

Getting the public administration right in the public policy process.

Traditions of Administrative Reform: Mixed Messages and Epistemic Communities in

Eurasia

Final Report

April

2017

The Q Methodological analysis of the norms, beliefs and values of Hub participants

Dr Karl O'Connor¹

¹ This report was supported with funding from the UNDP's Innovative Solutions scheme. I wish to express my gratitude to Kuralay Baibatyrova for her assistance in translating Q statements and arranging the participation of interviews selected for inclusion in the survey. The usual disclaimer applies.

Traditions of Administrative Reform: Mixed Messages and Epistemic Communities in Eurasia

Dr Karl O'Connor, Institute for Research in Social Sciences, Ulster University, UK

Abstract:

Substantial evidence exists to demonstrate that the roles adopted by our senior bureaucratic officials dictate how policies are skewed, employed or implemented. While it is most important to get the policy design right, we need also to get the system of public administration right. This report draws on original research to highlight how a transnational network in Eurasia is facilitating policy learning across countries at very different economic, social and political development stages. The findings should be of interest to those involved in other emerging regional cooperation initiatives and to those interested in developing administrative capacity. The report identifies typologies of bureaucrat distinguished by their perceptions of new public management, new public governance and the craft of public administration.

Points for practitioners:

When we talk of increasing administrative capacity, what really do we mean? What type of officials do we expect within our public administrations? How does our bureaucratic elite interpret administrative reform or concepts such as public service motivation? Do they believe it is their role to simply devise solutions that are technically feasible and efficient, or do they think that they should mediate between different arguments? Alternatively, do bureaucrats perceive their role so as to devise politically feasible solutions or provide input with their own expertise or should they even support specific interests? This report addresses

these practical questions of administrative reform that inform the policy adoption and implementation process.

Report Topic

This report examines how members of a transnational regional public administration committee perceive public service motivation (PSM). The research is situated within the three main traditions of public service: New public management, new public governance and the craft of public administration. The Regional Hub is a regional initiative which aims to increase the effectiveness of civil service systems. Through partnership and networking it uses soft power to build administrative capacity through peer learning.

Aim of the report

Practitioner aim

It is not the aim of this report to appraise NPM, NPG or Craft. Rather, it accepts that these skills are theoretically existent within the public sector. These skills have been developed over a number of years with training supported by national and international agencies. The report explores how the values of each of these administrative reform agendas are interpreted and internalised by bureaucrats in Eurasia. As there is no dominant 'reform agenda', latent narratives would be expected to come to the fore (Callahan and Olshfski, 2006) and guide decision-making in instances of discretion (Meier and O'Toole, 2006). The administrative environment in Eurasia has hitherto not been studied in order to identify what these latent narratives guiding behaviour in these particular policy areas actually are.

Theoretical contribution of the report

Epistemic communities can be described as communities of experts. In her review of 'epistemic communities' literature, Davis Cross (2013: 138) argues that more attention be given to the internal dynamics within an epistemic community. This report examines the internal dynamics of an emerging epistemic community in Eurasia.

Problem

While the Regional Hub has been successful in developing cooperation among some countries in the region, the problem remains that civil servants from different state traditions may interpret the role of the official in different ways. This is most likely past on their conception of one of the school of administrative reform. If attendees at the Regional Hub possess different motivations and role conceptions, the administrative solutions designed or promoted by the Hub may be misinterpreted or misunderstood and consequentially poorly implemented, leading many to incorrectly question the merit of the policy as opposed to the policy diffusion process.

Research Question

The report asks the question: Do regular committee members possess similar governance perceptions. Put differently, does a shared sense of purpose exist among members: *How is administrative reform interpreted by members?*

Method

To answer this question, the report draws on Q Methodology. [More below]

Hypothesis

The hypothesis that we are testing is: Regular attendees at Hub events share common governance beliefs.

Case selection – the P sample

A list of current members of the Regional Hub was drawn up. Those members who had attended at least two events in the past two years were identified and contacted. This list consisted of 28 people. This universe was then contacted by e-mail and telephone. Of these, 15 were able to complete the on-line Q-sort. Respondents spent between twenty minutes and one hour completing the Q-sort. Respondents were senior bureaucrats in their administrations, holding either the position of director or head of service. They originated from: Armenia (1), Azerbaijan (4), Georgia (4), Kazakhstan (2), Kyrgyzstan (1), Mongolia (1), and Ukraine (2). The fieldwork took place between September and December 2016.

Theoretical framework – the Q sample

In policy areas where there is no dominant state narrative, latent narratives are found to come to the fore and in turn guide behaviour. (Callahan and Olshfski, 2006) Administrative reform suffers from that oft cited problem of pareto-efficient policies: one cannot be against administrative reform – however what is meant by the term ‘administrative reform’ differs across time and across place: what Radaelli (2005) refers to as new wine bottles with either no wine or wine of variant quality inside. Three of the more recent turns in public administration research have been compiled by Rod Rhodes (2016). Based on Osborne (2010), Rhodes (2008) Bryson et al (2014) and Rhodes (2016), the section below summarises the key aspects of the (i) New Public Management, (ii) New Public Governance and (iii) ‘Craft’ agendas. The key properties of each theoretically existent perspectives are then collated in tabular form. These summary tables contain a number of statements which were put to our person sample. Of course some statements contain elements of all of these theoretically defined characteristics. Classifications are also subjective. Nonetheless, while the

classification of the statement may be disputed, as statements are interpreted with reference to the position of all other statements, classification does not have a significant effect on findings. The statements emerge from a review of public service motivation literature, epistemic community literature and administrative reform literature and have been categorised by the three primary ‘turns’ in public administration research as defined by Rhodes (2016): NPM, NPG and Craft or the traditional model as revived by Rhodes (2016)². Two tables (Table A2 and A3) have also been included in the annex outlining the primary differences between these administrative reform traditions.

Narrative for theoretical type one

Proponents of New Public Management were most concerned with government failures, distrust of big government, belief in the efficacy and efficiency of markets and rationality, and devolution of authority. It has its roots in public choice theory. Proponents favoured economic theory and positivist social science methodologies. Regulation of service provision was to be one of the primary tasks of government. NPM advocates citizens as consumers and sees competition between consumers as a way of ensuring organisational accountability. (Bryson et al 2014: 446, Osborne, 2006; Rhodes, 2016). The statements below reflect some of the key tenets of the NPM agenda.

Table of statements for theoretical type one: *NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT*

1. Those with expertise in the private sector should be encouraged to join the top level of the public sector
2. High profile business people should be involved in the governance process

² See also Robinson, M. (2015)

3. The private sector is inherently more efficient than public sector
 4. The civil service is often too privileged, interventionist and complacent
 5. Public sector bodies should compete with each other for funding
 6. Public-private partnerships are a good way of securing much needed investment in capital public projects
 7. Bureaucrats and their departments should be judged by quantitatively measuring their results.
 8. Key Performance Indicators are good way of measuring success.
 9. If a bureaucrat is forced to choose between the most efficient policy and the most equitable policy, the most efficient alternative should be chosen
 10. Value for money is the primary consideration in making policy choices
 11. I believe that by putting the interests of business first, benefits will flow to citizens
 12. The best way to ensure efficient public services is to facilitate and regulate the private sector in service provision
 13. Bureaucrats should aim for government that is smaller and more efficient.
 14. Multiple service providers of state services usually means better service outcomes for citizens
 15. In terms of management, the public sector can learn a lot from the private sector
 16. In this era of administrative reform, regulatory and contracting skills are one of the most important skills of the bureaucrat.
-

Narrative for theoretical type two – New Public Governance

NPG has its origins in institutional and network theory. It advocates that the organisation work with partners in society – nongovernmental organisations and civil society organisations. It emphasises the importance of values and relationships between people, organisations and interests. It is these networks that influence values and in turn influence resource allocation.

Table of statements for theoretical type two: *NEW PUBLIC GOVERNANCE*

1. It is the role of the bureaucrat to encourage cooperation between people, departments and organisations in order to design effective public policy

2. The solution to many policy problems begins with developing partnerships, encouraging modernisation and joined up government

3. In contemporary social and economic affairs it is essential that the technical aspects of administrative reform be given more weight than political factors

4. My role is to mediate conflicting interests and find a course of action that satisfies everyone.

5. It is the role of the official to actively seek out NGOs and CSOs to assist in the development of policy

6. It is the role of the official to actively seek out NGOs and CSOs to assist in the implementation of policy

7. A bureaucrat's primary role is that of a coordinator. He/She should coordinate various departments and agencies to ensure the implementation of policy.

8. A central regulatory unit is necessary to govern the governance process

9. I take the initiative in proposing policies, mobilising support for them, and questioning policies that may run counter to the general public interest

10. I am reluctant to assume a leadership role in divisive policy issues. This is the prerogative of politicians

11. It is the role of the bureaucrat to consider how his/her policy will affect other policy areas

12. The role of a manager in the public sector is to develop clear functional roles for team members.

13. Collaborative leadership across departments is crucial to ensure policy success.

14. It is my role to ensure policies are well designed and well implemented.

15. The key task of the bureaucrat is to manage the relationship between my department, the market and interest groups

16. The motivations of public and private sector workers are completely different. This makes it difficult to integrate private sector practices within the public sector.

Narrative for theoretical type Three – the Craft of Public Administration

Public administration theory has its roots in political science and sociology. It has a strong focus on the policy process and policy implementation. The bureaucrat is seen as the sole source of advice to the Minister and resources decisions are arrived at through a strict hierarchical process. Bureaucrats are guided by a public sector ethos. Rhodes' (2016) and Bryson et al's (2014) revisioning of the traditional model argues that "[w]hile efficiency was the main concern of traditional public administration, and efficiency and effectiveness are the main concerns of New Public Management, values beyond efficiency and effectiveness are pursued, debated, challenged, and evaluated in the emerging approach. In this regard, the

emerging approach reemphasizes and brings to the fore value-related concerns of previous eras that were always present but not dominant (Denhardt and Denhardt 2011; Rosenbloom and McCurdy 2006)". (Bryson et al 2014:445)

Table of statements for theoretical type Three: *THE CRAFT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION*

1. Resources should be allocated according to the wishes of the politicians, regardless of my personal opinions
 2. My allegiance is to the state, not to a particular political ideology, party or leader
 3. Bureaucrats should be free to provide Ministers with 'frank and fearless' advice
 4. It is not the role of the bureaucrat to take the limelight. This is the role of Ministers.
 5. It is the responsibility of the bureaucrat to act as a counterweight to partisan arguments
 6. Bureaucrats recommend or actively advocate in favour of policy positions that they perceive represent the needs and interests of citizens
 7. The role of the bureaucrat is to follow the rules of the bureaucracy at all times no matter what the circumstances
 8. Bureaucrats need to be politically impartial but they should act in the best interests of their department
 9. When a conflict of interests arises between the wishes of the politicians and a bureaucrats own technical beliefs about administrative reform, bureaucrats automatically and unquestionably follow the wishes of the political level
 10. Experienced officials should know how to influence the governance process.
-

11. It is the role of the elite level bureaucrat to build a relationship with the political level. Nothing could be more dishonest than to betray the confidence of a Minister

12. A bureaucrat's work requires judgment based on practical wisdom because the rule book does not have all the answers

13. A bureaucrat knows the art of weighing the merits of competing stories or policy positions

14. Negotiation and persuasion skills are one of the most important skills of a bureaucrat

15. Bureaucrats are neutral between political parties; but cannot be neutral in service of their departments or ministers

16. When a bureaucrat makes a decision he/she must think how this could look on the front of the national newspaper. He/She must act in the best interests of the Minister

Findings

Based on these the theoretical conceptions of administrative reform, hub members identified three types of perceptions. Before identifying the defining characteristics of these three typologies, there are a number of conceptions that are shared by all hub members. These are identified in the section below. The numbers in brackets refer to the number of the statement supporting the claim in the text. The statements and corresponding numbers are presented in the annex, A1.

Common conceptions

All listed statements are non-significant at $P > .01$ and those with an* are also non-significant at $P > .05$.

NPM/NPG/Craft

Respondents unanimously reject the idea that the civil service is too privileged and interventionist (3*). In terms of bureaucrat's attachment to the three theoretical positions outlined above, it is seen that bureaucrats tend to reject the neo-liberal idea that supporting businesses first will allow benefits to flow to citizens (24). There is also a rejection of the idea of the regulatory state: The best way to ensure efficient public services is to facilitate and regulate the private sector in service provision (26*). They also slightly disagree that value for money is a primary consideration in the policy-making process (30*).

Role Perception

In general, bureaucrats in the region do not see it as their responsibility to act as a counterweight to partisan arguments (40), alternatively viewing their primary role as that of a coordinator: coordinating various departments and agencies to ensure the implementation of policy (13*). They are also not afraid to take a leadership role in divisive policy issues (34). However, they do not see it as their role to coordinate actors outside the civil service largely disagreeing with the statement: 'the key task of the bureaucrat is to manage the relationship between my department, the market and interest groups' (36*).

Interaction with the political level

They profoundly object to allocating resources according to political criteria (47*) and generally do not see it as their responsibility to act as a counterweight to partisan arguments (40). Bureaucrats in the region demonstrate comprehensive agreement with the statement “My allegiance is to the state, not to a particular political ideology, party or leader” (14*). All typologies placed this statement in the most strongly agree category.

In summary, no dominant administrative reform agenda is evident. This may be interpreted to mean that the various cycles of reform have each left a legacy, the result being an amalgam of ideas and concepts on what the role and function of a bureaucrat actually is.

In the next section the differences between the three typologies are identified. Each typology is labelled type one, type two and type three. There is no correlation between gender and typology alignment, nor is there a correlation between country and typology alignment.

Typology weightings

The table below reflects the narrative presented above that respondents have many attributes in common. The left hand column identifies the interviewee by number, while the top row identifies the typology number. The 'X' denotes that the bureaucrat's responses contributed to the makeup of that typology. The other two numbers in the row identify the extent to which each bureaucrat identifies with each of the other typologies.

All listed statements are significant at $P > .05$ and those with an * are also significant at $P > .01$.

QSORT	1	2	3
1 1	0.0642	0.0614	0.7950X
2 2	0.5271X	0.3295	0.2271
3 3	0.4465X	0.3265	0.2512
4 4	0.4097X	0.0293	0.1656
5 5	0.7800X	-0.2571	-0.0751
6 6	0.2809	-0.2343	0.5732X
7 7	0.6784X	-0.0654	0.3673
8 8	0.2049	0.3342	0.7145X
9 9	-0.1496	0.6270X	0.2580
10 10	0.4231	0.5596X	0.0198
11 11	0.1986	0.5059X	0.0918
12 12	0.6322X	0.3868	0.0628

13 13	0.6486X	0.1469	0.1606
14 14	-0.0657	0.8399X	-0.1962
15 15	0.5579X	0.5448	-0.0625

Table X Typology formulation

The table below identifies the similarity between the typologies.

	1	2	3
1	1.0000	0.1979	0.3686
2	0.1979	1.0000	0.0824
3	0.3686	0.0824	1.0000

Typology One – Governance

Role perception

They are the only typology that interpret their role to ensure policies are successfully designed and implemented (35*). While these bureaucrats are politically impartial, they will defend the interests of their department (42*). They are the factor most likely to agree with the statement that ‘a bureaucrat’s work requires judgment based on practical wisdom because the rule book does not have all the answers’ (44). They are the most likely typology to agree with the statement that ‘experienced officials should know how to influence the governance process’ (29).

Relationship with civil society

Typology one do not see it as the role of the official to seek out NGO or CSO assistance in the design (21*) or implementation (2*) of policy.

Relationship with the political level

Bureaucrats weighing on type one do not automatically follow the directions of their political masters (43). Together with typology three, they most strongly agree that it is their primary role to offer frank and fearless advice to the political level (39).

NPM/NPG/Craft

While they do concede that many motivations of the public and private sector are similar (41*) and that in terms of management, the public sector can learn a lot from the private sector (1), they strongly disagree with the idea that members of the private sector should be recruited to the upper echelons of the civil service (25*). They most strongly disagree with the NPM assertion that bureaucrats and their departments should be measured quantitatively by their results (8*) and with Niskanen's (1971) idea that public sector bodies should compete for resources (6*).

Skills valued

The role of the official according to type one bureaucrats is to encourage cooperation between people and departments (22). They believe that collaborative leadership is the key to policy success (33*) and take an active role mediating conflicting interests (5). They are also the most rule bound of our typologies, agreeing with the statement that it is their responsibility to follow the rules, no matter what the circumstances (4*). Technically, they

are in favour of Central Regulatory Units to measure regulatory quality (27), but do not agree that these regulatory and contracting skills are the most important skills of a bureaucrat (23*).

Summary

In summary, this typology sees it as their role to bring about policy change. This is the role of the civil service and not outside organisations. They have a good working relationship with the political level and will offer frank advice when necessary. The public sector can learn a lot from the private sector in terms of management, but it should not try and emulate the private sector in all respects. This typology sees the merit in attaining regulatory skills, but these are seen as secondary to the more important skills of governance. This typology generally possesses many of the skills associated with the NPG agenda. They agree with some of the craft statements and reject others. They generally reject the NPM skills.

Typology Two - NPM

Role perception and relationship with civil society

While rejecting the essential skills required of the Craft agenda, they do not reject all elements of NPG, seeing it as their role to seek out NGOs to assist them in the implementation (2*), and to a lesser extent development (21) of public policy. These bureaucrats do not see it as their role to be politically impartial and defend the interests of their departments (42*).

Relationship with the political level

Their relationship with the political level differs from other typologies – they do not see it as their role to offer free and frank advice to the political level (39*). Nor do they agree with the statement that they should influence the governance process (29*). However, they are the factor most likely to hold onto their technical beliefs when faced with opposition from the political level (43).

NPM/NPG/Craft

Bureaucrats weighing significantly on this typology argue for government that is smaller and more efficient (9*). They also strongly agree with the NPM assertion that bureaucrats and their departments should be measured quantitatively by their results (8*). They embrace the idea of business people being involved in the governance process (17*) and believe that many of the motivations of the public and private sectors are similar (41*).

Skills valued

They value regulatory and contracting skills (23*). These skills are prioritised over skills associated with craft. These bureaucrats disagree with the following statements: experienced officials should know how to influence the governance process; (29*) negotiation and persuasion skills are one of the most important skills of a bureaucrat (45*) and collaborative leadership across departments is crucial to ensure policy success (33*).

Summary

This typology is closest to NPM. This is the only typology to embrace working with NGOs and CSOs. They will defend the interests of their departments but do not see it as their role to challenge the political level. They are open to private sector ideas and personnel being incorporated into the public sector and are the most technocratic of our typologies. They will

hold their technical beliefs – but not try and influence the ‘political’ process through persuasion and negotiation. They are the bureaucrats most likely to focus on evidence based policy, to the detriment of cultural and societal factors. This typology positively identifies with many of the NPM ideas. They also, to a lesser extent, identify with NPG reforms. They reject the Craft skills.

Typology Three - Craft

Role perception

This typology attributes a lot of importance to the technical aspects of their role (28*). However, technicality does not mean skills such as the understanding the details of regulatory reform (23). Rather, technicality is interpreted as being closer to the generalist civil servant. They interpret their role as to offer Ministers frank and fearless advice (39). Similar to other typologies, they are not concerned with how their decisions will look on the front page of a newspaper (38*) – however they do not disagree with this statement to the same extent as the other typologies. They do not see it as their role to mediate conflicting interests (5) but strongly agree that collaborative leadership across departments is crucial to ensure policy success (33*, 22, 13). They see it as their role to develop clear roles for team members (32).

Relationship with civil society

While this typology would consult with NGOs regarding the implementation of policy, they would be less inclined to involve them in the policy formulation/design process (2,21).

Their relationship with the political level

When a conflict of interest arises with the political level, they will not provide unquestioning political support (43*). These bureaucrats do not see it as their role to build a relationship with the political level (12*).

NPM/NPG/Craft

They are the only typology that agree that the motivations of the public and private sectors are different (41*). They tend to agree that bureaucrats and departments should be measured quantitatively by results (8*) and that public-private partnerships are good (45). They also believe the private sector to be more efficient than the public sector (16). However, they disagree with many of the NPM ideals. This typology disagrees with the following NPM sentiments:

- In terms of management, the public sector can learn a lot from the private sector (1*);
- Key Performance Indicators are good way of measuring success (19*);
- Public sector bodies should compete with each other for funding (6*);
- In this era of administrative reform, regulatory and contracting skills are one of the most important skills of the bureaucrat (23*).

They are the only typology to strongly disagree with the statement: 'The solution to many policy problems begins with developing partnerships, encouraging modernisation and joined up government' (11*).

Skills valued

Typology three recognise the need to be politically impartial but will act in the best interests of their departments (42*). They believe collaborative leadership to be crucial for ensuring policy success (33*). They embrace the craft skills of weighing the merits of competing stories. (46*). Negotiation and persuasion skills are also highly valued (45).

Summary

This typology gives similar prominence to the technique of policy making. However, unlike typology two, who prioritise evidence based policy making and the technocratic details of the process, this typology prioritises collaborative leadership and negotiation skills. They are also open to the idea of working with NGOs and CSOs – but to a lesser extent than type one. Apart from public private partnerships, they completely reject the NPM agenda. While they do disagree with a few craft skills, they overwhelmingly support the majority of craft skills and to a lesser degree those skills associated with NPG.

Summary of the findings

Type One: NPG	Type Two: NPM	Type Three: Craft
Key Affiliation		
The public sector can learn a lot from the private sector in terms of management, but it should not try and emulate the private sector in all respects	They are open to private sector ideas and personnel being incorporated into the public sector and are the most technocratic of our typologies	Apart from public private partnerships, they completely reject the NPM agenda. While they do disagree with a few craft skills, they overwhelmingly support the majority of craft skills and to a lesser degree those skills associated with NPG.
Role Perception		
This typology sees it as their role to bring about policy change. This is the role of the civil service and not outside organisations.	They are unlikely to defend the interests of their departments. They will hold their technical beliefs – but not try and influence the ‘political’ process through persuasion and negotiation. They are the bureaucrats	This typology gives similar prominence to the technique of policy making. However, unlike typology two, who prioritise evidence based policy making and the technocratic details of the process, this typology prioritise collaborative

	most likely to focus on evidence based policy, to the detriment of cultural and societal factors	leadership and negotiation skills
Relationship with Civil Society		
Do not see it as the role of the official to seek out NGO or CSO assistance in the design or implementation of policy	This is the only typology to <u>fully</u> embrace working with NGOs and CSOs	Would consult with NGOs regarding the implementation of policy, but would be less inclined to involve them in the policy formulation/design process
Skills Valued		
This typology sees the merit in attaining regulatory skills, but these are seen as secondary to the more important skills of governance. They possess many of the skills associated with the NPG agenda. They agree with some of the craft statements and reject others. They generally reject the NPM skills.	While rejecting the essential skills required of the Craft agenda, they do not reject all elements of NPG, This typology positively identifies with many of the NPM ideas. They also, to a lesser extent, identify with NPG reforms. They reject the Craft skills.	Typology three recognise the need to be politically impartial but will act in the best interests of their departments. They believe collaborative leadership to be crucial for ensuring policy success. They embrace the craft skills of weighing the merits of competing stories. Negotiation and persuasion skills are also highly valued.
Relationship with the Political Level		
They have a good working relationship with the political level and will offer frank advice when necessary	They will defend the interests of their departments but do not see it as their role to challenge the political level	When a conflict of interest arises with the political level, they will not provide unquestioning political support. These bureaucrats do not see it as their role to build a relationship with the political level

Implications of the research findings

The report asked the questions:

1. Do regular committee members possess similar governance perceptions?
2. Does a shared sense of purpose exist among members?
3. How is administrative reform interpreted by members?

This study has demonstrated that Hub participants possess three different perceptions of administrative reform. These perceptions differ remarkably. There is no correlation between any primary factors such as nationality or gender and typology alignment suggesting that there is no dominant state or international narrative on administrative reform. The absence of a dominant narrative has allowed respondents to draw on their own interpretations of administrative reform. There is therefore no shared sense of purpose, no 'community of practice' or 'epistemic community'. While knowledge is exchanged, there exists no shared understanding of the fundamental basics of administrative reform. Recent initiatives of the Hub – such as the Peer-to-Peer learning initiative, may demonstrate a step in this direction by countries that have indicated a willingness for this enhanced cooperation.

Why should the Hub wish to develop into an epistemic community?

Epistemic communities are communities of experts. They “do not simply exist or not exist, but have varying degrees of influence...the more internally cohesive an epistemic community, the more likely it will achieve a high degree of influence on policy outcomes.” (Davis-Cross, 2013:138) Therefore, a highly cohesive community of experts will have more influence than a committee where there are little or no shared understandings. For an epistemic community to be cohesive, Davis-Cross (2013: 150) emphasises:

- (i) the importance of selection and training: when standards are consistent across national borders, transnational epistemic communities are more likely to be cohesive.
- (ii) She also emphasises the frequency and quality of meetings: “frequent meetings solidify a body of shared professional norms that concern the protocol, procedure, and standards of consensus-building within an epistemic community” (Davis-Cross, 2013: 150)
- (iii) Common culture is also emphasised: “An epistemic community with a strong common culture is far more likely to remain cohesive regardless of the circumstances they face” (Davis-Cross, 2013:150)

Policy recommendations based on the findings:

- (i) Encourage the development of common training norms, standards and tools. Generate learning about the key aspects of administrative reform across countries – **establish what administrative reform means to the elite level bureaucrats of Eurasia.** Can a common understanding be developed?
- (ii) Ensure meetings are held regularly, encouraging **repeat participation from the same personnel.** The scope of the Hub needs to be focused, allowing participants to develop a professional attachment to the key concepts over a period of time.
- (iii) Continue supporting the **Peer-to-Peer learning exercise.** This may be the beginning of an ‘organic’ epistemic community that would emerge from the hub’s structures.

The hub has managed to succeed in generating a sustainable information exchange network. Where many other regional organisations have failed due to political differences between countries, the regional hub has managed to maintain and grow its membership in the Eurasian region (with the exception of Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan). It is therefore further recommended that:

- (iv) **a series of hub meetings entitled ‘interpretations and perspectives of administrative reform in Eurasia’ should be convened.** The content should reflect the analytical categories identified above: what is expected of a civil servant today? – How should a bureaucrat interact with the political level, Should the bureaucrat be responsive to his/her technical beliefs or does he/she have an obligation to directly implement the will of Ministers. Alternatively, does the bureaucrat have a responsibility directly to citizens? Thirdly, how can NGOs and CSOs be incorporated into the policy design and implementation process? Indeed, the question could also be posed – should NGOs and CSOs have a role in the policy process? Fourthly, what legitimises the behaviour of bureaucrats? What are the skills required of a bureaucrat in Eurasia today? Hub meetings could then work on developing these skills that have been identified by members.³

³ The Hub has already begun this process: member’s expectations of the hub, as demonstrated by a study completed by Azamat Zholmanov (2015)

Concluding remarks

This report has outlined the success of the Hub in bringing together bureaucrats from many Eurasian countries where other attempts have failed. The key to this success is the technocratic and expert focus of the committee. However, this study has found that while Hub members are very attached to the ideas of administrative reform, how they perceive administrative reform differs greatly. Typology alignment is not determined by gender, country, region or social background. This leads to the conclusion that no dominant narrative exists among public administrative reform practitioners in the region. Unlike in Europe where epistemic communities have emerged from committees of bureaucrats, the evidence presented here demonstrates no such common causal beliefs. While the Hub is tasked with generating 'reform minded civil servants' (Bissessar, 2009) it needs to pay attention to how the term 'administrative reform' is interpreted by its members.

Annex

Table A1: List of statements and translations in the order they were presented to participants

1. In terms of management, the public sector can learn a lot from the private sector

С точки зрения управления, государственный сектор может многому научиться у частного сектора

2. It is the role of the official to actively seek out NGOs and CSOs to assist in the implementation of policy

Роль должностного лица – активно искать различные НПО и общественные организации для оказания содействия в реализации политики

3. The civil service is often too privileged, interventionist and complacent

Государственная служба зачастую носит слишком привилегированный, интервенционистский (основанный на вмешательстве) и самоудовлетворенный характер

4. The role of the bureaucrat is to follow the rules of the bureaucracy at all times no matter what the circumstances

Роль государственного служащего – всегда следовать правилам и нормам государственной службы независимо от обстоятельств

5. My role is to mediate conflicting interests and find a course of action that satisfies everyone

Моя роль – посредничество в решении вопросов конфликтующих сторон и определение действий, которые бы удовлетворяли всех

6. Public sector bodies should compete with each other for funding

Органы государственного сектора должны конкурировать друг с другом за финансирование

7. I take the initiative in proposing policies, mobilising support for them, and questioning policies that may run counter to the general public interest

Я беру на себя инициативу по предложению стратегий, мобилизации поддержки для них, и подвергаю сомнению стратегии, которые могут противоречить интересам широкой общественности

8. Bureaucrats and their departments should be judged by quantitatively measuring their results.

Государственные служащие и их ведомства должны оцениваться по результатам в количественном выражении

9. Bureaucrats should aim for government that is smaller and more efficient

Государственные служащие должны стремиться к правительству, меньшему в размерах и более эффективному

10. Multiple service providers of state services usually means better service outcomes for citizens

Многочисленность поставщиков государственных услуг, как правило, означает более качественные услуги для граждан

11. The solution to many policy problems begins with developing partnerships, encouraging modernisation and joined up government

Решение многих проблем по разработке государственной политики начинается с развития партнерских отношений, стимулирования модернизации и объединенного правительства

12. It is the role of the elite level bureaucrat to build a relationship with the political level. Nothing could be more dishonest than to betray the confidence of a Minister

Функция государственных служащих старшего звена заключается в том, чтобы строить отношения с политическим уровнем. Ничто не может быть более бесчестным, чем предать доверие министра

13. A bureaucrat's primary role is that of a coordinator. He/She should coordinate various departments and agencies to ensure the implementation of policy

Основной ролью государственного служащего является координирование. Ему/ей следует координировать различные ведомства и учреждения для обеспечения реализации политики

14. My allegiance is to the state, not to a particular political ideology, party or leader

Я предан государству, а не определенной политической идеологии, партии или лидеру

15. Public-private partnerships are a good way of securing much needed investment in capital public projects

Государственно-частное партнерство являются хорошим способом обеспечения столь необходимых инвестиций в основные государственные проекты

16. The private sector is inherently more efficient than public sector

Частный сектор, по своей сути, более эффективен, чем государственный сектор

17. High profile business people should be involved in the governance process

Предпринимателей высокого уровня следует вовлекать в процесс государственного управления

18. If a bureaucrat is forced to choose between the most efficient policy and the most equitable policy, the most efficient alternative should be chosen

Если государственный служащий вынужден выбирать между наиболее эффективной политикой и наиболее справедливой, должна быть выбрана наиболее эффективная альтернатива

19. Key Performance Indicators are good way of measuring success

Ключевые показатели эффективности являются хорошим способом измерения степени успеха

20. Bureaucrats are neutral between political parties; but cannot be neutral in service

of their departments or ministers

Государственные служащие сохраняют нейтралитет по отношению к политическим партиям; но не могут быть нейтральными, когда дело касается их департаментов или министерств

21. It is the role of the official to actively seek out NGOs and CSOs to assist in the development of policy

Роль должностного лица – активный поиск различных НПО (неправительственные организации) и ОО (общественные организации) для оказания содействия в разработке политики

22. It is the role of the bureaucrat to encourage cooperation between people, departments and organisations in order to design effective public policy

Роль государственного служащего – содействовать сотрудничеству между людьми, ведомствами и организациями с целью разработки эффективной государственной политики

23. In this era of administrative reform, regulatory and contracting skills are one of the most important skills of the bureaucrat.

В данную эпоху административных реформ, регулятивные навыки и навыки заключения соглашений являются одними из наиболее важных навыков государственного служащего

24. I believe that by putting the interests of business first, benefits will flow to citizens

Я считаю, если ставить интересы бизнеса в первую очередь, граждане остаются в выигрыше

25. Those with expertise in the private sector should be encouraged to join the top level of the public sector

Тех, кто обладает экспертными знаниями в области частного сектора, следует призывать присоединиться к руководящему уровню государственного сектора

26. The best way to ensure efficient public services is to facilitate and regulate the private sector in service provision

Лучший способ обеспечить эффективность государственных услуг – это содействие и регулирование частного сектора в сфере предоставления услуг

27. A central regulatory unit is necessary to govern the governance process

Центральное регулирующее ведомство необходимо для регулирования процесса управления

28. In contemporary social and economic affairs it is essential that the technical aspects of administrative reform be given more weight than political factors

В современных социально-экономических отношениях крайне важно, чтобы технические аспекты административной реформы имели больший вес, чем политические факторы

29. Experienced officials should know how to influence the governance process

Опытные должностные лица должны знать, как повлиять на процесс управления.

30. Value for money is the primary consideration in making policy choices

Рациональное использование денежных средств является основным фактором при принятии решений в государственной политике

31. It is not the role of the bureaucrat to take the limelight. This is the role of Ministers

Быть в центре внимания не является функцией государственных служащих административного звена. Это роль министров.

32. The role of a manager in the public sector is to develop clear functional roles for team members

Роль менеджера в государственном секторе – разработать четкие функциональные роли для членов команды

33. Collaborative leadership across departments is crucial to ensure policy success

Коллективное управление в департаментах имеет решающее значение для обеспечения успеха стратегии

34. I am reluctant to assume a leadership role in divisive policy issues. This is the prerogative of politicians

Я не хочу брать на себя руководящую роль в решении противоречивых вопросов государственной политики. Это является прерогативой политиков

35. It is my role to ensure policies are well designed and well implemented

Моя роль - обеспечить хорошую разработку и успешную реализацию политики

36. The key task of the bureaucrat is to manage the relationship between my department, the market and interest groups

Основная задача государственного служащего заключается в регулировании отношений между своим отделом, рынком и заинтересованными группами

37. It is the role of the bureaucrat to consider how his/her policy will affect other policy areas

Роль государственного служащего - рассмотрение того, как его/ее политическое решение будет влиять на другие направления политики

38. When a bureaucrat makes a decision he/she must think how this could look on the front of the national newspaper. He/She must act in the best interests of the Minister

Когда государственный служащий принимает решение, он/она должен(-а) подумать, как это будет выглядеть на первых полосах национальной газеты. Он/она должен(-а) действовать в интересах министра

39. Bureaucrats should be free to provide Ministers with 'frank and fearless' advice

Государственные служащие должны не бояться давать министрам «откровенные и бесстрашные» советы

40. It is the responsibility of the bureaucrat to act as a counterweight to partisan arguments

Это ответственность государственного служащего – действовать в качестве противовеса политически ангажированным аргументам

41. The motivations of public and private sector workers are completely different. This makes it difficult to integrate private sector practices within the public sector

Мотивы работников государственного и частного сектора совершенно различны. Это и усложняет процесс внедрения методов работы из частного в государственный

42. Bureaucrats need to be politically impartial but they should act in the best interests of their department

Государственные служащие должны быть политически беспристрастными, но

также они должны действовать в наилучших интересах своего ведомства

43. When a conflict of interests arises between the wishes of the politicians and a bureaucrats own technical beliefs about administrative reform, bureaucrats automatically and unquestionably follow the wishes of the political level

Когда возникает конфликт интересов между желаниями политиков и убеждениями государственных служащих, государственные служащие автоматически и беспрекословно следуют желаниям политического уровня

44. A bureaucrat's work requires judgment based on practical wisdom because the rule book does not have all the answers

Работа государственного служащего требует суждения, основанного на практической мудрости, потому что правила не имеют ответы на все вопросы

45. Negotiation and persuasion skills are one of the most important skills of a bureaucrat

Умение вести переговоры и убеждать являются одними из самых важных навыков государственного служащего

46. A bureaucrat knows the art of weighing the merits of competing stories or policy positions

Государственный служащий владеет искусством анализа преимуществ и недостатков противоборствующих позиций в выработке решений

47. Resources should be allocated according to the wishes of the politicians, regardless of my personal opinions

Ресурсы должны быть распределены в соответствии с пожеланиями политиков, независимо от моего личного мнения

48. Bureaucrats recommend or actively advocate in favour of policy positions that they perceive represent the needs and interests of citizens

Государственные служащие рекомендуют или активно выступают в пользу тех решений, которые, как им кажется, отвечают потребностям и интересам граждан

Table A2 Core elements of NPM, NPG and Craft; Source Osborne, 2010

Table 1: Core elements of the NPG in contrast to PA and NPM

Paradigm/key elements	Theoretical roots	Nature of the state	Focus	Emphasis	Resource allocation mechanism	Nature of the service system	Value base
Public Administration	Political science and public policy	Unitary	The political system	Policy creation and implementation	Hierarchy	Closed	Public sector ethos
New Public Management	Rational/public choice theory and management studies	Regulatory	The organization	Management of organizational resources and performance	The market and classical or neo-classical contracts	Open rational	Efficiency of competition and the market place
New Public Governance	Institutional and network theory	Plural and pluralist	The organization in its environment	Negotiation of values, meanings and relationships	Networks and relational contracts	Open closed	Dispersed and contested

Source: Osborne 2010

Annex A3: Core elements of NPM, NPG and Craft Source: Bryson et al 2014:446

Table 1 Comparing Perspectives: Traditional Public Administration, New Public Management, and the Emerging Approach to Public Administration

Dimension	Traditional Public Administration	New Public Management	Emerging Approach to Public Administration (e.g., Denhardt and Denhardt's [2011] New Public Service)
Broad Environmental and Intellectual Context			
Material and Ideological conditions	Industrialization, urbanization, rise of modern corporation, specialization, faith in science, belief in progress, concern over major market failures, experience with the Great Depression and World War II, high trust in government	Concern with government failures, distrust of big government, belief in the efficacy and efficiency of markets and rationality, devolution and devolution	Concern with market, government, nonprofit and civic failures; concern with so-called wicked problems; deepening inequality; hollowed or thinned state; "downsized" citizenship; networked and collaborative governance; advanced information and communication technologies
Primary theoretical and epistemological foundations	Political theory, scientific management, naive social science, pragmatism	Economic theory, sophisticated positivist social science	Democratic theory, public and nonprofit management theory, plus diverse approaches to knowing
Prevailing view of rationality and model of human behavior	Synoptic rationality, "administrative man"	Technical and economic rationality, "economic man," self-interested decision makers	Formal rationality, multiple tests of rationality (political, administrative, economic, legal, ethical), belief in public spiritedness beyond narrow self-interest, "reasonable person" open to influence through dialogue and deliberation
The Public Sphere or Realm			
Definition of the common good, public value, the public interest	Determined by elected officials or technical experts	Determined by elected officials or by aggregating individual preferences supported by evidence of consumer choice	What is public is seen as going far beyond government, although government has a special role as a guarantor of public values; common good determined by broadly inclusive dialogue and deliberation informed by evidence and democratic and constitutional values
Role of politics	Elect governors, who determine policy objectives	Elect governors, who determine policy objectives; empowered managers; administrative politics around the use of specific tools	"Public work," including determining policy objectives via dialogue and deliberation; democracy as "a way of life"
Role of citizenship	Voter, client, constituent	Customer	Citizens seen as problem-solvers and co-creators actively engaged in creating what is valued by the public and is good for the public
Government and Public Administration			
Role of government agencies	Rowing, seen as designing and implementing policies and programs in response to politically defined objectives	Steering, seen as determining objectives and catalyzing service delivery through tool choice and reliance if possible on markets, businesses, and nonprofit organizations	Government acts as convener, catalyst, collaborator; sometimes steering, sometimes rowing, sometimes partnering, sometimes staying out of the way
Key objectives	Politically provided goals; implementation managed by public servants; monitoring done through bureaucratic and elected officials' oversight	Politically provided goals; managers manage inputs and outputs in a way that ensures economy and responsiveness to consumers	Create public value in such a way that what the public most cares about is addressed effectively and what is good for the public is put in place
Key values	Efficiency	Efficiency and effectiveness	Efficiency, effectiveness, and the full range of democratic and constitutional values
Mechanisms for achieving policy objectives	Administer programs through centralized, hierarchically organized public agencies or self-regulating professions	Create mechanisms and incentive structures to achieve policy objectives especially through use of markets	Selection from a menu of alternative delivery mechanisms based on pragmatic criteria; this often means helping build cross-sector collaborations and engaging citizens to achieve agreed objectives
Role of public manager	Ensures that rules and appropriate procedures are followed; responsive to elected officials, constituents, and clients; limited discretion allowed to administrative officials	Helps define and meet agreed upon performance objectives; responsive to elected officials and customers; wide discretion allowed	Plays an active role in helping create and guide networks of deliberation and delivery and help maintain and enhance the overall effectiveness, accountability, and capacity of the system; responsive to elected officials, citizens, and an array of other stakeholders; discretion is needed but is constrained by law, democratic and constitutional values, and a broad approach to accountability
Approach to accountability	Hierarchical, in which administrators are accountable to democratically elected officials	Market driven, in which aggregated self-interests result in outcomes desired by broad groups of citizens seen as customers	Multifaceted, as public servants must attend to law, community values, political norms, professional standards, and citizen interests
Contribution to the democratic process	Delivers politically determined objectives and accountability; competition between elected leaders provides overarching accountability; public sector has a monopoly on public service ethos	Delivers politically determined objectives; managers determine the means; skepticism regarding public service ethos; favors customer service	Delivers dialogue and catalyzes and responds to active citizenship in pursuit of what the public values and what is good for the public; no one sector has a monopoly on public service ethos; maintaining relationships based on shared public values is essential

Sources: Adapted principally from Denhardt and Denhardt (2011, 28–29), with further adaptations from Stoker (2006, 44); Kelly, Mulgan, and Muers (2002); and Boyte (2011).

References

- Bissessar, A. (2009) 'Public Administration: Challenges Facing Senior Public Servants in a plural society', *Public Personnel Management*, Vol.38 pp1-15
- Bryson, J., Crosby, B. and Bloomberg, L. (2014) *Public Value Governance: Moving Beyond Traditional Public Administration and the New Public Management* *Public Administration Review* 74 (4)
- Callahan, K. and Olshfski, D. (2006) 'War Narratives: Framing Our Understanding of the War on Terror', *Public Administration Review*, Vol.66 No.4 pp554-568
- Davis-Cross (2013) "Rethinking Epistemic Communities Twenty Years Later." *Review of International Studies*, 39(1): 137-160.
- Denhardt, J. V. and R. B. Denhardt (2011). *The New Public Service: Serving, Not Steering*. 3rd Edition. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe.;
- Meier, K. J., O'Toole, L. J. (2006) *Bureaucracy in a democratic state: A governance perspective*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press
- Niskanen, W. (1971) *Bureaucracy and representative Government*, Chicago: Aldine-Atherton
- Osborne, Stephen P. (2010) 'Introduction. The (New) Public Governance: a Suitable Case for Treatment', in Osborne, S. (Ed.) *The New Public Governance: Emerging Perspectives on the Theory and Practice of Public Governance*. London and New York: Routledge and Taylor and Francis: 1-16.
- Radaelli, C.M. (2005) 'Diffusion without convergence: How political context shapes the adoption of regulatory impact assessment' *Journal of European Public Policy*, 12(5) October: 924-943
- Rhodes, R.A.W. (2016) *Recovering the Craft of public Administration* *Public Administration Review* 76(4)

Robinson, M. (2015) From Old Public Administration to the New Public Service Implications for Public Sector Reform in Developing Countries. UNDP Global Centre for Public Service Excellence: http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/capacity-development/English/Singapore%20Centre/PS-Reform_Paper.pdf

Rosenbloom, David H., and McCurdy, Howard E. (Editors). Revisiting Waldo's Administrative State: Constancy and Change in Public Administration. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.