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**GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE OF THE PUBLIC
ADMINISTRATION AND THE CASE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA**

Abstract

Globalization has been challenging the theory and practice of Public Administration at an unprecedented level. Major policy issues cross national boundaries cannot be solved without international collaboration—even domestic issues will be better understood and addressed with a global perspective. Public Administration theory building, we need to examine issues across national and ethnodemographic divisions in order to better understand and explain context-specific phenomena. To ensure Public Administration's relevance to practice, we must reach out to the global public administration community in academic exchanges, global innovation and diffusion of best practices, and collaborative education. In the globalization spirit, we advocate moving toward "Public Administration with a Global Perspective" (PAGP) to render our teaching, research, and engagement more relevant to the changing reality of globalization. PAGP emphasizes serving a global community by building theories that offer greater explanatory power, have higher acceptability, and are more responsive to the demands in diverse and specific contexts.

This international approach must be regard in view in our coutry beacouse is urgent for the Republic of Macedonia.

Key words: globalization; public administration; knowledge building; global perspective; Republic of Macedonia.

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Introduction

The pursuit of relevancy has been a lasting theme at relevant conferences. As an interdisciplinary applied field, Public Administration¹ should develop theories useful for both scholars and practitioners in order to stay relevant. In the 21st century, critical public problems are increasingly interdependent across national boundaries. The traditionally US-oriented Public Administration is no longer adequate, nor is the traditional comparative Public Administration. In a new spirit, we are recommended to threat “Public Administration with a Global Perspective“ (PAGP) to advance knowledge building, address practical issues, improve Public Administration education, and, ultimately, increase the relevancy of the field. PAGP emphasizes theory building that bridges “particularism“ and “universalism,“ attending to observations in specific ethnic, cultural, and political contexts, while at the same time looking for greater explanatory power, wider practical implications, informed policy learning, and transfer. Aiming to serve a global community, PAGP may achieve higher theoretical acceptability and better satisfy practical demands in diverse and specific contexts.

Global challenges demanding global perspective

The world has increasingly been integrated and transformed through the process of globalization in recent decades. The impact of globalization on public administration and governance has evoked various responses both intellectually and practically. Critical public problems are increasingly interdependent across national boundaries. A vast array of emerging issues, such as antiterrorism wars, natural and human disasters, epidemic diseases, economic crises, energy and environmental problems, and ethnic conflicts, are all globally interconnected. Even problems within the traditional domestic policy realms, such as public transportation, information management, and defense and security, have been pushed across national boundaries by extended privatization and contracting efforts, demanding global perspectives in building knowledge and seeking solutions. Such problems in the public sphere present challenges to the theories and practices. So, we need a new theoretical perspective of Public Administration that embraces the opportunity to learn at the global level. The emergence of a new world order manifested by the rising power of the European

Union and transitional/developing economies suggests the inadequacy and obsolescence of the Public Administration framework predominantly based on US experiences.

But US-centric Public Administration was not considered by many as either informative or applicable to non-western nations. Non-western states and the European communities have explored practical solutions and generated valuable lessons that should not be ignored by the mainstream Public Administration literature. The increasingly integrated and invigorated European communities challenge the leading position of the United States in Public Administration theory building and practice innovating. The extensive experience of the former Soviet administrative systems striving for democracy and capitalism is valuable to other transitional or nondemocratic states in Asia, South America, and Africa. The abundant knowledge from E-government development in Singapore, Hong Kong, and Korea greatly complements the US and European experiences. The success stories of China's economic development zones along its coastal areas also enlighten many of the distressed western economies. Russia, China, and other transitional democracies can learn from capitalism and public administration in Westminster countries just as the present and future public administrators in America and Europe can learn from the innovations of China, India, Korea, and other countries.

Global components already in public administration (PA) literature

Traditionally and even currently, Comparative Public Administration (CPA)¹⁾ has been regarded as a "subfield" of Public Administration. Reflecting a parochial and US-centric orientation, this perception has influenced our thinking of Public Administration for the last 50 years. It demonstrates the assumption that American Public Administration is the mainstream, whereas studies of other countries, all categorized in CPA, are non-mainstream or substreams.

CPA grew as a subfield of Public Administration in the United States after World War II. The American Society for Public Administration created the Comparative Administration Group (CAG) which, with grants from the Ford Foundation and the US government, published a series of occasional papers focusing on development

¹⁾ CPA expanded our understanding of the role of PA in society and how to build administrative capacities and launch administrative reforms. It led to the construction of administrative typologies that provide frameworks for data collection and analysis. CPA also established patterns of functional administrative processes in multiple cultural settings, such as in budgetary behavior and budgeting for results. CPA also articulated and advanced development administration.

administration². Attempts by former colonial countries to learn from western nations, the establishment of international organizations such as the United Nations, and extensive funding opportunities during the Cold War were some of the driving factors that shaped the scope and perceptions toward CPA in the United States.

It is worth noting that this decline of CPA occurred mainly in America. The early 1990s witnessed a renewal of interest in CPA among Public Administration scholars in the United States, pertaining to the New Public Management (NPM) movement. NPM has revived American interests in the comparative approach and the determination to learn from other countries. This renewed CPA movement again is based on the American perspective, in conjunction with a few Anglo-Saxon countries.

It is of value to assess the global inclusiveness of American Public Administration journals and curricula as they are the main vehicles for Public Administration knowledge dissemination. Overall, the theoretical perspective and practical relevance of Public Administration scholarship, as the norm, is still seen as lagging behind the increasing pressure for global Public Administration knowledge. Overall, too, it is the dominance of American the leading journals of Public Administration. Achieving this goal requires a new set of strategic initiatives for integrating public administration research and practice with a global perspective.

The purpose of comparative work goes beyond mere comparison—it should be and has, in the research by many scholars, become an important, established approach of general knowledge building, through which we advance theoretical understanding of public issues, domestic or global, and improve our capacity to address these issues. The oft-cited phrase—“it depends on the context”—testifies to the credibility of Public Administration scholarship done via the global perspective lens.

We envision a transformed Public Administration field that views the scope of all public issues in diverse national and ethnodemographic contexts. In this vision, “comparative” is not the right word as the “global content” has been set by the environment for the field of Public Administration. The distinction between “comparative” and “country specific” will lose its original meaning and significance because individual countries, while important, are discrete organisms that will be better understood in reference to each other and will work together in a larger symbiotic relationship in the

²⁾ The 12 journals are *Administration & Society*; *Asia Pacific Journal of Public Administration*; *Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations*, *Governance—An International Journal of Policy and Administration*, *International Journal of Public Administration*, *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, *International Public Management Journal*, *Journal of Asian Public Policy*, *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, *Public Management Review: An International Journal of Research and Theory*, and *Public Organization Review: A Global Journal*. It is worth noting that the list includes several non-American journals that are relatively familiar to US Public Administration scholars.

global governance environment. Therefore, PAGP must not be downgraded to a sub-field of Public Administration that attracts only a small group of scholars with international backgrounds or interests; it is a perspective that all public administration scholars should consider to embrace.

Essentials of global perspective

The global nature of public administration practice, training, and scholarship in the 21st century necessitates a new perspective that fully addresses the transnational connectedness, interdependence, and complexity of the field. PAGP will avoid ethnocentrism, the tendency to study and make judgments about other societies in terms of one's own cultural assumptions or bias. Objects of study and observation are no doubt always taken from the context of specific cultures and countries, with traces of certain political and state characteristics. But our research should not be so relativistic that it becomes impossible to apply any generic cognitive or evaluative criteria. PAGP will also emphasize historicism. Researchers should place their studies into the context of the stages of human development in socioeconomic dynamics, with a retrospective view into the past for lessons, experience, and inspiration, and with a prospective view into the future for challenges and solutions. When placed in a longer historical frame, even the most stable political, social, and economic institutions are amenable to change; hence, they should not be treated as reasons for particularism but instruments from which we can learn. PAGP further requires balancing nomotheticism, the tendency to generalize, and idiographicism, the tendency to specify.

PAGP is not proposed as a grand theory nor a movement toward grand theory. It is best viewed as an "approach," an epistemological calling in conducting research. It is not designed (it does not even attempt) to offer "a comprehensive theory" to "unify the study" or "a central demarcating concept". It does not impose restrictions with tools to be used or the deductive or inductive inclination in conducting research. PAGP aims to redefine the scope of Public Administration to be globally relevant in all our activities of teaching, research, and services. PAGP entails knowledge of, or familiarity with, diverse cultures and countries. Researchers or cross-cultural collaborative teams employing PAGP will be more advantageously situated so they can overcome with relative ease those global challenges mentioned in the first two sections.

Given the increasingly more complex ethno- and geo-political background of global public services, theories based on PAGP will be useful in handling the "increasing incidence and intensity of conflict among diverse stakeholders"³⁾, so that different civilizations do not necessarily have to conflict. Since more and more issues have

³⁾ Brinkerhoff Jennifer M, *Global public policy, partnership, and the case of the World Commission on dams. Public Administration Review* 2002;62:324-36.

become global in scale and no single country can handle them or treat them well, theories from PAGP will be particularly useful in developing practical and acceptable global public policies. PAGP will also encourage the innovation and diversity of Public Administration practices.

The global perspective of the Republic of Macedonia

The reform of the public administration is a key priority of the the Republic of Macedonia. This is noted in the EU Progres Report 2010⁴⁾. Some progress is made mainly to legislative aspects. There is no sufficiently discussion on public administration reform. The driver for it forward is only the governemnt, wich was created a specialised platform with teh EU, under the framework of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA).

The Law on public servants was enacted in order to introduce similar provisions to those in the Law on civil servants. It will enter into force in April 2011. The law entrusts new competences to the Civil Servants Agency (CSA). State administrative bodies (SABs) and municipalities have begun to align their organisational charts with the Law on civil servants. The CSA developed monitoring plans and performed inspections. It also continued to strengthen its capacities to develop and deliver general training for civil servants. The training plan for 2010 wase not be implemented due to budgetary restrictions. The capacity of the CSA to take on the new competences conferred by the Law on public servants is insufficient in terms of expertise, budget and available infrastructure.

The administrative capacity of the human resources (HR) units in some ministries and the CSA are increased slightly. The network of HR units is not yet operational.

The increased slightly progress there is in some police reform (Ministry of Interior (MoI), the recruitment procedure under the Law on public servants does not guarantee a merit-based recruitment procedure.

The quality of strategic planning within SABs and municipalities is insufficient, and is mainly confined to budgetary planning. The related budgetary support is inadequate.

Overall, significant further efforts are needed to ensure the transparency, professionalism and independence of public administration.

⁴⁾ Commission Staff Working Dokument, The Republic of Macedonia, EUROPEAN COMMISSION, Brussels, 9 November 2010.

This is in practice.

We are needed changes in our scholarship to conduct research and teaching with a global perspective to advance general Public Administration theory building, to improve the global relevance of Public Administration education, and to address practical issues that are increasingly interdependent across national borders. The agenda is especially urgent for the Macedonian Public Administration community because we are lagging behind in this effort.

Research first. The integration of a global perspective in all Public Administration research focuses on building theories that “account for the continuously changing properties and problems faced by governments as they seek to implement public policies“. Not only does such research expose us to administrative problems in other countries, it also helps scholars better understand Macedonian public administration in a global framework and discover alternative ways to advance public service in the RofM.

Now teaching. Many Public Administration schools have experienced increasing needs to globalize the Public Administration curriculum in recent years. Although the primary goal of Public Administration education in the RofM is to focus on domestic practices. Public Administration education with a global perspective will deepen their understanding of American public administration, raise their awareness of global issues, and enhance their capacity in analyzing and managing public policy problems.

These urgent education needs call for scholars to incorporate a global perspective in the design of courses within the Public Administration curriculum, including questioning the relevance of theories in international settings, using international examples, and introducing comparative literatures. We should also create more study-abroad or student-exchange programs for Public Administration students. Significant barriers include identifying funding sources, finding suitable hosting institutions, and creating educational opportunities beyond sightseeing and superficial cultural exposure. Some of these barriers may be overcome by finding institutional partners. In recent years, some schools have established global connections with such partners through international fellowship programs, foreign executive training programs, or academic exchanges. We hope this trend becomes the norm rather than the exception for most Public Administration schools.

Conclusion

Because PAGP is a new approach for Public Administration in the 21st century we propose to implement in the R of M, in practice, education, reasercher. PAGP is an idea to be further explored and substantiated. Transcending the division between cultures and national boundaries, PAGP builds and tests theories outside of country-specific contexts to study global issues of public administration. This essay advocates

that PAGP become the mainstream for Public Administration education in the R of M. We offered some preliminary suggestions to advance Public Administration scholarship, both in research and teaching, in the hope that it will generate greater contribution in the the field of Public Administration, specially naw, in vibrant in the quickly globalizing world.

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