inequality.

Similarly, we think that the existing classification of teachers in Universities into three, Lecturers, Readers and Professors is not adequate. If a lecturer is appointed Reader within five years of his service in the lecturer's grade and if the same person becomes a professor at the age of 35, he may not make an effort to do any significant work. Therefore it is suggested that teachers in Universities should be classified into five classes, Assistant Lecturers or Research Fellow, Lecturers Assistant Professors, Associate Professors and Professors in which case there will be continuous effort on the part of teachers to improve themselves.

Qualifications:

Next to classification of services, comes the prescription of qualifications suitable for each post. A
college teacher must have a second class master's degree in the subject for which the teacher was appointed. This qualification was raised to at least 45% of the aggregate marks in the Master's degree examination. In 1975, the UGC recommended the academic qualifications of college teachers. The Universities of Gauhati and Dibrugarh fixed the qualificate at a minimum of fifty percent of the marks at the Master's degree examination with Honours or distinction at the first degree examination. In the case of Pre-University or Pre-degree colleges or similar sections in degree colleges a relaxation up to 45% marks at the Master's degree examination was permitted by the Universities.

In the case of University teachers qualifications were adopted on the basis of those in other reputed universities in India. The qualifications recommended by the UGC have now been accepted.

In regard to the non-teaching personnel, the officers above the rank of Assistant Registrar must have high academic qualifications which amounts to possession of at least a second class Master's degree. They must also have adequate experience in academic administration.
Employees below the rank of Deputy Registrars are divided into three classes namely Class B officers, both technical and non-technical and Classes C and D employees which comprise of office and laboratory staff and other lower grade employees like office and laboratory attendents, hostel and watch and ward staff. Minimum academic qualifications are laid down for different classes.

In addition to academic and professional qualification the general condition that none below the age of 18 years can be employed is observed in all the Universities and colleges.

The University service is open to all persons irrespective of sex, caste, creed, religion or place of birth. For the teaching departments the universities recruit suitable and eminent teachers from all parts of the country. Gauhati University recruited British, American and Russian nationals for its specialised branches of teaching.
Salaries:

Next to qualifications the question of wages is the most important so far as personnel administration is concerned. The theoretical foundation of wage system is that every employee must be paid adequate wages for his labour. That is, every employee must be able to secure a wage capable of giving him a standard life without which creative citizenship is not a possibility. Here again, the scales of pay of the Government servants in similar posts were adopted by the Universities. So far as the salaries of teachers and officers are concerned they were those recommended by the UGC. As a matter of fact the UGC scales of pay were accepted.

Increments of Pay:

In the present day salary system we notice a minimum or maximum and intermediate rates of pay. The intermediate rates of pay constitute the increments. From the date of establishment of universities, there were scales of pay for all posts. In the colleges however, there were no scales of pay for a long time. It was only after 1947, that the scales of pay was introduced. Before
1947, increments were given often as a result of chance availability of funds or demand. Under such circumstances the amount of increment that one got depended upon the degree of political pressure brought to bear on the college authorities. Therefore, there was no uniformity nor justice in the sanctioning of increments. To overcome this unsatisfactory condition automatic in-grade salary increases incremental system was introduced in all the colleges for all teachers. Yet in some colleges there is payment of fixed salary.

Increments are of two kinds, automatic and semi-automatic. The first is known as scale of pay and the second as grade of pay. The first is progressive scale of pay attached to a particular post and the employee gets increments at stated intervals. The second is a system in which all the officials of a certain class receive different rates of pay. Promotions from one grade to another takes place only when a vacancy occurs in the higher grades. Further, promotion from one grade to another is on the basis of merit. That is, he must be competent to carry on the higher duties of the grade. In the universities and colleges there was no grade system. There is only scale of pay,
As regards the length of time scales, it was reasonable. It did not exceed the period of twenty years suggested by the Pay Commissions. Anything longer than this would unduly delay the time when public servants could reach the maximum of his scale while anything shorter may have the effect of keeping one on the same pay for a long time in the latter part of his career. Very often when a person is appointed he was not started with the minimum of the time scale. If a highly qualified person is available he was given advance increments. Sometimes, a person who started in one post was promoted or recruited on merit to a higher post within a period of two or three years of his appointment in the lower post and thereby he moved about both vertically and horizontally more rapidly than his colleagues in the same department. For the proportion between the minimum and the maximum of a time scale the ordinary rule is that the maximum should not be less than two and half times of the minimum. But this rule is not observed. In several cases it is just double of the minimum. If this rule is observed then a lecturer must be started with Rs. 700 and maximum must be Rs. 1,700.
One notable feature of the pay structure of the Universities and colleges is that there were no efficiency bars. Should there be efficiency bars? There is a difference of opinion. It is contended that some method must be devised for providing an incentive for efficiency and a reward for marked ability to counteract the deadening effect which the certainty of time scale is likely to produce. But there are others who argue against the efficiency bars on the ground that promotions to the higher grades would be on grounds of favouritism. But this argument is not valid. Efficiency bars are necessary for promotion of efficiency. In the case of lower grades of non-teaching employees efficiency bars have been prescribed. But this has not been effectively enforced.

ALLOWANCES: The Universities of Gauhati, Dibrugarh and the Assam Agricultural University pay allowances of various kinds. Dearness allowances to neutralise the rise in the cost of living was paid at 10 per cent of an employee's pay since 1948. This was subsequently placed on par with the rates allowed by the State Governments to their employees. Employees other than teachers and officers are given overtime allowance when their services are utilised beyond the usual working hours. The teachers of Universities and college are given special allowance for handling additional classes
in other departments. Similarly officers are given special allowance for performance of duties of other officers of a different departments.

The University employees are entitled to fringe benefits such as housing or house allowance, medical help and medical allowance. The college teachers do not have such benefits.

RECRUITMENT: The efficiency of the administrative machinery depends on the selection of competent persons for the different positions. In the earlier years of the Gauhati University rules for recruitment of non-teaching personnel were not laid down. In 1956 the rules for appointment and promotion of ministerial personnel were framed and recruitment was made by open advertisement and a process of interview and selection by a committee appointed by the Executive Council. In recent years a recruitment test in writing has also been introduced.

The persons for officers' posts are selected by the selection committee after advertisement and interview. In the case of teachers no interviews were held by the Gauhati University in the earlier years of its establishment on the ground that suitable teachers did not in many cases like to appear for an interview. Since 1963 teachers were
selected on the basis of a personal interview by the Selection Committee. The recruitment policy of the Universities is such that no appointment can be made without advertisement and selection by the Selection Committee. Only in rare cases persons of known competence were appointed to posts on the recommendation of the Vice-Chancellor. The posts are advertised and selections are made to fill a permanent vacancy even when a person is holding it on a temporary basis for several years.

INCENTIVES TO EFFICIENCY: The means by which the efficiency of the service is maintained are several. The first is probation. Probation is a means by which an unsuitable person is removed from a post to which he is appointed. Probation is therefore the final step in the process of selection. The period of probation is one year. It may be extended for another year. But no one takes probation seriously. There is a feeling among the employee and the employer that once employed he or she should not be removed. We suggest that probation should be enforced to remove squire pegs in round holes.

TENURE OF OFFICE: Another incentive to efficiency of the services is tenure of office. In other words, services must offer a career. A career service is the best insurance of good administration. In the Universities and colleges there was a belief that employment was secure.
But some services are of contractual nature. For instance, the service of the Registrar of the Gauhati University is for a period of five years and he is eligible for re-appointment. But in Dibrugarh as in other Universities in India the Registrar holds office for lifetime during good behaviour. Again teachers must enter into a contract and their services may be terminated on three months' notice. We think that there should be security of service for all grades of employees of the Universities and colleges and a system of assessment by experts at regular intervals should be introduced.

PROMOTIONS: Persons with lively minds will be dissatisfied if they find themselves in the same position which they had occupied at the beginning of their career. It is therefore essential that opportunities should be provided for such persons to move about both vertically and horizontally. In the universities and Government colleges opportunities were provided for promotion. In the case of aided colleges prospects of promotion do not exist.

The basis of promotion are generally three, seniority, merit and examination. Seniority has been defended on the ground that it provides certainty and dependability. It eliminates rivalry and struggle. Under this principle the length of service is the determining
factor in promotion. The principle of seniority has not been taken into account. But in the administrative section seniority has been the main factor for promotion of ministerial and other lower grade employees. The staff itself demanded that the principle of seniority should be adopted for promotion. Thus two bases of promotions exist in the Universities, seniority and merit.

TRAINING: Despite the fact that administrative training and teachers training are the most important aspects of personnel administration in the Universities it is almost totally neglected. In the administrative sections even the basic clerical training was not given to an entrant in any office, with the result that the elements of departmental geography and organizational relationship were acquired in a fortuitous manner. The usual practice was to pitchfork the new comer straight on the job with the minimum amount of preliminary advice and to leave him to the mercies of his colleagues. As he had to learn by doing it he adopted wasteful methods and costly procedure. The Universities did not understand that an entrant is an understudy and that he should be trained not only that he has to acquire the specialised technique of his department but also a broad mind to enable him to see things in their proper perspective.
SUPERANNUATION: For the elimination of the inefficient and the incompetent and for the maintenance of morale provision has been made for compulsory retirement. The normal age of retirement for officers and employees in the administrative section is 60. There is no provision for extension. In this respect the teachers occupy an advantageous position. He must be retired at 60, but he may be re-employed for a period of three years, not more than one year at a time. After attaining 63 he may be recruited under the retired teachers scheme up to the age of 68. But the honorarium is paid by the UGC.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS: Superannuated persons are insured against pennyless pauperism in their old age. The retirement benefits devised by the Universities and colleges are the same as in Government. The University employees are entitled to Provident Fund, Gratuity and Pension. Formerly, they were not entitled to pension but to contributory Provident Fund and Gratuity. But from 1974, the University employees are entitled to Pension.

All the employees are entitled to liberal vacation. This is a bulwark against stagnation, staleness and dissatisfaction. It is a positive means for improving attendance throughout the year. The leave conditions of the University employees are similar to those of the State Government employees.
UNIONISM: Associations of different types have come into existence in Universities and colleges for the protection of rights and liberties of the employees. There are Workers' Unions, Officers' Associations, University Teachers' Association and College Teachers' Associations. These associations are stable and strong. They have been able to obtain certain concessions and improvements in their service conditions. There is need for regular dialogue between the authorities and unions for maintenance of better employer-employee relation.

We have so far surveyed personnel administration in the Universities and colleges. The success of an institution depends on the competence of its personnel. For this purpose there is need for in-service training of administrative personnel organised on a regional level and summer institutes, seminars for teachers and senior administrators of Universities and colleges.

Awards and other types of special recognition can contribute greatly to the development and maintenance of staff morale. Certificates and gifts awarded in accordance with length of meritorious service can be an incentive for future efforts and reward for past services.

Manpower planning and personnel research assist in decision making, in reduction of duplication of efforts and
proper utilisation of the staff. The personnel department of a University should maintain correct data of all employees with their aptitudes and specialised skill for intelligent transfers and postings. This provides encouragement to the staff for better and more efficient working.