

# **Public Management and Administration**

*Also by Owen E. Hughes*

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# **Public Management and Administration**

*An Introduction*

Second Edition

**Owen E. Hughes**





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# Preface

Since the mid-1980s, the public sectors of Western countries have undergone major change as governments try to respond to the challenges of technological change, globalisation and international competitiveness. Recent years have seen wider-ranging reforms than any other period of the twentieth century. It is argued that this represents a paradigm shift from the traditional model of public administration, dominant for most of the century, to 'managerialism' or new public management; the theory of bureaucracy in its governmental context is being replaced by economic theories and provision by markets.

This book provides an introduction to, and assessment of, the theories and principles of the new public management and compares and contrasts these with the traditional model of public administration. The managerial programme is an international one, with quite similar changes occurring in a range of different countries. What is more, there is common intellectual backing for these changes particularly in economic theory and the principles of private management. For this reason the book concentrates on the broad sweep of international developments rather than concentrating on individual national case studies which could obscure key issues in a mass of unnecessary detail.

The second edition maintains the same essential argument as the first edition, but updates it in several areas. Events since the writing of the first edition have shown even more clearly that a major shift has been under way in the management of the public sectors around the world, although the pace of change is greater in some countries, for example New Zealand, Australia and the UK, than in others, such as the US and Germany (Nunberg, 1995, p. 4). A new chapter has been added to discuss the particular problems of public management in developing countries and whether new public management can be as successful there as in more developed OECD countries.

The first part (Chapters 1–3) sets out the competing theories of traditional public administration and new public management. The two paradigms are argued to be quite different, resulting in contrasting conceptions of the public service. The second part (Chapters 4–6) considers the changing role of government, a change that is, to a large degree, behind the change in management. This includes discussion of the greatly reduced role of public enterprise and models of public policy making for government. The third section (Chapters 7–10) sets out in more detail specific aspects of new public management – strategic planning and management, managing internal

components and managing external constituencies, as well as management in developing countries – and the final part (Chapters 11 and 12) looks at political accountability and the limitations and problems of the new approach.

In looking at public administration there is a well-established and recognised model with a long history and an extensive literature. As it is more recent, new public management has neither to anywhere near the same degree. It is, however, here and here to stay. There are likely to be problems of accountability, morale and ethics in the adoption of new public management and it is possible some managerial changes will result in little, if any benefit. There is, however, no reason to assume that the managerial programme will be dropped and the traditional model adopted again. There is a major theoretical shift under way affecting the public sector and the public services, but also with substantial impacts on the relationship between government, bureaucracy and citizens. As the reform programme progresses in different countries it appears more evident that the days in which formal bureaucracy and the traditional model of administration characterised government management are rapidly passing.

OWEN E. HUGHES