

The New Public Management, a Factor of Novelty in the Public Administration

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Abstract

In the last decades, the traditional administration has been subjected to some challenges caused by ample changes, worldwide, in the managerial, political, judicial field, against the globalization and diversification of services.

The changes were based on principles of the New Public Management and meant the achievement of a managerial reform in the methods of operating of public sector organizations, by moving from the traditional model of public administration, governed by the bureaucratic theory of Max Weber, towards a flexible model. of public management; it was pursued to reduce the differences besides the private sector.

The new concept appeared against the background of finding the inefficiency of the public administration system, in the use of public resources and focuses on the takeover in the public sector, of the management techniques, belonging to the private sector.

The paper aims to present the reform process covered by the traditional public administration, beginning with the end of the last century, generated by the emergence of the new managerial formula. There are presented concepts and definitions in evolution, but also, levels of conceptualization of the new current, as reflected in the theories and works of specialists.

Key words: public administration, government, private sector, conceptual approaches, New Public Management

J.E.L. classification: H11, H83, H44

1. Introduction

Since the last decades of the last century, the public administration was subjected to wide changes, at managerial, political, judicial level. In the socio-economic context of the modern developed societies, the public organizations did not have the capacity to respond to the new requirements of citizens, because of the bureaucratic nature of their organizational and managerial structure. (Calogero, 2010)

The changes consisted in the transition from the traditional model of public administration, governed by the bureaucratic principles of Max Weber's theory, to a flexible model of public management, which meant a reform (Katsamunskaja, 2012), in the methods of operating of public sector organizations, attenuating the distinction from those of the private sector; the decision-making power of public managers increase, the supervision through rules of procedure transmitted from the center is relaxed. (Kalimullah, Alam Ashraf, Nour, 2012). At the basis of this process were principles of the New Public Management (Calogero, 2010).

As Marilena O. Moraru (2012) points out, to the origins of the New Public Management are reforms regarding the role of government in the delivery of public services, which have manifested themselves in some developed European countries. (Moraru, p. 115. 2012).

At the basis of the definition of the New Public Management was the aspect regarding "the implementation of management ideas from business and private sector into the public services" (Moraru, p.116, 2012 quotes Haynes, P., 2003).

The paper aims to present the reform process undergone by the traditional public administration, beginning with the end of the last century, along with the emergence of the new managerial form, called, the New Public Management; concepts and definitions are presented, in their evolution, as reflected in the theories and works of specialists.

2. Theoretical background. Conceptual approaches, definitions of the New Public Management

Conceptually, the New Public Management was anticipated by a series of currents of thought (neoclassical, organizations theory, agency theory, ownership theory), associated with the ideology of public choice, flexibility, decentralization of administrative units, privatization (Bouri, 2016).

The emergence of New Public Management is the effect of finding inefficiency in the public administration system and in the use of public resources. The basic element of the concept is the orientation towards the principles of market economy and increasing efficiency in the public administration; the proposed changes should ensure the optimization of public resources use and the improvement of the quality of public services provided to the citizen (Świrska, 2014).

This novelty in public administration management is considered a modern form of management that maintains the (traditional) public principles that are continuous evolving (Samaratunge, Alam and Teicher, 2008, quoted in Kalimullah N. A.; Alam Kabir M. Ashraf; Nour M. M. Ashaduzzaman, 2012, p. 2).

The aim is to reform the public sector by taking over some managerial formulae and mechanisms of the private sector (Amar and Berthier, 2007).

A given definition shows that the management "corresponds to the set of techniques of orientation, setup and administration of an entity, in order to achieve its objectives. The management is not, in fact, a theory, but, especially, a practice comprising a set of technical and relational knowledge" (Amar A. and Berthier L., 2007, p. 2 quotes Alecian et Foucher, 2002).

It is a new form of public management approach that is inspired from the private management techniques (Kalimullah, Alam Ashraf, Nour, 2012).

The New Public Management paradigm suggests reducing the size of government and its role, removing bureaucracy, decentralization, privatization, adopting market principles in public service delivery, emphasis on accountability and performance. There are principles that oppose the characteristics of traditional administration, regarding the conditions of employment and promotion, its indeterminate character, excessive bureaucracy, the form of traditional responsibility, unconvincing elements for achieving performance (Hughes, 2003, quoted in Kalimullah N. A.; Alam Kabir M. Ashraf; Nour M. M. Ashaduzzaman, p. 10, 2012).

The market discipline leads to competition, respectively, in the provision of public services, as such, the supplier agencies are encouraged to improve services; the public becomes the consumer customer of the public sector market.

The requirement to reduce costs and increase the quality of services provided obliges the public service agencies to ensure an optimum of use of financial and human resources they have. (Kalimullah, Alam Ashraf, Nour, 2012)

This new paradigm emerged in the public administration, through bureaucratic tradition, in the form of the New Public Management is constituted as a challenge addressed to the basic principles of traditional public administration (Kalimullah, Alam Ashraf, Nour, 2012). The challenge arises from the tensions that manifest between the institutional side of the administration, which has concrete tasks to perform in the public service, and the managerial side oriented towards the public services, whose stake is the flexibility and work conditions (Bouri, 2016).

The path from the traditional public administration to the new form of flexible public management, oriented towards market principles, manifested itself after the '80s of the last century, which meant a fundamental change in the role of government.

The state has a minimal role, being at the same time, *state - organizer* and *state - strategist* in conditions of market flexibility (Bouri, 2016).

The organizer state is characterized by flexibility and efficiency; the state is no longer the sole receiver of political legitimacy, taking into account aspects such as the delegation of a part of sovereignty towards entities (Bouri, 2016).

The strategist state presupposes a series of features, such as (Bouri, 2016):

- perspective vision in cooperation with civil society;
- is a guarantor of the general public interest (public services, public funds, regulations);
- ensuring social cohesion;
- adapting the administrative structures in order to achieve the objectives;
- participatory democracy.

The New Public Management that emerged in the last decades of the last century, in a series of significant countries, from the development perspective, had various names, such as: "managerialism" (Pollitt, 1993), the "new public management" (Hood, 1991) or "entrepreneurial government" (Osborne and Gaebler, 1993). (Kalimullah N. A.; Alam Ashraf Kabir M. Ashraf; Nour M. M. Ashaduzzaman, p. 8, 9 quotes Pollitt, 1993; Hood, 1991; Barzelay, 2001; Osborne și Gaebler, 1993 2012).

The definitions as well as different names refer to a phenomenon considered by Hood (1991) (Hood, 1991, quoted in Kalimullah N. A.; Alam Kabir M. Ashraf; Nour M. M. Ashaduzzaman, p. 9, 2012), a form of managerial thought, based on the principles generated by the private sector and assimilated by the public sector, the goal being to increase efficiency. (Kalimullah, Alam Ashraf, Nour, 2012).

The term New Public Management was presented as "a group of ideas, variations on a theme or a cluster of ideas". (Androniceanu A., Șandor A., 2006, p., 93 (13) quotes Kerstin Sahlin-Anderson, National, Interantioanl and Transnational Constructions of New Public Management in New Public Management – The Transformation of Ideas and Practice - Edited by Tom Christensen and Per Lægheid, Ashgate Publishing, Cornwell, England, 2003, p. 51);

These interventions in the administration of public management, considered as "modernization" of public organizations have emerged in a new form of public sector considered a model of "managerialism", different from the existing bureaucratic administration. The initiative of "reinventing the governance" has been practiced both in some European countries and in other parts of the continent, respectively, the United States, Canada, New Zealand, Australia. (Androniceanu A. and Șandor A., p. 93, 2006).

For the public sector, the New Public Management involves changes from structural, organizational and managerial perspectives, intervened in the achievement of public services in countries belonging to OECD. The shaping of the concept, expression of a new system of values, is the consequence of the approaches of some specialists in the field, at the end of the last century, respectively: (Hood, 1991; Pollit, 1993; Ridley, 1996; Hood, 1991, 1995; Lane, 1994; Clarke and Newman, 1997 - "The Managerial State"; Stewart and Walsh, 1992; Walsh, 1995; Flynn, 1993; Mascarenhas, 1993; quoted in Androniceanu A., 2007, p. 154)

- a model aimed at reforming administrative systems (Hood, 1991; Pollit, 1993; Ridley, 1996);
- a system of values belonging to the private sector, taken over, for implementation, in the public sector (Hood, 1991, 1995);
- a concept in which the balance of public management values advances those of the traditional administrative system (Lane, 1994);
- it is oriented, through content, towards managerialism (Clarke and Newman, 1997 - "The Managerial State");
- it is a process in which the public services management system, developed on the basis of competitive market principles, replaces the traditional model of operationalizing public services, dominated by the bureaucratic tradition (Stewart and Walsh, 1992; Walsh, 1995; Flynn, 1993; Mascarenhas, 1993).

According to the approaches of some authors, the component elements that singularize the New Public Management are grouped into two categories of values that are manifested simultaneously: (Androniceanu, 2007)

- managerial reforms, with reference to the business managerialism and autonomy to lead;
- the market and competition.

As such, the management is perceived "as a continuum ranging from more managerialism at one end (e.g., decentralization and hands-on professional management) to more marketization and competition at the other [...]" (Androniceanu A., 2007, p. 155, *New Public Management, a Key Paradigm for Reforming Public Management in Romanian Administration*)

John Stewart and Kieron Walsh (1992) consider that "the main objective of NPM is to improve the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of the public sector and increase the service quality" (Świrska, p. 151, 2014, quotes John Stewart and Kieron Walsh, *Change in the management of public services, Public Administration*, t. 70, 1992, p. 510). The perspective of improving the public sector, considered expensive, excessively bureaucratic, with a pyramidal hierarchy, implies reform based on the elements "Economy, Effectiveness, Efficiency" - the three E's (Urio, 1998, quoted in Amar A. and Berthier L., 2007, p. 3).

To achieve these objectives, some actions are needed, among which (Świrska, 2014):

- the emphasis on the results obtained by public organizations;
- the use of strategic programming and management;
- the distinction between the roles of buyer and of service provider;
- the development of market relations and stimulation of competition in the process of service delivery;
- customer-oriented activities;
- more flexible employment conditions.

The perception of the New Public Management techniques, within the states or even the areas that draw on its methods, is different depending on their expectations, the way of evaluating the results (Kerstin Sahlin-Andersson, 2001; Amanda Smullen, 2004; 2007, quoted in Pollitt C., 2007, p. 111.). Thus, it can be considered (Pollitt, 2007):

- a new form of professionalism of managers;
- a process directly related to the services provided to citizens considered customers;
- a procedure to diminish the level of expenses, taxes;
- form of elimination of central hierarchical control, based on the establishment of agencies.

Regarding the process of the New Public Management, the impact on some dominant elements regarding the management objectives, the authors have different visions. Thus (Van de Walle and Hammerschmiddisting, 2011):

✓ Steven Van de Walle and Gerhard Hammerschmiddisting (2011) (Pollitt, 1990; Barzelay, 1992; Hughes, 1998, quoted in Van de Walle S. and Hammerschmiddisting G., 2011, p. 2.) consider that the term the New Public Management is used, generically, with reference to the trends, respectively, to the changes produced in public sectors within European countries or other areas, in the last decade of the last century, expressed by:

- ⇒ "Managerialism" (Pollit, 1990);
- ⇒ "Post-bureaucratic organization" (Barzelay, 1992);
- ⇒ "Entrepreneurial government" (Hughes, 1998).

✓ Lane (2000, p. 219) considers New Public Management, "a contractualist model" (Steven Van de Walle and Gerhard Hammerschmiddisting, 2011, p. 2 quotes Lane, 2000, p. 219);

✓ König appreciates it a "mixture of management theories, business motivation psychology and neo-liberal economy" (König 1997, 219) (Steven Van de Walle and Gerhard Hammerschmiddisting 2011, p. 2, quotes König, 1997, 219).

✓ Barzelay (2002) considers the existence of four types of the New Public Management: "contractualist", "managerialist", "consumerist" and "reformist". (Barzelay, 2002, quoted in Steven Van de Walle and Gerhard Hammerschmiddisting, 2011, p. 2).

3. Research methodology

The methodology used meant a laborious documentation, from foreign and autochthon literature, given the complexity of the chosen topic, without exhausting the existing resources in the field, the selection and processing of ideas, through the author's own interpretation.

4. Findings. Levels of conceptualization

According to *some opinions* (Dunleavy et al., 2006, p. 96-105; Pollit, 2003a, chapter 2 quoted in Pollitt C. 2007, p. 110), the New Public Management signifies a process that manifests itself, differently, on two levels: (Pollitt, 2007)

A first level - a group of characteristic concepts and practices, within which significantly, by importance, can be mentioned: (Pollitt, 2007)

- the emphasis on performance, quantification of results;
- practicing small, specialized, flexible organizational forms, preferred to large, multifunctional forms (by disaggregating them);
- giving up the prioritized forms of contracting, with a coordinating role;
- the extensive use of market mechanisms, of the competitive purchasing system, of salary motivation related to performance;
- the improvement of the quality of services produced and delivered to users.

A second level – higher, the New Public Management is considered a process through which it streamlines the public sector, by transferring over it, new business methods and techniques (Pollitt, p. 110, 2007).

Another structuring comes to the authors Van de Walle S. and Hammerschmidting G. (Van de Walle and Hammerschmidting, p. 2, 2011), in the paper *The Impact of the New Public Management: Challenges for Coordination and Cohesion in European Public Sectors*; the New Public Management can be thought of from two perspectives, which they call "levels".

The first level - it is established as a combination of managerial novelties whose effect (each of them) can be determined (Van de Walle S. and Hammerschmidting G., p. 2, 2011).

The second level – higher, of the New Public Management, refers to another position of government in society, with a felt effect in the macroeconomic sphere (Van de Walle S. and Hammerschmidting G., p. 2, 2011).

⇒ **A first level** refers to the intervention, from the perspective of managerial novelties, of the New Public Management, on the public sector, signaled by authors, in the analyzes performed:

Haynes (2003) defines the New Public Management as “the attempt to implement management ideas from business and private sector, into the public services” (Van de Walle S. and Hammerschmidting G., 2011, p. 3, quotes Haynes, 2003).

According to Donald Ketl (2000, 1-2) (quoted in Van de Walle S. and Hammerschmidting G., 2011, p. 3), the key elements, determinant for the global changes of the public management, were the commercialization, targeting services, the decentralization, the responsibility regarding the obtained results.

Ferlie et al (1996) consider four forms of the New Public Management: „the efficiency drive, downsizing and decentralisation, in search of excellence and public-service orientation” (Ferlie et al. 1996, 10-15) (Van de Walle S. and Hammerschmidting G., 2011, p. 3 quotes Ferlie et al. 1996, 10-15).

Other authors (Gray and Jenkins, 1995) (Gray and Jenkins, 1995, quoted in Van de Walle S. and Hammerschmidting G., 2011, p. 3) note that, clarifications can be provided through processes such as disaggregation or decentralization and, within organizations, the tasks can be differentiated (regulation, property functions, control functions etc.). One of the basic characteristics of the New Public Management is the orientation, through the chosen solutions of intervention, towards the fragmentation of the public sector, in independent units, and the stimulation of the market competition between these new bodies.

There are changes that have led to fundamental changes in the functioning of the public sector.

⇒ **At the second level – higher**, the New Public Management relates to changing the role of government.

From the perspective of the New Public Management, the conception regarding the role of government is based on the opinions regarding the reduction of the role of the state (Lane, 2000) (Lane, 2000, quoted in Van de Walle S. and Hammerschmidting G., 2011, p. 4), the essential element in governance being increasing trust in the stimulation of market competition.

The managerialism is a concept that concerns new methods of management, the role of the state and of the public manager (Clarke and Newman, 1997). (Clarke and Newman, 1997, quoted in Van de Walle S. and Hammerschmidting G., 2011, p. 4).

Thus, the principles of traditional setup, the universalism, equity have been replaced with efficiency and individualism (du Gay, 2000), the condition of the civil servant and public manager has been changed (Clarke and Newman, 1997), the role of government in providing services, by their outsourcing, has been diminished; the citizens becomes customers (Clarke and Newman,

2007, Fountain 2001) (du Gay, 2000, Clarke and Newman, 1997, Clarke and Newman, 2007, Fountain 2001 quoted in Van de Walle S. and Hammerschmid G., 2011, p. 4).

There was not outlined a single model of the New Public Management, there are differences between countries, regarding the modalities of taking over the modernizations brought. This manifested itself from a complete orientation towards market forces (Great Britain), to the fundamental reform of the public sector, following the model of the private sector (New Zealand) or some situations of coexistence with the traditional rules of bureaucratic government (Austria, Germany, Japan), as noted by Naschold (1996, p. 19) (Naschold, 1996, p. 19, quoted in Calogero M., 2010, p. 32).

The New Public Management means a change, worldwide, with particular manifestations, at territorial level, which tend towards a new model of government, with various forms of expression. (Calogero, 2010).

It can be considered that the New Public Management signifies a formula of orientation of the public administration towards a modern management, adaptable to changes that should ensure quality norms and initiatives in public administration, the ultimate goal being a results - concerned management that should give priority to the requirements of citizens - clients. (Świrska, 2014).

5. Conclusions

In the practice of traditional public administration, a number of challenges have emerged under the influence of profound changes that have taken place worldwide, in the context of globalization as well as of the diversification of services. (Katsamunsk, 2012).

The global paradigm, as can be considered the New Public Management, signifies a the consequence of the changes occurred in global plan, from the perspective of production and capitals movement (Androniceanu & Şandor, 2006).

The novelty of the concept, in the management of public administration, is constituted as a modern form of management, which maintains the public (traditional) principles, which are in a continuous evolution.

It is suggested the reduction of the size of the government and its role, removing bureaucracy, the decentralization, privatization, adopting market principles in the delivery of public services, emphasis on responsibility and performance (Kalimullah, Alam Ashraf, Nour, 2012). There are principles different from the characteristics of the traditional administration, with an emphasis on excessive bureaucracy, a form of traditional accountability, unfavorable elements for achieving performance. (Hughes, 2003, quoted by Kalimullah, Alam Ashraf, Nour, 2012, p. 10).

The pursued idea was to signal the trend of replacing the traditional system of providing public services, based on bureaucratic principles, with the management of public service, organized on market principles and increase in efficiency in public administration. (Amar & Berthier, 2007; Moraru, 2012).

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