

Changing Nature of Public Administration in the Era of Globalization

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Abstract: The globalization process is causing a reconfiguration of the state, society and government in the arena of public administration. This is resulting in experimentation and innovation contributing to changes both in the theory and practice of public administration. Initially, there appeared to be an erosion of faith and trust in traditionally- structured organization and institutions, which gave way to new information and network groups. Globalization, to a large extent, is responsible for this change. The currents of change have caused debates to be raised about its positives and perils.

In this paper, focus would be to understand the changing nature of State and subsequent changes in Administration, and analyse how administration become Governance, Supplementary Role of Civil Society in Governance, State- Market Cooperation and the changing paradigm of Managerialism has been countered by New Public Service Management.

Keywords: New Public Service Management, Managerialism, reconfiguration of the state, State-Market Cooperation and Supplementary Role of Civil Society in Governance

1. Introduction

In the twenty-first century public administration, as a discipline and practice, is quite uniquely placed. The discipline is undergoing transformation on several fronts. Public administration- a sub- field of political science- is presently more attuned to resolving the issue pertaining to performance, efficiency and effectiveness. The globalization process is causing a reconfiguration of the state, society and government in the arena of public administration. This is resulting in experimentation and innovation contributing to changes both in the theory and practice of public administration. Initially, there appeared to be an erosion of faith and trust in traditionally- structured organization and institutions, which gave way to new information and network groups. Globalization, to a large extent, is responsible for this change. The currents of change have caused debates to be raised about its positives and perils.¹

Governance, as propagated and introduced in 1989, acquired the complexion of aid conditionality in course of time. Good governance came to signal three things: *firstly*, it signified

¹ Medury Uma, *Public Administration in the Globalisation Era; the new public management perspective,* (2010) Orient BlackSwan; New Delhi. P.236

the 'democratic centralism' of tough accountability regimes that featured the whole of government targets, contracts and managerial accountabilities. These focus on service delivery outputs and social outcomes. *Secondly*, good governance also signaled a disaggregated, market-friendly approach to services that empowered all manner of local agencies (governments, NGOs and entrepreneurs) to participate as partners in creating local 'political markets'. This was aimed at efficiently allocating resources and competitively contracting service delivery in ways clearly linked to specifically defined mandates of government. *Finally*, good governance promised that together these plural but joined-up services might provide a 'soft' institutional approach to both accountability and 'social inclusion'.²

Public administration, as a body of knowledge about administration, has a hoary past. The discipline's contents and methodology have been ethnocentric and time-specific. One therefore cannot ignore the ambience in which public administration is conceptualized. Linked with this is the idea that the nature of public administration differs from one context to another. So, there cannot be a universal design. Despite the theoretical importance of the Weberian 'ideal form of organisation', it would be wrong to undermine the 'spatial' nature of public administration. Models of administration are therefore contingent on historical circumstances. Whatever is relevant today may not remain so in the days to come.³ In this sense the contemporary age of globalization connects the state to many interlinking factors-economic, technological, and cultural and so on. As a discipline of contemporary relevance, public administration needs to be updated and made congruous with the myriad connectivities of contemporary times. The nature and process of public administration have been severely affected by the changing perceptions of the role of the state, managerial orientation in governance, market-driven approach to development, and increasing advocacy of the complementary role of government, market and civil society.

2. Revamping the Role of the State

The state has always been at the centre-stage of societal governance. Traditionally, many countries embarked on the concept of Welfare state—a political system with a high degree of responsibility for the welfare of the people. The onset of the globalisation and its influence on

² Craig, David and Doug Porter. *Development beyond neo-liberalism? Governanc*, *Poverty Reduction and Political Economy*. (2006) Routledge:New York.

³ Chakrabarty, B. reinventing Public Administration; the Indian experience, (2007), Orient BlackSwan; New Delhi, p.1

various fronts in the 1980s and 1990s brought about transformation in the role of the state throughout the world. In the UK and USA the repercussions of neo-liberalism brought several changes in the state. The emergence of new economic concepts pushed the state towards transformation. Though the impact of international economic forces had been significance on the state, not necessarily resulting in a decline in its autonomy, some consider it as a change to a 'competition state'. The competition state favours, deregulation, and privatization, irrespective of the local, political and administrative culture. P. Cerney describes the competition state as one that has been transformed 'from a primarily hierarchical decommodifying agent into a primarily market-based commodifying agent'.⁴

Globalisation leading to the marketisation of administration, dismantling of large bureaucratic structures, introduction of flexible production systems, lessening of control on public goods by the nation-state and the favouring of a government guided by market phenomena. Globalisation is the result of several factors including the state, surplus accumulation of capital, domestic constraints, IT, and international institutions and ideology. While the core of state and public administration persists in the broader sense of community, major changes have occurred as a consequence of globalisation that have altered their nature and character from the traditional welfare administrative state to a welfare state.⁵ In tune with the changing Scenario bureaucratic inefficiency and discontent with the notion of an 'activist' state are the drivers of change. A welfare and a highly-planned bureaucratic system focused attention on the overarching paradigm that produced the negative conceptualisation of the 'heavy hand' of the state. The Welfare State was criticised as being:

- Unresponsive but all-pervasive which fostered citizen dependence rather than self sufficiency (invasive state)
- Encompassing over time and unable to carry out functions and responsibilities effectively (over-extended state)
- Controlled by elite groups that used the state to serve their own interests rather than public interest (Private interest state)

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⁴ Cerney, P. Pardoxes of the Competition State: The Dunamics of Political Globlisation, (1997), Government and Opposition. Vol.32. No.2. 251-74

⁵ Farazmand, Ali, *Globlisation and Public Administration*, (2002) in peter Kobark (ed.), The Political Environment of Public Management, New York: Longman. p.408

A powerful new paradigm of limited government action that was dominant in Western democracies held the view that the government should:

- Do less
- Reduce or relinquish its previous overburdening responsibilities.
- Privatise public services or their or delivery wherever practicable.
- Reform their own operations in accordance with the market concept of competition and efficiency.

These beliefs in 'governments by the market' rest upon the premise that the market system is inherently a better method of satisfying human wants and aspirations than taking resource to government. The *first* objective of this thinking has been to streamline the state and liberate the market forces in a variety of ways such as deregulation as well as through suitable monetary and fiscal policies. The *second* objective has been to import market concepts and incentives into the operations of the government itself. The *third* objective is to take measures to reduce the relative size and growth of public expenditure, and to cut down on a range of functions that the government performs. The changing complexion of the state has also brought in new structures and features. A pro-market and anti-state philosophy of 'private good' and 'public bad' prevailed during the 1980s and 1990s in the UK and USA. There has been the rise of the new political economy of development based on the market instead of the state as the central actor.

3. Management Orientation in Public Administration

Public administration, traditionally speaking, has always had the major obligation of adhering to the rule of law: promoting public interest, assuring equity, representativeness and responsiveness to the citizens the excessive reliance of traditional administration on bureaucracy, hierarchy, rules and regulations, in course of time, raised significant questions about efficacy and effectiveness. This coupled with the dismantling of the soviet Union, increasing levels of public expenditure and taxation, and dissatisfaction with the functioning of the bureaucracy strengthened the notion that the traditional state model has failed to implement appropriate policies and deliver reflective services, and that there is a need to look for an alternative model,

⁶ Self, Peter, Government by the Market? (1993), the Politics of Public Choice, London: Macmillan, West Vision Press. p.59.

This model with a managerial orientation, termed as New Public Management (NPM), aims at making public administration market-based, and committed to the three prime goals of economy efficiency and effectiveness. NPM has condemned traditional public administration as a failure, It starts form the premise that the traditional, bureaucratically- organized public administration is broke and broken and consequently the public had lost faith in the government.⁷

The orthodox public administration which has been under attack since the last two decades, has found a new reform replacement. The managerial orientation in public administration found shape in the form of NPM, which has become a widely-used term stirring intellectual debates and discussions to provide a new insight into administrative functioning in the globalisation scenario. The complexities and intricacies of the traditional model of public administration have given way to a new thinking that:

- The present changing scenario needs government reforms
- The public organizations need to undergo a change in mindset from mere execution of tasks to performance orientation
- The need to be risk –taking mission –driven and service oriented

As Jennings (1995) notes: The major initiatives to reform government processes are built around a shared set of notions. Government has to be deregulated public agencies must be entrepreneurial, mission driven and service oriented public managers are to be risk—takers who welcome participation and reward performance They themselves are to be judged on their performance These reform initiatives are targeted at the multiple performance failures of government and the need to build public confidence They stumbling blocks to responsiveness, effectiveness and efficiency.⁸

New Public Management has emerged, gradually, since the 1980s as a, major manifestation of the competitive state approach, this new paradigm which has gained wider usage, with varied labels—reinventing, reengineering, quality management, and performance management—focuses basically on changes in the structure and processes of government The very term management instead of administration emphasizes that efficiency is more important

⁷ AI Gore, Cited in David H. Rosenbloom and Robert S. Kravehuk.(1993), *Public Administration Understanding Management, Politics and Law in the Public Sector*, USA: McGraw Hill International Edition.I.

⁸ Jennings, Edward T. Jr. *Public Service in Era of Transformation*, (1995), Public Administration Times. Vol.18. (September).

than mere adherence to rules and regulations. Kaboolian (1998) identifies three common factors that appear to support the thesis of globalization of NPM:

- The use of the economic market as a model for political and administrative relationships.
- Similarity in the goals they pursue and the technologies they utilize.
- The use of administrative techniques such as customer service, performance-based contracting, competition, market incentives and deregulation. ¹⁰

Globalisation appears to be a major factor in stirring the debate on reinventing public administration. Cerny (1994) considers that globalisation has caused state policies 'to converge on a more liberal, deregulatory approach because of the changing structural character of the international system— its greater structural complexity and interpenetratedness— which in turn transforms the changing position of states themselves within that system'. The result is the emerging globalised nature of public administration. This is based on a number of structural adjustments or readjustments that have been taking place around the globe. The readjustments have been in the form of redefining the scope and boundaries of the public and private sectors, of administrative reforms or civil service reforms, of organizational reconfiguration and many others. The developed as well as developing countries have been prompted by several considerations for initiating the public management reforms.

NPM that evolved and gained prominence in the discipline of public administration was possibly a rehash of Taylorism and New right philosophy. Yet being an attempt at synthesizing managerial principles, it definitely was a step forward in holding public administration in a good stead. In addition, in the present globalization context, the prevailing scenario compels the administrators to revisit the managerial reforms to upgrade the public sector in order to enable it to compete with the market sector. New public Management as a paradigm, as many consider it could find place in the discipline of public administration due to dearth of a dominant paradigm

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Pollitt, Christropher. Managerialism and the Public Services: Cuts or Cultural Change in the 1990s. (1993) Second edition, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Kaboolian, L. *The NPM: Challenging the Boundaries of Management vs. Administration Debate*, (1998) Public Administration Review. Vol.58. No.3.p.189-193.

Cerny, P. *The Dynamics of Financial Globlisation: Technology, Market Structure and Policy Response,* (1994) Policy Science.24, No.4, p.319-42

Farazmand, Ali. *The New World Order and Global Public Administration : A Critical Essay*, (1994) in Jean Claude Garcia et al. (eds). Public Administration in the Global Village. West Port CT: pracger.

at that time, Any paradigm needs to be tested in uniform as well as different contextual setting for bringing about a set of generalization. This calls for national and comparative studies to provide explanations and justify its utility New Public Management being a conglomeration of managerial and economics-based precepts, techniques and practices assumed a form of administrative improvement suited to each country. In the process, it resulted in a myriad of organizational and structural changes globally transcending national boundaries and encompassing several policy areas such as education, health, communication, etc, in a short span of time making a dent in the discipline and practice of public administration.

4. State- Market Cooperation

The state plays a key role here not only in securing the general institutional framework for profit-orientation and market- mediated economics activities, but also in shaping their specific forms, organisation and overall dynamics.¹³ The state had always discharge an important role in formulating development policies and programmes, providing a suitable institutional environment for the implementation of policies, and a stable political and social environment for their sustenance. But the sudden and massive rise of global capitalism raised question about the efficacy of the state and its institutions in shaping of the state economic life. It is gradually being realised that the administrative and political functions of the state are crucial for successful implementation of any market-orientated programme. The interventionist role of the state assumes a different form.

Government interventions are to be market friendly to make the market function efficiently and be people oriented.¹⁴ Streeten opines that there are several ways in which government intervention can contribute to a more efficient functioning of markets. Bhaduri and Nayyar have identified three kind of interventions have been identified, which are functional, institutional, and strategic in nature. *Functional interventions* seek to remedy market failures in so far as prices give the wrong signals. *Institutional interventions* seek to govern the market by setting the rules of the game for players in the market. *Strategic interventions* seek to guide the market, as these are interlinked across activities or sectors in an attempt to broader, long-term

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¹³ Jessop. Bob. Sharing Power: Public Governance and Private Karkets. (2003). Washington DC: Brookings Institution, p.32.

¹⁴ Streeten, Paul. *Markets and States: Against Minimalism and Dichotomy*,(1995) in Alam de Janury et al. (eds). State Market and Civil Organisations: New Theories, New Practices and Their Implications for Rural Development. London: Macmillon.

objectives of development. The state in order to facilitate market functioning needs to develop the physical infrastructure as well as create an indispensable social infrastructure.¹⁵

Evolving a paradigm of *Socially Responsible Market Economy* (SRME) has been another viewpoint. It seeks to reorient the role of the state and plan through the public sector and joint sector, strength economic and social service activities through building of human resources, strengthen skills, generate employment and develop infrastructure where private sector and foreign investments are not forthcoming. The SRME paradigm emphasises self-discipline, peer pressure and adherence to codes of conduct by all concerned sections of the society reflecting their socially responsible economic behaviour in a free market economy. The state is expected to play a balancing role in overseeing the achievement of people's welfare in a market-driven economy. In ensuring State-Market coordination, the role of government centres on the following:

- Providing an overall economic policy.
- Developing the necessary infrastructure.
- Removing market distortions
- Setting standards of service
- Ensuring fair competition among private players in the concerned sector.
- Instituting an appropriate regulatory or legal framework for players in the market.
- Protecting the interest of consumers, employers, employees and other stakeholders.
- Providing capital to market players.

Effective economic governance demands that the state make efforts to provide a conducive atmosphere for market institutions to functions and at the same time strive to make them then socially responsive. In many of the developing countries, the experience with the implementation of structure adjustment programmes revealed that the key issues including income inequalities, provision of safety nets in case of lay-offs and withdrawal of subsidies, have not been consciously addressed. The state is always accountable to the people whereas the

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¹⁵ Bhaduri, Amit and Deepak Nayyar. *The Intelligent Person's Guide to Liberalism*. New Delhi: Penguin Books.

Jain, R. B. Globlisation, Market Economy and Human Security, (1996). Indian Journal of Public Administration, Special Number on Liberalisation Policy and Social Concerns. Vol. XIVI. No.3 July- September, New Delhi, p.317

market is not. The prominent place given to market force in the present scenario might appear to give a reduced role to the state. But the state's role has not diminished as it has to reconcile the objectives of liberalisation, and pursuit of national interests and developmental goals.

5. Supplementary Role of Civil Society in Governance

In the changing scenario, there emerged a view that individualism, which was embedded in the market and in a government guided by market forces, is not favourable to any society. Hence states and markets need to be supplemented by another institutional alternative in the form of civil society organizations or non-state actors. Civil society as a kind of sphere outside and distinct from the political sphere of the state emerged in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It refers to the self-organisation of citizens in contrast to the state or government, and is rooted in western rational decisions and political culture, Civil society is the collective of those social organizations that enjoy autonomy from the state, and have important goal, among others, to seek to influence the state on behalf of their members. Civil society organizations are networks of groups formed for pursuing special interests, and include all local and external financial, private, charitable, social service, developmental and professional organizations. ¹⁷ Civil society furthers non-political relationships an behavioural patterns between several interdependent actors, which function in a particular political territory.

The markets being driven by the profit criterion and the state organizations being inefficient and unresponsive, the civil society organizations have gained prominence owing to their participatory, flexible, less bureaucratic and cost-effective nature, and ability to reach out to the people. Diamond (1991) identifies at least six functions of civil society in shaping democracy. These are as follows:

- Civil society is a reservoir of political, economic, cultural and moral resources to check the process of the state.
- The diversity of civil society will ensure that the state is not held captive by a few groups.
- The growth of associative life will supplement the work of political parties in stimulating political participation.

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¹⁷ Blair, 1 Harry. Cited in Attur Rahman, *Civil Society and Governance in South Asia*, in Hasnat Abdul Hye (ed.). !998. Governance: South Asian Perspectives, New Delhi: Manohar Publishers.

- Civil society will eventually stabilize the state because citizens will have a deeper stake in the social order. Further, while civil society may multiply of the state, it may also multiply the capacity of groups to improve their own welfare.
- Civil society is a locus for recruiting new political leadership.
- Civil society resists authoritarianism.¹⁸

The development of civil society organizations is considered as growth of communitarianism. Whether attached to and promoted by the political left or right, communitarianism would emphasise the growth of the third sector, meaning non-profit organizations other than those in the public sector, as a solution to many problems of contemporary society.¹⁹

The state and market are generally considered as sources of remote decisions that might not have much of an impact on the lives of the community. The emergence of the communitarian movement, which is a new development but is gaining momentum, provides a broader perspective to society as comprising new forms of community (local, voluntary and professional) working with the spirit of mutual concern and cooperation. The thinking is that gaining coinage is of the state delegating more of its functions to partly autonomous local agencies, communities and cooperatives. This is a way of democratic decentralization.

The limitations of a free market doctrine have now yielded place to a third way, which gives importance to the strengthening of government, citizens and private sector firms. This priority directs governmental attention to improving universal education and technical training, as well as technological research and development. Additionally, the state assumes responsibility for providing minimally adequate safety nets for those individuals who cannot market effectively. The third ways focus is to create equality of opportunity and minimal support for the market's losers rather than to promote equality of outcome by regulating markets.²⁰

¹⁸ Diamond, Larry (ed.) The Democratic Revolution: Struggles for Freedom and Pluralism in the Developing World, Perspective on Freedom, No.12

¹⁹ Peters, Guy. The Future of Governing: Four Emerging Models. (1996), Kansas: University Press of Kansas.p.58.

²⁰ Westergaard, John. Cited in Atul Kohli et. al. (eds). 2003. *State, Markets and Just Growth: Development in the Twenty-first Century*, Tokyo: United Nations University Press. p.229

Currently two global observations appear to be the prevailing trends²¹. They are as follows;

- Globalisation and cultural convergence of the world by western instrumental rationality, especially through the current government reinventing, reengineering, structural adjustments, privatization, and redefinition of public-private sector configuration designed and led by corporate and government elites.
- Counter-pressures from below by masses of citizenry against the rampant instrumental rationality in industrialized nations such as the US and Europe, as well as in developing countries. Demands for citizen participation and the democratization of governance have been increasing as elites press for more work force downsizing, privatisation, cutting and eliminating employment benefits, and high efficiency empire building. All these pressures are leading to the emergence of complementary roles of government, market and civil society, and their integration. The state and market as the two key partners in the task of governance are giving way to the establishment of an interactive governance process. Governance issues, in the present times, are receiving the attention of researchers, policymakers and of the international development community. Governance does not imply strengthening the processes and institutions of merely the government, but also looking into the needs of the governed, making them partners in the process of development, harnessing their capacities and empowering them. There is a rapid shift towards a society-centered approach to the development, with emphasis on the centrality of 'social capital' to development.

Hence, it is commented that, if Max Weber and Woodrow Wilson were to suddenly appear on the landscape of modern public administration today, it is likely that they would be unable to recognise the field. The comprehensive and functionally uniform hierarchical organisations governed by strong leaders who are democratically responsible, and staffed by neutral and competent civil servants who deliver services to citizen are long gone. They have been replaced by an 'organisational Society' in which many important services are provided through multi-

²¹ Farazmand, Ali. *Administrative Ethics and Professional Competence: Accountability and Performance under Globalisation*, (2002), International Review of Administrative Sciences. Vol.68. p.128.

organisational programmes. These programmes are essentially interconnected clusters of firms, governments and associations, which come together with the framework of these programmes.²²

Civil society provides a single civic identity, which is distinct, belong to various groups of citizens, and acts as a mediating link between the state and markets. Anthony Giddens in his work *The Third Way*: *The Renewal of Social Democracy* makes a case for the broadening of democracy with government acting in partnership with agencies in civil society so as to combat civil decline. The established traditions of participative planning and community development can be complemented by experiments in direct democracy. The fostering of civil society is an important task for the state, along with support for the 'bottom-up' politics of community renewal. This implies a greater role for service provision by non-profit organisations, more localised distribution channels and responsibility on the public sector to develop the capacities of local communities.²³

6. Managerialism to Public Service Management

There are maladies and constraints in any system. But these should not deter the transformation process. The reform process has acquired significance and is gaining momentum globally. The crucial question is the grounding of these in the local milieu or the specific contextual setting, and ensuring their sustainability. Reforms are multidimensional in nature and need to be accompanied by changes in the related spheres. It requires public support, political will and a conscious attempt on the part of all concerned to innovate, create, assess, institutionalize, and ensure the sustainability of new institutions and practices, The essential prerequisite for the sustainability of these reforms is achievement of the public purpose efficiently and effectively, thereby fostering a right balance in issues pertaining to social, political, civic and economic governance.

Public administration, in the present changing scenario, as opined by Denhardt and Denhardt (2003), needs to reinforce the concept of citizenship. In a democratic society, values such as efficiency and productivity are to be placed in the larger context of democracy,

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²² Ewalt, Jo and G. March. *Theories of Governance and New Public Management: Links to Understanding Welfare Policy Implementation*, (2001). Paper prepared for presentation at the Annual Conference of the American Society of Public Administration.

²³ Ferlie, Ewin and Louis Fitzgerald, *The Sustainability of the New Public Management in the U.K.* (2002) in Kate Mclaughlin et al. (eds). New Public Management Current Trends and Future Prospects, U.K: Routledge.

community and public interest. They suggest the concept of a New public service based on citizenship and community service. This reiterates the need for public organizations serving the citizens rather than steering, thinking strategically, acting democratically, valuing citizenship and public service above entrepreneurship, and ensuring accountability, not just to the market but also to constitutional law, community, citizen's interests and professional standards.²⁴

The IIIrd Minnowbrook conference held at Syracuse University, in September 2008, focused on the future of public administration, pubic management and public service around the world. Some of the local areas included academic-practitioner relations, democratic performance management, networks, social equity and transparency and accountability. It discussed the significance of a renaissance of comparative studies in the globalised world. The conference reiterated the need for reformulation of public administration, defining it as a socially embedded process of collective relationship, dialogue and action to promote human flourishing for all.

Public administration is in the process of change and reform under the impact of globalization, its arena getting widened and acquiring a new complexion. These present scenario has also opened up opportunities for change and reform. This also calls for acquisition of varied skills and abilities. These encompass creative, technical, behavioural, critical and ethical skills required for meeting the challenges encountered in the management of public affairs. Preservation of indigenous values, institutionalization of reforms tailored to the country needs and genuine participation of all concerned stakeholders add to the credibility and legitimacy of the administration and governance processes.

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