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Formation of Specialists and the Quality of Services in Public Administration

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NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT: A COMPARATIVE EXPLORATION

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Recently, Professor Donald Kettl, a Fellow of the U.S. National Academy of Public Administration, declared that "a global revolution in public management...has swept around the world" and "history might well record this as the first true revolution of the information age"(Kettl, 1997). Three years earlier Jan-Erik Lane (1993), the distinguished Scandinavian scholar, stated that "several of the notions of [traditional] public administration have been more or less abandoned," and on that basis Lane essentially pronounced traditional public administration as dead! These two statements, taken together, suggest that classic public administration has come to the end of its days, and is being rapidly replaced by a new model of public administration, which has been given the name of "new public management." Traditional Public Administration Compared to New Public Management

If "traditional" public administration is dead, perhaps we should first review its attributes before its buried. It may also be useful to compare traditional public administration with "New Public Management" (hereafter NPM). Such a comparison might reveal why classical public administration has died, and why NPM is replacing it.

Figure One compares several features of traditional public administration with a number of features commonly associated with NPM. A brief inspection of Figure

FIGURE 1: A COMPARISON OF TRADITIONAL PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION WITH NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

TRADITIONAL PA	NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT
* DIRECT PUBLIC PROVISION & DELIVERY OF GOODS & SERVICES; MONOPOLY SUPPLIER	*MARKET MECHANISMS W/IN & AMONG UNITS, e.g., COMPETITION, CONTRACTS, PERFORMANCE-BASED BUDGETS;
*CENTRALIZED, HIERARCHICAL ORGANIZATIONS	*DECENTRALIZED ORGANIZATIONS, WITH FRONT-LINE WORKERS EXERCISING SUBSTANTIAL DISCRETION
* FORMALISTIC ORGANIZATIONS EXERCISING CONTROL THRU DETAILED PROCEDURES & EXTENSIVE RULES; THE SOP IS SACRED	*FLEXIBLE, FLATTER ORGANIZATIONS DRIVE BY RESULTS DRIVE ACTIONS, NOT RULES; MEASURED RESULTS ARE SACRED
*NEUTRAL CIVIL SERVANTS ACCOUNTABLE TO ELECTED OFFICIALS	* SENIOR CIVIL SERVANTS ONLY ADMINISTER POLICY, MANAGE PROJECTS & PROGRAMS; ELECTED OFFICIALS SET RESULTS FOR MANAGERS TO ACHIEVE
* PUBLIC INTEREST DEFINED AS BEST FOR THE WHOLE COMMUNITY, OR AT LEAST FOR A LARGE MAJORITY	*PUBLIC INTEREST DEFINED AS EACH CITIZEN PURSUES MAXIMUM SELF-INTEREST, TYPICALLY THOUGHT OF AS PERSONAL WEALTH
* DEMOCRATIC VALUES MANDATE CITIZENS TREATED AS EQUALS, IN A UNIFORM MANNER	*DEMOCRATIC VALUES SUGGEST GOVERNMENT SERVES PERSONAL CITIZEN PREFERENCES BY ADOPTING A CUSTOMER-SERVICE ORIENTATION
* PODSCORB	*ENTREPRENEURIAL MANAGERS
*CRITICAL THAT ELECTED OFFICIALS CONSTRAIN MANAGERS	*CRITICAL THAT ELECTED OFFICIALS LIBERATE MANAGERS

One reveals that the main characteristics of traditional public administration are essentially those of Weberian bureaucracy. Traditional public administration relies solely on government agencies (bureaux) to deliver goods and services. Public bureaux exhibit common structural features – centralization, hierarchy – as well as common procedural features – control exercised through extensive rules. Working within bureaux are neutral, or non-partisan, civil servants selected for their

expertise and technical skills. Civil servants conduct their work in accordance with standard operating procedures (SOPs), which are seldom altered. Because SOPs are so crucial to the well-functioning of government agencies, their stability borders on the sacred. Traditional public administration defines the principal skills of public managers to be Planning, Organizing, Directing, Staffing, Coordinating, Reporting, and Budgeting – as indicated in the now famous formulation PODSCORB.

The public interest is defined in a democratic fashion such that the ultimate goal for public administrators is to seek out and foster what is best for the whole community, or at least a large majority of the community [whether it is the locality or the nation]. This majoritarian ethic mandates that public administrators treat all citizens equally, providing uniform service to all, no matter what their status in society. Because traditional public administration is associated with majority rule democracy, it is critical that elected officials maintain sufficient oversight and control of public administrators. Failure to insure that public managers act in accord with the mandates of the elected officials would mean a loss in popular sovereignty. The main instruments used by elected officials to control bureau behavior under traditional public administration are primarily those of fiscal inputs (i.e., budgets) and required reports.

It is unnecessary here to review the long litany of complaints and criticisms about traditional public administration; they are so well known that they are part of the public debate in almost every country around the globe. What is more important to note is that traditional public administration, and its relevant features, is increasingly judged as insufficient to perform the tasks necessary to provide public goods and services in a cost-effective manner.

In its place a new model termed "managerialism" (primarily in European academic circles) has emerged. This new model relies heavily on private-sector practices and is justified theoretically using public choice economics and its prescriptions for market mechanisms as the best way of obtaining efficient societal allocation of resources. Instead of an administration controlled by extensive regulations and detailed procedures, "managerialism" relies on results to drive actions, and thus prescribes the use of competition, contracts, and performance-based management. The public interest is defined instrumentally in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, and quality of service because the citizen as taxpayer is viewed as a self-interested individual who wishes to maximize personal wealth.

Also included in this set of emerging administrative strategies are the recommendations to (1) replace highly centralized, hierarchical organizations with decentralized organizations where decisions can be made by those civil servants who

interact with citizen-customers, (2) increase the flexibility of public agencies to use alternative methods for the production and delivery of goods and services so as to obtain the most cost-effective policy outcomes, (3) the creation of competition within and among units of the public sector so they are forced to behave like private sector enterprises, and (4) the enhancement of the strategic capacities of the central government's headquarter agencies so that elected officials possess the instruments by which they can steer the government and the choices made by civil service managers.

The specific components of "managerialism" vary somewhat from author to author, but those that I have listed on Figure One are typically included in the new model. Unfortunately, different authors use different labels to refer to the new model, and the different names suggest some differences in the elements a given author includes as part of the model. The most commonly used name is "New Public Management", or NPM, which is the term I will use, and I include under NPM all of the versions of the model, including "reinvention," "entrepreneurial management," "liberation management," and performance-based management.

Is Traditional Public Administration "Dead"?

Despite the enthusiasm of some scholars and public officials, others are less certain that PODSCORB is dead. The distinguished British author Christopher Hood (1996) has said bluntly "in spite of Osborne and Gaebler's claim that the change is global, it appears that it is far from universal." Hood points out that none of the highly praised changes in West European nations have been undertaken for the same reason or have achieved the same results. Thus, Hood concludes that there is no new model or "paradigm" that one can identify. Rather, Hood suggests that there are at least four different administrative regimes that better describe the variation among European countries.

Larry Terry (1998), a former city manager in the USA and now professor of public administration at Cleveland State University, who recently was appointed as editor of the *Public Administration Review*, attacked NPM as "a threat to democratic governance" because of its single-minded assumption that instrumental logic motivated by self-interest yields better public service is flawed and ethically dangerous! In simple terms, Terry is worried that democratic accountability to citizens, the foundation of popular sovereignty, is lost when public managers act as entrepreneurs imitating the behavior of private sector executives.

So who is correct? Is NPM a global revolution that will produce a more efficient, effective, and responsive public service such that government "costs less and

works better" (Gore, 1993)? Or is NPM something less than a global movement? Is it a seriously flawed model?

These are just a few of the questions that are currently being asked about NPM. You probably have several of your own questions. My interest is not prompted by the questions – they are easy to ask; rather, what I am intrigued by is the paucity of answers, especially answers based on valid evidence, and not answers derived from dogma or spun out of rhetoric.

Of course, it is always more difficult to research issues and obtain sound analysis, especially when the focus of the analysis is a dynamic process occurring in many nations and taking several different forms. Despite these obstacles, it is imperative for the public administration community – both practitioners and academics – to devote time and energy to a serious and comparative assessment of NPM. After all, a key prescription of NPM is to use outcomes and results as the basis for policy decisions. We should apply this same test to NPM; that is, is this new model of public management replacing traditional public administration? And when adopted, do NPM-based practices result in better public administration?

The remainder of this presentation will offer a preliminary review of the status of NPM. In particular, I would like to briefly review the causes reputed to have led to the adoption of NPM by the pioneering nations of New Zealand, Australia, and the United Kingdom as well as other nations. Then I will spend some time on the actual changes adopted in various nations, and then turn to a review of the research on the results, or consequences of the use of NPM.

The Reputed Causes Of NPM

FIGURE TWO: REPUTED CAUSES OF NPM

1. PURPOSIVE CHANGE INITIATED BY POLITICAL OFFICIAL(S)

e.g., Margaret Thatcher, Ronald Reagan, Brian Mulrooney

2. ECOLOGICAL OR CONTEXTUAL CHANGE

e.g., globalization, information science technologies;
more educated citizens, more mobility, increased number of
professionals who are held to results-oriented standards;
increased demands for personal rather uniform treatment;
rise of matrix & network organizations, growth of nonprofits &
community service organizations, & cyber/virtual associations

3. INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

e.g., 1980s "fiscal crisis of the welfare state;" taxpayer revolts; "implementation failure," "government failure" to solve critical economic & social problems; new budgeting tools or human resource management systems.

4. POLITICAL INTERESTS CHANGE

e.g., rise of anti-government, anti-bureaucratic political leaders; private entrepreneurs see opportunities for financial gain by lobbying for privatization & de-regulation; new interests emerge such as environmental protection or e-commerce.

5. THEORY CHANGE

e.g., public choice theory sees public sector as an inefficient allocator of societal resources; agency theory focuses on the need to reduce transaction costs.

6. TRIUMPH OF DEMOCRACY AND RULE OF LAW

e.g., end of authoritarianism in many nations in Eastern Europe, Latin America, Africa, & Asia [1990s as the decade of democracy]; global spread of civil rights movements for women, racial & ethnic minorities.

Figure Two provides a condensed list of the factors that have been suggested by various authors as the main causes of the NPM movement. Anyone who is familiar with the events of the past quarter century and the associated trends in the public sector will not be surprised by this list. What is important about this list is the diversity of causes. Some are macro-societal such as the increased number of highly educated citizens and the rapid spread of computer-based technologies. Others are institutional in nature, such as the fiscal crises of the welfare state. Others are purposive and political, for example, new leaders who represent new groups or new

ideas. Some causes are steeped in abstract theory, such as public choice economics, and other causes reflect the drive of the human spirit for freedom and liberty.

These assertions about the causes of New Public Management are informative, but do not contribute much to an assessment of the value of NPM-based reforms. A discussion of the causes helps one understand the motivations that led to the adoption of the reforms as well as the particular combination and sequence of reform in a given nation. Just as the study of motive is part of unraveling a crime, one does not ignore motive, but so also one does not base a judgment solely on motive, one must also have evidence of specific actions. It is the actual reforms adopted and the effects of the reforms that are the crucial pieces of information if we are to assess whether there is a global revolution underway, and determine if that revolution is producing a more efficient and effective public administration.

What Are The Actual Changes Associated With NPM?

One of the best multi-national inventories of actual NPM-based reforms has been produced by Anthony Cheung, who is a public administration professor at the City University of Hong Kong. Professor Cheung (1997) examined administrative reforms in twenty-five nations that belong to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). While these 25 nations are almost all European nations (the list does include Australia, New Zealand, and the USA) and thus is not representative of other political-economic systems, this compilation is nevertheless the best set of comparative data on NPM reform efforts in the professional literature at this time. The following discussion is drawn from only part of Professor Cheung's charts, and does not reflect the totality of his findings.

Table 2a. New public-sector management initiatives: OECD countries, 1994. Size and structure of the public sector.

	Limits to the size of the public sector	Privatization	Commercialization/ corporatization of public bodies	Decentralization to sub-national government	Deconcentration within central government	Use of market-type mechanisms	New roles for central management bodies	Other restructuring/ rationalizations
Australia	*	*	*	*	**	*	*	*
Austria	**	**		*	*	*		**
Belgium	**	*	*	*			*	**
Canada	**	*	*	*	*	*	**	**
Denmark			**			*		*
Finland	**	*	**	**	*	*	*	
France		**	*	*	**		*	*
Germany	**	**	**	**	*	**	*	**
Greece	*			**	**		**	*
Iceland	**	**	**	*		**		
Ireland	**			*	**		**	**
Italy	**	**	**	**	**	*	**	**
Japan	*	*		**				
Luxembourg	*							
Mexico	**	**	*	**	*		**	
Netherlands	*			*				
New Zealand		*	*		**			**
Norway	*		**	*		*		
Portugal	*	*	*		*	*		
Spain				**				**
Sweden	**	*	**	*		**	**	*
Switzerland	**	*	*	*	**	*	*	*
Turkey	*	**	*				*	*
U.K.	*	*	*		**	*		**
U.S.A.	**	**	**	**	**	*	*	*

** = Major initiative

* = Less important measure

First, Cheung offers a profile of reform initiatives designed to alter the size and structure of the public sector. By far, the most widespread initiative shown on

Cheung's Table 2a is the attempt to limit the size of the public sector. This comes as no surprise, given the "fiscal crisis of the welfare state" and the political interest of some groups to reduce or "downsize" the public sector. But it is important to note that not quite half (12) of the twenty-five nations listed here have acted to limit the size of their public sectors. Privatization and "other restructuring" initiatives are found in nine of the twenty-five nations. Interestingly, the use of market-type mechanisms is the least commonly adopted reform. Of the eight different types of initiatives listed by Cheung, Italy has adopted the most – seven, followed by Germany and the USA with six, and Iceland, Mexico, and Sweden with five. Once again, Cheung's data suggest that there is no single widely adopted strategy that can be labeled as a movement toward NPM – at least not at this time.

Table 2b. New public-sector management initiatives: OECD countries, 1994. Other main fields of public management reform.

	Management of policy-making	Performance management	Financial resources management	Personnel management	Regulatory management and reform	Improving relations with citizens/enterprises	Management of information technology	Other
Australia	*	**	*	*	*	*		**
Austria	*	**	**	**	**	**	**	*
Belgium		*	*	**	**	**	*	**
Canada	**	*	**	*	**	**	**	*
Denmark	*					**	*	*
Finland	**	**	**	**	*	*	**	*
France	*		*	*	*	*	*	
Germany	*	**	**	*	**	**	**	
Greece	**		**	**	*	**	*	
Iceland		**	**	*	*			
Ireland	**	*	**	*	**	*	*	**
Italy	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Japan		*	*	**	**		**	**
Luxembourg		*	*		*	*		
Mexico	**	**			*	**	*	
Netherlands		**	**	**	**	*		
New Zealand	*	**	**	*		*		
Norway	**	*	*	*	*	*	**	*
Portugal			*			**	**	**
Spain		**	**	**	*	**		*
Sweden	*	**	**	*	*		**	
Switzerland	*	**	*	**	*	*	*	**
Turkey			*	*		*	*	*
U.K.			**	**	*	*	*	**
U.S.A.	*	**	**	**	**	**	**	**

** = Major initiative

* = Less important measure

Cheung also provides information about reforms that are changes in the way public administrators manage their agencies and programs. The information on Cheung's Table 2b exhibits evidence that NPM exists as a coherent framework for the

reform of public administration, and that several nations have acted to change the way their public agencies function. The most widely adopted management reforms are in the areas of financial resources management -- 14 of 25 nations -- and performance management -- 13 of 25 nations. Clearly, a number of countries are moving toward "results-oriented" management. The next most typically adopted management reforms are improving relations with citizens/enterprises -- 11 of 25 nations -- and personnel management -- 11 of 25 nations. Here the evidence points to efforts to make public agencies and their staffs more flexible and responsive. Management of information technology -- 10 of 25 nations -- and regulatory management and reform -- 10 of 25 nations -- fit the NPM framework. Ranking these nations by number of management reforms adopted, we see that Italy has initiated all eight types, the USA seven, Austria six, and Canada, Finland, and France five types. Compared to policy actions designed to change the size and structure of the public sector, where less than half of the 25 OECD nations had adopted at least half of the different types of reforms, here we see that more than half of the 25 nations have adopted four or more different types of public management reforms.

What Are The Results Of The NPM Reforms?

While the list of the number and types of administrative changes carried out under the banner of NPM in different countries is necessary to our understanding of New Public Management, Cheung's inventory only provides a profile of actions taken. Cheung's research does not answer the crucial question of "so what?", or what differences have the changes in public administration made? In general, the results can be stated simply: those nations that began the reform process first -- that is, almost twenty years ago -- have made the most progress in implementing the selected strategies. We would expect this based on our knowledge of organizational behavior and the politics of policy implementation. More specifically, one can find many successes as well as some failures; again, this is as expected. Third, as we have seen from the data provided by Professor Cheung, different nations have followed different paths, but there is a widespread and growing adoption by many OECD nations of reforms in the areas of financial and performance-based management, personnel management, customer service, deregulation, and the increased use of information technology.

Commonwealth Nations

Almost all of the currently available information about the effects or impacts of NPM-based reforms exists in the form of case studies -- either as a study of

single country or in an anthology reviewing what has happened in several countries. One of the few studies to report on the status of NPM in a large number of nations is found in Sandford Borins' (1998) analysis of papers presented at two meetings sponsored by the Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management (CAPAM). In 1994 and 1996 CAPAM, an association devoted to issues of public management in fifty three nations (former British colonies), held conferences on NPM in Commonwealth countries. Borins reported the findings of 112 papers presented at the two conferences, and he summarized his review as follows:

- 1) Initiatives to improve the quality of customer service in the public sector are well under way throughout the Commonwealth;
- 2) Many countries have increased operating departments' autonomy in financial and human resource management...in New Zealand and the United Kingdom, these agencies have become more focused on their missions and have achieved cost reductions and service improvements;
- 3) Many countries are at work defining appropriate performance measures in terms of organizational outputs...they are also moving to fixed terms, performance contracts, and performance pay for senior public servants... there is some evidence that, at least in the past, performance pay has not worked very well in the public sector;
- 4) In the area of human resources, downsizing and pay freezes or reductions threaten to undermine morale and performance...on the other hand, governments are attempting to support public service through active recruitment programs, employment equity initiatives, and more sophisticated training packages;
- 5) The application of information technology in the public sector is advancing very rapidly, and governments everywhere are using it to improve service and communications with the public, through such technologies as electronic kiosks, electronic data interchange, and the Internet; and,
- 6) There has been a great deal of privatization throughout the Commonwealth... in addition, governments are increasingly using partnerships with the public

sector or non-governmental organizations as an alternative mode of service delivery. The U.K. has pioneered market testing and internal competition, with positive results in terms of lower cost and increased service.

It is important to note that these six findings based on the experience of the fifty-three Commonwealth nations summarize the types of reforms enacted. Only a few of the findings answer the question: does NPM make a difference? What this compilation by Borins does say, however, is that many different nations in various parts of the world are making changes in the way they produce and deliver goods and services, and that many of these new approaches are based on the ideas associated with New Public Management. This conclusion parallels Cheung's finding that there is no one pattern typical of NPM.

Borins does offer some preliminary evidence, both positive and negative, that the NPM-based reforms do make a difference; he notes cost reductions and service improvements, but also lower morale. He also points out that the monopoly over many societal goods and services previously exercised by public agencies is ending in many nations, with the consequent effect of downsizing of the public workforce. Such large scale changes require strong political leadership, and Borins notes that this is the case in many Commonwealth countries.

The United States of America

In the USA, NPM is associated with the "Reinventing Government" campaign, launched by the Clinton Administration using the ideas put forward by David Osborne and Ted Gaebler (1992). A clear benchmark by which to judge the progress of the "reinventing government" campaign exists because its official goal has been stated quite simply as: "a government that costs less, works better" (Gore, 1993). So what does the evidence say?

The accomplishments of the reinvention campaign are published with regularity by the National Partnership for Reinventing Government. One can obtain a concise summary of accomplishments by going to the Partnership's website at www.npr.gov. There one finds the claims that large sums of money have been saved, thousands of pages of regulations eliminated, over 350,000 job positions in the national government eliminated, and new customer service standards have been widely adopted. If one spends time at the Partnership's web site, one will also find a much longer listing of reinvention accomplishments. A few notable ones are:

- * 30 of the 50 states have functioning Electronic Benefit Transfer systems for welfare such as the Food Stamp program which now is saving more than 3 million dollars per year;
- * OSHA's new public-private partnership with companies and employees is close to achieving a 20% drop in workplace injuries/ illnesses since 1994;
- * the Department of Education's web site provides a free application for college student loans, and this web site has won Lycos' "Top 5% of the Web" award;
- * the Social Security Administration's toll free 800 telephone service system has been rated the best telephone customer service system in the USA -- better in terms of courtesy, responsiveness, and knowledge than the telephone service systems of such well known private corporations as Disney and LL Bean;
- * the US Postal Service, once the subject of jokes, now out performs private companies such as Fedex and UPS in terms of cost and dependability of delivery.

This rosy picture, of course, can be questioned because these statements come from the reinvention campaign's own staff. Fortunately, we have a very recent study of reinvention by two independent scholars, Frank Thompson and Norma Riccucci, who are at the Rockefeller Institute of Government at SUNY-Albany. Their analysis corroborates many of the accomplishments claimed by the National Partnership. Thompson and Riccucci (1998) also note several suggested shortcomings, including:

- * some evidence that fewer internal rules have led to some degree of disorder in some agencies;
- * the value of a customer service orientation remains unsettled in certain policy areas, especially those where the government holds a monopoly as the service provider;

- * forty percent of the dollar savings comes directly from "downsizing", the elimination of almost 12% of federal jobs, yet no little progress has been made on reducing the number of managerial layers; and,
- * reduction of regulations results in some persons receiving less service or protection.

For me personally, progress toward a new model of public management in the USA can be tracked first by observing the implementation of the 1993 Government Performance and Results Act. This Act required all federal departments and agencies to develop multi-year strategic plans, including measurable objectives, and incorporate the measurement of these objectives into the annual budget submissions to the US Congress. The Act intended to give the Congress "a single coherent picture of the annual performance goals for the fiscal year" [of each department and agency] (GAO, 1999). In other words, GPRA (the acronym for the Act) mandated performance-based management practices for all national government administrative departments and agencies.

What are the results to date with GPRA? In 1998 a single federal performance plan was issued as part of the President's budget request to the Congress. This means that five years after the passage of the Act the major departments and agencies now have strategic plans in place. About two-fifths of the agencies have developed quality measures by which to gauge their accomplishments. Until most departments and agencies devise performance measures and begin to monitor their performance, this new system of administration will remain inoperative because the legislative branch will not receive the necessary information to make budgetary allocations based on actual accomplishments (if they so desire). So, all we can do is observe the pace of implementation, and wait to see if the new performance-based system of management becomes fully operational. For me, this is the measure of the success of the reinvention campaign (GAO, 2000).

My second measure of reinvention progress in the USA is the extent to which state governments adopt the recommendations of the NPM movement. Only recently have efforts been made to gauge state level implementation of reinvention recommendations. A 50 state survey conducted by Brudney, Hebert, and Wright (1997) discovered that none of eleven different NPM-based reforms had been fully implemented in the opinion of a majority of the survey respondents. Strategic planning was mentioned by almost 40% of the respondents as fully implemented in their state government; no other action gained more than a 20% response. The

current information suggests that training programs to improve customer service, quality improvement programs, and benchmarking for measuring outcomes along with strategic planning are the most common administrative changes at the state level. At this time, one can only conclude that reinvention is moving quite slowly among US state governments.

Therefore, in the United States, we find at the national government level a clear campaign with a leader who is the champion of the effort, and this campaign has produced a number of significant accomplishments. Like the reform activity in Europe, the reinvention campaign within the US national government has adopted some, but not all of the framework commonly associated with NPM. At the state government level, a small set or package of reforms comprise the reinvention effort, but there is no "movement" with a clear leader. Instead, reform flows from the particular circumstances of each state government.

New Public Management— A Call for Results Research

The research presented by Sanford Borins and Anthony Cheung confirm that administrative reforms based on the ideas of New Public Management are being adopted in a large number of different nations, not just highly developed or Western nations. Governments of the right and the left are making changes in the structure and operation of their public sector. While information about which nation has adopted which administrative reform is increasingly available, little information about the benefits and costs of the changes has been collected. Presumably, political leaders and senior public managers act purposively when they make changes in public administration. That is, when public officials adopt one or more administrative reforms, one can presume that these public officials expect the reform(s) to make a difference in the quality and cost of public goods and services. Our task as scholars of public administration is to conduct the research required to confirm or disconfirm these expectations about the utility and value of New Public Management. Without systematic research about the effect of adopting changes such as "internal competition", privatization, or "customer orientation", it is not possible to determine whether NPM makes a difference and what type of difference it does make. Let me conclude this discussion by encouraging scholars and practitioners to conduct rigorous analyses of NPM-based administrative reforms, and share that research broadly.

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Conferința internațională
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FORMAREA DE SPECIALIȘTI ȘI CALITATEA SERVICIILOR ÎN ADMINISTRAȚIA PUBLICĂ

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Specialists' Forming and the Quality of Services in Public Administration

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