

The New Public Governance: Tracing the Shift from Public Administration and New Public Management

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Abstract: Over the last hundred years there has been a transition in the ways in which people think about the operation of government. There have been three major transitions. The first was an emphasis on hierarchy, written rules and a politically neutral civil service. This was associated with Classical Public Administration. The second emphasized efficiency using techniques from the private sector and principles of markets. This was known as New Public Management (NPM). The third is currently being referred to as New Public Governance (NPG). NPG starts from the premise that the production of public services occurs through multiple relationships between organizations and citizens rather than by one single state machine. This study reviews the history of this shift both intellectually and practically. It looks at the underlying assumptions of each paradigm, examines why NPM failed to sustain itself and shifted toward NPG. This paper also outlines the characteristics of NPG, and evaluates some of the criticisms made against it such as lack of accountability and ambiguity. In addition to reviewing these issues, a brief section also discusses how the three logics operate simultaneously in India's administrative system. Finally, the study concludes that it would be more accurate to view these paradigms as overlapping layers rather than as successive replacements, and that NPG has made a unique contribution to redirecting focus towards networking, legitimacy and participative orientation in public service.

Keywords: new public governance; public administration; new public management; networks; participation; neutrality.

1. INTRODUCTION

Reformers always have an image of what government should do and how it should be organized. This image often shapes what they consider to be good performance. For much of the twentieth century the dominant image of government was bureaucracy. A bureaucratic government was made up of a strict hierarchy of employees who followed rules set by elected officials. In the late 1970s the image began to change. There were many reasons for this change, including financial difficulties faced by many governments, the emergence of a conservative political movement, and dissatisfaction with the way many governments performed. As a result, many governments started to adopt the functioning and methods of private enterprises. Today a third image of government is emerging. Government is seen as one of many participants in systems designed to solve societal problems and provide services. Many scholars refer to this image as governance, and in its most organized form, the new public governance.

The purpose of this paper is to examine how the field came to develop this third image. Osborne (2006) developed a widely accepted framework for analysing the development of the field. According to Osborne, the field can be divided into three phases: public administration, new public management (NPM), and new public governance (NPG). While Osborne's framework simplifies reality and may distort history if taken too literally, it provides a valuable basis for studying what each phase assumed about the role of the state, citizens, and the provision of public services. It also helps explain why some reforms that were initially highly praised later received severe criticism. Before we begin our discussion, we need to clarify some terminology. "Governance" is a broad term with multiple meanings. Rhodes (1996) identified at least six different ways that governance is currently being used, ranging from the idea of a minimalist state and corporate governance to self-organizing networks. The lack of clarity surrounding the term has created ongoing confusion. Fukuyama (2013) defines governance more narrowly as the ability of a government to create and implement rules and provide services.

This paper primarily use governance as Rhodes (1996), Stoker (1998) and Osborne (2006) defined it: the process of coordinating public objectives through interactions among various parties both within and outside the formal structure of the state. The argument will proceed in four parts. Part one describes the classic model and its intellectual history. Part two describes the principles and history of NPM. Part three identifies the limitations of NPM that led to thinking about governance. Part four describes the key characteristics of NPG. Part five compares the three models. Part six examines the criticisms directed at NPG. Part seven present examples from India. Part eight summarizes the main conclusions.

2. PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION: THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE TRADITIONAL MODEL

The first formalized statements of modern public administration came out of the late 19th Century. Wilson (1887) stated that the business of administration is separate from the politics of party competition and therefore that government should employ professionally trained individuals to administer programs. An implied division of labour existed within Wilson's statement. Political leaders would determine what would be administered, and professional administrators would execute the program efficiently and without partisan bias. This separation of politics and administration is commonly referred to as the Politics-Administration Dichotomy. It gave the developing field a legitimate basis for being a science. Weber provided an organizational model for bureaucracy. According to Weber's ideal model, authority is based on legal laws, office positions are organized in hierarchical order, appointments are based on technical qualifications, official conduct is free of personal favouritism, and all decisions are documented in written form (Weber, 1978). Weber believed that bureaucracy was technically superior to all other forms of organization due to its consistency, stability and predictability.

While critics later claimed that bureaucracy is too bureaucratic (too much red tape), the model addressed a legitimate problem which was the arbitrary and patronage-based administration prior to bureaucracy. Open recruitment practices, stable career paths for administrators and impartial procedures represented revolutionary ideas at the time. Principles of design were developed in management theory during the Interwar Period. Gulick and Urwick (1937) summarized the functions of a Chief Executive Officer using the widely recognized acronym POSDCORB. The associated principles-including unity of command, limited spans of control and specialization according to function-viewed administration as a set of general principles applicable to large organizations. From this perspective the public sector differed from the private sector in terms of its mission to serve society and not by its administrative practices. Early challenges to this model emerged. Simon (1946) argued that the so-called "principles of administration" are merely proverbs - appearing in contradictory pairs-without any evidence supporting their validity. Waldo (1948) asserted that the study of administration cannot exist independently of questions concerning democratic values; and therefore, that the Politics-Administration split cannot exist in a modern administrative state.

Later proponents of a "New" Public Administration in the U.S. called for social equity and accountability along with efficiency (Frederickson, 1980). Everyday practices demonstrated that administrators at every level exert discretion and thus influence policy. However, by mid-20th Century the assumptions of what Hughes (2012) and others refer to as the traditional model of public administration dominated administrative practice throughout much of the globe, particularly in welfare states that expanded after WWII. The state was viewed as the primary provider of services to its citizens, funded through taxes, staffed by permanent civil servants dedicated to a public service ethic and accountable through Ministers upwards to the Legislature. Advantages of this system included legality, uniformity in treatment and clearly defined (though formally stated) lines of accountability. Disadvantages included inflexibility, isolationism, lack of focus on costs/results and viewing citizens as passive consumers of government action rather than active participants in it. As economic growth declined in the 1970s these disadvantages became increasingly problematic for political leaders.

3. THE NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT PARADIGM

NPM philosophy originated from the fiscal pressures experienced by the welfare states during the 1970's (oil shocks and stagflation). Governments in the UK, Australia, NZ, etc., sought solutions to their financial problems through two theoretical frameworks. The first was Public Choice Theory propounded by scholars like Niskanen (1971), who viewed bureaucrats as budget maximisers who used their monopolies to produce more at greater costs than legislators would allow. Therefore, Niskanen provided an intellectual basis for using competition and contracting to control monopoly. The second theory was Managerialism. Managerialism is the belief that good management is a universal skill that can be applied to different sectors. Therefore, if private sector management techniques were applied to public agencies there would be very little loss of value (Hood, 1991; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017). Hood (1991) identified the group of reforms resulting from these theories as New Public Management (NPM) and identified several recognizable doctrines. The doctrines included; hands-on professional management with visible discretion for senior managers, explicit standards and measurement of performance, greater emphasis on output controls, breaking up large bureaucratic units into agencies with their own budgets, increased use of competition and contracting, adopting private sector management styles, and emphasizing discipline and parsimony in the use of resources.

Dunleavy and Hood (1994) described the transition from the old public administration to a more managerial/market based public sector. Osborne and Gaebler (1992) developed similar ideas and promoted the idea of a government that steers rather than rows. Osborne and Gaebler also promoted the idea of a government driven by missions and results and viewed those it served as customers. Osborne and Gaebler's ideas influenced the National Performance Review initiated by President Clinton in 1993. Adoption of NPM varied significantly across nations. The UK implemented the Next Steps

Program which created executive agencies from 1988 onwards. The UK also expanded compulsory competitive tendering into local service delivery. New Zealand took NPM much further than most. New Zealand reorganized its departments around chief executives working on performance contracts and divided policy advice from service delivery. Pollitt and Bouckaert (2017) refer to this model as one of the most comprehensive models of NPM. Elsewhere, especially in developing countries, NPM-like measures were typically implemented as part of structural adjustment programs and/or as conditions of loans from international organizations.

Furthermore, many countries only adopted parts of NPM and not holistically. NPM has accomplished some positive things. Specifically, NPM has made topics such as cost, output, and service quality commonplace in public discourse. Additionally, NPM has produced some tools which are now widely used including performance indicators, service charters, delegated budgets, and independent regulatory bodies. In certain services, increased transparency regarding outcomes has enhanced effort and responsiveness. Overall, however, there is mixed evidence regarding the effectiveness of NPM. A long-term study conducted by Hood and Dixon (2015) examined British central government over three decades of reform. Hood and Dixon concluded that while proponents claimed that NPM would provide better government at lower costs, this promise was only partially realized over the three-decade period. Additionally, Hood and Dixon found that running costs failed to decrease as predicted by proponents. NPM also assumed that performance could be measured in ways that everyone would agree upon. Finally, NPM also assumed that citizens were primarily consumers choosing among alternatives. Each of these assumptions were plausible in some situations but questionable in many others as shown in the subsequent section.

4. LIMITS OF NPM AND THE RISE OF GOVERNANCE THINKING

The first obstacle to implementing the NPM model was the separation of large government departments into smaller agencies. This action provided clearer definitions of purpose for each agency; however, it also made coordinating activities across agencies much more difficult. Today's major challenges (e.g., climate change adaptation, aging populations, homelessness, and public health emergencies) require solutions that cross organizational lines. Rittel and Webber (1973) called problems such as these "wicked" due to the difficulty in defining them clearly and assigning ownership. Governments responded to this problem with a number of join-up initiatives. Christensen and Lægreid (2007) analysed these initiatives under the general heading of whole-of-government reform and described them as a reaction against previous disaggregation and its negative impact on coordination. A second challenge faced by NPM was performance measurement. Performance measures (targets/indicators), once implemented, create incentives for organizations to distort the system and may replace professional judgment. Lapsley (2009) reviewed the experiences gained from the implementation of NPM reforms and questioned whether the benefits achieved through these reforms outweighed the costs incurred. Denhardt and Denhardt (2000) also questioned the use of the customer metaphor in relation to citizens and argued that government is not a business and citizens are not customers. Instead, they believed that public officials should serve and empower citizens, and should focus on providing democratic citizenship and the public interest over managing markets. Their proposal for a "new public service" preceded discussions regarding participation and legitimacy.

A third source of pressure on NPM was technology. Dunleavy et al. (2006) stated that NPM was no longer viable by the mid-2000s and suggested digital-era governance as a replacement. They suggested that digital-era governance would be based upon the re-integration of previously disaggregated functions, a citizen-centric approach to organizing and the digitization of all administrative processes. Regardless of whether one agrees with that assessment, digital technologies enabled citizens to participate directly in service provision. A separate body of knowledge related to governance developed concurrently with NPM. Rhodes (1996, 1997) argued that the British State had been weakened from multiple sources simultaneously including privatization, transferring functions to agencies/supranational organizations, and developing policy networks that were partially autonomous/self-governing/resistant to central authority.

Stoker (1998) summarized the emerging view of governance using five propositions: governance involves institutions/actors from outside government; it blurs responsibility for addressing social problems; it acknowledges interdependence between organizations involved; it forms autonomous/self-governing networks; and it identifies the ability to govern with new methods as the primary means to exert authority. Kooiman (2003) developed a similar concept of interactive governance where societal problems are resolved through continuous interaction between public/private actors with government acting as one of several parties involved in the process. At the same time, the World Bank (1992) advocated for "good governance" as a requirement for achieving developmental success thereby introducing the term into many policy debates. Reviewers have noted that none of these approaches were intended to replace NPM and that post-NPM encompasses many different things (Reiter & Klenk, 2019). All of these developments shared a common

emphasis on shifting focus from internal efficiency of individual organizations to the nature of relationships between them and the citizens they serve. That shift is the foundation of the new public governance

5. THE NEW PUBLIC GOVERNANCE: CORE FEATURES

The new public governance (NPG) is a response to the blind spots in both of the previous paradigms, as stated by Osborne (2006). Public administration operated under the assumption that the state was the primary actor in policy-making and service delivery; however, NPM focused on the individual organization and relied on market assumptions which applied poorly to the provision of public services. NPG operates on a different set of assumptions. It views the state as having multiple interdependent actors involved in the delivery of public services and as a pluralistic entity in which multiple processes contribute to shaping policy. NPG is concerned with inter-organizational relationships and the governance of processes, and it focuses on service effectiveness and outcomes rather than input or output measures. There are several recurring themes in the literature related to NPG. One of these themes is networks and partnerships. Klijn & Koppenjan (2016) view governance networks as the standard form of public decision-making. No single actor possesses sufficient resources or authority to force solutions. Sørensen & Torfing (2007) argue that such networks can be democratically productive if they are structured appropriately and connected to representative bodies. As a result of this environment, the role of the public manager has changed. Rather than directing subordinates or overseeing contractors, the manager facilitates collaboration among stakeholders, mediates agreements, resolves disputes and establishes collaborative guidelines- a function which Sørensen & Torfing (2009) refer to as Meta governance.

A second theme is collaborative governance. Ansell & Gash (2008), based upon a review of numerous case studies, identify collaborative arrangements in which public agencies invite non-governmental stakeholders to participate in formal, deliberative decision-making processes designed to achieve consensus. They indicate that factors such as pre-existing imbalances in power and historical patterns of conflict or collaboration exist prior to establishing collaborative arrangements. Additionally, they identify design elements including inclusive participation and clear ground rules as critical elements influencing whether collaborative efforts are successful. Emerson, Nabatchi & Balogh (2012) subsequently developed an integrative model that relates collaborative drivers to the dynamics of collective action and ultimately to the resulting outcomes. This model has become a central point of reference for researchers conducting empirical research. A third theme is co-production. Bovaird (2007) provided evidence that users and communities actively participate in the planning, designing and delivering of services in many contexts, far beyond simple consultation.

Osborne, Radnor & Nasi (2013) expanded on this idea by suggesting a public service-dominant logic, whereby services are inherently produced collaboratively with users. Under this logic co-production is not merely an optional addition to be implemented when funding permits, but rather an integral component of how a service is created. Patients who follow treatment plans, parents who assist children in learning and residents who separate household waste are all, in a very real sense, components of the production process. Osborne & Strokosch (2013) demonstrate how integrating service management perspectives with public administration concepts can help clarify the various forms co-production can take. A fourth theme is public value. Moore (1995) encouraged public managers to perceive themselves as creators of value. He advocated for managers to consider what the community values and what political authorization enables their work, not simply as protectors of rules or producers of outputs. Bryson, Crosby & Bloomberg (2014) built upon Moore's ideas to present public value governance as an alternative to both traditional administrative practices and NPM. They assert that value is determined through negotiations among multiple stakeholders and is not solely determined by official decrees or market-based signals. Torfing & Triantafillou (2013) propose that NPG be conceptualized as a political-administrative system possessing its own unique logic- one that alters the roles of politicians, administrators, citizens and civil society. Although Osborne questioned whether NPG would replace earlier paradigms in the title of his original paper, he clearly articulated NPG as a conceptual framework representing a transformational governance paradigm.

6. CRITIQUES AND UNRESOLVED TENSIONS

The first criticism relates to conceptual clarity. Governance is a term used to mean too many things. Therefore, NPG can easily become a catch-all term for any type of reform that isn't classical or market based. Reiter and Klenk (2019) identify several different types of post-NPM. Each show how difficult it is to separate a single coherent paradigm from a general sense of rebellion against the previous one. Osborne's own question mark indicates his awareness of this issue, while Torfing and Triantafillou (2013) spend much of their time trying to give NPG more specificity. Another criticism is of accountability, democracy and legitimacy. In hierarchical bureaucracies, accountability can be traced, at least theoretically, from an individual official to a minister and eventually to the legislative body. However, in networks, accountability is distributed among numerous individuals and organizations. It is therefore difficult to determine who

should be held accountable for failures. Bovens (2007) develops a conceptual model for assessing accountability that highlights these gaps. He asks who is accountable; to whom; for what; and through what mechanisms. Similarly, Sørensen and Torfing (2005) ask where networks are democratically anchored and argue that legitimacy is dependent upon connections to elected bodies; to the publics affected by network decisions; and to the rules governing interactions between network participants. There is also a risk of unequal voices.

Collaborative forums tend to favor organized and resource rich groups. As a result, marginal citizens may be excluded from the discussion even if formal opportunities exist for their participation. The third criticism relates to practicality. Collaboration requires significant amounts of time, expertise, and trust. All three resources are distributed unequally. Ansell and Gash (2008) warn that collaborative processes may fail or be dominated by one party if participants enter into collaborative discussions with a history of distrust or unequal levels of resources. Public organizations that have experienced budget cuts due to austerity measures may lack the organizational capacity necessary to convene and manage networks, regardless of how promising the theoretical rationale for doing so appears to be. Furthermore, the evidence supporting the notion that arrangements based on NPG lead to improved results compared to alternative approaches is far less compelling than many advocates of these types of reforms would have us believe.

Another critical sphere is paradigms rarely replace one another completely. Pollitt and Bouckaert (2017) demonstrate that reforms implemented in practice are typically additive rather than subtractive. In other words, new tools are added to existing ones and some conflicts exist between the two sets of tools. Christensen and Lægreid (2011) refer to this situation as hybrid public administration. They argue that hierarchical, market-based, and network-based logics can exist simultaneously within the same organization. Lodge and Gill (2011) take this argument even further in their analysis of post-NPM in New Zealand. They question whether post-NPM in New Zealand represents a true departure from NPM or an evolution of NPM itself. The sensible conclusion is that public managers today draw from a tool-kit comprised of elements derived from all three traditions and select the logic that best suits each task. A regulatory decision that requires legal certainty is best handled through traditional bureaucratic methods. A high volume, standardized transaction can be processed efficiently using performance measurement and competitive bidding. A complex problem such as urban regeneration or managing chronic illnesses will likely require extensive collaboration among numerous parties.

7. REFLECTIONS FROM THE INDIAN CONTEXT

India provides a good example of the layering described earlier. At the time of independence, India adopted an administrative system that had many similarities to the colonial model of a hierarchical, generalist civil service. This administrative system operated in a development-oriented state based on central planning and a significant degree of public ownership. During this period, the classical model was predominant, and both the positive and negative aspects of bureaucracy were apparent. The economic liberalization that began in 1991 reduced the scope for licensing and increased the opportunities for private sector activity (Panagariya, 2008). As part of this liberalization, there were new approaches toward improving service quality standards for customers; selling off state-owned businesses; utilizing public-private partnerships for building infrastructure projects; and developing citizen's charters to establish publicly committed standards of service by various government agencies. These charters emerged as an outcome of citizen's demands for accountability and were supported by the Second Administrative Reforms Commission in its report on Citizen-Centric Administration (2009). The Commission recommended using IT to improve grievance resolution and citizen participation in decision making processes.

Other trends in India reflect NPG principles. Two amendments to the Indian Constitution, the 73rd Amendment Act of 1992 and the 74th Act of 1992, provided constitutional status to rural and urban local bodies and established forums such as Gram Sabhas and Ward Committees- where citizens could collectively participate in making decisions regarding their communities. The Right to Information Act of 2005 granted citizens a statutory right to obtain information from government entities and allowed citizen groups and civil society organizations to evaluate public actions. This type of social accountability exists outside the traditional hierarchical structure of government. More recently, NITI Aayog replaced the Planning Commission in 2015. Its mandate emphasizes cooperative federalism and collaborative partnerships with states and other interested parties (NITI Aayog, n.d.). However, none of these trends constitute a wholesale change. The Second Administrative Reforms Commission (2007) noted that devolution to local bodies remains unfinished, and administrative practices at the district and state levels continue to rely heavily on hierarchy, rules and the authority of generalist officers. Therefore, India's experience supports the layering thesis. Classical procedures, managerial targets and participatory/networked arrangements coexist, sometimes effectively and sometimes awkwardly.

8. CONCLUSION

The movement from "public administration," through "new public management," to "new public governance" can be viewed as a sequence of changes in what reformers perceived to be the primary challenge facing government. Classical administration saw the primary problem as being arbitrary rule; therefore, it provided an answer to this by creating hierarchical structures governed by laws. New Public Management (NPM) viewed the primary problem as being inefficient and unresponsive; thus, it proposed a solution to this by introducing competition, measurement, and managerial discretion. New Public Governance (NPG) perceives the primary problem as being interdependence; that is, public purposes are achieved through networks of organizations and citizens who are not controlled by a single authority. Consequently, NPG offers a solution to this problem by establishing and developing effective working relationships. Three ideas arise from the above discussion. Firstly, the paradigms overlap. Governments add reform layers over time and professionals frequently employ elements of hierarchical, market based, and network-based tools. NPG calls attention to co-production, shared responsibility, and the negotiation of public value which were largely ignored by previous models. Lastly, NPG has some serious deficiencies. Accountability issues, uneven participation and institutional capacity issues persist without clear answers and there is little empirical evidence to indicate better outcomes.

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