

Public Organization and Management
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Lecture – 11
Environment of Public Organizations – III

Hello, dear learners. Let me continue the discussion on the environmental factors and its impact on the functioning of public organizations. In the previous two sessions, I have talked about the background of the environmental factors and the discussion on the technological environment of these organizations and how technology has impacted the functioning of the organization in various ways. And we have looked at various examples, Indian case studies and some of the research insights. In this particular session, I am going to start with the political, environmental and factor of impact in terms of understanding how the political environment impacts the functioning of the public organization. So, we are done with the technological factor, we are going to start with political factors.

Now, the impact of political processes and the institution, the form of government or degree of political stability and political authority, they impact the functions of the public organization. That is the meaning of the political factor. Now, you know, how the political processes are and what is the role of these institutions, what type of government is there, what is the degree of political stability, who is the, and who are the people in political authority and their way of functioning, it all actually impacts the functioning of public organizations.

Let us look at how it is impacting in a very general sense and then I will talk about in a little more detail about the challenges and issues of changes in the political environment and its subsequent impact on the functioning of public organizations. Now, first of all, if you look at the political interest, I'm talking about political authority as interest. Now, depending upon the change in the political interest, let's say with the change in the changing priorities of the political authority, the goals of public organizations also change. because the organizations are embedded in the larger government systems. So, whosoever is the political authority, if there is a change in their priority in terms of the specific kind of the policy design implementation or in terms of the interference in the functioning of the organization, if the priority changes in terms of the programs or the policies or the demands, hence it has an impact on the goals of the public organizations.

You please recall, I have talked about that inside environment has to be changed or adapted to the changes in the outside environment. So, let's say there is a change in the political interest, it also will force the organization to change there. own priorities to

match with the demands of the political authority. Now, when this happens, the public managers who are the representatives of the public organizations, they also face shifting priorities. At one point in time, the priority is something else.

Now, suddenly something happened outside the organizational boundary, political interest change because it is dynamic, ultimately it has an impact on the goals of the public organization and hence the shifting priorities for public managers. I suggest readers to go through the paper which is given at the source number 2, Pandey and Wright, Connecting the Doors in Public Management, Political Environment, Organizational Goal Ambiguity and Public Manager's Role Ambiguity. It is published in Journal of Administration Research and Theory. It's a very good paper in terms of understanding the impact of the political environment on the functioning of the organization. Now, what happens is when these public managers, they face shifting priorities, this also has an impact on managerial activities.

Why? Because the changing organizational goals and if they are in ambiguity, it is not clear, they are vague, it also leads to managerial role ambiguity because the managers would not know what exactly is the organization wants from them because there is a lot of vagueness in terms of There is a lot of ambiguity in terms of what goals the organization would like to pursue because this continues a change in the political interest and hence the organizational goals. So it also impacts the managerial activities because it leads to a lot of managerial role ambiguity in terms of their understanding of the various activities that they are doing. Now, we are talking about the public organizations which are embedded in the larger government structures. So, it also has impact on the structure, the politics also has impact on the structure of public organizations in terms of bureaucracy. And about bureaucracy, I have discussed at length in the module 2 and of course, in the module 1.

So, I would like you to go back to those particular sessions and see how bureaucracy has been conceptualized and been talked about. and how it is impacting the functioning of the government organization. So, I will not go to the detail of this aspect here because it has already been covered in the previous sessions. are key aspects of the political environment that how the environment of political you know the aspects are related to the functioning of the public organizations so the first is political support and resource allocation so we look at first of all the political support now many studies have indicated like you can go to the you know the source mentioned here they have indicated that the political support positively correlates with better resource allocation for program implementation.

Let's say I'm talking about the public agency. If public agency, any public agency, it's not about any particular, any public agency, if they have very strong political support in the environment, what happen is, they can have better resource allocation from the side of the

government and can get full support for the program implementations, which will have lesser intervention from the political authority and the government. Because the relationships, the kind of support that you are receiving from that particular organization, that particular political authority is much more, right? Now, this is basically a political backing from the officials who are elected because it's very, very crucial for the public organization. So, if you do not have that kind of support, if you don't have that kind of, you know, competence from the political authority, it will be difficult for you to actually pursue your activities in a very effective and smooth manner. Now, what does the political support do? It provides much more authority and autonomy needed to implement policies effectively. Sometimes you have to take some kind of decisions and if those decisions are not well received by the political authority, ultimately it will have impact on the way you want to function.

Now, that is why we talked about that this particular support is actually linked with the better outcomes for the public organizations. So, if you can recall our discussion in the module 1, where we have talked about the paper by Professor Mark Moore, on fundamentals of public management, conception of public management. In that, I have talked about this aspect also. That relationship building with the political authority is also one of the important features of public management because the support that you receive from the political authority and the government is important for managing the inside activities of your organization.

Otherwise, you will have to have lot of interference from the world outside. Another is it also impacts the performance of the organization. Like when we talk about environments where the political support is strong, public organizations have more autonomy and resources which actually facilitate adoption of the performance management policies that align with their goals. Now, if it is reversed, the lack of political support can hinder organizational effectiveness and resource availability. You can be denied.

For example, in terms of resource, if you look at your budgets may be cut. You may not be given much freedom in terms of doing your activities. So, this also relates to the performance of the public organizations. Another important key aspects of critical environment is goal ambiguity and organizational behavior. Now, what is the meaning of ambiguity? The concept of ambiguity is also been covered in the next theme, when I talked about the goals and organizational performance.

I am going to talk about very briefly about the organizational goal ambiguity. Now, we talked about this when there are changing political interest or there are, you know, continuous changing political priorities, it gives also organizations or I will say put pressures on the organization to change their own organizational goals, right. So, these conflicting interests, what it does is, this among political parties may lead to unclear objectives for organization, bringing organizations to a grinding halt. So, because you are

not clear about this, you do not know what to do. So, this ambiguity can result in lot of confusion among employees.

So, I am talking about organizational behavior means what kind of behaviors are expected from the managers. But when they are not sure what is expected in terms of and how they should align their attitudes and behaviors with the implementation of the program it is not clear ultimately it have the you know the implications negative implications for the you know overall performance of the organization Also, the fragmentation of authority. Separation of powers within government structures can lead to fragment authority. Now, we talk about the concept of separation of powers in the next module on accountability and control. But in here, just try to understand that when you have multiple sources of power being exercised on you, lead to fragmented authority, this also can create a lot of role confusion among employees impacting performance.

Whom to listen to? Whom demands are to be met? Whose priorities are to be taken into consideration? So, all these are the issues and important aspects of the political environment. Another is influence of political stability. We talk about the concept of stability and instability in the political environment. If the political environment is stable, for long term it is stable, there is no much changes happening there if the environment is stable. It actually fosters the conducive environment whereas instability disrupt operations and create uncertainty.

So, if there is continued to be lot of instability in the environment, a lot of changes happening, a lot of disturbances in the environment, what happen is the environment of the organization is not going to be conducive, right? It's continued to shake the environment of the organization and give organization tougher times in order to do their activities in a smooth manner. So, because a lot of uncertainty is there in the environment, right? Now, it says that adaptability Though adaptability in terms of happening changes in the political stability are as an aspect and the organization response in terms of adaptability. The study says that those who effectively manage relationships with political stakeholders are better positioned to thrive changes. There could be the case of critical instability, changing priorities. But the organizations who better are adapting to the changes or how they are adapting to changes because they actually share very good relationships or they effectively manage their relationship with the political stakeholders in order to get lot of support.

You can recall on, you know, see the previous point on political support and resource allocation. If the administrators, they effectively manage the relationship with the political shareholders, you know, they are better positioned to thrive changes because you will get all the support that you require from the political authority in order to do your functions in a better way. Now, there are also challenges from political interferences. For example, if there is interference in the administration, meaning how you are continuing or

conducting the inside activities in the organization, if there is excessive interference from the political authority, it can actually hinder administrative functions. that's how we talked about the effective management of the relationship can actually help organizations to take care of this right so you maintain those relationship you do what they want from you but in terms of managing your relationship you ask for more support and if you get it your life is easy in terms of doing your function properly but if it is not if there is a lot of interference from the outside you know the political environment it can actually hinder the administrative functions right Then there can also be corruption and ethical concerns.

It says that the public organizations, because they are embedded in the government, the larger government setup, there is always a risk of the aspects of corruption and the concerns related to the ethics. So it is important that the organizations maintain integrity and accountability in their operations in order to come across as very transparent organizations. And because the organizations are held accountable for their actions, all the actions that they are taken, it can be in terms of the policy success or the failures or whatever happening with the money being allocated. So all these things are to be kept transparent, information shared properly with the public and the others, you know, the important interest groups outside. Because, you know, in the public organization, there is a risk of all these aspects, you know, corruption happening or there are issues related to the ethics and others.

So, it is important for the public organizations to maintain integrity and accountability in their operations. Another important aspects of political environment, right? Now, the next factor is the ecological factor. It is more of the concern for the environment we are talking about, ecological. Now, in this aspect, we are talking about the impact of climate change, pollution, physical environment, natural resources preservation on functioning of public organizations. how does it impact the functioning of public organization you know with respect to climate change or pollution or physical environment now it says that because these changes are happening outside and these changes can be sometimes detrimental and can have negative consequences on the natural environment can disturb the ecosystem and it has negative implications for the citizens and all the people of the country.

So, it will actually has an environment where the public organizations or agencies are to focus on creation of agencies for protection. This is policy making thing. Climate change. right the pollution and preservation of national resources so whose duty is it to we have to create put in place the mechanisms put in place the agencies who will take care of this environmental protection right public organization going green to mitigate the impact of their operations on the environment. So, it is not only true for public organizations, all the organizations these days are much more talking about the concept of sustainability.

So, they are talking about how they are, because they are taking resources from the outside and do their business. So, it is their responsibility to take care of the environment also. Environment talking about in terms of ecological environment. They need to take care of how much resources they are using, the resources are being depleted, the resources are going to not be available for future generations. So, these are the concerns which are to be taken in consideration very, very seriously because the resources should be made available for people in time to come.

Now, the public organization, in fact, all the organizations going green to mitigate the impact of their operations on environment. I just mentioned that because of the operations that the organizations are doing, it is actually having impact on natural environment. So how they are adopting or following the best practices being used by other organizations in order to take care of the sustainability aspect, right? Also, there is a pressure on government organization to lead the sustainability initiatives. I have talked about this because these are the one on the functioning of this organization, the functioning of other organization also depends in. So, rule making, regulations which are to be followed by all the organizations. So, in that way, the government organizations are actually pressurized to take the lead in the sustainability initiatives. Now, one of the interesting paper I've just mentioned is Dumay et al. in 2013. Please refer to this thing. They say that there is a change in their role from education to environmental services.

So, this is basically what they have to do from educating to providing environmental services and from planning to social care when we talk about the aspect of education. ecological environment is very crucial whose role the public organization role is very crucial for delivery of sustainable development they are to educate they have to provide environmental services they are to you know plan for the social care and so and so forth right Now, influence on policy and governance. Ecological governance. How you will make sure that this is being governed properly? Public organizations need to integrate environmental sustainability and economic development. So, they have to put in place the programs or the action plans which takes off the sustainability agenda for the nation.

If you know about, we also I think talked about the aspect of sustainable development goals. United Nations has provided around 17 sustainable development goals and every country, nation is coming up with their own plan that how they are going to achieve those sustainable development goals which are being set. Now, how you will put in place as a government or a public organization, put in place the system to take care of the ecological governance. For example, National Action Plan on Climate Change is one particular example of the mechanism of governance, ensuring ecological governance. Now, in this context, what happened is the National Action Plan on Climate Change is basically a program of the Government of India to address the impact of the climate change.

This plan, which was launched under the guidance of the Prime Minister's Council on Climate Change, it has talked about the eight national missions. For example, National Solar Mission, National Mission for enhanced energy efficiency, national mission on sustainable habitat, national water mission, national mission for sustaining the Himalayan ecosystem, national mission for Green India and others. So, it is important that these kinds of action plans are put in place so that it takes care of the aspect of ecological governance and how as the public organization or government or as nation, we stand by integrating the environmental sustainability and economic development. So policy development is another influence on policy and governance in terms of there is a need of policies that addresses the climate change or biodiversity loss sustainable resource management by following the sustainable management practices such as adopting the green technologies. So, this is very very important because these innovative approaches to policy making that consider ecological impacts alongside traditional economic metrics is also worth consideration.

Not only we are to look at the economic outcomes because see the money has to come for all the business organization it is important that they continue to sustain their position they have money. At the same time there are two other important pillars also which are ecological and social sustainable outcomes. So, we cannot ignore the other pillars also of sustainable development. Another is resource management, sustainable practices, organization need to implement sustainable practices in their operations such as green technologies, reducing waste and promoting energy efficiency. I am giving you some examples of how organization can build the system inside the organization which takes care of the aspects of ecological environment.

Ecosystem services benefits provided by natural ecosystem need to be considered into urban planning and development projects. So whenever the public organization and government are coming up with the plans for the infrastructure development, the urban planning and development projects, it is to be taken care of that the natural ecosystems are not disturbed, they are preserved for more resources generation in time to come. So, there should also be put in place the mechanisms for creating more awareness about the optimal utilization of resources, effective utilization of resources, resource regeneration, reducing the waste or recycling. So, these are some of the aspects related to ecological environment.

And then, you also have stakeholder engagement. Involve the community, including citizens and environmental groups. It is essential for effective ecological governance. So, as individual organization, we will not be able to do everything. So, it is important that we involve the citizens in the process of how the environment is to be taken care of. For example, my government idea box, the people can share their views on, how they can help, how certain things can be adapted in terms of bringing in changes in the ecological environment. Public awareness campaigns can also be used. Public organizations need to

implement campaigns to raise awareness about environmental issues. Now, what these initiatives will do? These initiatives can actually foster community participation in sustainability efforts, and thereby enhancing the effectiveness of ecological policies.

I am taking an example of Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam. This is the campaign to plant a tree in the name of mother and create a lasting memory, which is not only protect the environment, but also contribute to building a greener and prosperous future. So, the idea here is that the both mother and nature are fundamental basis of life. So, please go through this particular campaign which is mentioned on the resource number 3 here. It is going to give you much more interesting insights on how these kind of campaigns are helping in engaging these stakeholders in terms of citizens involvement, community involvement in taking care of the effective ecological governance. At the same time, there are institutional barriers, challenges which are being faced in terms of organizations going for implementing the sustainability initiatives in terms of ecological environment.

There are political and institutional barriers. Public organizations often encounter political resistance or institutional inertia when attempting to implement ecological initiatives. Sometimes it is because of the budgets, sometimes the priorities are different because there are limited resources that you have. limited funding is there. So, these resources can hinder the abilities of public organizations to adopt comprehensive ecological strategies. For example, if you don't have budget and you have the priorities for the economic outcomes first and you sometimes ignore to go for the sustainability initiative.

So, these are some kinds of resource that you have to make a choice. I'm not saying that economic outcomes should be getting priority, but sometimes you have to make a choice between short-term and the long-term outcomes of aspect. But if you go by the sustainability agenda, it should be such that all the three pillars of the sustainability, if we talk about triple bottom line in terms of people, planet and profit, should be getting equal priority in terms of the achievement of the outcomes. But sometimes these resource constraints can put public organizations in little more difficult situation where they focus on immediate short-term outcomes than focusing on long-term aspects of this.

Let's look into research insights. India's approach to agroforestry for climate change and evaluation of state action plan on climate change. This is the paper by Datta and Behera published in 2024 and the paper titled India's approach to agroforestry as an effective strategy in the context of climate change and evaluation of 28 state climate change action plan published in Agriculture Systems. Very interesting paper to look into the aspect of agroforestry for agriculture. climate change. Now, the key themes and the objectives of this paper is on agroforestry, meaning integrating trees with crops, livestock to mitigate and adapt to a climate change.

It's basically using the same land for the agriculture as well as forest in terms of integrating trees with the crops or livestock. same land can be used so that simultaneously these things can be taken care of because it is going to mitigate the challenges which we are confronting because of climate change. I will talk about how they have done it. The focus of evaluation is that how 28 state-level action plans on climate change in India addressed agroforestry's benefit. Is agroforestry really benefit for this? They have made an assessment into their paper.

What are the findings? In terms of recognition in the state action plan, they found that 25 out of 28 state-wise action plan on climate change acknowledge agroforestry role, that it is important in terms of mitigating the impact of climate change. main focus of these plans are actually basically expanding tree cover with less attention to diversify system the focus of agroforestry is basically agro silvopastoral setups wherein we are talking about a land commonly used for all you know planting trees taking care of the livestock and the crops but you see they found the main focus is that the the focus is much more on expanding tree cover The benefits are carbon sequestration, meaning that storing the carbon so that we are mitigating the effect of the climate change, reducing the greenhouse gases and reduced deforestation, reduced cutting down of the trees. And the adaptations are soil conservation, water management and diversified farm production. Now, the paper also highlight the policy gap and the issues in the implementations of this particular program. For example, inconsistent budget estimate and lack of specific roadmaps for agroforestry expansion.

The plan is good, but there is no specific roadmap which is being given or highlighted or made in terms of the implementation of this particular expansion. And also, there are constraints being highlighted, for example, lack of farmer incentives, unclear implementation strategies, these things are not adequately addressed. Also, over-emphasis on tree-based system, which limited focus on livestock integration or agro-silvopastoral approaches. So, focus is much more on tree-based systems as a neglect of the other aspects like livestock integration and agro-silvopastoral approaches.

So, this is the challenge, the issue here. In terms of implementation challenges, there are administrative hurdles, for example, in terms of conflicting policies, weak extension services or market barriers. Now, these state action plans on climate change need better alignment with the national policies. Example, national agroforestry policy and local needs. So, I'm talking about how agroforestry as a policy or as the plan to take care of the impact of the changes in the ecological environment in terms of climate change and pollution can be one particular way to deal with mitigating the effect of this climate change happening.

So, very interesting paper. The authors also made some kind of recommendation that if these have to be done and their benefits to be realized, proper action plans are required, clear strategies with SMART, which is Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound Targets. There should be budget clarity, precise allocation with incremental cost outlined. It should be very, very clear. There should be integrated roadmaps. For example, synergizing mitigation and adaptation efforts with monitoring mechanism.

We talked about this mitigation and adaptation before. I've talked about this, right? How will you do it in integration? This should also be focused on inclusion of livestock systems. Promote agro-silver pastoral approaches for more effective outcomes. And of course, coordination among departments. Only one particular department should not be dominated. For example, they have talked about you know, tree-based system has more, much more emphasis.

So, there should be collaboration, very close proximity between agriculture, forestry and environment bodies to collaborate on this particular action plans so that the benefits of these programs can be achieved in a bigger way, right. So, in this particular sessions, what we have done is, I have talked about two important aspects of the environment. One is the political environment and how the various components of the political environment are impacting the functioning of the government organizations.

And the another important aspect which I have talked about is the ecological factors shaping the environment of the public organizations, you know, in terms of putting pressure on the government organizations to create agencies, following of the best practices by the public organizations, public organizations' roles in facilitating the rule making and the implementations of the rules in order to take care of the environmental concepts. And within this, we also talked about various challenges being faced by the organizations while implementing the ecological environmental initiatives.

And we talked about the research insights on a paper by Datta and Behra about agroforestry. I suggest learners to also look at some of the YouTube videos on this particular concept of agro-silvopastoral setups. You will get much more insights on about this particular action plans on climate change that how these actions in terms of the policy and its strategy to deal with or mitigating the impact of the climate change is actually working in the real time. If you look at how people are implementing and what kind of benefits they have received from this thing, there are wonderful YouTube videos explaining the process there.

There are people sharing the views about this. So, you can look at these YouTube videos with the search title Agro-Silver Pastoral Setups. You will get greater insights on the ecological environmental management with respect to the agroforestry approach to climate change. So, with this I am going to conclude this session. We are going to start

the other factors in the next particular session and we will conclude with the another general components of the environment before discussing about the critical authority and its influence in the public organizations.