

Public Administration

SECTION A

Q1(a) Imperfect market and political factors limit the application of Public Choice approach. Explain.

Public Choice theory, associated with **James Buchanan and Gordon Tullock**, explains administrative behaviour using economic rationality and self-interest. However, its application in public administration is constrained by institutional realities.

- **Imperfect market conditions**
 - Public goods lack price signals and competition
 - Absence of exit options limits efficiency discipline
 - Information asymmetry weakens rational choice assumptions
- **Political and administrative constraints**
 - Administrators operate under constitutional values, not profit motives
 - Democratic accountability prioritises equity and welfare
 - Electoral pressures and coalition politics distort cost–benefit logic
- **Theoretical critique**
 - **Herbert Simon’s bounded rationality** challenges hyper-rational assumptions
 - **Dwight Waldo** emphasised the value-laden nature of administration

Hence Public Choice is useful in exposing rent-seeking, but imperfect markets and democratic norms limit its universal applicability in public administration.

Q1(b) “The fine art of decision-making is not making decisions that others can make.” Comment.

The art of decision making in particular specific domains is the essence of **strategic leadership in administration**, distinguishing between routine and higher-order decision-making.

- **Theoretical grounding**
 - **Herbert Simon**: programmed vs non-programmed decisions
 - **Chester Barnard**: executives must focus on strategic decision zones
- **Administrative significance**
 - Routine decisions should be delegated for efficiency
 - Leadership attention must focus on:
 - Policy choices
 - Crisis situations
 - Value conflicts
 - Inter-organisational coordination
- **Organisational impact**

- Over-centralisation causes delay and demotivation
- Delegation builds institutional capacity and accountability

Hence Effective decision-making lies in **judicious non-decision**, enabling leaders to focus on complex, high-impact administrative challenges.

Q1(c) Has the media mixed its role of accountability and transparency? Argue.

Media is a key institution of democratic accountability, often described as the **Fourth Estate**, but its role has become increasingly contested.

- **Positive contribution**
 - Investigative journalism exposes corruption
 - Enhances transparency and citizen awareness
- **Emerging distortions**
 - Commercialisation and political alignment
 - Sensationalism and trial-by-media
 - Blurring of news and opinion
- **Theoretical perspective**
 - **Habermas**: distortion of the public sphere
 - **Waldo**: accountability must be institutional, not populist
- **Digital media challenge**
 - Speed over verification
 - Polarisation and misinformation

As such Media remains vital for accountability, but its democratic role depends on ethical journalism, institutional responsibility, and informed citizenship.

Q1(d) Is Herbert Simon justified in calling administrative principles “proverbs”? Analyse

Herbert Simon critiqued classical administrative theory, particularly the principles advanced by **Gulick and Urwick**, as lacking scientific validity.

- **Core argument**
 - Principles like unity of command and span of control often contradict each other
 - They function like “proverbs” — context-free and non-testable
- **Theoretical contribution**
 - Introduction of **bounded rationality**
 - Shift from normative prescriptions to behavioural analysis
 - Focus on decision-making as the core of administration
- **Counter-view**
 - Classical principles retain heuristic value
 - Useful as managerial guidelines, not universal laws

As such Simon was justified in rejecting the absolutism of classical principles, though not their limited contextual relevance.

Q1(e) Administrative law evolved from the need to create public administration under law. Elucidate

The expansion of state functions increased administrative discretion, necessitating legal control mechanisms.

- **Purpose of administrative law**
 - Subjects executive power to the **rule of law**
 - Prevents arbitrariness and abuse
- **Key principles**
 - Natural justice
 - Reasonableness
 - Proportionality
- **Institutional mechanisms**
 - Judicial review
 - Tribunals
 - Ombudsman
 - Legislative control over delegated legislation
- **Theoretical support**
 - **Dicey**: supremacy of law
 - **Wade**: control of discretionary power

As such Administrative law legitimises governance by ensuring that administrative authority operates within constitutional and legal limits.

Q2(a) New Public Management has actually been a transitory state in evolution from Traditional Public Administration to what is here called New Public Governance. Examine.

New Public Management (NPM), associated with **Hood and Osborne & Gaebler**, emerged to correct inefficiencies of Traditional Public Administration (TPA).

- **TPA features**
 - Hierarchy, rules, procedural rigidity
- **NPM contributions**
 - Market orientation
 - Performance measurement
 - Managerial autonomy
- **Limitations of NPM**
 - Fragmentation through agencification
 - Weak coordination

- Erosion of public values
- **Shift to New Public Governance**
 - **Rhodes, Osborne:** network-based governance
 - Collaboration among state, market, and civil society

Hence NPM functioned as a **bridge paradigm**, paving the way for governance models that integrate efficiency with legitimacy and collaboration.

Q2(b) Mary Parker Follett pioneered the evolution of socio-psychological approach to the study of organisations. Explain.

Mary Parker Follett was a pioneering thinker who humanised organisational analysis.

- **Core ideas**
 - Organisation as a social system
 - “Power with” rather than “power over”
 - Authority derived from function and situation
- **Socio-psychological contributions**
 - Group dynamics shape behaviour
 - Leadership emerges from interaction
 - Coordination as a continuous process
- **Conflict theory**
 - Conflict is inevitable and constructive
 - Emphasis on integration, not domination

Follett as such laid the foundation for the socio-psychological approach by foregrounding human relationships over mechanical structures.

Q2(c) Under the New Public Management framework, “Public–Private Partnership” challenges the entropy of closed and open models of organisation. Analyse.

Public–Private Partnerships (PPPs) represent hybrid organisational forms under New Public Management.

- **Closed systems**
 - Hierarchy, control, insulation
- **Open systems**
 - Environmental interaction
 - Risk of instability and entropy
- **PPPs as hybrids**
 - Combine public accountability with private efficiency
 - Use contracts and performance benchmarks
- **Theoretical linkage**
 - **Hood:** managerialism

- **Rhodes:** governance networks

PPPs thus challenges organisational entropy by creating structured collaboration, though success depends on regulatory capacity and transparency.

Q3(a) In conflict situations in organisations, leadership migrates to the aggressive and relegates the emotionally matured to the background. Discuss.

Organisational conflict creates uncertainty and urgency, often altering perceptions of effective leadership. In such contexts, leadership tends to shift towards more aggressive actors.

- Conflict situations demand **speed, decisiveness, and visible control**, qualities often associated with aggressive leadership styles.
- As per **McGregor**, stress conditions encourage Theory X behaviour, favouring command-oriented leadership.
- Aggressive leaders provide short-term clarity and mobilisation, making them appear effective during crises.
- Emotionally mature leaders, emphasising dialogue and patience, may be perceived as slow or indecisive in high-pressure situations.
- However, **Goleman's emotional intelligence framework** shows that suppression of emotions and coercion may escalate conflict rather than resolve it.
- Long-term organisational outcomes—trust, cohesion, and morale—are better served by emotionally mature leadership.

Thus, while conflict situations may temporarily elevate aggressive leadership, sustainable resolution and organisational stability require emotionally intelligent and integrative leadership.

Q3(b) The foundations of Public Administration, New Public Management and Public Governance rest on the 'rule of law'. Discuss.

Despite paradigm shifts in administrative thought, the rule of law remains the foundational principle across all major models.

- In **Traditional Public Administration**, rule of law ensures legality, procedural uniformity, and restraint on discretion, consistent with **Dicey's** constitutionalism.
- Under **New Public Management**, managerial autonomy and market mechanisms operate within legally defined contracts and accountability frameworks.
- In **New Public Governance**, where authority is dispersed across networks, rule of law provides legitimacy, protects rights, and regulates non-state actors (**Rhodes**).
- Across paradigms, rule of law prevents arbitrariness and maintains public trust despite changing administrative instruments.

Therefore, while methods of governance have evolved from hierarchy to markets to networks, rule of law continues to anchor administration to constitutional legitimacy and democratic accountability.

Q3(c) The principles of checks and balances count among the most fundamental constitutional values. Comment.

Checks and balances are central to constitutional governance as they prevent concentration and abuse of power.

- Rooted in **Montesquieu's** doctrine, they distribute authority among organs of the state to ensure mutual restraint.
- In public administration, these principles operate through:
 - Legislative oversight of executive action
 - Judicial review of administrative discretion
 - Financial accountability and audit mechanisms
- They balance administrative efficiency with constitutional morality.
- In contemporary governance, checks and balances extend beyond state organs to include media, civil society, and independent regulators.
- Though excessive controls may slow decision-making, absence of checks risks authoritarianism and erosion of rights.

Hence, checks and balances are not procedural constraints alone but essential constitutional values safeguarding liberty, accountability, and democratic governance.

Q4(a) Delegated legislation should be clear and confined to legislative limits. How can misuse of administrative discretion be checked? Explain.

The expansion of delegated legislation has inevitably widened administrative discretion, making control mechanisms essential to prevent arbitrariness.

Misuse of discretion can be checked through multiple safeguards:

- **Legislative controls:** Parent legislation must clearly define policy, objectives, and limits of delegation. Laying procedures and scrutiny committees ensure democratic oversight.
- **Judicial controls:** Courts apply doctrines of **ultra vires**, reasonableness, proportionality, and natural justice to invalidate arbitrary or mala fide action (**Wade**).
- **Administrative safeguards:** Requirement of reasoned orders, internal appeals, tribunals, and ombudsman oversight promote accountability.
- **Transparency mechanisms:** Access to information and public scrutiny reduce scope for abuse.

These controls do not negate discretion but channel it within legal and constitutional boundaries.

Thus, clarity in delegation combined with legal and institutional oversight ensures effective administration without erosion of the rule of law.

Q4(b) Leadership is not only about taking credit for success but also owning up and being accountable for failures. Elucidate.

Leadership in public administration carries ethical and moral responsibility beyond formal authority. While success often results from collective effort, failures test the true character of leadership.

- **Chester Barnard** emphasised that executives bear moral responsibility for organisational outcomes.
- Accountability for failure enhances institutional credibility and public trust.
- Acceptance of responsibility promotes organisational learning and corrective reform rather than blame-shifting.
- In democratic governance, leaders are answerable to citizens, legislatures, and constitutional authorities.
- Avoidance of responsibility distorts incentives, weakens morale, and encourages risk aversion among subordinates.

Effective leadership therefore involves courage to acknowledge failure, protect institutional integrity, and initiate reform.

Hence, leadership is validated not merely by success but by ethical ownership of failure, which strengthens democratic accountability and administrative legitimacy.

Q4(c) “Bureaucracy constitutes the imaginary state and is the spiritualism of the state.” Explain.

The statement reflects the philosophical understanding of bureaucracy as the enduring embodiment of the state.

The state itself is an abstract legal and political construct; bureaucracy gives it operational reality.

- **Hegel** viewed bureaucracy as the “universal class” mediating public interest.
- **Weber** identified bureaucracy as the carrier of rational–legal authority.
- Bureaucracy ensures continuity, stability, and institutional memory despite changing political leadership.
- Through routine administration, it translates constitutional ideals and laws into concrete governance.
- As the “spiritualism of the state,” it internalises values such as legality, neutrality, and service ethos.

Thus, bureaucracy sustains the moral and functional continuity of the state.

Therefore, bureaucracy is not merely an administrative apparatus but the living institutional conscience through which the state exercises authority and legitimacy.

Q5(a) E-advocacy of e-governance can facilitate democratisation of public policy-making. Discuss.

E-advocacy refers to the use of digital platforms by citizens and groups to influence public policy processes. It has significant potential to democratise policymaking.

- Digital tools reduce barriers of access and scale participation beyond traditional elites (**Castells – network society**).
- Online consultations, grievance portals, and social media enable real-time citizen inputs.
- E-advocacy strengthens transparency, responsiveness, and accountability in line with **New Public Governance**.
- It facilitates continuous engagement across policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation.

However, its effectiveness is constrained by digital divides, misinformation, and limited institutional receptivity.

Thus, e-advocacy can democratise public policymaking only when digital inclusion is ensured and administrative systems meaningfully integrate citizen inputs into formal decision-making.

Q5(b) Neo-liberal policies have enhanced the scope and opportunities of taxation for the government. Explain.

Neo-liberal policies emphasise liberalisation, globalisation, and market expansion, which have indirectly widened the taxation capacity of the state.

At the structural level, liberalisation has led to the **formalisation and expansion of economic activity**, especially in the corporate, financial, and service sectors. This has broadened the tax base and increased opportunities for direct taxation. Globalisation has improved **tax administration and compliance** through digitisation, data integration, and alignment with international tax norms. Further, increased consumption under market-led growth has expanded the scope of **indirect taxation**, such as value-added tax and GST-type regimes.

However, neo-liberalism also encourages **tax concessions, rate reductions, and competition for investment**, which can dilute revenue potential and reduce progressivity.

Thus, while neo-liberal policies enhance the *scope* and *opportunities* for taxation structurally, the actual revenue outcome depends on fiscal policy choices, administrative capacity, and redistributive intent of the state.

Q5(c) Policy analysis process is limited if possible outcomes and alternative potential policies are neglected. Discuss.

Policy analysis aims to support rational and informed public decision-making. This objective is seriously constrained when alternative policy options and their possible outcomes are ignored.

A policy framed without examining alternatives tends to reflect **status quo bias**, political convenience, or administrative inertia. **Herbert Simon's concept of bounded rationality** underlines that decision-makers cannot achieve optimality unless choices are systematically compared. Similarly, even **Lindblom's incremental approach** presupposes consideration of feasible alternatives within limited comparisons. Neglecting outcome analysis also increases the risk of **unintended consequences**, policy failure, and inefficient allocation of public resources.

From an administrative perspective, absence of alternatives weakens accountability, as decision-makers cannot justify why one option was preferred over others. It also reduces adaptability, making policies rigid in dynamic social and economic contexts.

Therefore, effective policy analysis must incorporate alternative policy pathways and outcome assessment through tools such as scenario building and impact analysis, to enhance rationality, legitimacy, and policy effectiveness.

Q5(d) Values and ethics in civil services are shaped by global practices and trends. Explain.

In an increasingly interconnected world, values and ethics in civil services are no longer shaped solely by domestic traditions but are significantly influenced by global practices and norms. International organisations such as the UN, OECD, and World Bank promote standards relating to **integrity, transparency, accountability, and anti-corruption**, which national civil services often internalise through reforms.

Global administrative trends—such as results-based management, performance ethics, and codes of conduct—have influenced ethical frameworks under **New Public Management and New Public Governance** paradigms. Cross-national learning, international training programmes, and global benchmarking have further contributed to convergence in ethical standards. However, global influences also pose challenges. Ethical norms transplanted without sensitivity to local administrative culture may weaken indigenous public service values. Excessive managerialism can dilute traditional norms of neutrality and public interest.

Thus, while global practices shape civil service ethics, they must be adapted to domestic constitutional values to ensure legitimacy and contextual relevance.

Q5(e) Economic development alone is not a sufficient component for women's development and empowerment. Discuss.

Economic development, though necessary, is insufficient by itself to ensure women's development and empowerment. Growth in income or employment does not automatically translate into enhanced agency, autonomy, or social status for women.

From a theoretical perspective, **Amartya Sen's capability approach** emphasises that development must expand substantive freedoms, not merely economic resources. In many societies, women continue to face structural barriers such as unequal access to education, healthcare, property rights, and decision-making, even in periods of high economic growth. Cultural norms, unpaid care burdens, and workplace discrimination further limit the empowering effects of economic progress.

Empowerment also has political and institutional dimensions. Participation in governance, legal protection against violence and discrimination, and representation in public institutions are critical. Without these, economic gains may reinforce existing inequalities rather than transform them.

Therefore, women's development requires a multidimensional strategy combining economic growth with social reform, legal empowerment, political participation, and gender-sensitive public policies.

Q6(a) F. W. Riggs' industrial–interdependent economy is a precursor to some features of post-modern public administration. Analyse.

F. W. Riggs, through his prismatic–sala model, highlighted the nature of **industrial–interdependent economies** found in transitional societies. Such economies are characterised by structural overlap, functional diffusion, and coexistence of traditional and modern elements. This analysis anticipates several features associated with post-modern public administration.

Riggs rejected universal administrative principles and emphasised **context, heterogeneity, and complexity**, which aligns with post-modern critiques of grand theories and managerial universalism. His notion of interdependence reflects fragmented authority, multiple actors, and blurred public–private boundaries, all central to contemporary governance and network-based administration. Further, the emphasis on non-linearity and environmental interaction resonates with post-modern stress on plurality, decentralisation, and negotiated order.

However, Riggs remained analytically structured and comparative, whereas post-modern public administration is more interpretive and sceptical of structure itself.

Thus, Riggs' industrial–interdependent economy can be seen as an intellectual precursor that sensitised administrative theory to complexity, diversity, and contextuality later foregrounded in post-modern public administration.

Q6(b) The role and responsibility of the state in the development process has been overemphasised and given undue importance. Critically examine.

The role of the state has historically been accorded central importance in the development process, particularly in post-colonial and welfare-state contexts. Proponents argue that the state is indispensable for correcting **market failures**, providing public goods, ensuring social justice, and building infrastructure, as reflected in Keynesian and developmental state theories.

However, critics contend that excessive reliance on the state has often led to **bureaucratic inefficiency, rent-seeking, fiscal indiscipline, and crowding out of private initiative**. Neo-liberal thinkers argue that overextended states lack the capacity to manage complex economic activities effectively and that markets and civil society can perform many developmental functions more efficiently.

Yet, empirical experience shows that markets alone cannot ensure inclusive development, and weak states exacerbate inequality and exclusion. Successful development experiences point towards a **strategic and enabling state**, rather than a minimal or overbearing one.

Thus, the issue is not overemphasis on the state per se, but undue importance without adequate capacity, accountability, and role clarity in the development process.

Q6(c) Affirmative action for equal opportunity is a cornerstone in recruitment to public service. Discuss it in the global context.

Affirmative action in public service recruitment is widely used to address historical and structural inequalities and to promote representative bureaucracy.

- **Rationale**
 - Ensures equal opportunity for disadvantaged social groups
 - Corrects systemic exclusion from state institutions
 - Enhances legitimacy and inclusiveness of public administration
- **Global practices**
 - **United States:** affirmative action in public employment to address racial discrimination
 - **South Africa:** employment equity policies to redress apartheid-era injustices
 - **India:** reservation system based on social and educational backwardness
 - **Canada and Australia:** employment equity for indigenous and minority groups
- **Theoretical justification**
 - **Rawls' principle of fair equality of opportunity**
 - Concept of representative bureaucracy (Kingsley)
- **Challenges**
 - Merit versus equity debate
 - Social resistance and politicisation
 - Need for periodic review and contextual adaptation

Thus, affirmative action remains a cornerstone globally, but its legitimacy depends on balanced design, evidence-based application, and continuous evaluation.

Q7(a) The objective of Liberalisation, Privatisation, Globalisation and New Public Management was to limit government functions and reduce public expenditure. However, both have increased. Account for the paradox. (~150 words)

LPG reforms and New Public Management (NPM) aimed at downsizing the state and reducing fiscal burden, yet in practice government functions and expenditure have expanded.

- **Transformation, not retreat, of the state**
 - Government shifted from direct provision to regulation and oversight
 - Privatisation created new regulatory and monitoring responsibilities
- **Expansion of social and redistributive roles**
 - Market-led growth increased inequality, necessitating higher social sector spending
 - Welfare commitments in health, education, and social protection expanded
- **Governance and transaction costs**
 - Contract management, PPPs, and outsourcing increased administrative expenditure
 - Risk regulation and compliance costs grew
- **Theoretical explanation**
 - **Osborne and Gaebler:** shift from “rowing” to “steering,” not withdrawal

Thus, LPG and NPM did not reduce the role of the state; they redefined it. The state became more regulatory, coordinative, and welfare-oriented, leading to increased functions and expenditure despite reform objectives.

Q7(b) The basis of comparative study of public administration has evolved from the institutional approach to the contemporary political–economic process approach. Have all these approaches enabled the development of a theory of Comparative Public Administration? Justify.

Comparative Public Administration (CPA) has evolved through multiple analytical approaches, each expanding understanding but falling short of a unified theory.

- **Institutional approach**
 - Focused on formal structures and legal frameworks
 - Limited by descriptive and ethnocentric bias
- **Behavioural approach**
 - Examined administrative behaviour and decision-making
 - Improved empirical depth but lacked cross-national generalisability
- **Ecological approach (F. W. Riggs)**
 - Emphasised environment–administration interaction
 - Rejected universal administrative principles
- **Political–economic process approach**
 - Linked administration with power, class, and global capitalism
 - Highlighted dependency and structural constraints
- **Assessment**
 - Generated rich comparative insights
 - Findings remain context-specific and non-predictive

Thus, while these approaches have deepened comparative understanding, they have not produced a coherent, predictive theory. CPA functions more as an analytical framework than as a grand theoretical system.

Q7(c) Can competency mapping linked to career development incentivise civil servants' commitment to effective service delivery? Elaborate.

Competency mapping, when integrated with career development, can significantly enhance civil servants' motivation and commitment to effective service delivery.

- **Conceptual basis**
 - Identifies skills, knowledge, and behavioural competencies required for roles
 - Links performance with progression, training, and rewards
- **Incentive effects**
 - Provides clarity on expectations and career pathways
 - Encourages continuous learning and skill upgradation
 - Reduces arbitrariness in promotion and postings
- **Theoretical support**
 - **New Public Management** emphasis on performance and outcomes
 - **Herzberg's motivation theory**: growth and recognition as motivators
- **Limitations**
 - Risk of over-managerialism and target fixation
 - Requires transparent appraisal systems and institutional trust

Thus, competency mapping can incentivise commitment only when embedded in a fair, merit-based, and development-oriented personnel system. Without institutional integrity, it may degenerate into a procedural exercise rather than a motivational tool.

Q8(a) The effectiveness of civil society in the development process is only when state institutions are receptive to inputs from civil society organisations.

Discuss.

Civil society organisations (CSOs) play a vital role in development through advocacy, service delivery, and social mobilisation. However, their effectiveness is contingent upon the receptiveness of state institutions.

- **Role of state receptiveness**
 - Enables incorporation of grassroots knowledge into policy design
 - Facilitates participatory governance and democratic accountability
 - Strengthens policy legitimacy and implementation effectiveness
- **Theoretical grounding**
 - **New Public Governance** emphasises collaborative networks
 - **Habermas' public sphere** highlights dialogue between state and society
- **Empirical dimensions**
 - CSOs succeed where governments institutionalise consultation mechanisms

- Non-receptive states reduce CSOs to symbolic or oppositional roles
- **Limitations**
 - Excessive dependence on state approval may compromise CSO autonomy
 - Risk of co-optation and selective engagement

Thus, civil society contributes meaningfully to development when the state is institutionally open, responsive, and willing to integrate societal inputs while respecting civil society's independence.

Q8(b) Evaluate the role and scope of tacit knowledge and personal experience as an important source of knowledge in the policy-making process.

Policy-making is not driven solely by formal data and technical expertise; **tacit knowledge and personal experience** play a significant complementary role.

Tacit knowledge, as explained by **Michael Polanyi**, refers to context-specific, experiential understanding that cannot be fully codified. In public administration, policymakers and civil servants draw upon field experience, administrative memory, and situational judgment to interpret complex realities that quantitative data may miss.

- **Role**
 - Helps in problem definition and agenda setting
 - Aids adaptive decision-making under uncertainty
 - Enhances feasibility and implementability of policies
- **Scope**
 - Particularly relevant in street-level administration (**Lipsky**)
 - Crucial in crisis management and dynamic policy environments
- **Limitations**
 - Risk of bias, subjectivity, and path dependency
 - Needs balancing with evidence-based policy tools

Thus, tacit knowledge enriches policy-making when used alongside systematic analysis, not as a substitute for it.

Q8(c) The efficacy of management aid tools depends on the purpose and appropriateness of tools and techniques. Explain with examples.

Management aid tools are designed to improve administrative efficiency and decision-making, but their effectiveness depends on contextual suitability and clarity of purpose.

Different tools serve different administrative objectives:

- **Examples of tools and appropriateness**
 - **PPBS**: effective for resource allocation and long-term planning, but unsuitable in unstable environments

- **Zero-Based Budgeting (ZBB)**: useful for expenditure rationalisation, yet administratively demanding
- **Management by Objectives (MBO)**: enhances goal clarity, but may encourage target fixation
- **SWOT analysis**: aids strategic planning, but offers limited operational guidance
- **Theoretical basis**
 - Contingency approach rejects “one best way” (critique of classical management)
 - Emphasised in **New Public Management**, but refined under New Public Governance

Misapplication of tools can distort priorities and reduce effectiveness. Therefore, management aid tools yield results only when aligned with administrative capacity, organisational culture, and policy objectives, rather than being adopted as universal solutions.