

## **Public Sector and Globalization: Towards New public Management**

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**Abstract:** *Running public service organizations that is used in government and public service institutions and agencies, at both sub-national and national levels is a major area of research in public policy in the era of globalization. Thus, the aim of this paper is to probe relationships between new public management and the process of globalization. It argues that the emergence of NPM is the consequence of parallel processes that could be summarized under the rubric of globalization. The core of these developments could be seen the victory of economics over politics, the introduction of market forces and flexibility into the public sector, and decentralization. Having discussed NPM practically and conceptually the paper concludes that structuration is a useful method of analyzing the interaction between globalization and the implementation of NPM, by assuming that there is a persistent process of interaction between structure and agent and that structures themselves ever-changing.*

**Keywords:** *public sector, globalization, government, structure, privatization.*

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### **Introduction**

NPM is an approach to running public sector including government and public service institutions and agencies at different levels, local and national. The term was first introduced by academics during the 1980s as part of an effort to make the public service more efficient as it is the case in "business" by applying private sector management models. These models basically choose to focus on centrality of citizens who were the recipient of the services or customers to the public sector. From social policy and planning point of view, NPM mostly interested in using decentralized service delivery models, to give local agencies more freedom in how they delivered programs or services.

The changes of public services and public management over the past decades, which is known the new public management, have been described as the process of transforming the landscape of the public sector (Hood, 1991). While the old public sector was based on reliability, predictability, probity, cohesion and continuity" (Rhodes, 1994, P. 151), the new one emphasizes on results, outcomes and performance. Although, there have been considerable controversies in the literature, --focusing mostly on deferring perceptions and the definition of the new public management, and the way of its implementation-- both concepts are highly contested terms, they are also fashionable. This paper attempts to make a link between the literature on the new public management and on globalization by determining the extent of their relationship. For this purpose we need to develop an able framework, which should involve four initial steps: Firstly to map out the emergence and development of the theory and practice of the new public management core theoretical propositions; secondly, to explain the process of developing the theory and practice of globalization; thirdly to identify areas of commensurability between the two literature; and finally, to integrate them into a context.

### **Theoretical Roots**

Managerialism and public choice theories are mentioned to have common assumptions and/or prescriptions for the public sector as compared to others such as economic and market theories, which the following discussion attempts to, draw out their main related points.

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### **Public Choice Theory**

Public choice theory is mostly connected with the ‘new institutional economics’, and it is an economic theory which analyses public institutions and their behavior on the same basis as private firms. The theory is based on the rational actor model and begins with the assumption that bureaucrats are self-interested. There is therefore no reason to assume that they would switch into different gear when they moved from the private to the public sphere, but they would seek to pursue their own interest, whether it was done by ‘bureau-shaping’ (Dunleavy, 1991), or by trying to examine their budget (Niskanen’s, 19971). They can influence outcomes through distorting or restricting the information they pass up through the organization, responding to decisions from above in discretionary ways, and choosing options which best fit their interests when faced with broadly equivalent choices.

So, it is contended that public services would be oversupplied the social welfare optimum, and would not reflect the real will of the people (or the public choice). Public choice theory suggests the ways in which the balance of power between politicians and bureaucrats can be restored, partly through contract theory. Inspired by Self (1993, p. 156) we may list the following key prescriptions associated with public choice as:

- accurate listing and costing of all government functions
- to impose user charges where practicable
- to overcome the tendency of departments to be captured by bureaucrats and to make policy advice more contestable
- to increase the transparency and cost-effectiveness of the whole system in order to ensure that the latter two points are done properly, the followings are needed:
  - private incentive mechanisms like related pay
  - tighter control mechanisms like performance indicators
  - compulsory competitive tendering
  - Bureau competition.

The outcome of the public choice chain concerns the users of public services. Voting every few years does not mean a notable scope for them to express their preferences and influence the way of providing and running of public services. This has led to the introduction of increased choice, for example, of schools and of centers as a method of feedback and redress to “act as the spur to maintaining and improving public service quality and efficiency” (Walsh, 1995, p. xv). Performance indicators and standards are central to this, and are a key aspect of the changing relationship between citizens (here customers or consumers) and bureaucrats. We may say that public choice theory has two main aims. The first is to ensure that the social welfare optimum level of service is being produced, and that it is produced efficiently and effectively. The second aim is to control the ability of bureaucrats to manipulate the system in order to forward their own personal interests, unless these correspond with the public interest. This is usual done by changing the public sector to behave more along with the lines of the market model, and by taking power away from the bureaucrat. It is then passed both upwards to the politician --by increased control through contracts, competition, performance indicators, and measures indicated above-- and downwards to the consumers through increased choice and feedback.

### **Managerialism**

Managerialism has been contended by many in very contradictory ways, from those arguing that it is antithesis of bureaucracy, liberating managers from “the old common structures to more open responsive management” (Atkinson and Cope, 1994), to those arguing that “it is not the rejection of bureaucracy but its fulfillment” (Walsh, 1995, xiv), with “the aim of ...gaining more effective control of work practices” (ibid). This probably derives from the fact that managerialism, like the new public management, is largely based on images of the private sector. There are, however, a great variety of management structures and methods in the private sector, and the two strands of managerialim have picked up on different aspects.

The first strand, which is called neo-Taylorism, originates from Taylor’s ‘scientific management’. It has been concerned with the measuring of work processes in order to control and reward effort, or the

“bureaucratization of structure of control” (pollitt, 1993, p. 16), and largely by means of information technology. Aucoin (1990, p. 119) draws a parallel between scientific management and public choice as they both “presuppose that conflict pervades organizational life and is best contained, and therefore managed, within prescribed authority relationships and official rules” (1990, p. 119). The control, as the result, needs to be an output rather than a process, with a tight reporting infrastructure, and large organizations being broken up into discrete units. This fits with the introduction of performance measurement, cooperation, and changes in accounting procedures which are part of the new public management.

The second strand of managerialism, which is known the new managerialism, starts with the belief that the public sector has been obsessed with regulations and procedures, and that the introduction of management structures and practices would free it up to realize its objectives. The emphasis is therefore on eliminating rigid, dense systems of rules, and for some given managers the ‘right to manage’, to be flexible and entrepreneurial, by giving them responsibility and discretion. It dose follow that according to new mangerialism, there should not be any inherent differences between management in the public and private sectors. This links into the familiar policy/administration dichotomy. It involves putting everyone at arm’s length relationship from managers: this includes the traditional concern with politicians, but has been extended to senior civil servants and professionals. Consequently, this strand, the new managerialism, fits in with the establishment of Executive Agencies and quangos and the purchaser-provider split, and the devolution of power down the line. It has both micro and macro level implications.

The two main strands which have influenced the new public management can thus be summarized as being about giving managers the room and discretion to manage and control work processes. At the core of both is a concern with the efficient use of resources. As pollitt (1993, p. 49) argues, “better management’ sounds sober, neutral, as unopposable as virtue itself”. However, they are not necessarily contradictory. This merely depends on the form of performance measures and output controls being used (particularly whether they are strategic or operational). The Setting forth of some the main points of the new public management models could helpful in this regard.

**Models**

Although the new public management has become a common term with a large literature, it is an eclectic and quite slippery concept. The literature on the new public management has not come up to a consensus on a single definition; however there are common themes which may be observed in the literature. Dunleavy’s seminal classification (1994) encapsulates some of these themes. As indicated in the following Box, he organizes the measures into competition, desegregations and incentivitisation.

<b>Competition</b>	<b>desegregations</b>	<b>incentivisation</b>
Purchaser-provider split market testing through compulsory competitive tendering intra-governmental contracting consumer-tagged financing user control public or private sector polarization deregulation	Corporatisation Micro-local agencies Independent institutions Decoupling linked policy system ‘Chunking up’ privatized industries deprofessionalisation	Privatization of asset ownership Respecification of property rights Development charging technologies Capital market involvement Ani-rent-seeking policies Accounting methods changes

Regarding this classification, some points should be noted. This classification overlaps with many reforms fitting into more than one, if not all categories. For instance, he deals with the splitting up of purchasers and providers in the competition segment, although it also involves disaggregation. Clearly, these two are often closely related, as disaggregation has been an extremely common means of introducing competition. In addition to the problem of overlapping, Dunleavy’s classification overemphasizes certain areas at the expense of others. For example, the increased importance of contracts as a means of coordination and control is referred to throughout the article to only a limited extent, although it has been identified by others as one of the defining changes of the new public

management (Deakin and Walsh. Moreover, Dunleavy's use of the classification of disaggregation rather than decentralization results in the omission of localization as a reform, although 'getting close to the customer' has been one of the guiding principles of the managerial literature. Further, although he mentions deprofessionalisation and increased pay differentiation, he is not explicit about the creation of flatter management structures, or delaying. ...

Stoker and Mossberger (1995) have developed an alternative way of classifying public sector changes in their model called four 's' model (composed of structures, systems, staffing and superordinate culture). This compares traditional management with new wave management in the local state. Several important changes come from this approach. Such as the changes in culture (or the administrative values underlying the public sector) and in staffing (whose combined impact on working conditions is emphasized by grouping them together). Most importantly, the four 's' model points out the changes from 'hands-on' to 'hands-off' control, involving a reduction in general procedural rules which limited the discretion of managers (the desire for uniformity), and a shift to control through contracts and performance indicators. Hoggett (1996) noted the change in control as the key features of the new public management, in such manner that operations have been decentralized while strategic control has been centralized. A strategic framework is established through the contract, and then control is maintained through performance indicators and incentives. Meanwhile there is more room for managerial discretion and responsibility on operational matters. Thus, control is maintained more indirectly.

The distinction between operational and strategic matters explains why it has been possible to point to both decentralization and centralization in the reforms. Hogget (1994) and Aucoin (1990) describe the changes as 'decentralized centralization' and 'selective centralization and decentralization'. Most writers consider centralization and decentralization rather than disaggregation. The latter is concerned with organizational structure, decentralization not only includes that, but also it comprises power structures in a broader sense. As a whole, we may conclude that the new public management constitutes a movement away from Webers' ideal type of bureaucracy, but a change from an ordered hierarchical organization to a disaggregated organization coordinated through markets. This organizational transition has been accompanied by movement from a comprehensive body of rules to performance measurement and contracts which vary across the public sector, and a departure from formal equality of treatment to flexibility and incentives. Dunleavy's classification of the reforms contained in the new public management, although only one of many ways of organizing the list of reforms, could be seen as a useful starting point. All reforms can be placed into at least one category, once these are adapted slightly to marketization and competition, incentivization and decentralization. This classification also accommodates the major public sector reforms which have been introduced in Britain: privatization, CCT, Next steps, the Citizen' Charter and performance measurement.

### **Globalization: Development of the Concept**

Within academic circles, globalization has been analyzed from a wide variety of disciplinary and multi-disciplinary perspectives including politics, economics, sociology and geography. This has led to many different approaches and definitions, ranging from the very narrow like Dombrowski's (1996, p. 222) – "the gradual standardization of regulation between national financial markets and the increasing ability of financial services firms to compete across spectrum of financial markets" – to the abstract like Amine and Thrift's (19994, p. 4) – "the compression and transgression of time and space barriers". Although the objective of the paper is to develop the definition of globalization applicable to social sciences particularly to the explanation of the new public management, different helpful approaches to the concept are briefly illustrated.

The debated surrounding globalization has tended to focus on: problems of political and economic control by the state; on the role of the state in the international system (whether it is a principal actor or not); and on the nature of the international system. These issues demonstrate both the various levels at which globalization is thought to operate, and the progression of the literature over time. The terms used in the literature (interdependence, internationalization, transnationalisation, and globalization) can generally be associated with particular stages in this development. Cooper's book, the Comics of Interdependence (1968), although written from a purely American standpoint and about the Atlantic

community, stated that “international economic intercourse, both enlarges and confines the freedom of countries to act according to their own lights” (p.4). The concept then was developed by international relations scholars and expanded beyond the purely economic sphere (for example, Keohane and Nye 1977). Interdependence is generally taken to mean a loss of autonomy over the policy process to other states. This view still saw the international system as state-centered, but increasingly sensitive to events and policies in other states. The boundary between interdependence and globalization is not always very clearly drawn, but the former basically considers a loss of autonomy to other states, not to the system itself or to global forces at work in the system. It also focuses more than globalization on the positive aspects, or benefits, of increasing transactions and connections between states. As interdependence grew, states had to establish more international organizations in order to facilitate cooperation, although there are still based on the nation-state. This was called as the internationalization of the system. The focus later shifted to ‘global forces’, and a change in the international system itself, encapsulated in the term ‘globalization. The focus became more and more radical, ‘the victory of economics over politics’, and ‘end of the nation-state as the pre-eminent organizational unit, or the withering away of the state (Cerny, 1996). Therefore the traditional distinction between international and intra-national seemed to misleading.

This then provoked a reaction against the concept, mainly from the left. For example, Hirst and Thompson (1996) attempted to argue that governments still have opportunities to develop governance mechanisms at the national and international level to deal with global problems and forces. The backlash has been followed by a examination of the concept, recognizing the fact that ‘it is time to start away from its generalizing tendencies to the specificities of what globalization actually means when used in particular concept for declared and undeclared purposes” (Kofman, Youngs et al 1996). Recent studies have sought to analyze the impact of globalization in relation to particular policy areas (e.g. Gummert et al 1996), or have addressed more explicitly the traditions of thought on which it is based (e.g. Kofman, Young et al 1996). Yet globalization remains a rather vague concept. Explaining several levels of globalization has been envisaged --such as global problems, global forces, government policies and global system-- may help further clarification of its concept, particularly with regard to processes and factors affecting its development.

### **1) Global problems**

The most common cited global problems are environmental such as global warming, the rapid erosion of genetic biodiversity and the depletion of stratospheric ozone (Jordan 1995, p. 303). Others could be international terrorism, global networks of organized crime and the global narcotics trade (McGrew 1992, p.3) and international migration (Hirst and Thompson 1996, p. 141; Kofman and Youngs 1996, p. 150). The international nature of these problems is clearly originated from global forces such as technological innovation and the integration of financial markets. The problems are focused around which national governments develop domestic and international policies, whether alone or in conjunction with other governments. However the problems themselves do not explain much about the changes occurring in the world system and within states. They can produce fascinating anecdotes, but we need look at the forces which are at work.

### **2) Global forces**

Global forces have been examined by many to consistent trends that have shaped institutional change to influential changes in the international economy (Amin and Thrift 1994). Global forces are defined as institutions, as their actions, and as trends affecting them. Many authors refer to a combination of these elements. Some examples could be noted as follows: the spread of liberal democracy; the dominance of market forces; the integration of the global economy; the transformation of production systems and labor markets; the speed of technological change; the media revolution and consumerism (UNRISD 1995, P. 2); international communications; global flows of ideas and images; global financial institutions; and influential international regulatory authorities (Amin and Thrift 1994, p. v). The common areas are the rate of technological innovation and its application particularly with respect to communications; the internationalization of production and the rise of TNCs; the integration and relative power financial markets; and increasing global cultural flows. How can we define a global force without descending

into tautology? McGrew definition in this regard would be helpful. According to him, Scope (or stretching) and intensity (or deepening). On the one hand it defines a set of processes which embrace most of the global or which operate world-wide ... On the other hand it also implies an intensification in the levels of interaction, interconnectedness or interdependence between the states and societies which constitute the world economy (1992, p. 23). Discussing about global forces or processes, however, may led us to conclude that they should operate in large scale of the globe, we should realize unevenness across societies and that processes may not be present everywhere. In addition, yet the dimension of scope is significant as it is one way of differentiating globalization from interdependence, examining the dimension of intensity would be a useful way for the definition and clarification of this process, in such manner that to include the extent to which states are constrained by global forces which are independent of particular states.

### **3) Government policies**

Governments can react to the forces of globalization in different ways. They may attempt to slow down these forces or they may implement policies which accelerate them and expedite globalization. Governments, consequently, can affect the course of globalization, which may not have been predicted. Humphreys and Simpson argue (1996, p. 107) that the US and Britain unleashed 'competitive deregulation' in the telecommunication industry. Liberalization was partly driven by technological developments and partly by demand-side pressures. Factors included the globalization of world trade, the requirements of the global financial structure, and the needs of transnational and multinational business users. However, once certain countries started down the path of deregulation, this created additional pressures on other governments, which then created an internal momentum to the process. Creny points out that deregulation of the financial sector contributed to the process of globalization, as 'state action has not merely reinforced but also initiated market restructuring' (1996b). States may let loose processes over which they have little control when they open markets further. The policies of governments in reacting to global forces may therefore have unintended consequences which actually restrict the range of policies open to the government in the future. McGrew (1992) claims that globalization can be conceived as a dialectical process (es). The forces of globalization will provoke opposition (such as religious fundamentalism or the Green Movement) in some circumstances, the outcome of which will vary across specialties and policy areas. However this is only part of the story, as we have just seen. In some occasions, governments will introduce policies which are in opposition to the forces of globalization by introducing legal restrictions to increase 'friction' between markets, and in some occasions governments will advance those forces. These could be seen as endogenous and exogenous factors, respectively, in the opening up of economies and states. This distinction is often omitted.

### **5) Global System**

The international or global system has been taken by many writers as the level of analysis in defining globalization. McGrew, for example, characterizes globalization as "the multiplicity of linkages and interconnections between the states and societies which make up the modern world system" (1992, p. 23). Hirst and Thompson set out a model of a 'globalized international economy' which entails the "development of a new economic structure, and not just conjectural change toward greater international trade and investment within an existing set of economic relations" (1996, p.7). Waters (1996) charts the degree of globalization within the economic, political and cultural spheres without considering how they occur the reaction of governments.

However, some writers also claim that globalization changes the old 'traditional' levels of analysis used within the literature, particularly international relations. For instance, Underhill (1994, p. 20) asserts that "What was once essentially matters of domestic politics have now spilled over and become contentious in relations among states and other actors ... the distinction between domestic and international levels of analysis is a strict sense artificial. Meanwhile Cerny declares that globalization "defies traditional conceptions of levels of analysis ... domestic and international politics have been inextricably intertwined from the start" (1996a, p. 3). They assert that globalization is interesting because it undermines the old approach to the study of the international system.

Both of these approaches, however, are defining globalizing in terms of the changes affected by global forces in the system, none of them explains why change is happening. The first defines globalizations as the new global structure, with stating how we got there. It often implies that this outcome was inevitable and it is necessary an exercise in assessing the extent of globalization. This approach is not interested in explaining the development of globalization. However, we may conclude that the globalizing forces can provoke opposition that governments have a number of choices in how to react to them, and that we cannot therefore predict the result. The second approach is concerned with analyzing the system rather than with the understanding of how changes in the system are coming about.

### **Concluding remarks: on linkages**

Some of the linkages between the new public management and globalization outlined in the different parts of the paper might be organized into the following propositions.

- If globalization is defined as a global convergence in policy then it will be commensurable with the assumption that the new public management has become a global ‘best practice’ paradigm for public sector change.
- If globalization is defined as the ‘victory of economies over politics’, it will be proper with the introduction of market forces and competition into the public sector.
- If globalization is defined as the ‘new medievalism’ then this is commensurable with broader processes of decentralization.
- If the ‘competition state’ is viewed as a manifestation of globalization then this may be viewed as commensurable with the introduction of flexibility and market forces into the public sector, and a shift in values to a primary concern with economy and parsimony.

In order to explore the relationship between the two phenomena and their literatures, we require an analytical framework.

As mentioned above, most of the debated in the literature on the new public management surrounds the particular reforms composing of: its theoretical roots (public choice theory and managerialism) related to their assumptions about bureaucracy and bureaucrats; the consequences of the reforms; and the way of its implementation. The debate on globalization, meanwhile, focuses on the policy areas it has affected: the extent of change in the international and national systems and problems of political and economic control by the state. Structure and agency is therefore an important instrument for evaluating commensurability. The new public management’s theoretical underpinnings are concerned with the structure of the public sector and the way of affecting the behavior of bureaucrats and politicians, while globalization is concerned with the way that global forces change the structure and the way that state actors react.

If we situate globalization within the analytical context of structure and agency, then global forces are part of the structure which constrains or facilitates agents’ choice. As noted earlier, these global forces will provoke opposition, and agents’ choice can change the structure, although sometimes in unintended ways. There is no an end point towards that the global forces are pushing the system. Global forces will have different consequences depending on the place and time. As Cerny (1990, p. 27) argued, “Structures arise from non-replicable, unique mixtures of historical accident, coincidence, precedents ... and design”. Therefore we find it helpful to use the notion of structuration in which the interaction between agent and structure is a continual process. Although structures are mainly constraining, they are also subject to change themselves (op. cit. xi). When global forces change the structural constraints on states, agents (state actors) may have several options open to them when making policy. However, the choice they make will also affect structures and possibly limit the choices they have in future. Analysis of globalization must move away from the common practice of using what Cerny calls ‘orthodox’ structural theory.

Structures are actually complex and are open to change, in spite of having a tendency to reproduce themselves. This basic approach is used by some of the authors in Gummert’s edited volume, *Globalization and Public Policy* (e.g. Cerny 1996b; Humphreys and Simpson 1996), for analyzing

particular policy areas. They examine the structural constraints on policy making, the process of deciding and making policy, the way affecting these decisions on the structure --and thus further constrains on future policy making. If we look at the new public management in terms of structuration, its aim is to change the structure to alter the logic of the interlocking pattern of 'games' played out by bureaucrats. Cerny points out that the games are often concerned with structural maintenance (career ladders, departmental budgets), while they are also intertwined in games with other levels (elite strata in society, policy communities, lower-level civil servants and so on) (Cerny 1996, p. 45). This has parallels with Dunleavy's analysis of bureau-shaping and Nikanen's theory of budget maximization, in fact with public choice theory generally.

It should be noted that there are structural constraints and opportunities which informed the strategic and tactical choices of agents. The implementation of the new public management then altered the structure of the public sector, possibly in unintended ways, which may have affected the global forces too, and created new incentives and constraints on agents. Of course, some of these claims require further empirical analysis. Empirical investigation of the new public management has concentrated on the national and local level, however, other areas are ripe for investigation. Theoretically the new public management is supposed to be applicable to any type of organization in the public sector, and globalization studies deal directly with the local level in the literature on globalization and the new medievalism. Therefore both the new public management and globalization are applicable to empirical analysis at all levels of governance. Structural theory, as Cerny (1990) states, clearly provides a context of integration for the two literatures and a useful way of trying to explain the emergence and development of the new public management. Both the new public management and globalization literatures deal with the nature of structuration implicit. We therefore need to examine the structural factors which influence the implementation of the new public management, including globalizing forces and the incentives of the agents involved. We then need to assess the impact of the reforms implemented on the structure and how it has changed the constraints and opportunities of agents and affected the globalizing forces. The next step must therefore be to develop a model of structuration to be used in the analysis of the implementation of the new public management, of globalization, and of the interplay between the two.

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