

The Challenges to the Futures of PA Education¹

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Abstract:

Public Administration (PA) as a field of study and practice has undergone transformations, shifts and movements in its paradigms, concepts and approaches in teaching, research and practice. This paper revisits these transformations and the ways by which these have shaped PA education, research and practice in the Philippines. It also focuses developments in the country and the world in the recent past that may have dramatically impinged on the very core existence of PA education. The latter include internationalization movements anchored on collaboration, competition and/or both. These are transnational education, education for all, open educational resources; and K-12 and international standardization. It reflects on these developments and grapples with how these challenges may shape and reconfigure PA education in the future, as well as its possible content and pedagogy, spaces and possibilities in theory and practice.

Indirectly, it addresses the basic question of the roles of universities in a regime of ‘universitas’ and how PA education may creatively approach access and equity issues, without sacrificing quality and excellence, public service and its other core values.

A. The Transformations of Public Administration as a Field of Study and Practice

Public Administration (PA) or the field of study and practice (Waldo 1955) intended to professionalize public practice, address development problems, reform societies, foster democracy and serve public interest and welfare, has undergone a number of transformations, shifts, movements and streams. In terms of sets of convergent concepts and approaches in the teaching, research and practice of Public Administration, which are dominant at particular periods, Carino (2008) mentioned four streams navigated by the discipline. These are: Traditional Public Administration (TPA), Development Administration (DevAd), New Public Administration (New PA), and Public Administration and Governance (PAG).

Brillantes, Jr. and Fernandez (2008) meanwhile divided the phases in the evolution of the field into only two: traditional or classical PA (from 1800s to 1950s) and modern PA (from 1950s to present). The latter includes DevAd, New PA, New Public Management (NPM), Reinventing Government, and PA as Governance.

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Ocampo (2008) in analyzing the cumulative rather than successive shifts and movements in the discipline, proposed a continuing review of the changing paradigms the field has adapted, reformed, reinvented and rediscovered in the face of the jolting demands and conditions of the times. He grouped the shifts into: old or traditional PA to DevAd and New PA; Public Policy, Implementation and Service Delivery; NPM and Reinventing Government; and Governance. He also focused on a sub-field of the latter, e.g., e-government, in consideration of the digital era governance 21st century PA thrives and survives.

The Traditional PA emphasized governmental management that sought efficiency and economy in the performance of its functions, as well as in the management of the (public) bureaucracy, its personnel, funds, processes and structures. This genre was criticized as “a drag on socio-economic progress because it was devoted to deadening routine, engaged in rule-bound bureaucracy, and committed to the maintenance of the status quo and the ruling regimes” (Ocampo 2008).

DevAd focused on the ‘development of administration and administration of development’ (Riggs as cited in Khator 1998) in third world countries like the Philippines, and was considered as ‘management of innovation’ because it aimed at helping countries undergoing reconstruction and social transformation (Brillantes, Jr. and Fernandez 2008). It was oriented at all-around modernization in developing countries aspiring to escape from poverty, inequality and autocracy (Ocampo 2008).

In the Philippines, DevAd was the framework used to examine the State’s role in rebuilding institutions within a democratic framework, to achieve economic development and social progress (De Guzman 1986). It was a Western construct akin to ‘Comparative Administration’ aimed at comparing economic development, for example, of developing countries with that of America (Carino 2008). In the administration of development aid that went with this movement, DevAd was criticized to have overlooked the value of sustainable post-change development that led to corruption, perpetuation of the elites and status quo, and the lack of foresight to development planning in the long run (as implied in Ocampo 2008, Hirschman 1967).

The old, traditional PA was scored for seeking efficiency and economy at the expense of social equity and the interests of the government’s clientele, as well as in assuming a stable, predictable environment for government operations. Thus, the attraction of New PA to advocate policy solutions to the issues of the day, e.g., poverty, inequality, neglect of human rights, racism, global misadventures and the like was such, that it rippled across the shores and was taken up by governments and PA institutions working towards social justice, freedom and war against poverty (Ocampo 2008; Carino 2008). New PA emphasizes social equity, client-oriented-ness and non-bureaucratic organizations; it also assumes a turbulent, uncertain environment (Pilar 1982; Frederickson 1996).

A major infusion in these discourses is the introduction of the public policy lens in analyzing the role of the State and bureaucracy in delivering public services and promoting social justice, equity and fairness, amidst policy and political systems that may be turbulent. Public policy, implementation and service delivery enhanced the meaning and scope of traditional PA beyond the structures and processes of

government and the public bureaucracy to their clientele and products and services (Carino 2008; Ocampo 2008).

NPM and Reinventing Government were movements from across the Atlantic, which were encapsulated in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and Washington Consensus that assumed that the public sector may be inherently inefficient and the private sector may be better. Vigorously promoted through public sector reforms like privatization, deregulation and liberalization (Thatcherism in the 1970s; Hood, Pollitt and Barzeley in the 1990s), governments were encouraged 'to steer rather than row' (Osborne and Gaebler 1992), adopt good business practices and radically redesign government processes. Governments and public bureaucracies were generically treated as organizations as if 'public and private organizations are fundamentally alike in all unimportant respects' (Allison 1983).

As if following up on beating the State out of its hallowed existence (Rhodes 1994), the governance paradigm introduced the 'institutionalization of a system through which citizens, institutions, organizations, and groups in a society articulate their interests, exercise their rights, and mediate their differences in pursuit of the collective good (ADB 1995 as cited in ADB 2005). The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP 1997) also describes it as "the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority to manage the nation's affairs." Carino (2000) adds the market and civil society to government as among the actors in governance in pursuit of growth, peace and development.

These transformations in the theory and practice of PA have in a way shaped the design, depth and breath of PA teaching, research and practice in the country.

In the academic front, these shifts and streams have influenced for example, the manner by which the National College of Public Administration and Governance (NCPAG), University of the Philippines (UP), the pioneer and recognized leader in the field of PA in the Philippines, have revised, redesigned and offered its curriculum; the expertise of the faculty members it has invited in its pool; the researches and publications it has produced; and the extension and service activities it has implemented.

Specifically,

- a) Its curriculum at the undergraduate and graduate levels reflects these the evolutionary and cumulative shifts: Its fields of specialization include Organization and Management, Personnel Administration, Fiscal Administration, and Local Government for the old. Traditional PA; Public Policy and Program Administration, Public Enterprise Management, Spatial Information Management and Voluntary Sector Management for the modern PA, NPM and governance.
- b) Its faculty's expertise has a rich and expanded portfolio consisting of comparative PA, administrative theory and history, management, planning and control, organization and management, PA and development, governance and institutions for development, research methods, fiscal

administration, government budgeting, local governance, ethics and accountability, public enterprise management, public policy, public enterprise reform and privatization, spatial and geo-informatics management, voluntary sector management, regulatory governance, climate change and environmental governance, international political economy, citizenship and democracy,

- c) Its researches and publications have produced knowledge products on such development concerns as among others, reorganizing the bureaucracy, bureaucracy for democracy, negative bureaucratic behavior, combating corruption, ethics and accountability, administrative culture and politics, innovation and excellence in local governments, poverty alleviation and the health sector, state, market and civil society, corporate governance, federalism, assessment of the Aquino, Ramos, Estrada and Arroyo administrations, privatization, deregulation and public sector reform, responsible mining, access to justice, fostering democratic governance, mainstreaming human rights, ICT for development, access to justice, rationalization of the electoral process, the Philippine and American administrative traditions, the political economy of regulatory governance, management of water resources.
- d) Its extension activities include policy training programs, leadership and capacity building programs for those in the Executive, Legislative and the Judiciary; policy forums on civil service reform and reorganization, trade and development, participatory budgeting, the Local Government Code, federalism, autonomy in Mindanao, equity and fairness in public policies, the impeachment process, ICT for development, public-private partnerships. These are undertaken by its core research and extension centers, which include the Center for Policy and Executive Development (CPED), the Center for Local and Regional Governance (CLRG), and the Center for Citizenship, Leadership and Democracy. It has also conducted outreach projects for Gawad Kalinga, Habitat for Humanity, Millennium Development Goals, Democracy and Citizenship, Great Cities, Governance Checks, Galing Pook. (www.ncpag.org and various materials on and publications about/of NCPAG, various dates; author's stock knowledge, being part of the College since 1983).

In the public bureaucracy and Philippine government, these streams and paradigms have been manifest in their various development plans, programs, projects, policies and thrusts. A more pronounced shift to New Public Management and Modern PA is evident after the era of Ferdinand Marcos, e.g., from Corazon Aquino (1986) to 2010 to the present under the Simeon Aquino III administration. Their flagship policies and programs were anchored on privatization, (de-Marcosfication), reengineering government, poverty alleviation, international competitiveness, public-private partnership (PPP), and rebuilding trust for good governance.

Programs and policies such as land reform, conditional cash transfer, disaster risk reduction and mitigation, green technology, citizen's charter, Magna Carta of Women, peace process, anti-money laundering, absentee voting, PPP, e-procurement and e-commerce, digital literacy, computerized elections, e-governance, ICT4D

(information, communication and technology for development), alternative and open classrooms and the like have dotted the landscape of Philippine public administration practice in the PA's modern era.

B. Recent Developments and Challenges

In fine, we can concur with the observations of Ocampo (2008) that the field of study and practice of Public Administration or of understanding and managing the affairs of the State for the development of the country, her people and resources, 'has undergone periodic criticism, soul searching and identity crises abroad and at home. It has been buffeted by movements for renewal, reform and reinvention. It has been contested, obscured and sometimes shunted aside by ideas from within and outside this permeable area... But PA has survived and probably even been enriched by the experience" (p. 1, Ocampo, 2008)

Building on the seemingly continued relevance of the eclectic PA at present, let me discuss two interrelated developments which were brought about by globalization and the advances in technology which revolutionized the way peoples of dispersed geographical locations converge into one small world village. These are moves toward internalization based on collaboration, competition and/or both. These include

- 1) The growth of transnational education (TNE) and the corollary advocacies for cross-border universal education, knowledge co-creation and sharing (e.g., education for all by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization or UNESCO, and open educational resources or OER); and
- 2) The K-12 and moves toward international standardization.

1) Transnational Education (TNE)

Transnational education is not a new phenomenon but the pace of its global expansion is. It is this growth that brings with it increasing levels of competition both within and between countries. Many new providers now exist, combining telecommunication, cable and satellite businesses, publishing and software companies, with traditional and non-traditional universities. This escalation of transnational education has implications not just for individual institutions of higher education but for nation states, international organizations, citizens and companies. Put simply, the advent of new education providers poses significant challenges to European education UNESCO 2001).

Currently, transnational education is an under-researched³ and often misunderstood area, with no common understanding, definition or approach. It has many different manifestations, some of which are alternately regarded as threats or benefits by different national higher education systems and even, by various parts of the same system.

³ This is not to deny that there are several excellent recent publications in this area but they all stress the lack of availability of hard statistical data.

Transnational Education (TNE) is defined by the UNESCO/Council of Europe or Confederation of Council of Rectors' Conference in its 2001 **Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education** as "*all types of higher education study programmes, or sets of courses of study, or educational services (including those of distance education) in which the learners are located in a country different from the one where the awarding institution is based*".

TNE implies crossing the borders of national higher education systems (Librero 2004).

Its common forms include

- a) Franchising: the process whereby a higher education institution (franchiser) from a certain country grants another institution (franchisee) in another country the right to provide the franchiser's programs/qualifications in the franchisee's host country, irrespective of the students' provenance (from the first, the second or any other country). In many cases, the franchisee only provides the first part of the educational program, which can be recognized as partial credits towards a qualification at the franchiser's in the context of a "program articulation". The franchisee is not always recognized in the host country, even if the franchiser's programs/qualifications delivered in the home country are recognized in the host country.
- b) Programme articulations/Twinning: inter-institutional arrangements whereby two or more institutions agree to define jointly a study program in terms of study credits and credit transfer, so that students pursuing their studies in one institution have their credits recognized by the other in order to continue their studies ("twinning programmes", "articulation agreements", etc.). These may -or may not- lead to joint or double degrees.
- c) Branch campus: a campus established by a higher education institution from one country in another country (host country) to offer its own educational programs/qualifications, irrespective of the students' provenance. This arrangement is similar to franchising, but the franchisee is a campus of the franchiser. In addition, the notes on franchising apply here as well.
- d) Off-shore institution: an autonomous institution established in a host country but saying to belong, in terms of its organization and educational contents, to the education system of some other country, without having a campus in the pretended mother country. This is seldom recognized in the host country. In addition, some are accredited by regional or national accrediting commissions, say in the USA (which are often said to be the mother country); some may have articulation agreements with other educational institutions in the country to which they say to belong to.

- e) Large corporations: they are usually parts of big transnational corporations and organize their own higher education institutions or study programs offering qualifications which do not belong to any national system of higher education;
- f) International institutions: institutions offering so-called "international" programs/ qualifications, which actually do not refer to any specific education system. This may have branch campuses in several countries; but these are seldom recognized in host countries;
- g) Distance Learning arrangements and virtual universities, where the learner is provided with course material via post or web-based solutions, and self administers the learning process at home. There is a growing number of such institutions, whose programs/ qualifications may -or may not- belong to the higher education system of a particular country (What is Transnational Education? @ www.cimea.it/files/207_114.pdf ; UNESCO 2001)

From a survey conducted by the Council of Europe/UNESCO in 2001, TNE was found to offer the following benefits:

- widens learning opportunities by providing more choice for citizens;
- challenges traditional education systems by introducing more competition and innovative programmes and delivery methods;
- helps to make host (in this case, European) education more competitive;
- benefits home institutions through links with prestigious foreign institutions;
- for exporter - the opportunity to access new sources of income.

TNE however suffers from the following main negative aspects that are anchored on the seeming commodification of education in a globalized setting:

- problems associated with non-official, unregulated higher education providers (often franchise institutions and branch campuses) who remain outside official national quality assurance regimes and are not subject to internal or external audit/monitoring processes.
- consumer protection problems associated with lack of adequate information (and therefore transparency) available to the potential students, employers and competent recognition authorities;
- difficulties with 'degree mills' and bogus institutions who exploit the public;

- transnational institutions might represent ‘unfair’ competition for strictly regulated national providers can lead to loss of income to home institutions;
- from the provider view - good quality transnational education is not necessarily recognised. Lack of information makes it difficult to distinguish good from bad transnational education (Council of Europe/UNESCO 2001)

Along with TNE are some of the viral trends towards open philosophy of learning. These include knowledge co-creation and sharing through open access and open educational resources (OER) in regimes of intellectual property rights, and UNESCO’s Education for All (EFA).

Open Access has grown into a movement advocating the bringing of knowledge to as many people as possible for free and in the end, improving the quality of education worldwide. OA is a “knowledge-distribution model by which scholarly, peer-reviewed journal articles and other resources are made freely available to anyone, anywhere over the Internet” (Rossini, 2010).

It has grown simultaneously with the open education (OE) movement, which is based on a set of core values shared by a remarkably wide range of academics: that knowledge should be free and open to use and reuse; that collaboration should be easier, not harder; that people should receive credit and kudos for contributing to education and research; and that concepts and ideas are linked in unusual and surprising ways and not in the simple linear forms that today’s textbooks present (Baranuik, 2007).

OE promises to fundamentally change the way that authors, instructors, and students interact worldwide. The OE movement takes the inspiration of the open source software movement (GNU Linux, for example, [Raymond, 2001 as cited in Baranuik, 2007]), mixes in the powerful communication abilities of the Internet and the World Wide Web, and applies the result to teaching and learning materials like course notes, curricula, and textbooks (Ibid.).

Open educational resources (OER), meanwhile are “digitized materials offered freely and openly for educators, students and self-learners to use and reuse for teaching, learning and research.” (OECD, 2007) They are “technology-enabled, open provision of educational resources for consultation, use and adaptation by a community of users for *non-commercial purposes*” (UNESCO, 2002, underscoring mine). They include learning objects such as lecture materials, references and readings, simulations, experiments and demonstrations, as well as syllabi, curricula and teachers’ guides (Ibid.)

OA, OE and OER promote the free use or sharing of materials, and in some cases, allow changing and sharing again, made possible through licensing, so that both teachers and learners can share what they know. The movements draw support from big universities around the world, e.g., Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Harvard, Cambridge, Stanford, etc. as encouraged by development organizations such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO),

the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and others. It has infected the Asia and Pacific regions, the Asian Association of Open Universities (AAOU) and the rest of the world.

Education for All (EFA) is the main commitment collectively signed by some 164 governments in 2000, together with partner organizations to dramatically expand educational opportunities for children, youth and adults by 2015. These participants at the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, endorsed a comprehensive vision of education, anchored in human rights, affirming the importance of learning at all ages and emphasizing the need for special measures to reach the poorest, most vulnerable and most disadvantaged groups in society (UNESCO 2007).

EFA has six goals. These are:

Goal 1 Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children

Goal 2 Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to, and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality.

Goal 3 Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes

Goal 4 Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.

Goal 5 Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.

Goal 6 Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills (<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/education-for-all/efa-goals/>)

At present, UNESCO Commissioned Teams are monitoring and assessing the extent to which commitments to EFA are being met. Annual EFA Global Monitoring Reports are being produced to serve as an authoritative reference for comparing the experiences of countries, understanding the positive impact of specific policies and recognizing that progress happens when there is political vision and commitment of all stakeholders involved in the process.

2) K-12 and International Standards

The Philippines is the only country in Asia with a 10-year basic education, as against the rest in the region and the world where 12 years is the norm. The congested

curriculum partly explains the poor quality of our basic education: where a 12-year curriculum is offered in only 10 years. This partly explains the poor preparation of our high school graduates to the world of work or entrepreneurship or higher education. This puts our graduates or those who wish to work or study abroad at a disadvantage as our degrees are not always automatically recognized and our graduates not automatically recognized as professionals (DepEd 2010).

The Philippine government, particularly under the Aquino III government hopes to address these problems and be at par with the international standards by offering a 12-year basic education curriculum, called the K-12 or the Enhanced K+12. It seeks to provide for a quality 12- year basic education program that each Filipino is entitled to, consistent with Article XIV, Section 2(1) of the 1987 Philippine Constitution which states that “*The State shall establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and society.*”

C. Implications

Transnational education, open educational resources and K-12 are movements and norms that navigated across the globe and reached national borders. Depending on how we embrace them and value them as good or bad, would dictate the shape, structure and approaches of our ways of life, and in this case, our Public Administration.

We may explore international collaboration and our quality of program offerings may be enhanced by new ways, new schools of thought, new paradigms, new worldviews. We may think ahead of K-12 and review our bachelor’s curriculum now, reflect on the breed of learners we wish to admit and the kind of graduates we want to produce. We may revisit the researches we have been doing and look for ways on how we may be able to thicken the discourse of good governance and impact policy making and reform, more. We may also explore better ways to manage our extension services to provide more favorable effects to the vulnerable, the marginalized and to those who have less in life.

The movements, shifts, streams and developments that have marked PA transformations and reconfigurations have been steady responses to externally imposed pressures and norms. From old PA to New PA, NPM and Governance, spruced and spiced up by the jolts brought about by technology and globalization and the realization that we are one small village, we seem to have been made to realize that internationally accepted practices and norms are the standards and that we have to shape out or be left behind. But in all these seemingly rehash of the competitive spirit, more and more that we should worry about internal quality assurance, regulation and indigenization. It should not always be a shot from the outside. We should also shoot out and influence the international arena, no matter how feeble our effect may be.

The futures of PA education may be many: 1) it may continue to be impinged by outside influences that we also embrace as our own; 2) we continue to be cognizant of outside movements and critically reflect on their meanings and senses to us as global

citizens; 3) we digest further what is our own, in all these configurations (i.e., we indigenize) and proudly contribute to the enrichment of the field of PA.

There may be other scenarios and futures as we reflect on the roles of the academe in nation building and development. But it is best that we analyze the ethos and principles of the 'universitas' and claim the space for Public Administration study and practice in the 'universitas'. As Alfonso (2012) defined, the latter is the university's social contract for social transformation, or specifically, its mandate to help shape society (whether local or global) not only by producing competent professionals but also by nurturing innovative ideas, facilitating discourse on important social issues and developing technologies that people can use. Universities are able to do this because they encourage the free exchange of ideas, thereby allowing its community of scholars to think critically, creatively and collegially.

References

(To follow)