

There Are Four Challenges That Hinder the Accountability of Public Leaders in The Contemporary Era, Drawing Insights from China and The United States.

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of recent advancements and changes in public administration on accountability in the United States and China, using the Romzek-Dubnick typology as a foundation. The writers specifically examine the challenges of maintaining legal obligations, safeguarding administrative objectives unrelated to missions, promoting public principles, and retaining hierarchical power. The authors demonstrate how changes, particularly those related to outsourcing and results oriented, can have varying effects in the United States and China due to their unique political and legal frameworks. Presently accessible data provides empirical support for current theories in public administration. This evidence supports the assertions that the interaction between politics and the law has a substantial impact on the process of reform. In addition, it is evident that various nations may employ distinct approaches to address the administrative challenges they encounter.

Keywords: New public management, accountability, administrative reform, public ideals, and shared goals

Introduction

Over the course of the past three decades, numerous efforts have been made by the United States and several other Western countries to recast the domain of public management and/or public administration in a more contemporary light. These attempts have been debated at length in the body of academic literature, with major contributions coming from academics such as Hood (1991), Kettl (2000), and Osborne & Gaebler (1992). According to Kettl, Kamarck, Kelman, and Donahue (1998), governments should prioritize steering rather than actively participating and should focus on achieving outcomes, satisfying customers, targeting markets, and promoting entrepreneurship. These goals, which were met with little success within the United States, are well recognized. China has pursued administrative changes in several fields, with a special emphasis on performance monitoring and evaluation, in spite of the obvious discrepancies that exist in their political systems. What challenges does the New Public Management (NPM) and the reinvention of government present to accountability, which is widely regarded as the most important element of administrative effectiveness? It is possible to identify four obstacles that are present in both China and the United States by using an approach that compares dissimilarities between the two countries. The upholding of legislative boundaries, the defense of administrative goals that are not in line with the purpose, the promotion of public ideals, and the protection of hierarchical power are all examples of these impediments. When we take into account the fact that these worries are shared by both China and the United States, we can say with a high degree of confidence that they are prevalent within the arena of modern public administration. The investigation starts with a look

at a taxonomy of accountability that is widely recognized, and then it moves on to a thorough investigation of each of these challenges.

Analytical Framework for Accountability

Both the theory and practice of public administration have traditionally relied on a number of concepts, such as accountability, that have not been adequately defined over the course of the discipline's history. Similar to concepts such as "the public interest," "representation," "justice," and "social equity," accountability involves a variety of connotations and applications that vary depending on the context in which it is used. Within the industry, the analytical framework for analyzing accountability that was developed by Barbara Romzek and Melvin Dubnick has garnered a great amount of attention and approval. According to Romzek and Dubnick (1987), on page [page number], accountability can be defined as the process through which public agencies and their personnel properly handle the many demands that occur from both internal and external sources. The authors present a useful framework for classification by presenting four unique kinds of accountability, which may be found throughout their study. On the other hand, it is essential to keep in mind that the aforementioned categories are not exhaustive and do not necessarily include each and every conceivable type of accountability. In addition, these categories are not mutually exclusive, which means that a single entity or system might exhibit features associated with multiple categories at the same time if they so choose. In addition, a wide variety of agency operations make extensive use of supervisory control, which is one of the most common types of control used. The ties that exist between an external governing authority and the individuals working within an organization serve as the primary foundation for accountability because they are the ones responsible for establishing legal responsibility. The third party in question possesses the necessary authority to formalize the enforcement of contractual commitments or to impose legal punishments on the parties involved. The idea of professional accountability refers to the practice of delegating work within the context of an organization to a member of staff who possesses the appropriate knowledge or specialized abilities for the task at hand. The idea of professional accountability is strongly dependent on the significance of recognizing and appreciating the agency as a whole as having a high level of overall competence. Romzek and Dubnick contend that political accountability regimes are characterized by responsiveness (Romzek and Dubnick, 1987, pages 228–230). They argue that administrators should be responsive to the policy priorities and programming needs of the constituents they serve in order to fulfill their responsibilities. The typology developed by Dubnick and Romzek takes into account two more components, namely the source and amount of control. The level of the degree might range anywhere from high to low, and the origin of the degree could be either internal or external to the firm where it is being used. Figure 1 presents a diagrammatic representation of their organizational structure. Romzek and Dubnick (1987) state that the framework is based on the notion that agencies possess the potential to utilize a variety of different types of accountability. The accountability system that is deemed to be the most appropriate for a given set of institutional

circumstances is one of the primary focuses of the framework (p. 230). The author does not propose a ranking system for the various forms of responsibility, nor does he or she prioritize them in any way. The degree to which formal hierarchical authority is submissive to or defers to specialized competence is what determines the classification of bureaucratic-professional jobs. According to Thompson (1961), it is therefore reasonable to conceive of this classification as a single continuous variable. This line of reasoning is supported by the evidence. In spite of the fact that there is some overlap between the political and legal categories, there is a fundamental difference between the two. Within the framework of the reinvented public administration, the primary focus of this conversation will be on the notions of legal accountability, political accountability, and bureaucratic responsibility. The methodology known as New Public Management (NPM) will serve as the basis for this investigation. NPM is distinguished by its emphasis on internal employee empowerment, outsourcing, performance assessment, results orientation, and professional accountability. It is stated, with support from the Romzek-Dubnick paradigm, that professional accountability serves as the major accountability framework within modern public administration, rather than being in direct rivalry with other systems of accountability.

Legal controls for accountability, outsourcing, and giving power to other people

The legislative framework governing the implementation of government functions that are outsourced in the United States is sometimes subject to modifications. The United States Constitution serves as the primary governing document that establishes and imposes limitations on all tiers of authority within the country. From a legal standpoint, the impact on the commercial sector, including philanthropic groups, is minimal. One pertinent exception is to the legal concept of "state" action, which refers to governmental activities. The attribution of private activities to the government is permitted in limited cases, as exemplified by the legal cases of *Brentwood Academy v. Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association* (2001) and the scholarly work of Rosenbloom & Piotrowski (2005). One instance of state action can be observed when a private entity undertakes a public function, such as the management of a correctional facility, the provision of healthcare services to incarcerated individuals, or the facilitation of electoral processes. The application of the state-actor paradigm to public-private partnerships can be attributed to the merging of nonprofit organizations with government entities. Despite its apparent growth, state intervention is still characterized by significant limitations. The field of administrative law poses a comparable challenge. The key provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act were publicly disclosed on 21 May 2010 at the Bodleian Libraries at Oxford University. The Rosenbloom 15S Procedure Act of 1946, which has undergone significant amendments and expansions, is infrequently applicable to private enterprises that engage in subcontracting government work, as observed from the data obtained from Chan. These encompass provisions related to the guarantee of due process in adjudicatory procedures, the involvement of the public, and, under specific circumstances, the provision of representation in rule-making processes, as well as the promotion of transparency through public reporting, freedom of information, and open

meetings. Rosenbloom (2003) contends that extra administrative law measures are intended to incorporate public objectives such as environmental justice and family structure preservation into administrative decision-making (pp. 73–74). There are those that offer clear and specific guidelines that can assist individuals who have been wronged administratively in seeking appropriate remedies. When the government decides to engage in outsourcing activities, it is important to note that most regulations do not apply in such cases, except for those specifically related to whistleblower protection, some aspects of openness, and individual privacy. The application of administrative law at the state level exhibits variation and may have particular relevance to the utilization of outsourced labor (Rosenbloom & Piotrowski, 2005). The legislation lacks jurisdiction if it is not applicable. In contemporary times, the public sector has adopted the practice of outsourcing various tasks such as the planning, building, and upkeep of transportation infrastructure like roads and bridges. Additionally, the production of nuclear weapons, the administration of correctional facilities and the services offered within them, information technology, the operation of public educational institutions, the education, training, and employment of individuals receiving welfare benefits and those who have lost their jobs, the implementation of child support mandates, and a diverse range of social services have also been subjected to this outsourcing trend (Behn & Kant, 1999, p. 470 [internal citation]). According to the Committee on Core Competencies for Federal Facilities Asset Management (2005-2020), it is common for federal agency government facilities to delegate tasks related to design, construction, operations, maintenance, and certain management activities (p. 27, 2008). According to Behn and Kant (1999, p. 470), it has been observed that a majority of municipalities have the ability to outsource the tasks of solid trash collection and auto transporting. According to Prager (2008), there exists a city in the United States that delegates the majority of its needs to external sources, except for its two-person labor force and city manager.

Getting public values out there

There is a popular approach in the modern administration of the NPM that divides the responsibilities of civil people into two distinct groups, namely "commercial" and "inherently governmental." It is against the law for the federal government of the United States to outsource activities that are considered to be inherently connected to the government. According to the Office of Management and Budget (2003), Section B.1.a, the acts in question are considered to be of such close significance to the public interest that they require execution by employees of the government. A large amount of discretion in the application of government authority and/or the decision-making process for the government (as defined in Section B.1.a) is an essential component of the operations that are basically carried out by the government. According to Section B.1.a, the acts are able to be placed into one of two separate categories: firstly, the design of procedures and processes relevant to the supervision of financial transactions or entitlements, and secondly, the exercise of governmental authority in a sovereign capacity. However, the aforementioned definitional elements have only been implemented in a limited manner, and they have not been successful in effectively

preventing the outsourcing of a variety of tasks. These tasks include, but are not limited to, the evaluation of legislative proposals, the generation of congressional reports and budgets, the formulation of regulations, the facilitation of public hearings, and the involvement in determinations pertaining to the exportation of nuclear technology. The aforementioned content, which may be accessible at the following URL: <http://aas.sagepub.com>, was distributed by the Oxford University Libraries. The date of release for this material is the 21st of May in 2010. In previous scholarly works (Light, 1999, page 14; U.S. Congress, 1989, as noted in Guttman, 2000a, page [page number]), the roles of the Inspector General and incarceration have been explored. The Federal Activities Inventory Reform Act of 1998, also known as the Chan and Rosenbloom 21S. Act, enacted the classification of "commercial" for activities that do not possess an intrinsically governmental aspect. This categorization was designed so that activities may be classified as "commercial" when they were carried out by the federal government. As opposed to activities that are fundamentally of a government nature, the federal government contains a sizable, non-elected bureaucracy of consultants who work behind the scenes and are largely unnoticed. These consultants are responsible for carrying out a considerable portion of key responsibilities and formulating policies. According to Senator David Pryor, who referenced Light, 1999, page 13, as the source for his information, the explanation for this can be found in the expansive definition of commercial operations. If it is not deemed essential to the agency's operations and it is in the government's best interest to maintain the capability in-house, or if it is expressly exempt from competition by statute, a comprehensive competitive procurement process should be applied to any commercial activity, as stated by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in 2003. This is in contrast to the situation in which a specific exemption from competition is provided by a statute. As a direct consequence of the decline in the number of people holding jobs, the government's ability to ensure that individuals who are paid with public money are held accountable for advancing public values has been significantly hampered. The promotion of public ideals requires the involvement of at least two distinct aspects simultaneously. Administrative agencies are tasked with the obligation of pursuing public policy objectives that are not directly tied to the operational features of mission-based administration or the qualities of government in a more general sense. This is in contrast to non-mission-based ideals such as openness, which are not part of the administration's mandate. These regulations include provisions for the protection of the environment and the preservation of species, as well as the conservation of resources and the adoption of contracting advantages for businesses owned by individuals who are members of small, minority, or female groups. It is not uncommon for government jobs to provide precedence in the hiring process to candidates who had past military service. In addition, public organizations have the ability to suggest to their staff members in a reserved manner that they should be models of good citizenship. In the setting of China, there is a greater degree of acceptability than there is in the United States regarding the thought that civil servants, similar to the finances of the government, have the potential to contribute toward the promotion of public

ideals that transcend beyond their administrative obligations. This is in contrast to the situation in the United States, where there is a lower degree of acceptance regarding this concept.

Conclusion

The reformers in the United States, who were the ones responsible for consciously bringing contemporary public administration to the nation, were known for communicating their views in a straightforward and basic manner. According to E. S. Savas (1987), privatization has been called "the key to better government," implying that it may have the ability to serve as a means of improving public management (emphasis added). The NPR translation of David Osborne and Ted Gaebler's groundbreaking work, *Reinventing Government* (1992), takes a deceptively straightforward or overly simplistic approach to resolving the issues that are prevalent within the realm of public administration. The National Performance Review (NPR) has committed to putting a number of plans into action in order to put the requirements of the general public first. Establishing a well-defined mission is one of these strategies, along with reducing excessive involvement in day-to-day operations, delegating authority and responsibility to appropriate individuals, exchanging regulations for incentives, developing budgets that are outcome-oriented, and fostering transparency in federal operations. The NPR aims to revolutionize the government through the implementation of these measures by lowering unnecessary expenditures, increasing the efficiency of services provided to constituents, enhancing the capabilities of government staff, fostering community-driven solutions, and fostering an environment that values excellence. The nature of current public administration is complicated and multifaceted, in a way that is reminiscent of the dominant views and practices that were prevalent in the area of public administration throughout the 1930s and 1940s. The execution of significant adjustments could result in the emergence of additional issues. It is not a feasible long-term strategy to ignore or downplay the significance of fundamental concepts. In a manner analogous to that of the Open Government Act, there will very certainly be an increasing demand for the reinstatement of such regulations. The contemporary field of public administration in the United States is faced with the challenge of determining whether or not it is compatible with a public law framework that encompasses political, legal, and bureaucratic accountability, while also aligning with the principles of administrative law and constitutional law at the same time. Although they advocated for the deregulation of the federal service, National Public Radio (NPR) did not suggest any changes to the Administrative Procedure Act of 1946, even though it has been updated and expanded since it was originally passed. The study of law has a considerable influence on a variety of aspects of public management, particularly in regard to the idea of accountability. The implementation of New Public Management (NPM) reforms has been hampered in China as a result of the sociopolitical and ideological constraints that exist there. The initial circumstances, also known as the starting point, have a significant impact on the process of problem-solving. The Chinese government has taken a methodical approach to choose the most effective tool with which to

accomplish their clearly outlined policy goals. The decentralization of the Oxford University Libraries took place on May 21, 2010 (source: <http://aas.sagepub.com>). Reforms brought about by the introduction of New Public Management (NPM) have presented law enforcement agencies with challenges that are becoming more difficult and demanding. Management of performance, assessment, and contractual improvements can all benefit from the outcomes-focused approach of New Public Management (NPM), which offers support in these areas. The present Chinese public administration is characterized by the presence of an approach to accounting that is focused on the results of its operations. The results are then subjected to a "fit-for-purpose" process that is applied in China, which results in further selected refinement. It does not reorganize the Chinese public administration in a fundamental way; rather, it imposes modifications on top of the structure that is already there. A prominent focal point in current Chinese public administration is the effect of NPM reforms on the state and the politics that govern public service arrangements, particularly accountability. This is an important aspect of the topic. As a result of the introduction of reinvention and New Public Management (NPM) reforms in the United States and China, the problem of administrative accountability has come under the microscope in both countries. This serves as an important reminder of the necessity of political and legal frameworks in establishing efficient governance of a country. As stressed by the famous comment made by Woodrow Wilson regarding the avoidance of adopting a murderer's rationale for employing a knife-sharpening method (W. Wilson, 1887/2004), it is essential to take caution while implementing major enhancements in public administration. This is because it is important to avoid adopting a murderer's rationale for employing a knife-sharpening method. The processes involved in public administration cannot be moved about easily, connected to other systems, or function on their own like consumer goods. It is of the utmost importance to present a contextual framework when attempting to comprehend advances. The legal structure that controls public administrative tasks is being put to the test by the increasing prevalence of outsourcing, which is an essential part of the United States' reinvention. In addition to this, it significantly reduces the authority that the government possesses to mold the ideals of society. It will be difficult to ensure that political and administrative elites in China are held accountable to the country's general population. The existence of legal restraints, performance management, and evaluation systems all work together to shield officials of the Communist Party from public scrutiny. Due to the legal and administrative responsibilities that they must fulfill, local managers with limited policy control are more vulnerable to incurring financial penalties. Despite their commonalities in other situations, there is a possibility that the viable solutions for administrative difficulties will not always match consistently across multiple contexts. Despite the major operational differences between the United States and China, Reinvention and the New Public Management (NPM) provide significant challenges to accountability on a political, administrative, and legal level in both countries.

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