ABSTRACT

Bureaucracy is considered the backbone of public administration. It is impossible to have any idea of public administration without bureaucracy. Bureaucracy is a very old institution which the political thinkers and sociologists considered as an important mechanism to politically manage a society. It existed even in the past when governments were not very organised. In fact, the very organisation of government and its efficacy has always been thought parallel to the development of bureaucracy. Bureaucracy was required to run society even in the ancient ages. Kings and rulers had developed a certain system of bureaucracy in the context of historical and overall political situations. It shows the central importance of bureaucracy in public administration. There are certain features of the structure of bureaucracy which perhaps always remain the same, despite other changes. For example, their hierarchical systems in which officers are subordinated to each other and are assigned some authorities and duties. If one sees bureaucracy in its historical perspective, one finds that the rulers of the past developed a system of bureaucracy which enforced greater subordination and complex hierarchy. This is what one can finds in the bureaucratic tradition of India as discussed in this thesis. Moreover, there was hardly any transparency. These features were due to the form of government. For example, since other forms of government, unlike democracy, are by nature authoritative in which power is often concentrated in the hands of few, bureaucracy like judiciary, cannot have an independent existence. This is what one finds in the study of almost every form of government which is not democratic.

Modern bureaucracy had inherited certain elements from the past. But, it was given a theoretical form by Max Weber and some of his contemporary social and political thinkers. It is important to see the historical conditions of its emergence with the beginning of industrial revolution ad expansion of colonialism, Weber conceived bureaucracy as an important system for the benefit of industrial development and progress of capitalist economy. Weber’s ideas were primarily guided by the conditions of economic conditions of capitalist economy and management of political administration. In this respect he gave a very clear guideline for the establishment of effective bureaucracy (as discussed in this thesis). He thought that an effective bureaucracy in the industrial society under modern democracy requires proper
education and training of the officers to work in their respective spheres of duties. This is why he has given systematic rules about the selection, appointment and promotion of the officials. He also thinks that the government officials must cultivate some moral and ethical values so that they can work with honesty, integrity and commitment. He believes that officials thus given certain authorities and duties should not have any scope for the appropriation of properties. Similarly, he thinks that transparency and accountability are the important characteristics of an effective bureaucracy. Therefore, he thought that the acts and orders of government must be documented so that officials can be made accountable to the duties assigned in this way. Weber tried to emphasise on official accountability and transparency. Weber had a very realistic view of bureaucracy this is why his ideas are still relevant despite changes in the historical and political conditions.

Bureaucracy in pre-independent India introduced by colonial rulers was in fact, the model given by Weber. Even Macaulay’s report which was prepared to help the colonial rulers to run the government had many features (as discussed in this thesis) given by Weber, even Macaulay had emphasised on the educational qualifications, training, skills and competence of public officials. It should be noted that Macaulay’s report was influenced by the prevailing political conditions. His aim was to produce an educated class which can work to fulfil the interests of the government. Macaulay gave a very clear picture that the purpose of bureaucracy is to help the government by a set of trained people who constitute the whole clerical staff. Under the colonial rule this educated class which was supposed to run bureaucracy was under the absolute control of the government in India. Seen from this angle, one can understand the purpose of education in British India was to produce an educated class which can help the government. Initially, such a class of people were educated and trained in England. Later on, even Indians were permitted to appear in the examinations who became bureaucrats. Macaulay also tried to make bureaucracy an effective institution. Gradually, bureaucracy in British India became very strong. But its whole aim was to serve the interests of the colonial government. Since the colonial government was mainly interested in the exploitation of Indian people and the resources of the country, bureaucracy was not directly accountable to the people of India. Its primary aim was to fulfil the interests of the government. This attitude of bureaucracy created a lot of sufferings for the Indian people. The bureaucrats in
British India were directly handpicked by the rulers, they had no freedom. In fact, they work like tools in the hands of the government.

With the independence of India, the framers of the constitution of the modern Indian democracy guided by socialistic thoughts incorporated certain principles according to which bureaucracy could be made directly responsible to the people of India and was expected to work in the interests of the people. The members of the constituent assembly who were so clearly aware of the miserable conditions of the poor people of India thought that bureaucracy can play a very positive role in the eradication of hunger and poverty in the independent India. They thought that bureaucracy’s purpose is not simply to prepare agenda and frame policies but also to work with honesty and integrity.

It is important to see that bureaucracy in pre-independent India and also in post-independent India had certain important roles to play. For example, even today bureaucracy is known for some of its technical functions such as assisting legislatures at the central and state levels to prepare agenda and to frame laws and implement them. In the pre-independence India, the role of bureaucracy was largely confined to maintaining law and order. But in the post-independent India and with the incorporation of certain principle of welfare state since the times of Nehru, India’s first prime minister made the bureaucracy more dynamic. In this way in a welfare state, the role of bureaucracy became very important, it was not confined to simply maintain law and order, frame policies and to see their implementation but also to ensure that the schemes and development programmes which the government of the centre and the state are launching in the welfare of the people must reach them. In this way bureaucracy was supposed to be a rather responsible institution. In the post-independent India bureaucracy was regarded as an institution whose working must be different from work it was during colonial period.

The role of bureaucracy in the development of a state is critical, as it has been found, in this thesis on the role of bureaucracy in the implementation of welfare schemes and development programmes in the welfare of Uttar Pradesh in India that its role is of a very technical nature. The study of the role of bureaucracy in the state of Uttar Pradesh has been conducted with reference to a set of schemes and development programmes such as Indira Awas Yojana, Mid Day Meals, NREGA, and others, has
not been found as positive as it should have been. For example, Uttar Pradesh is a state whose economy is pre-dominantly based on agriculture. Moreover, given the limited resources of the state and a huge population and the decline of agriculture in the last few decades has created unemployment and poverty. Poverty is a very common problem of this state which is taking a frightening turn with the increasing economic inequality particularly since the liberalisation of the economy. This poverty is not similar everywhere. For example, it is found that even in certain districts due to migrations and foreign income the condition is not as bad as in certain regions and districts where people are still dependent on struggling agriculture. The central and state governments have been taking certain steps in welfare of the farmers and labourers but it has been found that such aids do not smoothly flow to the people through the bureaucratic filter. In most of the situation it has been discovered through the study of welfare schemes and development programmes like IAY, MDM, NREGA and others that the funds allotted hardly reached to the people in minimum amount. In most of the cases it has been found that politicians and bureaucrats are involved in financial corruption. This has been found as the most dangerous threat to the dignity survival of the poor people in the state. It has come to light that if corruption removed particularly from the lower level of bureaucracy and if government officials can be made to work with certain sense of responsibility while implementing public schemes and development programmes the condition of the people would have improve in almost every region of the state. Seeing from this point of view, the role of bureaucracy looks very disappointing. In fact, some of the factors which have contributed to the worsening condition of the poor people are the rampant corruption in bureaucracy and criminalisation of politics in the state of Uttar Pradesh. In this respect, the role of bureaucracy could not be held directly responsible if one has clear view of the conditions in which the government officials work under their respective political bosses who are largely uneducated and politically tainted. It shows that the role of bureaucracy despite constitutional autonomy and legal protection and formal procedures of appointment and promotion depends very much on the kind of people elected for government. Due to the rampant corruption in bureaucracy the condition of the poor particularly in the rural Uttar Pradesh is worse, due to illiteracy and lack of awareness in the people corrupt politicians and bureaucrats have found favourable situation for exploitation. It is not unusual to find very unsystematic planning and implementation of development programmes. Therefore, unless citizens
of the state are given quality education and proper social awareness to distinguish their social and political choices and to play the role of responsible citizen’s bureaucracy cannot work effectively. These developments in the life of the citizens will necessarily lead to certain reformation in the formation of good government which eventually will make an effective and pro people bureaucracy.