

Administrative Theory
Daniel E. Griffiths, 1959

p. 45 If the study of administration is to become scientific, administration must assume the characteristics of a science. Inquiry in administration must come to be characterized by objectivity, reliability, operational definitions, coherence or systematic structure and comprehensive. The content of administration is capable of being handled in a scientific manner even though it is not now being handled in that manner.

Administration is a specialized branch of science and must, therefore, meet an additional set of criteria. A theory of administration must provide guides to action, to collection of facts, to new knowledge, and to explain the nature of administration. A very restricted definition of theory is accepted, and a case is made for its use. The term *theory* should be restricted to mean a set of assumptions from which a set of empirical laws [principles] may be derived.

p.69 **Need for precision.** As one reads and works with present theories of administration, it is apparent that there is a need for greater precision in theory construction. This can be accomplished by more operational definitions, by more logical constructions, and by stating relationships in mathematical formulations. The first two are obvious statements, and the workers in theory have accepted this challenge. Little has been done to put theoretical derivations into mathematical formulations. The chief value of mathematics in social science theory is the gain obtained in precision. Few modern theories could stand the rigor of mathematical treatment.

p71ff **STATEMENT OF A THEORY OF ADMINISTRATION**

It was stated in Chapter 2 that the use of the term *theory* would be restricted to that meaning assigned to it by Feigl, namely: "a set of assumptions from which can be derived by purely logico-mathematical procedures a larger set of empirical laws." The assumptions should be of such a character as to explain fully and completely the nature of the phenomenon under consideration, in this case, administration. The exposition of this theory takes the form of a declarative statement of each assumption followed by a brief explanation.

1. *Administration is a generalized type of behavior to be found in all human organizations. [explanations omitted]*
2. *Administration is the process of directing and controlling life in a social organization.*
3. *The specific functions of administration is to develop and regulate the decision-making process in the most effective manner.*
4. *The administrator works with groups or with individuals with a group referent, not with individuals as such.*

p.112 **SUMMARY**

This final chapter presents a view of the central process of administration, that of decision-making. The conventional model is used, but with the introduction of the

concepts developed in Chapter 4. The decision model is composed of the following aspects:

1. Recognize, define, and limit the problem.
2. Analyze and evaluate the problem.
3. Establish criteria or standards by which solution will be evaluated or judged as acceptable and adequate to the need.
4. Collect data.
5. Formulate and select the preferred solution or solutions. Test them in advance.
5. Put into effect the preferred solution.
 - a. Program the solution.
 - b. Control the activities in the program.
 - c. Evaluate the results and the process.

It is emphasized that decisioning in an organization is not a personal matter, and the effectiveness of decisions is not a product of the quality of decisions of any one person. The decision process is an organizational matter, and the criterion by which an organization may be evaluated is the quality of the decisions which the organization makes plus the efficiency with which the organization puts the decisions into effect.