

Bureaucracy: Aquifer or Insular?



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Bureaucracy is an administrative machinery of the government. It is a strong and powerful weapon to drive the government affairs. It is such instrument which can help realize the government's dream into reality. It helps to translate government's vision into mission and ultimately achieving the ambitious dream of happy people and prosperous country. It is, therefore, the success or failure of any government largely depends on the well-functioning of this mechanism. People also understand it as an extended arm of the government. It is a living organism or living constitution of the government. The foundational belief of this institution is that it bridges the gap between government and citizens. It delivers not only customer services but also democratic values and citizens' delights. Therefore, it is a tonic rather than stumbling block or road block of the government affairs. However, if we put our critical lens in the current bureaucratic culture, what we see is there is cumbersome legal procedures and irksome behaviors of bureaucrats. They are sluggish in their functions. They are change-phobic in nature. They are emotionally arid. They apply rule-choked management styles. Their management suffers from sclerotic style. They are self-centric and have scarcity mentality. They think there are limited resources in the resource pie of the government. If someone else takes some resources from that pie, they lose. This sort of win-lose thinking of the bureaucrats, ordinary people understand them as adversaries rather than civil servants. We severely denounce and deplore about it, but have not succeeded to dethrone it. In the present day world, the degree of the strengths and the level of the capacity of the civil servants are severely deteriorating. There is a big question mark in their daily performance. Worldwide, there is dismal performance of bureaucrats. Sluggish and lacklustre execution of daily government activities are the typical attributes of bureaucracy. Gary Hamel, renowned American expert of management, aggressively speaks about the onus and functions of bureaucracy. He says bureaucracy is Villain, Cancer, Ebola, incurable disease, etc. It has spoiled the system. In the upcoming Harvard Business Review volume (2020) i.e., "**Humanocracy**" he has pointed out that only 13% civil servants are fully engaged in their work. The rest are physically present in their offices, but mind and heart are at homes and somewhere else. They are slackers or slack human resources. Similarly, another American writer, William Edwards Deming has also asserted that 90% reasons of the organizational deficiencies are of general, i.e. bad system. Remaining 10% are specific, i.e. employees. System problem is the cause of weak human competency. Human resources of the organization should create system. System does not create itself. Another opt-quoted writers, David Osborne and Ted Gaebler (1992) also asserted that the people who work in the government are not the problem. The system in which they work is the problem. They

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From the given scenario what can be said is that adversity is a tonic. It is not stumbling block. It brings an equal or more benefits within it. Here, Albert Einstein's quote could be touchstone to conclude the whole arguments made in this article. "From the clutter, find simplicity. From discord, find harmony. In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity." Therefore, if we want to see bureaucracy to become as an aquifer to realize the dream of the nation, we have to revamp it. We should be vigilant enough in the work of bureaucracy. We can transform them. Nobody goes to do a bad job. The flagship idea to be improved is management. The role of management is to change the process rather than badgering individuals and backstabbing politicians. Good system makes bad people to work well.

Cursory introduction of the writer

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