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Sustainability of Public Management in the Developing Countries: the Case of Lebanon

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Abstract

Management is the art of maximizing value from natural resources and human capital. It reflects the results of political, social, economic, and environmental policies adopted by national leaders. Far from neglecting the environmental, financial and economic matters, this research focuses upon the sustainable management of human resources in developing countries, selecting Lebanon as an example. Furthermore, instead of going deep into utopian theories, this research assumes pragmatism in highlighting the deficiencies of management in the developing countries and in recommending policies to be reviewed and possibly adopted. Managing human capital is heavily based on the leader's ability to effectively communicate and transform his/her team members into creative doers. Sustainable public management is based on healthy policies and objectives that must be diligently pursued by managers irrespective of what, in certain cases, the internal and external environment may otherwise dictate. The aim is to maximize the value produced by the available resources.

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1. Sustainability of Management in Developing Countries: The Case of Lebanon

1.1. Introduction

Managing the public sector may be compared to the director of a musical concert who demonstrates his/her art by knowing and leading every instrument, tune, and musician in his/her team. He/she is the maestro of the art. Similarly, the public management leader is the authority responsible for managing the physical, social, political, economic, and human resources of the country to reach to the optimum level of creativity and production. He/she orchestrates the tools and talents to drive the country towards development, wealth, and citizens' security at all levels. He/she is like a captain who sails the ship either to safety or to destruction often in very unfavorable and calamitous conditions impacted by internal or external events and trends.

The public management has come to rule considering open part change by professionals and scholastics alike. Some have hailed it as another worldview (Osborne and Gaebler 1992; Borins 1994; Hughes 1998). Public management changes, it is said, are a typical reaction to basic weights—open antagonistic vibe to government, contracting spending plans, and the objectives of globalization.

There are contrasting translations of what that normal reaction comprises of. In any case there is general understanding that key parts incorporate deregulation of line administration; transformation of common administration offices into unsupported organizations or endeavors; execution based responsibility, especially through contracts; and focused components, for example, contracting-out and inward markets (Aucoin 1990; Hood 1991). Different creators likewise incorporate privatization and scaling back as a component of the bundle (Ingraham 1996; Minogue 1998).

Public management enacts and applies laws, policies, and innovative techniques. It engages human doers to harvest and sustain the overall resources of the country they manage.

Whether in the short or long run, public management objectives revolves around the creation of equilibrium between the consumption and the replenishment rates of resources resulting in an ecosystem balance. Consequently, in order to effectively develop and sustain the needed management process for national growth, it is not allowed that human managers of public life in the developing countries, such as members of parliament (MPs), ministers, directors, governors, and so forth remain forcibly entrenched in the office for over 40 years, or even their entire lives, using antiquated techniques and policies. This often dictatorial and monopolizing behavior negates the foundations for the sustainability of productive management, for it blocks the way for young and innovative human managerial talents to assume public responsibilities.

The classic definition of sustainability reads: "Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It contains within it two key concepts:

- The concept of needs, in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and
- The idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs" (Brundtland report).

In this research sustainability relates not only to managing natural resources but also to managing the future of society as a whole, the industry, available natural resources, and the quality of human life in general. The key terms to this sustainability are: strategy, innovation, adequate tools, far-sighted vision, transforming leadership, and power to make decisions. The manager must be highly skilled and able to administer four types of capitals: (a) Human capital; (b) Financial capital; (c) environmental capital; (d) Technological capital. (Sara Parkin)Most important among them is the human capital, for "you can't do business on a dead planet" (David Brower). This human capital is the focal point of this research.

Numerous creating nations are likewise trying different things with different things on the new open administration menu. The most widely recognized activity separated from privatization and conservation—to be sure, maybe the most well-known, given the sketchy execution of these other two components—is that of

corporatization (changing over common administration divisions into detached offices or ventures, whether inside the common administration or outside it out and out). This is maybe the best known component of common administration change in the UK and New Zealand, two pioneers of the new open administration. In creating nations corporatization gives off an impression of being going ahead at a progressively quick pace, even as a prior era of state-possessed ventures is being put on the salesperson's piece.

Various nations are trying different things with UK-style official organizations, including Jamaica, Singapore, Ghana and Tanzania (Brown 1999; Common 1999; Dodoo 1997; Mollel 1998). South Africa is additionally going down the same street. Tanzania's system shows up especially near the UK model, with 12 offices made in 1996 and another 60 hopefuls holding up in the wings. Similarly Jamaica, however this nation is moving at a slower pace.

Theoretically, public management has been instituted to (1) Improve living human conditions; (2) Fulfill the social contract theory by meeting and protecting the legitimate aspirations of citizens for security, happiness, and development; (3) Restore and cement the trust between the ruler and those governed through transparency, integrity, and a healthy environment (Brundtland, 1999).

1.2. Managerial Scope and Characteristics

By comparing any organization or institution, whether public or private, to an equilateral triangle with three equal sides and angles, one would discover that the angles and sides are divided in a simple and balanced manner. Applying this figure to management, the top angle would represent the owners, shareholders, and top CEO management. The second bottom left comprises the middle and lower management employees, producers, civil servants, and logistic staff. The third bottom right encompasses consumers and clients. As one joins these three angles, one would produce a close circle that incorporates "the organization", the government.

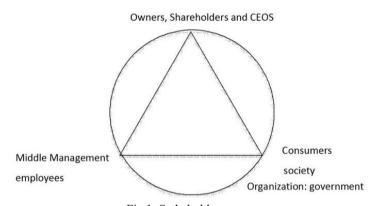


Fig.1. Stakeholders map

What constitutes the focal point in this visual exercise is simply the living human being acting as an engine directing all operations. A living human being means a constantly changing and developing factor in planning, designing, performing, and assessing policies and outcomes. By examining private or public firms, companies, and organizations in developing countries, one would clearly notice either success or stagnation leading to self-destruction. Those to blame or seldom praise are usually members of the lower management level. Consequently, one assumes that civil servants or members of an effective public management ought to be endowed with great qualifications, almost "super human" to prevent failure, and produce happiness to citizens while sustaining the

success of the organization. Unfortunately, this is not the case in the developing states where good governance is replaced by corruption at different levels.

1.3. Management and Sustainability

Among many definitions of sustainability, a simple one may be more pertinent and suitable. It reads: to maintain an operation by continually moving into the path of justice, development, and equilibrium, in spite of unfavorable internal or external environment. Although this definition may seem too broad, it entails many essentially hidden elements which are needed to be clearly mentioned, understood, and mastered. These elements include: (a) in depth knowledge of the mission, values, goals of the operation and its surrounding environment; (b) mastering the art of communication with shareholders, suppliers, and above all, employees; (c) having a clear and pragmatic vision of the entire operation including mid and long term objectives; (d) possessing the capability to promote an ethical code whereby the rule of law and accountability would prevail, and where equity and fairness are applied; (e) stressing the importance of human capital management, development and motivation; (f) promoting the undisputed value of continuous training and change in order to optimize the operation's productivity.

Endeavors at overseeing European inland fisheries are antiquated (Welcomme 2001). Since medieval Europeans devoured awesome amounts of fish, fishing weight expanded in connection to populace development (e.g. Hoffmann 1996; Arlinghaus et al. 2002). Stakeholders that commonly affect fisheries and fishery assets in inland waters. By the thirteenth century, officials as of now griped about overfishing (Hoffmann 1995). In the meantime, essential anthropogenic natural surroundings modifications took place influencing the fishery assets adversely (Hoffmann 1995, 1996). As an aftereffect of declining fishery assets, European history specialists of medieval law perceived privatization of already basic or open fishing rights as a general wonder in the Medieval times (Hoffman 1995). By around 1200, stipends from rulers or straightforward seizure place landowners under lock and key of everything except the biggest inland waterway fisheries (Hoffmann 1996). Somewhere around 1200 and 1400, improvement of business sectors and fishing rights occurred. Onetime noble hirelings developed into full-time fishers who paid yearly money related levy or, once in a while, an offer of the catch for the privilege to abuse the lord's water (Hoffmann 1995).

All these elements are essential for setting up and reaching management and sustainability for the survival of the organization, whether private or public. While the major aim of management in the private sector is to accrue profits and preserve sustainability, public organizations management needs to follow in similar directions, reducing costs and wastes. Its ultimate aim centers on providing citizens utmost beneficial services within the shortest time and the lowest cost. (Daly, 1990; Randy Hayes, 2013). Public management's survival and its success are heavily connected to its sustainability.

1.4. Public Management

The hypothesis in this research simply concentrates upon the sustainability of managing human capital, whereby humans act as agents for development and productivity in the public sector.

The authors' intention is not to swim in the deep water of pure theoretical utopia that can rarely be effectively applied since every environment enjoys specificities related to its culture, geographical set up, education, ideologies, and others. The actual objectives of this paper center on sustaining effective and constructive management in the developing countries of Africa and The Middle East. It is evident, however that the success of any public organization stands clearly reflected by the type and skills of its management. To give this research more credibility and force, it was mandatory to provide a case study demonstrating how management operates and how it can be sustained. Lebanon, a country of many paradoxes and dichotomies, is chosen for this purpose.

1.5. The Reality of Lebanese Public Management Performance

Following its independence from the French mandate in 1943, Lebanon had its public sector's laws and public management operation, mainly borrowed from the French system with some remnant policies adopted from pre — World War I, Turkey. This borrowing of foreign principles and theories acted as an implant of principles and values into a local and hostile environment for they ignored local beliefs, values, and ideologies. The statehood granted to Lebanon came as a giant political leap from dark medieval environment into the twentieth century. The result, however, of such unprepared and unplanned forms of management, led to the governance of Lebanon by a multiplicity of social human groups characterized by ignorance, sectarianism, corruption, chaos, abysmal management of natural and human resources. (Anna Birney, 2010)

Brewer and Selden (2000) as of late report a methodical experimental venture in view of Raineyand Steinbauer's hypothetical contention. They clarify an extensive part of the change in government worker impression of authoritative execution, as translated in rather wide terms, crosswise over 23 offices. The model they create and test incorporates an authority and supervision measure, which is emphatically identified with impression of execution, despite the fact that its prescient force is moderately slight. The measure is restricted to representative view of how their quick administrators rate; and, as Brewer and Selden note, "initiative and supervision may add to hierarchical execution in a roundabout way" (p. 704, accentuation in unique). Without a doubt, a few different variables they dissect that contribute more to clarifying the change in execution are likely impacted by administration too.

These discoveries and contentions are provocative, yet they are constrained in various ways and plainly not authoritative. The majority of the observational work is cross-sectional, and it is essential to test for the effect of open administration by joining a longitudinal measurement too. The greater part of the measures of execution is perceptual and/or middle. Furthermore, the estimations grew up to this point catch just a constrained part of the idea of value administration as it has been comprehended by researchers.

The real confusion has been further reflected by the fact that both the government and the citizens understand modernity, democracy, and management in terms of earning profits beyond any ethical or legal limitations, while copying western culture and educational curricula and failing to build the local modern civil servant and citizen.

In this chaos, the concept of public management was purely understood as financial and power gains for individual unchallenged war lords. Consequently, the overall result may be summarized in these facts for public management in Lebanon needs yet to be born and nurtured to maturity. The actual Lebanese public management(civil service), is designed, applied, and proctored to (a) support either individually divine and self-established leaders; (b) fulfill and obey the wishes of foreign regional and international actors; (c) comply with wishes of armed groups or militias; (d) stand to defend God's rights and honor on earth for those religious zealots and fundamentalists, through literal marginalizing of those branded as non-believers; (e) support open theft of the citizens by public bureaucrats through bribery, corruption and quotas; (f) pollute the food, water, and agricultural land and produce for the sake ofa few dollars; (g) violate all rules and regulations when serving the self-appointed warlord and (h) waste and deplete the natural resources of the country: faun, flora, and mineral ones.

This is the reality of the Lebanese public management that, for further clarification, is illustrated in the following clear examples of managerial malfunctions and deficiencies. These examples highly reflect the characteristics of a poor, unethical public management.

- Lebanese public management has been unable to draft and implement a fair democratic and modern electoral law since 1960. The actual practice is to please a specific leader or another while the state falls into hibernation and disintegration.
- The process of separation of power between branches is indefinitely shelved in favor of religious taboos and twisted theocratic values and practices.
- Electing a president, forming a cabinet, and filling up top government managerial vacancies await some kind
 of a regional or foreign magic word to materialize while state institutions are rendered ineffective.

- Providing the citizens with safe and adequate roads and traffic laws form material for political speeches. As for fresh water supply, the sea takes priority over the humans. Lebanon ranking is 143 out of 144 countries in quality of electricity supply according to the World Economic Forum report of 2014-2015.
- Public servants in most institutions form their own elite usually based on their political, religious affiliation or
 most corrupt civil servants with no accountability; they do government transactions manually by keeping
 records in ledgers inherited from the ottoman rule four hundred years ago, instead of applying modern
 technological tools; a lot of civil servants lack ethical behaviour and need professional training; on top of that
 there is an absence of judicial and administrative accountability while corruption and bribes are publicly
 acclaimed.
- Lebanon has a huge waste of citizens' time, energy, and productivity. The administrative system is centralized and encumbered with paper work, backlog of requests, lack of modern organizational working models and responsibilities. The citizen is often asked to waste days of productive work to secure the approval of a vital personal transaction.
- Lebanon has one of the poorest institutions ranking in the world as per the World Economic Forum, it is illustrated in table 1.

Indicator	Rank/144 countries
Diversion of public funds	137
Public trust in politicians	144
Irregular payments and bribes	142
Favoritism in decisions of government officials	142
Wastefulness of government spending	143
Transparency of government policymaking	138
Ethical behavior of firms	141

Table 1- World Economic Forum, the Global Competitiveness Report 2014-2015

The impacts of these few examples illustrate the distress inflicted upon the citizen who may be left with limited choices of action:

- Immigrate in search of a new life to secure his/her human dignity, freedom, and survival. It is estimated by officials that there are 14 million Lebanese who left the country from 1900 till now compared to 4 million living in the country. Tens of thousands of highly skilled and educated Lebanese emigrate every year in search of freedom, and better life.
- Join the unethical jungle of corruption and learn how to coexist. What is meant here is the in depth rooted corruption at various levels, whereby the civil servant's loyalty is not to the country, but rather to powerful and wealthy individuals, families and religious leaders.
- Surrender to reality and carry on the economic, social injustices abuse, paying heavy taxes and fines.

A survey was conducted through a questionnaire focusing on the deficiencies in the principles of good governance in Lebanon. The questionnaire is intended to quantify major variables that were found in the literature for explaining effective management sustainability, these variables are: strategy, innovation, vision and leadership. The questionnaire was designed to ask individuals if they perceive leadership, vision, strategy and innovation in the public management and to indicate if they think that leadership for public institutions should be changed.

Then individuals were asked about their trust in public officials and whether they are corrupt or not. The purpose of such questions is to determine if there is a trust between people and their public institutions. Moreover, individuals were asked if resources are managed properly by public institutions.

Five hundred samples were selected on an equal basis between males and females from various classes including: lawyers, teachers, businessmen, young graduates, politicians, and above all regular citizens.

Lebanon was chosen because a) it represents an interesting case since people are well educated yet, public management performance is poor.

b) The authors are Lebanese; the natural target sample is Lebanon. This is related to the ability to distribute and collect the questionnaire.

In this research, the authors intend to summarize the few and most indicative data in support of this article. The authors included only responses with percentage above 70%

- Public officials are corrupt 95%
- Public resources are stolen, wasted and mismanaged 93%
- Changes in the system and officials is a must, 87%
- No trust between citizens and government 84%

Few respondents indirectly expressed fear to truthfully express their views, or took a milder stand because they belong to the ruling parties, elite and classes. The authors would have preferred not to disclose these findings to not tarnish the image of their homeland. However, they chose to do so to spot the light on government deficiencies in order to trigger change.

What is most remarkable is that, so far, the ruling warlords have been able to brainwash their followers by making them, here and there, some small favors to keep them docile and even willing to perform illegal activities including violence.

Following these few examples of abysmal public management, some basic questions impose themselves upon the reader's mind: What qualifications should public managers possess? What skills must they master? What managerial model should they adopt? How could good governance be sustained?

- 1. The identity and the personality of managers in the developing countries such as Lebanon are generally products of nepotism, fraud, financial rewards, and clannish families. The top rulers impose the hiring of their followers whose loyalty is bought or usurped.
- 2. In reality, public managers and civil servants are political appointees who usually possess a low level of skills. Some of them undergo prearranged and fake examinations. Those who are recruited based on their qualifications, soon find them compelled to follow one of two choices: (a) resign the position and fall into distress and uncertainty if they fail to comply and follow unethical behavior; (b) or stay on the job and follow the adage "When in Rome, act as a Roman".

What is common and unique about all these public servants and future managers, is the fact that in a very short time, and in violation of all ethical codes, they are granted tenure plus promotion to higher levels of administration. Some of them, despite openly violating the laws, are neither removed nor prosecuted nor penalized; instead, they continue in their ranks collecting all the benefits until they die. After death, their wives and children will be the beneficiaries of funds drawn from the public budget, meaning taxpayers' money. Should they opt to resign past few years of service, they will be awarded a fat lump sum of money as indemnity, in addition to other benefits including monthly salaries, health benefits, military protection, house servants and others.

This financial luring explains why Lebanese citizens do their utmost to join the public civil service management career opportunity.

3. As for the managerial model, there is none in Lebanon. The ruling elite dictate the games and rules. Management is far from being based on scientific research or planning. It is often an emotional reaction filled with bias, misperception, and mostly arrogant behavior of the individualistic "I".

As previously stated, the authors in this paper do not intend to go into theoretical detailing of what good management is. Rather, the objective lies into outlining the necessary and basic qualifications considered sacred to achieve effective sustainability of management. The research focuses upon the human element as a manager/leader who is qualified and skilled enough to lead and manage the state, its inhabitants and its natural resources to sustain

life in the present and for future generations. L.Hunter Lovins, President of National Capitalism Solution, best described the matter as "sustainable management is a whole system approach to achieving superior performance in delivering desired outcomes to all stakeholders of business, government, and civil society".

Conclusion

Following this brief analysis, the thoughts below may provide clarification and answers to the intriguing question: How public management ought to be effectuated and sustained?

Public management, as a life provider, has many responsibilities that must be met and sustained to satisfy the citizens' basic needs and quality of life for future generations. The followings are basic steps and recommendations offered to invigorate and promote sustainability in developing countries' public management:

- Accurately survey the country's resources and thereafter enact appropriate laws to be strictly obeyed and
 respected by all citizens regardless of social rank, wealth economic power tribal or family belongings or
 religious beliefs. Public managers are the caretakers responsible for sustaining a balanced ecosystem between
 depletion, replenishment, and recycling.
- Promote human development and awareness of what their responsibilities as citizens are. This is achieved through education, health, effective training, and application of ethics in the performance of public services.
- Develop partnership between the public and private business sector to encourage corporate social responsibility practices in favor of protecting a balanced ecosystem.
- Assure sound financial policies that would include budgeting, levying taxes, but most of all reducing waste, unethical spending and corruption by strategically planning equal socio-economic development between regions and sectors to spread equity and justice among citizens.
- Assess the country's economic stability through fair policies and intelligent regulations that fit the concerned society in protecting its resources.
- Create public value through resilience, planning, and strategic management of governance by efficiently managing supply and value chains through strict appliance of the rule of law and accountability.
- Reduce waste of energy in all forms of pollution, and time loss. This will cover up water, gas, oil, mineral
 resources, as well as the fauna and flora.
- Most importantly, adopt courageous and daring policies in hiring skilled civil servants through the merit
 system, highly trained public employees, compensating those who perform well, while penalizing those who
 betray their responsibilities. The true management knows well how to search, discover, attract, and retain the
 best talents.

In conclusion, to sustain public management, one must master the art of ethically integrating strategies between human, environmental, financial and societal capitals. Leaders ought to develop themselves first and believe in the importance and value of the concept of sustainability. It is not a matter of a routine management of issues; it is the path toward endless conquest, development and preservation of the future.

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