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Bureaucratic Rationality Revisited

A New Managerial Critique of the Colonial Bureaucracy in India

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Abstract

For Weber, bureaucracy was an ideal type construct, which he used to understand the nature of transformation in social organisations through the development of human history. His view was that all organised efforts that humans make or have made in the past will eventually lead to a more legal-rational type of organisation which was the bureau. According to him it was the most rational type organisation that could ever exist and clearly it was a pure-type which could not be found in real world. It is the structure of the organisation which determines the flow of communication within organised channels (communicative rationality), it is the structure that determines the motivation and morale of the workforce (social capital), it is the structure of the organisation which determines the choices people make within and without the organisation (whether it is influenced by self-interest or public interest), and it is the structure of the organisation which determines amongst almost every other thing the organised decision-making within the organisation (bounded rationality). This paper tries to critically examine the existing literature on bureaucracy, co-relate it with the most current ideas of organisational re-engineering and attempts to explain and define **Structured Rationality** (pure-type) which may be a more realisable ideal for bureaucracy. It tries to take forward the evolution or transformation of human social organisation which Weber, Hegel and other theorists had predicted.

Keywords; *Rationality; New Managerialism; Colonization; Bureaucracy; Democracy; Responsibility*

INTRODUCTION

When the East India Company Conquered India, they replaced the indigenous system of administration with their own *Covenanted Civil Services*, later on to be substituted by the Indian Civil Services when the crown assumed power over Indian Territories (Compton, 1968). The British established these services with the purpose of exploiting India, its peoples and its resources. Subsequent to independence in 1947, it was decided that the Civil Services as established by the British shall continue

in order to maintain effective administration. At the time of the independence of India, the way the crown divided India into two separate nations and hundreds of other princely states that were free to go either way or stay independent, the hurried manner in which the crown mapped the borders of India with its neighbours, sometimes running through people's homes and above all the basis of the partition of India being religion, created chaos and resulted in the single largest migration of human population on either side of the border (Talbot & Singh, 2009). The newly elected government of India had no machinery set in place to manage such large-scale malicious mis-management of a simple transfer of power. They were arm-twisted into accepting and continuing with the British legal system, Cabinet system and Bureaucracy. The past 70 years of independence hasn't changed anything. It's still the same bureaucracy, same policies and the same problems. There can be only two reasons for this; either the people, who can effect change, have no interest in bringing such change, or, those people do not have the required intellectual capability to effect such change. Alternatively, it can be a complex mix of both the above reasons. Before the end of the 2nd World War, the whole of Europe including Britain was particularly feudal in character and that filtered down into the bureaucracy as well (Riggs, 2001). Subsequently, there has been a gradual shift away from feudalistic setups across the board, but this gradual shift has been slow in India. One major factor in this slow shift could be the fact that in Europe society was divided into Commoners and Nobility, whereas in India this division is more entrenched in the form of Caste, which the British policies during the Raj further entrenched. 70 years after independence and abolition of untouchability, caste-based loyalties still exist and are still one of the biggest deciding factors in elections and public appointments (Prasad, 1997). The representation of lower classes in India in the higher echelons of bureaucracy is minimal.

This means that even today Indian bureaucracy is primarily feudal in character and this tends to promote initially, nepotism and favouritism and subsequently corruption. The relationship between power and responsibility within every government organization is also skewed because of the feudal characteristic of our bureaucracy. The sole purpose of feudalistic bureaucracy is to usurp maximum power without taking on any responsibilities (Deutscher, 1969). Bureaucracy in India has been doing exactly the same thing for the past 70 years. The bureaucracy enjoys overbearing power within their jurisdiction, just like the feudal lords of the Middle Ages; they live in palatial bungalows, have numerous servants & vehicles, travel with bodyguards and are absolutely unapproachable (Booker, 1997). During the Raj, since it was an exploitative system, the British never bothered to define the responsibilities of their civil servants; they only defined their powers. After the independence of India, things have not changed one bit, for the simple reason that it is the job of the bureaucracy to define such powers and responsibilities (Gregory, 1998). Over the centuries as democracy has evolved, it has created limits on the powers exercised by each and every arm of the government and to some extent; they have created checks on the powers of the bureaucracy as well. The primary focus though in any democratic organization around the world has thus far only been on the limitation of power (Zhou *et al*, 2012). Compare this with any private organization, and their primary focus is on job responsibilities and not power (Coyle-Shapiro *et al*, 2004). Bureaucracy predates democracy and even when king was all powerful, bureaucracy existed as an instrument of exercising that power. It has never since stopped being that power instrument. As democracy evolved, the power transferred from the king on to the people and subsequently through them onto their chosen representatives. The focus though has always remained on power; limiting it (negative and restrictive approach) rather than expanding responsibility (positive and progressive approach) and therefore bureaucracy has preserved its character as a power instrument (Etzioni-Halevy, 2013). Responsibility in this context can have two connotations; *firstly*, in the narrow sense by defining the job specifically and holding the bureaucracy accountable to specific jobs performed, and *secondly* in the broader sense by holding them accountable as a whole to a specific institution. At present, in India neither of the above holds any meaning; [1] Because, it is the bureaucracy that controls the selection, appointments, tenure and terms of services of the bureaucrats, they never define job descriptions for any bureaucratic position within the government with any degree of specificity and always leave it vague (Rizzo *et al*, 1970). This is done because by leaving things vague, discretion is introduced into decision

making, which leads to exercise of exorbitant power and subsequently corruption. The focus is always on increasing its own power, and [2] also because, the only institution that the bureaucracy is accountable to is itself bureaucratic in character. There are only two institutions that have any sort of control over the bureaucracy; *first* is the Cabinet, which is a body comprised of elected representatives of the people which in itself is advised by an institution called the secretariat which is comprised solely of career bureaucrats, and *secondly* the office of the CAG (Comptroller and Auditor General) which again is an office comprised solely of career bureaucrats (Bazerman *et al*, 1997).

In both the above cases, a bureaucracy is directly or indirectly loyal only and solely to bureaucrats and it is humanly impossible for them to lose control over their activities and become responsible. Before the game of democracy began in the West, the government was owned by the king and his officials were loyal to him alone. But in modern democratic nations, at least in theory the people are the source of all power (Fishkin, 2011). The loyalty of all government officials must be with the people, but unfortunately this is hardly the case in any democratic country around the world. Even though it may seem patently undemocratic, but the fact remains that the bureaucracy is neither loyal nor responsible to the people that it is supposed to serve (Weber, 2015).

Another aspect of the colonial bureaucracy in India that is primarily influenced by its feudal character is the behaviour of the bureaucrats. Earlier bureaucracy used to draw its powers from the crown and used to dispense justice under the authority of the crown, but even today, even though democracy has been established in India, bureaucracy still seem to draw power from a fictitious source (a figurative Crown or the President) and discharge that power in exactly the same way that they used to during the era of the crown, preserving in essence the feudal character of the bureaucracy (Bakshi & Kashyap, 1982). They belong to a privileged class of persons, who are seen to be living in privilege and envied by the common man, who are difficult to approach, and even when the common man manages to approach them, they expect to be treated likes feudal lords and begged before for justice, which if in their sweet discretion they choose to dispense, is to be seen as an act of grace by the public at large (Singh, 1986). Even where a citizen is trying to get his rights enforced, they have to start by pleading before the bureaucracy for protection; much like pleading for protection from a mafia boss (Hong & Lim, 2016). Although in theory the constitution of India establishes *rule of law*, but in reality, the feudal character of the executive, which primarily consists of the bureaucracy, makes it impossible for *rule of law* to be established in India. As discussed above the British created the bureaucracy as an exploitative system and therefore ensured that they enjoyed enormous amounts of discretion in making decisions (Colombatto, 2003). This resulted in their decision-making powers being unlimited and unchecked, which meant that they really didn't need to follow any rules of decision making at all. Every decision was made on an *ad hoc* basis and *rule of law* was replaced by *rule of thumb*. This discretionary power in decision making has more or less stayed exactly the same for the last 75 odd years of Indian Independence. It's a well-known fact that there is resistance to change in any organization, but in bureaucratic organization this resistance to change takes an unprecedented level. This discretion in decision making empowers them and bureaucrats are unable to let go of their powers in order to effect change (Trader-Leigh, 2002). It is further compounded by the fact that in modern parliamentary democracy the legislative functions are not solely and exclusively dispensed by the legislature. The legislature delegates these functions upon the bureaucracy as it lacks, time, skill and most importantly the willingness to perform these functions (Pünder, 2009). These delegated legislations that the bureaucracy enacts mostly form the rules, regulations, bylaws and orders that the bureaucracy uses in order to dispense the executive authority of the government. This power to make rules to govern their own conduct ensures that bureaucracy remains a power instrument which keeps enhancing its own authority and power and in turn makes sure that its exploitative nature remains intact (Heyman, 2004). Bureaucracy creates the rules of procedure in such a way that there always remains a scope for exercise of discretionary power which makes it impossible for *rule of law* to be established (Gailmard, 2002). These rules of procedure that the bureaucracy creates in order to conduct its own business are not simple rules; these rules are so complicated that even experts take ages to understand

them. There are multitudes of these rules that may be contradictory in nature, and over time these rules of procedure have become so innumerable that even the vastly experienced bureaucrats, themselves do not know which rules to follow and which not to (Evans & Harris, 2004).

Because bureaucracy is a power instrument and keeps on increasing its own power, it is also the most corrupt of all government institutions. In bureaucratic terms power is the authority to influence the legal position of another either positively or negatively without affecting the legal position of the person exercising such power. Now since it is an authority; it is legitimized by law (Weber, 2015). Since the bureaucracy in India was established by the British as an exploitative system, they really didn't mind the corruption. In fact, they ensured that bureaucracy assumed more and more power in order to become more and more exploitative in character (Dwivedi, 1967). After independence, our elected representatives became increasingly dependent on the bureaucracy for advice as at that time almost every Indian who was educated and skilled was in some way or the other a part of the bureaucracy. In 1951 only 18% of the population was literate and a smaller percentage of that was skilled enough to understand the workings of a bureaucratic government (Dewey, 1973). Today even though more than 75% of the population of India is literate, still a vast majority is easily fooled by the quagmire that is called bureaucracy. This lack of understanding of the vast multitudes of bureaucratic intricacies creates an *environment of ignorance* and even the most thoroughly educated citizens spend their entire lifetimes attempting to unravel its mysteries and fail to do so comprehensively. If laws are not enacted properly and loopholes are purposely created in order for bureaucracy to exploit it, this *environment of ignorance* is always going to exist and will never be resolved. In any democratic government across the globe, it is the job of the legislature to enact laws, but everywhere, they only enact half-baked laws and leave a large portion of the work in the hands of the bureaucracy in the name of *delegated legislation*. As discussed above, bureaucracy is a power-hungry machine and *delegated legislation* only enhances its power and further empowers it to grab more power. In spite of the fact that India is a democracy, the bureaucracy in India has never been responsible to the public at large in any manner whatsoever. It was created with the sole purpose of being loyal only to the British interests and even after independence it has remained largely the same institution, confusing the elected Parliament of India as the Crown. Not only that instead of *responsibility* of the legislatures filtering down into the bureaucracy, the trend has been exactly the opposite, that of *lust for power* and the *seduction of secrecy* expanding its tentacles through the bureaucracy into the legislatures (Aftergood, 2008). Furthermore, in developing countries like India the prime motivation for anyone to join the bureaucracy is rarely a sense of service, it is more often than not, the lust for power and scope for corruption. Even those few who start out with a sense of service to the nation are in almost no time seduced by this glamour of absolute power and it is further compounded by the fact that common man starts treating these bureaucrats as *Feudal Lords* as soon as they join the service (Pandey, 2000). There is little doubt that, because a large proportion of the population is uneducated (*different from literate*) and ignorant, it is very difficult to reason with them and this does, to a large extent, make the job of the bureaucracy difficult in performing its functions. In no time at all the bureaucrats start to believe that they are better than the rest of the people and they deserve to be treated like Lords. They immediately lose all motivation to serve and are now solely motivated by a feeling of mercy and grace (*the kind that Feudal Lords bestow upon their subjects*), which in no time turns into favouritism and nepotism, eventually taking form of the most corrupt kinds (Kumar, 2026).

As discussed in detail above, bureaucracy was established in India by our British colonial masters, and it was clearly a remnant of their own feudal past. Therein lies the origin of the problem; our bureaucracy is not Indian in character. And since its inception for almost two hundred years of colonial rule, the people of India were forced into treating these British bureaucrats as their *masters*. Even after independence since the character of the bureaucracy never changed, most people still treat them as their masters. Even when Europe was entirely ruled by despotic monarchs, they still had a bureaucracy¹, and

¹ The rationality of this bureaucracy may not have been the legal-rational type which Weber associated bureaucracy with, nevertheless it did exist.

the character of bureaucracy even today remains the same. It exists to enforce the word of the king (or the President or Prime Minister). It has no inclination towards serving the people. Democracy on the other hand (*at least in theory*) makes the people sovereign. At the source of its definition lies responsibility to people as a whole.² It is impossible to make bureaucracy responsible to people, it is by design created only to enforce the will of the king and all it does is dispense authority. It only deals in power and no responsibility at all. By definition one makes the government responsible, the other makes the government powerful. Power derives its legitimacy from authority, only authoritarian regimes can be powerful, and therefore by definition they cannot be responsible (Kumar, 2026). The only logical solution is to replace it with something new (*a new more rational type*)³. Something which is an improved and significantly more democratic version of what has previously been envisaged and something that people can easily identify with. Something in which the people are directly involved and which draws its source of origin to the people (Kumar, 2022).

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The current structure of our Bureaucracy is Pyramidal and Hierarchic in character. This structure is bottom heavy and narrow at the top, but it is so bulky that the bottom line of the organization is never in contact with the top. The movement of information between layers of this type of organization is so sluggish, that it creates automatic avenues of corruption and favouritism in order to expedite the process. The organizational structure is replicated in exact form in every department and the only thing connecting these departments, is the top echelon of the pyramid. So, if communication has to be established on an inter-departmental basis it becomes twice as bulky as it would be on an intra-departmental level. Furthermore, in Indian Bureaucracy the organization is divided into Headquarter and Field Operations (Dhaliwal & Hanna, 2017). For a Country as large as India, if movement of information is restricted by strict hierarchical considerations, then it creates an even bigger problem than the two listed above. If information has to go from one section officer to another, it will take the path above through his superiors and back down to the next section officer. The vertical lines connecting the hierarchy also define the *division of work* within the organization, as a whole and by separate pyramidal organizational setups divided into secretarial, directorial and field operation within any department, ministry or other government bodies (Hodgson, 2004). In order to get rid of all these problems of Red tapes, along with other issues of division and separation of work, not to mention other traditional bureaucratic maladies such as chain of command, authority, subordination, unity of command, unity of direction, centralization, span of control, delegation and the like; we need to take a closer look at each of the structural aspect listed above and figure out ways in which these fault lines can be removed to create a better organization, one that can adequately replace our Bureaucracy and establish a long lasting and truly rationally structured organization more suited to our current needs and aspirations as a progressive, developing and evolving human society.

The source of all structural problems relating to our Bureaucracy lies in its core pyramidal and hierarchical character. It is centralized and power heavy at the top, carefully designed in such a manner by our past colonial masters in order to keep absolute control over how it operates in every sphere of governance. Since even after independence this structure has never been considered for change, it has remained bottom heavy and centralized at the top with all authority flowing down the hierarchical lines along the pyramid from top to bottom creating ample opportunities for delays in processing important work, opportunities for corruption, nepotism and favouritism at each level of the pyramidal hierarchy. Research suggests that this kind of organization is too bulky and centralized in character to be able to

² The paradoxes of democracy in theory exist but scope of this paper is limited to warrant a detailed discussion (Kumar, 2026).

³ In order to understand this improved rational type, I shall use Weber's conception of Legal-Rational type and move forward to the rational Choice Theories and Simon's conception of Bounded Rationality and finally propose a new pure type of rationality which would be Structured Rationality (Kumar, 2025).

function efficiently (Rauch & Evans, 2000). A better organizational structure advisable would be a **Matrix** type organization for functional (or the more enduring part of the organization that takes care of day-to-day operations), business as usual aspects and a **Projectized** organizational structure for the transient aspects of the organization which deals with temporary works in any particular area or relating to any particular goal (developmental or otherwise) (Bocean, 2011). In these kinds of organizations, the movement of information is not only vertical along a strict hierarchic line, it can also be horizontal and sideways and there's no rule that restricts communications between different hierarchies. If a decision has to be made at the top, the file does not need to travel through each level of the pyramidal hierarchy with recommendation being noted at each level. In a *Matrix* organization the issue is sent straight to the top where meetings are held in order to determine its suitability. If approved it is then sent to one of the smaller interdepartmental *Projectized* organizations for the project to be planned and then implemented (Fearon *et al*, 2010). Since these organizational structures are non-hierarchic and interdepartmental in character, everyone whose input may be relevant in the decision-making can attend the same meetings and instead of communications going up and down 20 times the same rigid hierarchies, this decision can be reached in 2 meetings. The employees working in these kinds of organizations are also specifically trained in managerial processes and techniques like, *WATERFALL*, *SCRUM*, *RUP* *etc...* and are accustomed to using these tools to arrive at rationalized and appropriate decisions at a faster pace than in traditional hierarchic organizational setups (Theocharis *et al*, 2015). A matrix organization is not hierarchic in character but ideally it should have 4-6 layers over which employees should grow over their careers (Goold & Campbell, 2003).

Division of Work

Usually when we define *division of work* in any organization the purpose is to divide it into specialized functional units which when combined together result in the achievement of the desired goal, whether creation of a product or offering of a service. Bureaucracy divides work in strange ways; specialized skills go right out the window. As discussed above, the Indian bureaucracy is divided into Secretariat, Directorate and Field Operations. For obvious reasons; since the executive branch of the government is such a mammoth affair, it is advisable to divide it into smaller parts for smooth functioning. The aforementioned separation of operational foci belies all logic though as instead of creating separate specialized structures to conduct such governmental business at various levels, it remains a part of the same mammoth pyramid; thus, creating a hierarchy over the existing hierarchy at the operational level. Not only that, in every single part of this hierarchy, whether in the field, directorate or secretariat levels, there is always a **single head of power** at the top of the pyramid, which gives it a unique feudalistic flavour. In terms of division of work, it is done at the pleasure of the bureaucratic head of the pyramid, defying all managerial and rational logic and simply based on *rule of thumb*, creating ample breeding ground for corruption, nepotism and favouritism. There is little wonder that millions of rupees exchange hands every time transfers, postings and appointments of government officials are made. Bureaucrats are more than willing to pay in millions to get plum appointments and postings where there are more opportunities to make earnings through corrupt and illegitimate means (Iyer & Mani, 2012). Furthermore, the bureaucracy is divided into departments that don't make any rational sense. In fact, bureaucracy creates illogical departments only to perpetuate and propagate corruption. Every time a new department is created it creates a new hierarchy, multiplying the same problems over and over again. For example; in order to curb corruption in public life the office of CVC (Chief Vigilance Commissioner) was created; and over time it has failed miserably, in 2011 the then Chief Vigilance Commissioner of India was forced to resign by the Supreme Court, because he himself was facing corruption charges (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2011). Next in order to do the same work, LOKPAL and LOKAYUKTA was created, and it is failing in the same spectacular fashion. In 2016 the LOKAYUKTA of the state of Karnataka in South India was charged with corruption while in office (Times of India, 2016). The executive arm of any government is humongous in size, and without proper division of work, it cannot function properly, but such division of work must not defy logic; it must be based on sound managerial principles and most importantly it must be aimed at eliminating the irrationality in bureaucracy rather

than creating it. Whether it is the Primary activities or the support activities, each item must be a source of a separate organization within the executive arm of the government connected through a *Matrix Organizational Structure* at the top and through a *Projectized Structure* at the bottom. Every organization that deals with one of the primary activities of the government must conduct all of its actual business through the use of Project Teams that form the basis of the Projectized structure at the bottom. As soon as the work is completed that Project team should move to a new Project within the same area of primary activity. The benefit of doing such business is that it has a beginning and an end. It has a fixed time constraint, a fixed budgetary constraint and a fixed resource constraint, the issues and risks that arise before or during the Project can be dealt with swiftly and within these constraints at the Projectized level only without need for escalation to the above functional Matrix (Abbasi & Al-Mharmah, 2000). Furthermore, all primary matrix structures must have permanent representatives who are employees of the support matrix structures. This ensures that all matrices are truly interconnected and all support activities can be provided on hand, in order to perform the primary activities without delays and hindrances (natural or artificial) (Turner *et al.*, 2010). Although most support activities are functional in character and can be performed solely by matrix structures, some of these activities like Infrastructure or Research and Development works do need a Projectized Organizational Structure to perform efficiently. One of the most important aspects of Projectized Organizations is the level of control over time, cost and resources that it ensures making it the most effective, efficient and economical organizational type to perform any clearly defined work (Thiry & Deguire, 2007).

Responsibility

In pre-modern times the basis of appointment of any government official in Europe was loyalty to the crown. It didn't matter if they were fit for the job, if they had the requisite skills to perform the job, or even if they cared to perform the job; only thing that mattered was *the pleasure of the crown*. Amazingly in India, even today bureaucrats are appointed at the *pleasure of the president*. Their tenure, terms of service, their removal and everything else is determined at the pleasure of the president. The system is so rigid that once a bureaucrat is appointed even the *devil* cannot harm him in anyway (Hager, 1973). The only part of executive that is elected is the council of ministers. Researchers argue that *elections ~ responsibility* whereas *appointments ~ skill*, but in fact neither of these is strictly true. Elections relate to responsibility only as much as constituents are aware of their rights and the elected officials are in close proximity of the electors (in other words approachable) (Phillips, 1998). Appointments relate to skill and quality only if the process of selection is scientific and is based on sound managerial logic. Also, in this context skill means relevant skills, not unrelated ones, there's no logic in appointing an engineer a health officer (Qadir, 2008). The top line of the executive is elected and is in charge of policy making, whereas the bureaucracy which is appointed takes care of the policy implementation part. It is commonly accepted, albeit erroneously, that primarily our problems lie in implementation rather than formulation (Sheikh & Porter, 2010). Even if we agree with this view, it only leads to one logical conclusion that the problem of implementation of policy exists because the appointed executive (bureaucracy) cannot be made responsible to the citizens. The reason elected executives sit on top of the bureaucracy is to ensure responsibility to the citizens, but in reality, it is far from truth. The bureaucracy as it is; is formed up of *jack of all trades* and with time as they gain enough experience in bureaucratic malpractices that they become practically indispensable in order to ensure smooth functioning of the government. Their aid and advice become critical in policy formulation and instead of the elected executive making bureaucracy responsible it is the bureaucracy that teaches the council of ministers how to become irresponsible. It is clear that elections do not ensure responsibility towards the citizens and neither do appointments ensure skilled quality of workforce. In order to circumnavigate these issues and ensure responsibility from top to bottom within the executive branch of government and also at the same time to ensure quality and relevant skill within the workforce, we need to look past the traditional notions of elections and appointments. It is of utmost importance to understand that *appointments and elections are not disjoint*

sets. We can introduce a scientific selection process for nominations, as pre-requisites for getting elected; and alternatively, we can introduce elements of election within appointed workforce⁴. Since the days of the British Raj, bureaucrats have been selected on the basis of a single competitive exam. If a candidate is successful in passing that competitive exam, they're considered fit to become a bureaucrat and during the entire course of their career, there is no further need to assess whether or not they're actually capable of performing the work that is expected of a government executive. This competitive exam is generalist in character and designed to test only the memory of the candidate, the British designed it to appoint clerks who could help follow the instructions of their colonial masters. There are different categories of positions that are filled within the colonial Indian bureaucracy; Class I, Class II, Group A, B, C, D etc... and all these categories are filled at different levels. Competitive tests are conducted at each level to fill in these various positions and the eligibility criteria for each one is different, but the basic parameter of all these tests remain the same they test the general knowledge of these candidates and their ability to retain information. None of these tests are conducted to verify any specialized knowledge, experience or skill set (Bertrand, 2015) (Hanna & Wang, 2017).

The only logical explanation is that the colonial bureaucracy is desperately trying to preserve its ambiguous and discretionary character in order to remain a power instrument it has continued to be for the last 250 odd years of its existence. Since bureaucracy is hierarchic and pyramidal in character, no matter in what category an appointment is made, promotions are always time bound and never on the basis of performance. The result of this archaic system is that for workers in the bureaucracy no matter in what category they are, there is never any incentive to perform (Burgess & Ratto, 2003). The appropriate way to ensure career progression would be to introduce a scientific method of selection at each of the 4-6 layers of the matrix organization. It is important that bureaucrats accumulate experience over time, but this should never be the sole criteria for career progression, although it should be one of the essential eligibility criteria to make applications for a position in the higher levels of the hierarchy (Ketelaar *et al*, 2007) (Matheson *et al*, 2007). Appointments of specialists should be made separately for a fixed term for each and every position on each and every level of the matrix and below it on the projectized organization. Eligibility criteria should be scientifically fixed and both specialized education and experience of the applicants must be taken into account by conducting a thorough assessment which should include written tests and interviews. For each and every position in each and every layer of the matrix/projectized organization, job responsibilities must be clearly defined leaving no scope for ambiguity (Ketelaar *et al*, 2007) (Matheson *et al*, 2007). As these appointments are made for a fixed term, applicants must during the assessment make a thorough presentation about their vision for the organization during the term of their employment, and how they would achieve the goals highlighted in their vision. Upon appointment this presentation must take the form of a vision document that clearly identifies specific targets (time, cost and resources) for the entire duration of the employment and should form the basis of performance evaluations of the employee (Ketelaar *et al*, 2007) (Burgess & Ratto, 2003).

At the local level the *Deputy Commissioner/District Magistrate/District Officer* is literally the **King** of the city. They are the tax collector, the magistrate, takes care of all planned development work, oversees all local government work, in charge of education, health, law and order, land records, registrations of births, deaths, marriages, and all other documents, the nodal officer for all e-governance projects, the link between international development efforts and the government, they are literally in charge of any and all work that the government undertakes at the local level (Bandyopadhyay, 2006). Too much power gets concentrated at the top of this pyramid and the only way to fix it is by creating different organizations to take care of all these various works and abolish the position of the Deputy Commissioner and all its variants above and below in the bureaucratic hierarchy. We've already discussed the rightsizing of the government and restructuring of the executive branch getting rid of the pyramidal bureaucracy. The

⁴ The first part of the statement relates to election reforms which can form a topic of another essay.

top of the matrix is occupied by a generalist manager. A functional manager who started out as a specialist but with time and experience acquired knowledge of other related disciplines to become a general manager (Datta & Iskandar-Datta, 2014). This is where there is a need to introduce **popular choice** at the local level; all functional managers within the matrix organizations who have attained a certain level of expertise in their own specialized areas of operation and acquired knowledge of the workings of other operational areas may become eligible to fight in elections for the position of the Generalist Executive Head of the matrix organization. This position should be for a fixed term and at the time of nomination these candidates must make public their detailed plan of work for the duration of their term, their budget and the sources of their revenue. It should take the form of a project with a definite beginning and a definite end, and should clearly define the value addition that such election aims at achieving. The people also must have a **right to trigger a recall** if they feel that the elected representative are not performing in accordance with the plan submitted before election or if they find him/her otherwise incapable of performing the responsibilities of the said office (Serdült & Welp, 2017).⁵ The entire local executive is to be divided into *smaller independent organizations* and their individual organizational structure shall all be based on the Matrix/Projectized organizational structure and not pyramidal.

The result of such restructuring of the executive and establishment of a structurally rational bureaucracy at the local level would clearly be that all the policy implementing agencies at the grass-root level will specialize in their specific areas and will be considerably more effective and efficient owing to their Matrix/Projectized structure, the workforce will be more skilled to their specific tasks and because skilled officials will get elected, it will make the organization more responsible to the public at large, considering that the constituency that elects them is small and closely knit (Dahl, 1994). Furthermore, this will also result in indirectly solving the problem of political education of electorate in the long run by involving them more and more in their own local politics (Jamieson & Birdsell, 1990). As discussed in the previous section, with the abolition of the secretariat and directorate system and restructuring of the executive in such a way that it forms a Matrix/Projectized organization for each government department the effectiveness and efficiency in policy formulation as well as implementation can be substantially improved.

ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOUR

In isolation different human beings may behave in diagonally opposite ways to the same stimulus under same environmental conditions, but in a group, their behaviour is largely similar to every member of the group. Even in a group it is impossible to predict human behaviour to any level of scientific accuracy, although it is possible to foresee patterns in human behaviour through research and analysis of historical behavioural data collected over the same group (Day & Carroll, 2004). Some members of the group may have more influence over the group behaviour than others (Neuman, 1986). Through research and data analysis over time, we can identify the more influential members of the group and by stimulating their individual behaviour, we can influence the overall group behaviour (Smith *et al.*, 1983). These stimuli can be both internal as well as external. Internal stimuli are controlled by the group itself, and if it does not wish to modify its behaviour, internal stimuli will not work. External stimuli are applied from without the group, and are outside the control of the group and whether or not the group likes it; it will have an effect, however big or small, on the behaviour of the group. Freshly appointed civil servants are like isolated individuals, their behaviour is unpredictable; a lot of them have high hopes of serving the nation and people. As soon as they join the bureaucracy; they become part of a group and slowly but steadily, their behaviour starts aligning with the group behaviour. Soon they are corrupted by the lust of power, and start identifying one's responsibility with an emotional attachment to bureaucratic rules rather

⁵ It is absolutely immaterial whether or not recall works or what should its format be or whether or not people understand it and are willing to use it, the most important aspect of structurally rationalizing the bureaucracy is that the people have this right.

than to the wider goals (Heckscher *et al*, 1994). As discussed already, bureaucracy is a power instrument and as an organization it works only towards a goal of grabbing more and more power. As a group; the bureaucracy never intends to lose control over anything, therefore no internal stimulus is ever going to change its inherent behaviour, the only way to effect change within bureaucracy is external stimuli. In India it seems impossible to stimulate it from without either. Reason being; bureaucracy over the past two centuries has penetrated almost every single aspect of the Government in India. It has penetrated the Legislature (through the Cabinet Secretariat, Lok Sabha Secretariat and the Rajya Sabha Secretariat), the Judiciary (through the office of the Registrar General) and it is patently in total control of the Government Executive. Bureaucracy is in total control of all of government finances, revenue, banks and insurance, public relations, public service commissions (appointments), transport, communications, defence, education, health and all of public sector enterprise. There isn't anything left within the entire country that is not being controlled by the bureaucracy. There is simply no place left from where any kind of external stimuli to can be introduced in order to transform the behaviour of the bureaucracy. The only way to fix this issue is to dismantle the existing bureaucracy in its entirety and replace it with a more rational organization whose behaviour can be quantified, measured and altered, if necessary, both from within and without.⁶

The structure of an organization is fixed and it provides us the pathways to exercise control within the organization. But the extent of control within any organizational setup can only be determined by the extent of control an organization has over its overall behaviour. Every action within the organizational setup is a collection of decisions made by individuals at various levels. These decisions are influenced by the behaviour of individuals, and even more so by the collective behaviour of the group of which any particular individual is a part of. In order to maximize control over the organizational decision making, we need to minimize the human influence in decision making. **Process automation** is one of the foremost methods of minimizing human influence in decision making process (Stemberger & Jaklic, 2007) (Kock & McQueen, 1996). Simon (1959) comes up with the idea of **Programmed Decision Making or Structured Decisions** and **Unprogrammed Decision Making or Unstructured Decisions**. In any organizational setup, there will occur events or arise issues or risks, which will have no recorded history. Employees and managers will have no previous experience in dealing with such events, risks or issues, and in such cases, decisions will have to be made after considering all relevant facts and information available, and will depend on the intelligence, logic and bounded rationality of the employee or manager on case. These decisions cannot be programmed and depend on the creativity of the human factor in the organization. Usually, such decisions are left to the top brass of the organization to make as they have the most experience, skills and knowledge to come up with the most rational decisions (Simon, 1972). On the other hand, there are some decisions that can be automated, examples of which may include, decisions made on everyday basis on issues that deal with the normal functioning of the office, decisions made routinely in order to achieve the desired results and goals of the organization or decisions made upon the occurrence or non-occurrence of a certain routine event, which form a clear and certain pattern. These are examples of **programmed decision making**; because there is a recorded history of a unique way in which such decisions have been made in past save exceptions, it is assumed that in future as well decisions in similar circumstances will be made on the same historic pattern. These are decisions that can be automated (Simon, 1959) (Simon, 1972). Mostly these decisions involve the procedure and processes followed within the organization and decisions relating to day-to-day routine and repetitive work that is carried out by organizations in order to achieve their desired goal and results. For example; garbage collection is a routine function which can be automated and human influence on such decision making

⁶ The only way to achieve such a change is by replacing the current irrationally bureaucratic public institutions with a more structurally rational organizational setup. The problem with all kinds of rationality that have formed a part of the discourse in social sciences till now is that it deals with the rationality of individual human beings and their so-called rational behavior. However, in every single case it fails to recognize the inherent humanity of the human beings inter alia their unique individuality. There is no possibility of creating scientific criteria on which behavioral rationality in humans can be measured or predicted. The only other option is **structured rationality** (Kumar, 2025).

can be eliminated. Automation in this context does not mean mechanization or to be performed by machines only eliminating all human involvement altogether, it only means that employees will not have any influence over making decisions. In the above example, employees will not decide whether or not to collect garbage, it is pre-decided for them and they just have to follow the instructions.

Information technology plays a pre-eminent role in process automation in any organization. **Transaction Processing Systems, Knowledge Management Systems, Management Information Systems, Decision Support Systems, Executive Support Systems** are just a few examples of information technology tools that can be used to automate processes within organizations and Enhance decision making (Scherer & Schapke, 2011) (Gorry & Scott Morton, 1971) (Lee *et al*, 2002). While dealing with decision making at the lower levels of the matrix and the projectized organization; we use database tools like the TPS (transaction processing system) or KMS (knowledge management systems). For entry level employees with no or negligible experience even as specialists and with limited skills acquired only through education and training, these systems provide the best tools to perform their responsibilities. It is designed in such a way that for every transaction there can only be a limited number of responses, like; YES, NO, ESCALATE or APPROVE, DISAPPROVE, ESCALATE or PERFORMED, NOT PERFORMED, ESCALATE. They are designed to operate on the basis of a series of closed ended questions, the answers to which determine the next step in the process. Contact centres, customer service desks and technical support are typical examples where these systems are widely in use. The purpose of using such a system at the lower levels is to ensure consistency in decision making and eliminating discretion from the decision-making process resulting in equal treatment of all citizens and cutting off all chances of corruption, nepotism and favouritism. Since it is a software tool it is also very easy to record, retrieve and analyse responses, in order to ensure exceptional quality of service (Scherer & Schapke, 2011).

Performance Management and Quality Assurance

At present, there is no defined process of managing performance or assuring quality of service within the Indian Bureaucracy. The only method by which some sort of notional control over the work of the bureaucracy is exercised is through the office of auditor. Furthermore, the auditor only concerns itself with the financial workings of the government and not the overall performance. In any case, since this office of the CAG, is also bureaucratic in nature, even this notional control has over time evolved into a mechanism of exercising control over the elected council of ministers rather than controlling the bureaucracy, thus restricting the powers of the elected executive and ever-increasing the powers of the bureaucracy (Sukhtankar, 2013). In order for any organization to function properly every individual within the organization must be motivated enough work towards achieving the goal of the organization. In other words, the personal goals of every individual must be harmonized with the organizational goal in such a way that they achieve their personal goals in achieving the organizational goal. Only in this case will they perform to the best of their abilities and the organization will achieve its strategic goals (Barnard, 1968). Both performance management and quality assurance have the same purpose; achievement of the strategic goals of the organization. Whereas Quality Assurance is conducted from the perspective of the customers (in this case citizens); Performance Management takes into account the perspectives of employees and the organization as a whole (Kaplan & Norton, 1992). Quality Assurance can only be conducted whenever there is a direct or indirect interaction between the citizens and any government executive. This interaction may take the form of a (direct) conversation, in person or through voice, video or electronic means, or it may take the form of (indirect) transmission of data or information in the form of a work package. In both the above cases, the satisfaction of the citizen must be paramount. There is little doubt about the fact that the perception of quality in service will be patently subjective and every citizen shall expect a different standard, but there is also no doubt about the fact that there will be a minimum level of standard that every citizen shall accept. The aim should be to exceed this minimum level of expectation for each and every transaction. A modified version of *Net Promoters Score* can be utilized to measure the level of satisfaction among citizens. The net promoter score was developed as a

tool to measure customer satisfaction in a competitive environment (Reichheld, 2003). Problem with the government executive is that for most part it is a monopoly and the citizens do not have a choice. Not a lot of research has been conducted so far to adapt this popular tool into measuring citizen satisfaction. Although it's very difficult to introduce competition among government departments, except wherever it is involved in some kind of commercial activity, it is fairly possible to introduce some sort of competitiveness amongst individual workers within the organization. Once a level of competition among workers is achieved, which can then be related to their performance benefits, a score similar to the NPS can be used to measure citizen satisfaction⁷.

In order to manage performance within the government departments, we first of all need to identify the long term and short-term goals of the organization. These goals then need to be harmonized with the personal goals of all the employees working within the organization. Most modern performance management systems provide a Top-Down approach towards aligning individual goals with organizational strategic vision (Kaplan & Norton, 2000). A top-down approach works perfectly well in a privately owned organization, where the strategic goal is focused solely on shareholders' interest, but in government organizations where community interests are involved a bottom-up approach is more advisable (Fraser *et al*, 2006). A large amount of research has been conducted in order to find the right formula for optimising performance within organizations, and various models have been proposed; ABC (Activity based costing), TQM (Total Quality Management), MBO (Management by Objectives), BPR (Business Process Re-engineering), BSC (Balanced Scorecard) are just a few of the popular ones.

Balanced Scorecard is indeed the most popular model amongst performance managers today, and it has been adopted into public management by adding a 5th perspective of *Employee Empowerment* into its original model (which was developed for private enterprise and consisted only of 4 perspectives namely; *Financial, Customer, Internal Process* and *Learning and Feedback*). BSC quantifies and measures performance on the basis of these 5 perspectives (Kaplan & Norton, 1996). It is important that at this stage we recognize the fact that government organizations are quite bulky in size and once the old bureaucracy is dismantled and a matrix/projectized organization is assembled, it will still have multiple specialized functional and projectized units within the organization, which will work towards performing a specific work or task that will collectively lead towards the achievement of organizational goals. BSC model identifies these as SBUs or strategic business units and it quantifies and measures the performance of each unit individually and also collectively (Kaplan & Norton, 1996). Furthermore; it quantifies and measures the performance of each individual worker in addition to measuring the performance of the organization as a whole. Once the scorecard is created it is very easy to identify which areas of the organization need which specific kind of attention or which employee may need what specific training or motivation to perform to their optimum level (Kaplan & Norton, 1996).

CONCLUSION

Whether we choose to agree with Hegel or Wilson's evolutionary perspective on the development of political sociology or we agree with Max Weber's social transformation idea, we will always reach the same destination, the present state of bureaucracy in our society. The journey may have taken different paths but the destination is always the same. In fact, the paths could not have been different either, both as the journey never ends, and in each temporal era of human history no matter which perspective we follow, at any given point in time, the destination was always the same, it's just the perspective of these philosophers which was different (Sager & Rosser, 2009). In order to understand the manner in which modern bureaucracy works there is no better theory than what Weber propounded at the turn of the 20th century and more so his methodology of constructing pure-types in order to explain what ideally should

⁷ It is important to conduct further research in this area to find out methods of applying NPS in the government sector.

be, rather than what is and gives us the freedom to dream of a utopia while still remaining grounded in reality. However, his conception of rationality, which later formed the basis of the rational choice theories and the public choice theories, stood on the foundation of the idea of rationality of human mind, and therefore its choices. By putting ourselves in the actors' shoes we can decrypt the reason behind their actions, but only from our point of view and not their point of view. In other words; our assumptions that it was a certain type of rational act is more a judgement on our rationality than that of the actor, for them it may have been a completely different kind of rationality. And therein lays the problem with the understanding of the rationality of human mind.

Structured Rationality on the other hand does not care about the human mind or how it behaves, its only concern is creating, social, political or organisational structures, which can maximise the rationality of decision making in a human group setting (Kumar, 2025). At the very same time it also means creating these structures in such a way that behavioural irrationalities (or lower forms of rationalities; in Weberian terms) are minimised. Going back to Weber, Hegel or Wilson's understanding of modern bureaucracy, it is clear that in a lot of ways their conceptualisations of historical social transformations or evolutions also deal with the changes that human society has undergone. And the majority of such changes have been to the social structures, political structures and organisational structures, rather than any substantial change in the perceived rationality of human mind. This leads us to the assumption that the transformation or evolution cannot stop, and with each passing generation, we must strive to create a more and more structurally rational social, political and organisational setup. The structured rationality defined in this essay is not without limitations and definitely not the answer to all of our societal problems; however, it definitely is a solution to some of the more pronounced bureaucratic problems of India. Undoubtedly, more research would lead to even better versions of this structurally rational bureaucracy, and no doubt finding perfection in a setting which is defined by human imperfections is impossible. Our aim should not be creating any ideal type structure; it should be to continually improve on the structure that exists and keep dreaming of the un-realizable utopia.

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