

**Teaching and Research in Public
Administration**

**Rethinking in the light of American
Experience**

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* Introduction

In a Classic textbook, Herbert Simon, Donald Smithburg, and Victor Thompson, define **administration** simply but graphically in this opening sentence “when two men cooperate to roll a stone that neither could have moved alone, the rudiments of administration have appeared“. That illustrates much about what administration is and what it is not.

The first and foremost ingredient of administration is **people**. A stone by itself on a hill is not involved in any form of administration. If that stone rolls down the hill by some act of nature, administration is not involved. People have to be present before administration can take place.

The second ingredient of administration is **action**. Two men looking at the stone are not, in that act alone, involved in administration. The men must take some action regarding the stone before administration can enter the picture.

The third ingredient is **interaction**. If one man moves the stone, administration does not occur. At least two men must combine their efforts in some way to move the stone. People interacting with other people to accomplish tasks, this is what administration is about. The essence of administration is people relating to other people. Administration, to sum up, is a process involving human beings jointly engaged in working toward common goals.

• **Public** simply means the citizens of a given area the people of a village, town, governorate, county, state or country. If an issue is considered in the public domain, information and discussion about that issue are open to, or shared by, the people, and can be generally known

to all. Also, the word public refers to activities administered by the government in the name of the entire community.

- Thus, we can define public administration simply as the activities of government that supply goods and services to the public. Public administration main tasks are to serve and protect.

Public administration is both an academic discipline and a professional activity.

In this paper we are going to deal with public administration as an academic discipline discussing both teaching and research in that field, rethinking them in the light of the experience of American schools of public administration and affairs and the guidelines of the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA).

For that purpose, the paper includes these issues:

1. The field of Public administration. (Public Management).
2. The state of education and research of PA in the American schools of Public Affairs and administration (PA/PA).
3. NASPAA guidelines and standards for degrees programs.
4. The current discussions on developing the field.
5. The Department of PA at Cairo university : what has been done? and what should be ?

(1) The Field of PA

Public administration is, as a field of study and analysis, linked with political science, sociology, psychology, business management, economics, and engineering. Its focus is the knowledge base that professionals use and how they can improve their effectiveness.

science of applied methodologies for public administrative program design and organizational restructuring, policy and management planning, resource allocations through budgeting systems, financial management, human resources management, and program evaluation and audit.

Within public policy schools, public management is recognized as mediating the relationship between policy analysis and authoritative decisions, on the one hand, and the concrete outcomes of public policies, on the other.

Public management, as a conceptual field of reference and study within p.a., is a recent development and is very much still emerging . In a review of some of the major books in this field, Overman noted, “Public management is not exactly scientific management or administrative science, though it is still heavily influenced by them. Nor is it policy analysis, new p.a., or more recent frameworks. Public management reflects the tensions between rational - instrumental orientations, on the one hand, and political - policy orientations on the other.

Public management is an interdisciplinary study of the generic aspects of organization. It is a blend of planning, organizing, and controlling functions of management with the management of human, financial, physical, information, and political resources” Overman’s definition makes use of a scheme in which public management and public policy are the two major overlapping fields of p.a.

Public management, as a special focus of modern p.a., is new. But its roots extend back to the founding of the field of p.a., usually credited to woodrow wilson’s essay, in which he proposed new science of (Public) administration excluded politics from the executive / management functions of government.

Public management is a major segment of the broader field of p.a. It is concerned with the functions and process of management in agencies at all levels of government as well as the nonprofit sector. Public management focuses on p.a. as a profession and on the public manager as a practitioner of that profession, rather than as a politician or statesman.

It is concerned more with the internal operations of a government agency or nonprofit organization than with its relationships and interactions with other departments of government, a legislature and its committees, the courts, or organization in another economic sector. P.A. is a broader term than public management because it does not limit itself to management but incorporates all of the political, social, cultural, and legal environments that affect the managing of public institutions. Public management focuses more succinctly on the administrative activities that occur within government agencies. Instead of emphasizing the political considerations that permeate the policy process and pervade the external relations of government organizations, public management is primarily concerned with the policy implementation.

Thus, public management, as an applied, problem oriented field will always, and should always, wrestle with the exquisite tension between theory and practice. Academics believe their theoretical knowledge is an important contribution to public management. It is their contention that because they have some distance from the everyday working of public organizations, they have much-needed perspective in the broader meaning of how things work. There is also an implicit claim that unless knowledge is collected according to the canons of social science research, it is not quite reliable. The millions of civil servants also believe they know something about management everyday. Moreover, many of these people have extensive background in the academic study of p.a.

Researchers in public management should improve their ability to draw selectively and wisely, from a variety of disciplines, those analytic frame-works with explanatory power, sound empirical evidence, and practical value for managers. Researchers should continue to strengthen the ties between the classroom and the workplace. Here "experiential learning" has to be of special significance as one of the desired ties between theory and practice.

Several aspects of public management are receiving particular emphasis. These focal functions and current issues of public management include .

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