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Management and Administration

The first dichotomy we will discuss in this book is between public administration and public management. As was pointed out in Chapter 1, we see public management as embedded in public administration. Therefore, the dichotomy we will address in this chapter refers to the tensions between those two different perspectives – management versus administration – on fundamental issues related to the bureaucracy. These will include its relationship to elected officials and its clients, and the values and norms that are prioritized in the two perspectives. These differences are most distinct and pertinent when we confront conventional public administration with New Public Management (NPM) which is the currently dominant version of public management thinking and a neo-Weberian philosophy of public service. Thus, our discussion about public management is mainly related to NPM, although we will also trace the history of the public management school of thought.

This chapter will look more closely at the shift from public administration to public management in the scholarly literature and also in the debate among politicians and civil servants. We first discuss the different meanings and consequences of the shift from public administration to public management. After that, and as a way of further clarifying what the concepts of public administration and public management stand for, we will stylize the two different approaches to the public sector and its organizations. We then conclude the chapter by discussing whether there is today some degree of convergence between the two approaches and, if so, what that position means and the degree to which neo-Weberianism deviates from those two approaches.

The 1980s witnessed a subtle but significant change in the literature and debate on public sector reform among scholars and practitioners. ‘Public administration’ became used less, and was gradually marginalized while ‘public management’ gained rapid recognition and diffusion. Numerous books and

articles were published, often in new journals devoted specifically to the study of public management (Hood, 1991; D. Osborne and Gaebler, 1993; Christensen and Laegreid, 2011a). Public administration schools and programs were renamed and new degrees were created. In an astonishingly brief period of time public administration had become a phenomenon of the past while public management was the *au courant* way to talk and write about the public bureaucracy.

Was this mainly a matter of change in jargon, an ‘old wine in new bottles’ process, or did the replacement of public administration with public management signify a substantive change in focus, theory and discourse? This chapter will argue the latter position. Not only do management and administration denote different organizational functions and roles, but the two concepts also denote different theoretical and normative lenses through which the public bureaucracy is observed. Management and administration highlight different organizational roles within the public service just as they prioritize different goals and norms. The almost unilateral attention to public management issues at the expense of public administration has thus meant that some empirical and normative aspects of the public service have been prioritized over others, and that indeed a discourse emphasizing efficiency and performance has taken precedence over a discourse of legality, due process and transparency.

Recently we have seen tendencies towards a convergence between the public administration and public management philosophies. The classic public administration has been found to have problems with modernizing service delivery, while costs have become a growing concern. At the same time, the public management model of administrative reform has been proven to drive fragmentation and coordination problems in the public service (see Chapter 5). Similarly, the strict focus on performance measurement has had undesirable consequences on administrative decision-making and prioritizing (Radin, 2006), and public management reform has to some extent failed to deliver on its promises of cost-cutting and customer satisfaction (Hood and Dixon, 2015). Therefore, many countries have sought to develop a model of administration that ensures responsiveness and accountability while at the same time safeguarding the gains from public management reform. Sometimes labeled ‘post-NPM’ or ‘neo-Weberianism’ (Christensen and Laegreid, 2011a; Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2011; but see Goldfinch and Wallis, 2010), this reform project has aimed at strengthening the center of the political system, ensuring that management is embedded in, and contributes to, democratic governance and, as Ramesh and his associates put it, ‘rearticulating the public in public administration’ (Ramesh, Araral and Wu, 2010; see also Kramer, 1999; Thomas, 1999; Halligan, 2010; Dahlström, Peters and Pierre, 2011). We will return to these issues later in this chapter.

From Public Administration to Public Management

Public administration was for long an area of academic study in its own right, devoted to the study of bureaucracies. It was, as pointed out in Chapter 1, a fragmented and eclectic field of study, drawing on several different academic disciplines, like sociology, political science, economics and organization theory.

Another fault line among public administration scholars exists between on the one hand, scholars who were mainly interested in applying theoretical arguments to the system of administration, for instance the assumption that actors are maximizing their utility, and to explore the consequences of that assumption, and on the other hand, those scholars who were primarily interested in describing the daily practice of public administration (Peters and Pierre, 2016; Pollitt, 2016).

Public management shares many of these features, drawing on largely the same disciplines as public administration and is equally torn between deductive theory and the study of administrative practice. In addition, public management is still evolving as a research field. Although ‘modern’ public management emerged in the 1970s and 1980s, its intellectual roots can be traced far back in time (see Hood, 2005; Noordegraaf, 2015). Although a heterogeneous field replete with potential normative tensions, public management presents itself as based in ‘the scientific study of the modern state’ (Lynn, 2005: 27), originally in the United States around the turn of the twentieth century. For example, Woodrow Wilson and the progressives wanted to create a more professional perspective on management in the public sector. If public administration is mainly concerned with constitutional issues, such as how public decisions are to be made, the role of the public service in relation to the political level of government, and the formal rights of citizens and clients vis-à-vis the bureaucracy, public management looks first and foremost at the management, i.e. leadership, efficiency problems, resource allocation and relationships with customers/clients.

The interesting observation as we compare the two research fields is that there is little overlap between the two. Both areas of study and practice are critical to the organization, yet given the different foci of public administration and public management there should be intellectual space to accommodate both. There are several reasons why public administration and public management have become seen as competitors in academia and among practitioners. One reason, as mentioned above, is that they focus on different aspects of public sector organization. Importantly, during the past couple of decades the issues at the heart of public management – cost-cutting, efficiency, market-based reform, etc. – have risen to prominence on the public sector reform agenda. The old POSDCORB management system (Planning, Organizing, Staffing, Directing, Coordinating, Reporting and Budgeting) was assumed to provide a template for efficient management (Gulick and Urwick, 1937). At the heart of classic public administration (see Simon, 1947) there was also concern with efficiency, albeit not in a strictly economic sense. At the same time, issues that are central to public administration – responsiveness, legality, transparency, conventional accountability, and so on – are today less at the center of attention among political and administrative leaders. These issues have had to give way to management issues.

Second, public management and public administration are related to quite different academic disciplines. Public management has its roots in economics and business management while public administration is mainly academically derived from law, political science, organization theory and sociology. These differences suggest that although the object of study is not vastly different, the two fields approach this object from distinctly different intellectual vantage points and apply different discourses to the public bureaucracy.

Third, public management gained importance and prominence during the 1980s and 1990s to some extent because it spoke more directly to the problems that were seen as the chief problems in the public sector at that time, and it advocated a novel approach to those problems. At the same time, public administration became to some extent seen as part of the problem, given its emphasis on values that did not promote efficiency, such as due process and responsiveness. Notions of ‘old public administration’ and ‘new public management’ are indicative of the erroneous idea that public bureaucracies are no longer engaged in administration but only concerned with managing. Given the ascendancy of neoliberalism to political power across the Western world during these decades, there has been growing political pressure to cut costs and increase efficiency in the public sphere. Public administration scholars and practitioners alike had very little advice to offer on these matters. Instead, management experts, often with expertise in corporate management, could respond to this demand and apply their work to the public sector.

Table 2.1 summarizes our discussions on the differences between public administration and public management. As we can see, the two research fields accord the public bureaucracy somewhat different roles and describe the organization differently.

Table 2.1 Public administration, public management and neo-Weberianism: key differences

	Public administration	Public management	Neo-Weberianism
Objectives	Legality	Efficiency	Balance
	Due process	Marketization	Political control
	Accountability	Performance Customer satisfaction	
Clients	Public interest	Stakeholders	Public interest
	Citizens	Customers	Citizens
Key roles of bureaucracy	Policy advice	Service delivery	Service delivery
	Law enforcement	Contract management	Legality
	Implementation		
Relationship to political leaders	Loyalty	Autonomy	Advisors
	Responsiveness		Responsiveness
Relationship to clients	Legal security	Customer satisfaction	Balancing efficiency and legal security
	Predictability		
Management	By command	By results	By goal setting
Source of legitimacy	Procedure	Performance	Strategic leadership

The difference between public administration and public management is thus far greater than merely focusing on different aspects of the public bureaucracy or drawing on different academic disciplines. The two disciplines essentially tell different grand stories about the public bureaucracy. Public administration departs from the political and democratic roles of the bureaucracy, defines what that perspective means for the relationships to citizens and elected officials and studies how intra-organizational processes may support or interfere with the democratic mission of the bureaucracy. Public management asks questions about how the performance of public organizations can be enhanced and how collaboration with private sector organizations or nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) can best be organized.

Neo-Weberianism has emerged in the wake of NPM and in reaction to some of the pathologies that this reform entailed (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2011). Neo-Weberianism has, however, also been careful to preserve the positive changes that NPM brought about. We will discuss neo-Weberianism in some detail later in this chapter. For now, we should note that the overarching objective of this reform strategy has been to find the optimal balance between the values, norms and practices that were typical to the public administration model on the one hand, and the focus on efficiency and customer orientation that NPM introduced. See Table 2.1.

A key issue in shifting intellectual focus from public administration to public management was the degree of public sector specificity, that is, whether there were features of public sector organizations that set them apart from for-profit organizations or NGOs. Indeed, the import of management ideas, including internal markets and a customer focus, from the corporate sector rested on the idea that public management was essentially no different from managing private sector organizations (see Allison, 1983). The solution, often implicit, was to think of management as a 'generic' organizational function, that is, organizational leadership was the same challenge regardless of whether the organization is public or private (Peters, 2001).

To further clarify the differences between public administration and public management and what the shift from the former towards the latter has meant we will outline two stylized models. From that comparison we will be able to see more clearly the differences between the two, both in terms of their empirical organizational focus as well as the main differences between them conceptually and theoretically.

We will compare the two models and also the neo-Weberian model in more detail with regard to their perspectives and objectives on four sets of issues: normative theory, organizational structure, leadership and control; and accountability.

Public Administration

As already mentioned, we see public administration as integral to democratic governance. Indeed, this is a key point which we are pursuing throughout this book; the norms and governance tasks associated with public administration are

just as salient today as they were 25 or 50 years ago. Without the public bureaucracy the elected government would not be able to implement its decisions and the large number of regulations that it issues would not be enforced. The specific organizational tasks that are associated with the bureaucracy's role in governance may or may not lend themselves to objectives such as efficiency or performance, but then again it was not created with these objectives in mind.

Normative theory

From Max Weber and Woodrow Wilson onwards, public administration as a field of academic study has elaborated the normative foundation of public administration. The tension between political loyalty and responsiveness on the one hand and legality and due process on the other has been a main theme in this debate. If the former norms are prioritized, there is a risk of excessive political control of the bureaucracy, which will jeopardize legality and equal treatment and, in the longer run, institutional trust. If, however, the values related to the internal processes in the public bureaucracy are emphasized, we may end up with a public administration that is mainly self-serving and aloof to the interests of both elected officials and the citizens. Different countries have sought to find the 'sweet spot' between these two norms and objectives, with the answers based on different political cultures and different challenges to governance.

The normative theory of public administration also includes an understanding of the role of intra-organizational processes of self-selection and socialization. According to this perspective, the public bureaucracy as an organization carries values and norms about the ethics of public service. These values are constantly reproduced within the organization, and new employees are taught what it means to be a public servant and how public employment differs from working in a private organization. As we discussed in the previous chapter, these values have proven to be quite resilient despite decades of NPM reform (John and Johnson, 2008). Thus, in this model, a public bureaucracy is to a large extent shaped by these deeply entrenched norms about the pursuit of the public interest, loyalty to elected office, and the implementation of legality and due process.

Organizational structure

Given the significance of organizational behavior and norms, public administration emphasizes structure, partly because it is structure that defines roles and the relationship between those roles, and partly because structure defines the interfaces with citizens and the elected level of government. Central to these ideas are beliefs about permanency and continuity, hierarchy, rationality and accountability. Clients' trust in a bureaucracy is to some extent dependent on a high degree of continuity, so that the client recognizes the institution and knows what services it delivers.

The Weberian model of bureaucracy, which has informed administrative development in a large number of countries, emerged in the early twentieth century. At that time, there was less concern with developing the human capital in public organizations and more emphasis on uniformity in administrative

behavior. To that effect, bureaucracies were structured so as to minimize individual discretion – both for the manager and for the street-level bureaucrats. More recently there has been a growing understanding that some degree of bureaucratic discretion is not dysfunctional to the organization but, indeed, often necessary to deliver targeted and effective public service (Lipsky, 1980; Hupe, Hill and Buffat, 2015).

Leadership and control

In the public administration model, leadership is impersonal and strictly tied to office. The top administrative leadership is accountable to the political leaders. Furthermore, leadership and control in this stylized model is a fairly simple exercise as hierarchy ensures compliance with orders and instructions. There is a firm distinction between political and administrative leadership, where the latter is accountable to the former. Elected officials are accountable to the electorate in democratic regimes, thus legitimating their policy choices and their control over the bureaucracy.

Leadership in public administration has a vertical and a horizontal dimension. The vertical dimension highlights the line command systems that are typical to hierarchical organizations. The horizontal dimension of leadership is arguably as important as vertical leadership in terms of how it defines the tasks and modus operandi of public servants. Horizontal leadership is related to peer, professional guidance and coordination in administrative decision-making. Professionalism is a defining feature of public administration. Professional groups in the public service, for instance teachers, police officers, social workers and medical doctors, are socialized into norms about proper professional conduct. As Brehm and Gates point out, ‘bureaucracies have cultures, where workers learn from one another about appropriate behavior’ (1997: 48). Most tasks and work stations in the public service require some degree of professional skills, and in order to ensure uniformity professionals meet to discuss how different types of cases should be addressed.

Thus, leadership and control in the public administration model is exercised along different dimensions. While the organizational leadership often stresses the importance of professional deliberation, there can easily emerge tensions between organizational and professional leadership. Typically, the views held by professionals in the public administration about what constitutes good public service may often strike the organizational leadership as too costly.

Accountability

The public administration perspective recognizes that public institutions and servants exercise tremendous power over society and its citizens. These powers are ultimately delegated from elected officials and must therefore be held to close legal and democratic account. All offices in the public bureaucracy must have a distinct place in the hierarchical chain of command, which also facilitates accountability. Thus, in this framework, accountability is mainly legal; it refers to accountability in cases of malfeasance in or abuse of public office. There is also

accountability in cases of legal but inappropriate behavior among public servants, which is exercised, for instance, when the public servant seeks promotion.

In addition to the legal accountability in public administration, there is also a strong strand of political accountability. Public administrators are, through the chain of hierarchy described above, ultimately accountable to their political masters in the executive, and also to the legislature. This relationship may be less clear in presidentialist systems with a separation of powers, but the political connection remains important in those cases. In presidentialist systems public administrators have to serve two sets of political leaders. Their day-to-day superiors are in the executive branch, but they must also answer to the legislature, especially when the legislature has well-developed mechanisms for oversight. Perhaps most importantly public organizations must depend on the legislature for their budgets, and the power of the purse is a crucial source of legislative power over the bureaucracy.

Public Management

The version of public management in the 1980s and 1990s – the New Public Management – prioritized a different set of objectives for the public sector. The key problems in the public sector, according to this approach, were low efficiency, low effectiveness, high costs, lack of customer orientation, an inefficient budget-making process coupled with limited knowledge or data about public spending and its outcomes, and detailed political control that stifled entrepreneurship in the public sector. The public management school argued that these problems were systemic, that is, they were directly related to the structure, the leadership and the management processes of the public sector (Hood, 1991). Politicians, it was suggested, are not good organizational managers; they often lack education and experience in management and are likely to focus more on their re-election than on managing public organizations. A key argument, against this background, was to empower the managers, ‘let the managers manage’, as the NPM advocates put it (D. Osborne and Gaebler, 1993), and to define the role of elected officials as setting long-term goals for service delivery. Managing organizations and contracts was believed to be an essentially similar challenge in the public and private sectors, and the public sector would learn a lot by emulating private sector management.

Thus, the public management perspective challenged the public administration model on almost all major themes. As we will see, public management either highlights issues that are of little concern to the public administration model or emphasizes arrangements that are at odds with public management. This neoliberal perspective on the state and the public sector, however, does not preclude a strictly academic approach to public service. Public management scholars have investigated principal–agent problems in service delivery (Entwistle and Martin, 2005), contract management issues (T. L. Brown, Potoski and van Slyke, 2006), efficiency problems in public sector organizations (Borghe, Falch and Tovmo, 2008), accountability problems (Hood, 1991; Barberis, 1998), issues related to shared responsibility in service delivery (Ansell and Gash, 2007; Donahue and Zeckhauser, 2011), and so on.

Normative theory

If the public administration perspective draws on sociological organization theory and political science, public management departs from economic theory. The public management focus on efficiency, cost-cutting and competition in service delivery is in many ways reflective of a distinctly different perspective on the state and collective action compared with that which sustains public administration (Bresser-Pereira, 2004). In the public management model, the state has limited inherent value. Its role is to solve collective action problems, enforce regulation and to provide public and collective goods. This is, however, not to say that public management ignores the contributions to governance that the public bureaucracy delivers. On the contrary; this perspective argues that those roles are performed better by improving the management of public organizations.

In some ways the distinctive feature of the public management perspective in terms of normative theory is not so much that it advocates a particular set of norms and values for the public sector, but more its rejection of the norms that the public administration school associates with the state (see Pollitt, 1993; Milward et al., 2016). This 'generic' and instrumental view of public institutions in and of itself represents a clear break with the conventional public administration perspective. For public management scholars, the main norms and objectives related to the public sector are concerned with economic factors, both in terms of internal resource allocation and the public sector's regulation of markets.

Organizational structure

One of main areas of interest for the emerging public management school was the organizational structure of the public sector which it believed harbored several causes of low efficiency and poor management. Perhaps the main issue in this respect was the tendency in most countries to have the 'policy' and 'operations' functions executed by the same organization. The public management perspective argued that these two functions should be divided between departments in charge of policy and autonomous, executive agencies which should be in charge of the operational element of the process (Pollitt, 1990; Pollitt and Talbot, 2004; Pollitt et al., 2005). This division would assist the development of more professional managers who should be accorded extensive autonomy in relationship to the political level of government.

The agencification of government has been one the most important legacies of the managerial approach to the public sector. Even after governments have walked away from some of the other aspects of managerialism this structural feature has persisted (Verhoest et al., 2012). This has been in part because it allows an organization to focus directly on a particular policy area, and it also to some extent facilitates accountability.

Another central theme in the public management discourse was that the public sector should not have to deliver all public services itself. Given the focus on outcomes, it was argued that the bureaucracy should use contractors and competitive tendering in public service delivery. This strategy had some implications on the structure of the public service; conventional service delivery units can be

scaled back while organizations devoted to contract management, tendering and procurements need to be developed (Hall, 2011).

Leadership and control

As mentioned, public management aims at professionalizing management in public sector organizations in order to boost efficiency. Certainly, elected officials play critical roles as nominal leaders of public organizations but given the focus on public management on service production and delivery those roles are not central to the theory. Indeed, in more extreme models of public management such as the 'public value' model, the elected officials are referred to as 'the authorizing environment' (Moore, 1995). Transferring control from politicians to managers is essential to the public management model. This is not least the case because it increases the similarities between public and private organizations and therefore makes the incorporation of corporate management models into the public sector easier.

If peer, collegial deliberation is an important part of leadership and control in the public administration model, the public management model draws mainly on external performance measurement and evaluation. Public managers are on the whole rather quiet on the role of organizational norms and values as guides for administrative behavior. Instead their focus is on the quality of public services and client (or customer) satisfaction with those services.

However, one of the key roles of organizational leaders is to create and nurture an organizational culture that reproduces the norms and values that make up the identity and mission of the organization. Altering organizational culture is one of the biggest challenges facing the leaders of any organization; it is, for instance, interesting to note the resilience of conventional public ethos in the British public service despite decades of public management reform (John and Johnson, 2008). The critical point here is that fostering an organizational culture is an essential managerial tool and public organizations do have a responsibility to pursue the public interest alongside managerial objectives.

Accountability

The public management objective to shift significant organizational control from elected officials to managers could potentially have major ramifications on the accountability of public service delivery. While the conventional leadership will be exercising less control over the mid- and lower levels of the organization, there will be an increased external evaluation of the organization's performance through performance measurement and feedback from its customers. Somewhat paradoxically, perhaps, the public management perspective thus claims to offer a more effective accountability than the conventional public administration can present. Performance measurement provides detailed data on how public resources were spent, and customer choice and feedback gives information on client satisfaction with the public services. Furthermore, these accountability mechanisms identify underperforming service providers more or less instantaneously and not, as the public

administration model can offer, through a report a year or so after delivery (Bouckaert and Halligan, 2008).

In sum, the public management seeks to strengthen accountability by redefining it from a 'relationship between an actor and a forum' (Bovens, 2007: 450) where the actor's behavior is assessed, to a more indirect evaluation of performance and the degree to which recipients of services approve of the quality of those services. The relationship with the political environment, and with law, becomes somewhat attenuated within this conception of accountability.

Neo-Weberianism

We mentioned earlier that although public management and public administration focus on public organizations they highlight rather different aspects of those organizations. Both identify critically important aspects of the public bureaucracy in terms of how it relates to citizens and to the political level of government and how it operates and is organized. There are however also important differences between the two approaches, not least in their conceptualization of the state and the market and the broader discourse of market vs. collective action.

Administrative reform has been aptly described by the late Peter Aucoin as a pendulum movement where radically different ideas are implemented to solve problems while at the same time engendering new problems (Simon, 1947; Aucoin, 1990). If we apply that metaphor to the present discussion it would seem as if the New Public Management reform campaign addressed problems in the public bureaucracy related to inefficiency, organizational rigidity and a lack of customer orientation. In so doing, however, it also created or exacerbated problems of fragmentation, decreasing central and political control, and accountability.

Normative Theory

The past decade or so has seen a search for middle ground in many countries between ensuring the core values associated with the public administration perspective on the one hand while maintaining the gains in efficiency, fiscal and budgetary control, and client attention generated by public management control on the other (Christensen and Laegreid, 2011a; Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2011). In an assessment of administrative reform in Australia, John Halligan notes that 'management's place is relatively secure' (2010: 154), although there is increasing pressure towards aligning management with governance objectives (see below).

Finding the optimal balance between the two aspects of the public bureaucracy is certainly not an easy task. This section will highlight some of the key features of this convergence between the two approaches. As we go through these features we need to remind ourselves that there is extensive variation among different countries in terms of the extent of NPM reform. Much of this variation relates to administrative tradition and the legacy of a legalistic *Rechtsstaat* public administration emphasizing 'a public interest' and management model of administration (Knill, 1999; Painter and Peters, 2010; Pierre, 2011; Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2011). As a general pattern, the Anglo-American countries were the first to adopt market-based reform in different guises.

The continental European and Scandinavian countries and also several Asian countries have a public bureaucracy which is steeped in a legalistic tradition, and these countries were initially much less willing to consider such reform. Over time, however, we can see extensive public management reform also in these systems (Painter and Peters, 2010; Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2011).

Organizational structure

The main structural component of public management reform has been the split of conventional ministries into departments and autonomous executive agencies. This reform has been found to entail severe coordination problems; departments lack information about agencies' actions and have problems steering the agencies. This has in turn required strengthening coordination mechanisms within the center of government (Bouckaert, Peters and Verhoest, 2010) as the pendulum swings somewhat back toward control.

Organizational and institutional change tends to be slow, incremental processes and institutions have many times proven quite resilient. They do, however, change. In 2001, Nick Manning observed that 'most government functions remain performed by vertically integrated bureaucracies functioning pretty much as Weber might have intended' (2001: 300). This is still the case in some countries, although the vast majority of countries today have less vertically integrated bureaucracies, which is the problem that neo-Weberianism seeks to address by strengthening the political center and bring the executive agencies closer to the policy-making institutions.

Another component of neo-Weberian administrative reform is less concerned with organizational structure but more with the normative framework of the public bureaucracy. We mentioned earlier that the market-based normative foundation of public management as it emerged in the 1980s and 1990s puts it in contrast with the normative framework of the public administration perspective, which emphasizes legality, due process, equal treatment, meritocracy, transparency and accountability. How do you define a middle ground between these two different sets of norms? How do you weigh efficiency against legal security, or customer satisfaction against equal treatment? We find very little evidence that the neo-Weberian reform has explicitly addressed these complex tradeoffs. Instead, the pattern seems to be what Streeck and Thelen and their associates refer to as 'layering' (2009; see also Halligan, 2010); norms and rules associated with public management were simply placed in the same organizational context. As a result, it appears as if it has been largely up to the individual public servant to try to make sense of the apparent inconsistency between the conventional and the new norms and ideas about how to perform the role of a public servant.

Further along this theme, neo-Weberianism also includes a rearticulation of the unique features of the state: 'the public in public administration' (Kramer, 1999; Thomas 1999; Ramesh, Araral and Wu, 2010). In our analysis, this means bringing back some of the features and values of the conventional public administration model that were either explicitly downplayed during the NPM reform or simply ignored and replaced with (or 'layered' under) a norm derived from

the public management framework. 'The public' in public administration relates to rules defining proper conduct in relationship to clients, to politicians and in internal deliberations such as transparency, legality, accountability and equal treatment. 'The public' also emphasizes that the bureaucracy's key role is to implement decisions made by elected politicians.

Leadership and control

We discussed earlier how public management reform, in the spirit of separating policy and operations, redefined leadership and control in the public bureaucracy by empowering the managers of the organization and leaving only goal-setting to the elected officials. This reform made sense from the point of view of injecting (more) professional management in the public sector to boost efficiency. Over time, however, it also became clear to the political leadership that this reform had serious downsides; by surrendering control to managers, the elected officials had effectively cut off the branch they were sitting on. As a result they found themselves left with few levers to control or lead the bureaucracy. At the same time, the growing lack of coordination made it increasingly difficult to address urgent issues that cut across sectoral and jurisdictional boundaries, such as climate change, domestic security and immigration.

Furthermore, public management reform also facilitated demand-driven organizational decision-making, whereby customer preferences and quality assessments should influence public service budget allocations. These reforms significantly weakened the position of elected officials in their relationship to the public bureaucracy. The reform also drove fragmentation in the public sector by creating agencies at some length from government departments and 'hybrid organizations' for service delivery that were even more challenging to control from the center.

Rearticulating hierarchy and political leadership is central to neo-Weberianism as a means of bringing back a clear chain of command and accountability (see below) and to increase vertical coordination (Dahlström, Peters and Pierre, 2011). This also meant a stronger emphasis on rules, again without necessarily downplaying performance targets. Thus, if the slogan of NPM reform was 'let the managers manage' (D. Osborne and Gaebler, 1993), neo-Weberian reform advocates prefer 'make the managers manage', that is, rearticulate the line command processes in public organizations (Norman, 2001).

Finally, neo-Weberianism emphasizes the growing importance of strategic leadership. The political center is challenged both domestically and internationally by strong political and economic developments. At the same time, coercive policies and regulations are today believed to be less efficient compared with a few decades ago; the preferred mode of shaping social behavior today is more to encourage the desired behavior than to punish less desired behavior. Thus, government today has less regulatory clout and fewer financial resources to back its regulation compared with a few decades ago. All of this suggests that political leadership has to be selective in which issues it decides to put on the agenda and to build coalitions with key societal partners to facilitate smooth implementation of its policies and service delivery.

Accountability

NPM reform has been criticized for complicating accountability. The problem is perhaps not first and foremost that there is no accountability, but rather that it is now to some extent the wrong actors who are accountable. As Johan P. Olsen notes, ‘political leaders have (re)discovered that they are blamed even when authority is decentralized and that “technical issues” often have significant political implications’ (2008: 24). This insight may well have spurred those political leaders to reclaim some of the control that had been decentralized to the managers of public organizations. As constitutional theory reminds us, power and responsibility must never be separated, but this has to some extent been the outcome of the empowerment of managers and the institutional split of ministries into departments and executive agencies.

At the same time, public management reform opened up a new channel of direct accountability through customer evaluation and choice which is not likely to be abolished. Combining that type of accountability with conventional, formal–legal accountability means blending upwards and downwards communication in the bureaucracy – indeed, blending two philosophies of public administration – which poses a major challenge (Kettl, 1997).

Concluding Discussion: Towards Convergence

We can now return to the question about what the new mix looks like. How salient are the ideals and norms emphasized by public administration and public management today? There are clear patterns of some degree of convergence or rediscovery of Weberian values (Olsen, 2006). In Norway, Christensen and Laegreid note ‘traditional Weberian features, NPM features, and post-NPM features are blended in a complex combination’ (2008: 20). Public management reform scholars acknowledge that the overall philosophy of management in the public sector is not likely to be replaced by the previous command and control systems, although management will become more embedded in governance than has previously been the case. This development is clearly underway in Australia and New Zealand (Halligan, 2010). In Sweden, a country that introduced NPM with some reluctance, there is now political movement to strengthen the professions in the public sector and to reduce performance management and marketization of public services. It is safe to say that many countries are currently struggling to integrate public management with the governance role of the public bureaucracy. The specific nature of such a convergence is probably related to the reform trajectory of the country. Jurisdictions with a strong legalistic tradition are likely to emphasize those aspects of public administration whereas national contexts where other values, such as efficiency and management are strong tend to prioritize those features of administration.

Embedding management in governance is important, not just for the sake of accountability or for ensuring that politicians are in control of the system they are elected to lead. Public administration is where citizens encounter the state on

a daily basis and where their trust in government is either built or eroded, depending on the quality of the treatment they receive and the process through which those services are determined. The state, and indeed democracy, is a system of rules just as much as a forum for political discourse, and it is the bureaucracy that ensures that those rules are upheld. Public management, for all its virtues, is more concerned with other aspects of public service – its costs, its appropriateness and relevance to customers, and so on. These aspects of public service are certainly important but they are, or should be, embedded in the system of rules that define the framework for democratic government.

The reassertion of the center that has been happening in numerous countries across the world during the past decade (Dahlström, Peters and Pierre, 2011) should be seen as a strategy to reintegrate the bureaucracy with democratic governance. In that process we see some degree of convergence between the public administration and public management perspectives. We began this chapter by going over the many differences between those two perspectives. It is clear that convergence between the two may in some cases produce an outcome that is typical of neither. We may well be underway towards a new public administration that draws on public management objectives but in an organization embedded in governance.