

Public Sector Reform for Dynamic Governance: Evidence from Selected Regional bureaus of Oromia Regional State, Ethiopia

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Abstract

The general objective of this study was to assess the role of the public sector reform programs in creating dynamic governance in bureau-level sectors of Oromia Regional State. In this survey study, sectors at the regional administration-level were selected using purposive sampling technique. About 170 civil servants and middle level public managers were selected from the sectors using simple random sampling technique. The analysis of the study was descriptive that combined both qualitative and quantitative data. The study shows a clear dominance of roles that are in line both with a Weberian self-understanding and a managerial (NPM) self-understanding indicating a certain hybridization of these two reform paradigms called Neo-Weberian model. The study identified that public managers and civil servants in the region perceive low level of autonomy (except in policy implementation) in power of promoting, hiring and firing of employees, restructuring organization, and developing and selecting policy options. This study also indicated poor implementation of the managerial reform programs in the regional state. Considering the human resource capacities of civil service organizations of the regional state, public sector reforms can bring incremental benefit and evolutionary transformation instead of dramatic and radical change for foreseeable future to come, in which it will be difficult to expect the dynamic governance to be a reality. Finally this paper recommends due attention for the implementation of Balanced Scorecard in the public sectors.

Key words: Dynamic Governance, Neo-Weberian model, New Public Management, Reform, Oromia

1. Introduction

One of the very important questions raised by the public of any nation is how the government becomes effective. This is because the malfunction of a government is often disastrous. Wrong policies and poor implementation, ethical problems, and failure of governments are the challenges that are saddling many countries. In all these cases, it is the public whose living is affected and becomes victim. For Peters (2001), looking for novel mechanism to make governments effective, efficient and better political organization is critical issue. The effectiveness of the government can be analyzed from the perspective of policy alternatives that the governments can propose. Governments lay down policies in a number of fields such as finance and economy, education and health, culture, and social security. In view of the fact that

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actual policy alternatives deviate from the best practice, it is possible to explain the success and failure of governments (Neo and Chen, 2007).

Governments cannot address all the needs of the public simultaneously due to shortage of resources. Hence, they are forced to set priorities to address problems in a prudent order, and maintain performance over time. In addition, the suitable policies and priorities of governments also change along the changes in governments. Peters (2001) states that public sector managers and political leaders have responsibilities of reforming and enhancing the internal performance of their institutions.

New prospects also face as the world outside the nation transforms, adjacent countries develop or turn down, global legal arrangements and organizations realign, etc. These external alterations force the proper government policy choices to adjust, shift of priorities, and increase in standards of results. These intricacies show that good quality government is not a static notion, and its achievement does not depend on any individual decision. Rather, its fundamental challenges are dynamic, intersect several verdicts, require continuous learning, and hinge on successful and swift execution (Neo and Chen, 2007).

In Ethiopia, as a result of the 1991 government change, much was expected from the new government by the public with regard to the public sector transformation since the period was an important decisive moment for addressing deep rooted public sector related problems through reforming the age-old bureaucracy of the country (Amanta, 2020; Miruts & Daba, 2016; Terefe, 2016). Evidently the EPRDF-led government of Ethiopia rapidly initiated different civil service institutional changes consistent with the expectations of the public.

Hence, the Ethiopian public sector has also undergone a series of reforms in recent years with the aim of providing the citizens with the services they require in a rapidly changing world. The pressure for reform has been driven by both global and domestic developments. According to Tadesse (2019) and Getachew (2006), the Ethiopian government, based on the suggestion of the World Bank, has launched various public administration reforms starting from the early 1990s for transformation of government services. Moreover, such broad public sector reform programs (Business Process Reengineering (BPR), Balanced Scorecard (BSC), Change Army, Kaizen, and Citizen Charter) which were introduced in 2001 are expected to create dynamic governance which results in positive cultural change and enhances organizational capabilities.

The reforms adopted were mainly an NPM-inspired change initiatives, such as district level decentralization, Business Process Re-engineering, Balanced Scorecard, and the Citizens' Charter, all of which have since been under process. However, application of such change initiatives was enormously delayed by many problems and challenges that reduced their substantive contributions greatly. For instance, various previous studies (Beyene, 2009; Fida, 2016; Kacho et al., 2016; World Bank, 2013; PSCO, 2015; Wakgari, 2016; PSCO, 2013) indicated that bureaucrats and public sector administrators have low capacity and attitudinal problems towards the reform programs. In addition, lack of continued leadership commitment, and insufficient incentives were also the main challenges to the effective execution of the change initiatives in the country in general and in Oromia region in particular. Kacho et al., 2016 and Wakgari, 2016 also identified absence of meritocracy and professionalism and incidence of political bias and partiality in the Ethiopian bureaucracy and these critically constrained effective execution of the public sector reforms in Oromia region.

Oromia regional state is implementing reform initiatives in almost all public institutions. Though the Regional State has been implementing different reform programs since 1996, to bring radical, breakthrough and dramatic improvements in the performances of public

institutions, studies indicated that there was a gap in what public institutions of the region have been able to offer and what people of the region was expecting. In this regard Public Opinion Survey carried out by Public Service College of Oromia in 2013 and 2015, also indicated that there was dissatisfaction of the public on government services as a result of lack of responsiveness, poor work commitment and inadequate knowledge of employees and leaders on reform programs and their insufficient attention for reform efforts.

Even though the contribution of public sector reforms is imperative in realizing dynamism in public sector, the challenges in implementation of these initiatives were not assessed at the sectoral bureaus of the region in the past few years as these bureaus are responsible for providing technical support for the lower tiers of the government. Therefore, this study contributes towards filling these gaps by analyzing the role the reform programs play in creating dynamic governance in bureau-level sectors of Oromia regional state. Based on this, the study addressed the following basic questions: a) how do public employees and public sector managers perceive their role? b) What is the degree of autonomy of public sector employees and managers in the regional state? c) To what extent are the reform instruments used in the organizations of the regional state? And d) How is performance measured in the organizations?

2. Theoretical Review

2.1. Public Sector Reform

A strong state is critical to advance economic transformation, social, cultural and economic development, to ensure national unity, peace and security for all. A strong public administration is also an essential tool to ensure the state capability to pursue and implement its policies. A commendable, well-educated and trained public service is a powerful tool for enhancing economic development and building a modernized public sector. It also contributes immensely to the achievement of industrialized society (Bourgon, 2007).

With the emergence of the contemporary governments, the civil service in less developed nations grew in to designing and executing public policies. According to Ayee (2001), the public service is frequently related with the valuable and well-organized management of development policies and programmes. This association also reveals that the public sector is considered as the major tool by which development programs and strategies are implemented in developing nations (Esman, 1988 cited in Ayee, 2001). Nowadays, there is a strong consent in states, public administrators, scholars, and donors on the need for public sector reform in developing countries. Shepherd (2003) states that merit system in selection of civil servants and protection of the civil service from the political interference is well practiced in the advanced countries as compared to the less developed nations.

The basic motive for engagement with civil service reforms emanated from the insight that the structure of public administration was not capable to deliver services properly to the public. The general objective of public sector change initiative is also to improve the quality of civil services provided to the public and to increase the capacity to perform essential government functions. Many reform initiatives in the field of public service were introduced due to sluggish provision of services and absence of transparency and accountability in public service sectors. Particularly, in many developing nations including Ethiopia, the public have required inexpensive, quicker and better public services and further operative and competent government (Tadesse, 2019).

According to Meier et.al., (2019), the main governance failure is not administrative, it is rather political and the primary phase to improved governance is to acknowledge the basic

political reasons. Hence, globally administrative reforms aimed to advance the quality of governance. Politicians and senior public sector managers also do not have professional depth and often fail to provide any chain of continuity in government over the longer term. This also resulted in poor and inefficient provision of public services, and, often, overwhelmed by corruption and rent-seeking. It is also thought by many politicians and scholars that reforming the public sector of less developed nations in line with the model presented by the developed nations could be vital to building strong and effective governments. There is also a need to depoliticize the civil service sector in these developing countries. According to Peters (2001), the wave of reform that has swept through the public sector touched majority of the governments of the world.

As a result, many nations of the developing world have tried to implement and included into their constitutions and laws consistent with the advanced nations often with the help of the funding agencies. The function of the public sector as a mechanism in a national socio-economic and political development is unquestionable. However, in most developing countries, the public service is not capable of coping with the common alterations in ideology, politics and economy as well as governance modernizations. The New Public Management model intended to create a business-like public sector by introducing different strategies such as outsourcing government functions to the private sector, by restructuring the over-staffed civil service so that it can treat citizens as customers (Meier et.al., 2019).

Politt and Bouckaert (2011) discuss that public administration reform is generally considered as a way to an end, not a goal in itself. Reform in public sector, according to the authors, is taken as a means to various objectives such as efficiency of government operations, effectiveness of public policies, and quality of public services. In addition, administrative reforms are also meant to strengthen the control of politicians over the bureaucracy, empowering public officials, and increasing the accountability of the government to the public.

According to Bourgon (2007), the past many years show a sufficient time of testing the public service reforms. Various nations of the world, developed and developing, have embarked on wide-ranging reforms aimed at improving government efficiency, effectiveness, productivity, transparency and responsiveness. The mission to accomplish these objectives has been practiced through privatization, deregulation, commercialization, customer focused and decentralization. Currently when we look back, it is possible to identify the encouraging initiatives that demonstrate long-lasting and to get rid of the unsuccessful schemes that had a harmful effect on the ethos of the public service.

As a result, public sector reforms are found to be an essential driving force of Ethiopia's modernization and poverty reduction strategy and the approach by which the country manages its political, economic and social conditions is believed to be transformed. According to Paulos (2001), reorganization of government sector, pay related issues for civil servants, position classification, human resource directives and manuals, training for civil servants, efficiency, effectiveness and accountability were given high attention by the Ethiopian government during the first phase of reform. Hence, the public sector reform initiatives Ethiopia is undertaking is meant to make certain that outdated structures, work systems, processes and practices of governance experience essential changes that give power to and advance the quality of life of the citizens.

According to Tadesse (2019), public sector reform initiatives can occur in the process of a top-down style or a bottom to top model. Some practitioners and academics favor the former while others favor the later one. Restructuring central governments, as in certain states such as

Korea, is mainly a problem of political will and management capability to successfully practice convincing and manipulative types of power instead of forced and corrupting. The supporters of the bottom to top approach also argue that all-encompassing change initiatives disturb accustomed practices and reforms when they focus on a small number of core functions, changing politically significant patronage chances to fewer dynamic agencies. In Ethiopia, the public sector reform initiatives appear to take more of a top to bottom style rather than reforms from below because the central government has introduced nationwide change initiatives as a tool of public sector transformation towards providing essential services for citizens in an effective and efficient way.

2.2. New Public Management

Public sector reform was introduced into the civil service institutions since the early days of the 1980s as an innovative insight of the favorable organizational arrangement and techniques of institutional management. Hence, the civil service modernization agenda was initiated with the newly adopted New Public Management (NPM) Model. NPM is the relocate of business principles and management techniques from the private into the public sector, symbiotic with and based on a neo-liberal understanding of state and economy (Drechsler, 2005).

The NPM model was also preferred as an alternative to the traditionally hierarchical and authoritative public administration (Vidaeak, 2000 cited Hammerschmid (2013). Peters (2001) in Drechsler (2005) states that NPM reforms signify suppositions that one way of managing both in the public or the private sector is best and the only suitable approach. The NPM is also considered as a new paradigm shift to provide high quality services, increasing managerial autonomy, evaluating and prizing both the performance of an organization and individual public servant, capacitating public managers in terms of human resource, financial and physical asset as well as technological support to achieve the expected outcome through team-working (Polidano and Ewalt, 2001 cited in Hammerschmid (2013).

According to Drechsler (2005), Weberian model assumes public administration which lays down different offices which are filled with employees who are selected by merit principles (impersonality), as most efficient system. In addition, hierarchy, the division of labor, exclusive employment, career advancement, the written form, and legality are also features that are reflected in Weberian model of public administration. Merit-based selection of employees is also the essential of these features because there is a strong association between merit selection and a low corruption rate.

The NPM movement is also derived from management theories whose basic assumption is mutual trust. According to these theories, subordinate units and superior bodies have common interests and the only way to increase the efficiency of public bodies is to give operating managers more discretion and leeway in deciding how to use allocated resources. The best way to improve organizations is supposedly to allow more autonomy and flexibility. Thus, there is an element of decentralization and the slogan is “let the managers manage”.

NPM holds a broad range of methods, each model drawing on numerous instruments transported to the public sector from the private sector (Hope, 2012 cited in Ghrmay, 2020). NPM is criticized for its centralization via decentralization (Mongkol, 2011 cited in Ghrmay, 2020). This occurs when additional power is assumed by public administrators to properly discharge their plans, it may lead to an absorption of authority, as opposed to the original claim of devolution in decision-making. NPM is also criticized for using private sector management methods to the public sector. Since both sectors occur in dissimilar settings, it is not easy to

directly transplant the management techniques that have confirmed to be effective in the private sector into the dissimilar circumstances in the government sector. Furthermore, though NPM improves transparency in the government, it may cause the occurrence of corruption. NPM has also become questioned for its outcomes, as observed in advanced nations. Hence, adopting NPM in the situations of emerging and transition economies may result in more altitudes of complexities (Ghrmay, 2020).

2.3. Dynamic Governance

Governance links governments and the public and enables different public policies and programs to be prepared, executed and appraised. It is also about the rules, institutions and networks that determine how a country or an organization operates. According to Neo and Geraldine (2007), governance becomes dynamic when previous policy choices can be adjusted to present developments in an uncertain and rapid changing situation so that policies, programs and institutions remain related and successful in achieving the long-standing desired goals of a nation. It is more than making a one-time change or recovering from a setback. It is about ongoing sustained change for long-term survival and prosperity. Public governance is about providing high quality services, achieving value for money, public value.

In this uncertain and changing world, existing successes are no guarantee for upcoming continued existence. That is to say, stagnant governance and competence could ultimately lead to decay and slow growth even if the early selected set of principles, policies, strategies and practices are found appropriate. Governments cannot be continuously effective and relevant unless they build strong institutional capacity (Neo and Geraldine, 2007). They need to have sufficient institutional capacity for learning, innovation and change in line with the constantly changing world which poses new challenges upon them. Even careful planning and programming cannot be enough in today's unstable and changeable environment.

But whether government institutions can be dynamic or not is debatable. Usually government institutions are regarded as sluggish and stodgy organizations that implement obsolete rules and regulations, and highly adhere to procedures, rather than being entrepreneurial and dynamic institutions. They are also considered by many as organizations which do not care for human resources and businesses. According to Bourgon (2007), the public service was traditionally governed by accurately set rules and responsible to elected officials. The power structure in the government bureaucracy is vertical and hierarchical and expected to put into effect minimum discretion in implementing its activities.

Today's public service also owes much to the theories of public administration that existed at the early 20th century which gave emphasis for rule of law, dedication to serving the public good, and serving the public trust by satisfying the expectation that civil servants will demonstrate reliability, decency and neutrality. This helped them to create somewhat autonomous institutions and created partnership between the public and private sectors which resulted in improvement in execution of policies, programs and projects, and service delivery (Haque, 2002; Peters, 2001).

Neo and Geraldine (2007) also explain the need to develop a model of institutional change if we want to create a dynamic theory of change. The major underlying principle behind reforms in governance is economic development, efficiency, economy, and competitiveness (Haque, 2002). Neo and Geraldine (2007) also opine that dynamism in governance requires continuous learning to understand the future developments that may affect a society. Good governance that keeps on being applicable and remains effective must therefore be dynamic. Hence, dynamism in governance is vital for continued economic and social development in an uncertain and rapid

changing environment, and in an increasingly demanding and sophisticated society where citizens are more educated and more exposed to globalization.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Approach

In this study, descriptive research type based on survey method was used. Both quantitative and qualitative research approaches were also employed in the study. In addition, both primary and secondary data sources were utilized. Primary data were collected using questionnaires, and interviews. The secondary data were collected from journals, reports, and previous studies. In addition, unpublished documents from Oromia Public Service and Human Resource Development bureau and sectors related to public sector reforms, human resource management were used as sources of secondary data.

3.2 Sampling Techniques

In this study, sectors at the Oromia regional state administration-level (civil service and good governance bureau, investment commission, health bureau, social affairs agency, and revenue authority) were selected using purposive sampling technique. The civil servants and middle level public sector managers were also selected from these sectors using simple random sampling technique for their representativeness. To determine the sample size (n) of the respondents who respond to the questionnaire, the following Kothari (2004) formula was applied.

$$n = \frac{z^2 \cdot p \cdot q \cdot N}{e^2 (N-1) + Z^2 \cdot p \cdot q}$$

Where, p = stands for sample proportion, $q = 1 - p$; z = stands for the value of the standard variance at a given confidence level. In this case at 95% confidence interval, 1.96 was taken as the value of z ; e = stands for acceptable error (the precision) in which 8% (0.08) was taken (Kothari, 2004). N = stands for total number of bureau-level civil servants and public sector managers in the regional state which were 32724 and n = stands for size of sample. By taking the value of $p = 0.5$ using the most conservative sample size, in which case ' n ' was the maximum and the sample yields the desired precision (ibid). By substituting these values in the above formula, it gives:

$$n = (1.96)^2 * 0.5 * 0.5 * 32724 / (0.08)^2 (32724-1) + (1.96)^2 * 0.5 * 0.5 = 151$$

For convenience, the researcher decided to make the sample size 200. In addition, seven senior experts and managers from the selected sectors were interviewed. Out of the distributed 200 questionnaires, 170 of them were filled and returned. Hence, the response rate is 85%.

3.3 Data Sources and Data Collection Method

The data collection involved methodological triangulation and data triangulation or a combination of methods and data sources. Survey questionnaires, in-depth interviews, personal observations and secondary document analysis were employed in order to get sufficient information about the reform programs, and dynamic governance in the bureau-level sectors of regional state. The analysis of the study was descriptive that combined both qualitative and quantitative data. The quantitative data were also used to analyze by using descriptive statistics. Statistical package for social scientists (SPSS) was also used to generate percentages, tables and graphs to critically assess and explore the implementation of the reform programs and dynamic

governance. The qualitative data were coded and transcribed into texts and analyzed by content analysis. Besides, results obtained from both qualitative and quantitative data were triangulated.

4. Discussion and Results

4.1 Values and Attitudes of Public Sector Executives

The following section will present data on how public sector managers and civil servants in Oromia perceive their role as executives, their motivation and social values and preferences.

4.1.1 Role

Public sector executives are expected to play different roles to realize and contribute to the effectiveness of their respective organizations. As shown on table 1 below all the listed roles of the public sector managers and employees are important as their mean importance is greater than 2.5 out of five point scale.

Table 1: Perception of respondents about their role as public sector executive

Role	N	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Medium	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Rank
Ensuring implementation of rules & laws	170	6.5%	7.6%	22.4%	32.4%	31.2%	3.74	2
Ensuring integrated operation of gov't offices	170	4.7%	11.8%	28.8%	37.6%	17.1%	3.51	7
Achieving results	170	4.1%	10.6%	18.8%	41.8%	24.7%	3.72	3
Ensuring public interest be heard	170	8.8%	8.8%	21.8%	30.0%	30.6%	3.65	4
Formulating new policy agenda	170	13.5%	17.6%	23.5%	27.6%	17.6%	3.18	8
Contributing professional knowledge	170	7.6%	6.5%	20.6%	33.5%	31.8%	3.75	1
Searching joint solution for public problem	170	11.8%	7.6%	21.2%	32.4%	27.1%	3.55	6
Ensuring efficient use of resources	170	11.2%	6.5%	23.5%	32.4%	26.5%	3.56	5

Source: Survey of 2016

When asked about their self-understanding as public sector executives, a clear majority of the respondents strongly confirms providing expertise and technical knowledge (65.3%), ensuring independent execution of policies and laws (63.%) and achieving results (66.5%). In addition, providing a voice for societal interests (51.8%), ensuring an efficient use of resources (58.9%) and finding joint solutions to solve problems of public concern (59.5) are also considered central issues for their role.

Other aspects such as ensuring integrated operation of government offices (cooperation and collaboration) and formulating new policy agenda (with slightly lower mean (3.51 and 3.18 respectively), are also well anchored but to a much lesser degree. Interviewees also stated that participation of employees in different activities is weak in public organizations of the regional state. "Our role is accomplishing what is being formulated," a response of an interviewee.

With regard to the Oromia regional state's public sector civil servants and managers emerging from these answers, we find a clear dominance of roles that are in line both with a Weberian self-understanding (e.g. giving expertise and technical knowledge, making sure unbiased

accomplishment of laws and directives) and a managerial self-understanding (e.g. achieving results, ensuring efficient use of resources) indicating a certain hybridization of these two reform paradigms which could be interpreted as a Neo-Weberian model by Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011 cited in Hammerschmid et. al. 2013).

In contrast, a more political self-understanding and roles in line with a more networked-governance reform model are reverberating to a lower degree. Interview participants also raised that joint solution searching and coordination among departments and sectors is found to be weak. For example, according to the interviewees, service level agreement (SLA) is not properly implemented in the sectors. This indicates that the post-NPM reforms which are inter-organizationally oriented (Christensen, 2012) are poorly implemented in the sectors of the region. Properly implementing such reforms is important as those post-NPM reforms are aimed to improve the horizontal coordination of public organizations and also to boost coordination between the state and non-state actors.

4.1.2. Management Autonomy

Management autonomy is an element influencing the transferability of management practices to the public sector. The less public sector managers and civil servants are autonomous in managing their organization, the less they can be made accountable for successes or failures. After the institutions are reformed, workers are required to make their own decisions because in such processes decision making is part of the work. Hence, empowerment is critical issue after the implementation of reform programs.

The results on Table 2 below show that, in general, the civil servants and public sector managers perceive a relatively high degree of autonomy in implementation of public policies as agreed and strongly agreed by nearly 70% of the respondents. Autonomy in allocating budget and outsourcing of services is also relatively higher since 36.4% and 32.4% of them believe that they have budget allocation autonomy and contracting out services respectively. In contrast, only a rather very low share of respondents agrees on having power of promoting, hiring and firing of employees, restructuring organization as needed, and developing and selecting policy options as part of their role as executives (vs. high share of disagreeing). The respondents perceive a rather low degree of autonomy in all of the variables mentioned except implementation of policies. According to the respondents, approaches to increase management autonomy are also rather uncommon.

Table 2: Degree of autonomy of public sector executives

Autonomy	N	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Medium	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Rank
Budget allocation	170	27.6%	18.8%	17.1%	18.8%	17.6%	2.80	2
Outsourcing services	170	24.7%	14.1%	28.8%	21.2%	11.2%	2.80	2
Promoting employees	170	30.0%	13.5%	25.3%	19.4%	11.8%	2.69	4
Power of hiring employees	170	32.9%	12.9%	24.1%	21.2%	8.8%	2.60	5
Firing employees	170	62.4%	15.3%	7.1%	10.6%	4.7%	1.80	8
Restructuring organization as needed	170	37.1%	17.1%	17.6%	17.1%	11.2%	2.48	6
Developing and selecting policy	170	48.8%	11.2%	15.9%	18.8%	5.3%	2.21	7
Implementation of policies	170	10.0%	8.8%	18.2%	45.3%	17.6%	3.52	1

Source: Survey of 2016

Interviewees also opined that empowering of employees is not up to their expectations. "Team leaders are expected to decide at their levels but they do not give decisions," said one interviewee. They also raised that decision at individual manager level is very minimal. "Budget for the sector is posted on the board but individual units/departments do not clearly know their budget" reported another participant of interview. This implies that employees and public sector managers in the regional state are not properly empowered even though the reformed organizations need autonomous and empowered managers and civil servants.

4.1.3. Change Management programs

A strong organizational base and supports are important in ensuring that public sector reforms are pursued (Hammerschmid et. al. 2013), and successful reform requires an expected, ongoing approach that takes into account different stakeholder and political perspectives. Effective public sector reforms enable continuous change, and create a good enabling environment that facilitates dynamism in the public sectors because institutional culture can support or hinder, facilitate or impede dynamism in policymaking and implementation (Neo and Chen, 2007).

With regard to the extent to which different reform tools are applied in public sector of the Oromia regional state, respondents were asked to express their opinion to what extent these instruments are used. The management tools used by majority of the respondents are Strategic Planning and Management (SPM) (90%), Balanced Scorecard (BSC) (72.3%), Business Process Reengineering (BPR) (63%), service points for customers (44.7%), citizen charter (48.2%), and code of conduct (46.4%).

Table 3: The extent to which the reform instruments are used in the organization

Change Management Tools	N	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Medium	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Rank
presence of SPM	170	4.7%	5.3%	11.2%	31.2%	47.6%	4.12	1
presence of customer satisfaction survey	170	17.1%	11.2%	25.3%	27.6%	18.8%	3.20	8
service points for customers	170	10.6%	9.4%	35.3%	31.2%	13.5%	3.28	3
presence of quality management systems	170	15.3%	20.6%	32.9%	25.9%	5.3%	2.85	11
presence of code of conduct	170	8.8%	15.3%	29.4%	38.2%	8.2%	3.22	6
Benchmarking	170	16.5%	25.9%	28.2%	22.9%	6.5%	2.77	13
presence of cost accounting system	170	13.5%	13.5%	38.2%	23.5%	11.2%	3.05	10
presence of BPR document	170	12.4%	9.4%	31.8%	31.2%	15.3%	3.28	3
presence of kaizen	170	58.2%	12.4%	11.8%	11.8%	5.9%	1.95	17
Presence of BSC	170	10.6%	17.1%	27.6%	21.2%	23.5%	3.30	2
presence of citizens charter	170	11.2%	19.4%	21.2%	29.4%	18.8%	3.25	5
decentralization of financial decisions	170	24.7%	17.6%	24.7%	23.5%	9.4%	2.75	14
decentralization of human resource decisions	170	22.9%	18.8%	23.5%	26.5%	8.2%	2.78	12
presence of change army	170	5.9%	22.4%	30.6%	27.6%	13.5%	3.21	7
presence of performance appraisal	170	14.1%	14.7%	28.2%	31.2%	11.8%	3.12	9
presence of performance related pay	170	44.1%	16.5%	21.8%	11.2%	6.5%	2.19	16
presence of risk management	170	31.8%	22.4%	22.4%	18.8%	4.7%	2.42	15

Source: Survey of 2016

Interestingly, public sector managers and civil servants in the overall regional state use majority of these management initiatives significantly though the degree of application varies from sector to sector. This clearly indicates the efforts made to implement managerial reforms in Oromia region public administration.

From this we can observe that the strategic plan and Balanced Scorecard are the most practiced management instruments in the public sector. Having strategic plans and Balanced Scorecards is good as a comprehensive approach to public administration reform needs a strong strategic underpinning. Change army, and customer satisfaction survey and performance appraisal are also widely implemented as their mean importance is greater than 3.20 out of five point scale.

It can also be inferred from the data that the intensity with which large-scale public administration reforms have been undertaken is high and has actually varied considerably during the past many years. Achievements as a result of BPR implementation as identified by Oromia bureau of Public Service and Human Resource Development are establishing process-based organizations, minimizing handoffs, one stop shopping service, and more attention for value-adding activities rather than routine activities in public sectors. Relationship with customers and stakeholders has also improved.

According to Oromia Public Service and Human Resource Development (OPSHRD) (2008) report, problems related with BPR implementation are listed as follows: BPR implementation level of regional sectors has not been identified; monitoring and evaluation at different levels of the sectors is not based on the unique nature of the sectors; the desired change of values and beliefs has not been realized by public managers and employees; even though continuous trainings were offered for the employees and managers, still there is a problem of awareness; low level of leadership commitment in many offices; failure to improve service delivery level at all levels as expected; failure to solve problems of good governance and rent seeking in the sectors.

According to the report and interview results, BSC implementation has also faced many challenges out of which failure to apply uniform framework to execute strategies on the part of the sectors, problem of identifying sectors based on their capacity of strategy execution and providing support based on their status, poor leadership support, failure to plan, manage, and report by BSC framework on the part of the managers due to low level of commitment and knowledge of BSC, lack of knowledge and resistance of the employees about BSC, and failure to apply it for planning and reporting are the major ones.

Dynamic governance requires thinking across different sectors to draw lessons from other sectors (Neo and Chen, 2007) so that fresh ideas and concepts could be introduced into public organizations. Majority of the respondents also reported that benchmarking and performance related pay are the least practiced in their respective organizations as reported by 42.4% and 70.6% of them. This could negatively affect the public administration of the regional state.

An interviewee responded that "reform has not brought change, only mechanical changes are observed. The human side is not properly treated". In addition, information obtained from interview reveal that public sectors in the region do not regularly measure results based on the BSC framework and hence performance is not properly measured and is not linked to reward. There is also no performance related pay because of failure to implement BSC in a desired manner. The report and the interview results also show that change army in the region are not properly implemented and have not brought the intended results.

Hence, it is possible to deduce that even though many reform programs are introduced in the public sectors of the regional state, their implementation status is poor. In general, the expected change in public sectors has not been achieved as expected. Measures were also not taken on the sectors identified based on their maturity level and this adversely affected the effectiveness of BPR. This also indicates that much remains to be done to create strong organizational culture and dynamic governance. Hence, strong organizational capabilities are needed to consider thoroughly major policy issues and take effective action.

According to Drechsler (2005), NPM is the transfer of principles and techniques of private management to the public sector, symbiotic with and based on a neo-liberal understanding of state and economy. This could be the reason for poor implementation of such NPM-inspired reforms as they may not fit to the context of developmental state ideology. Hence, contextualizing such reforms to developmental state is important.

In addition, matching the statuses of civil service organizations in the regional state to implement all the above reform programs indicates that the public administration reforms instruments/tools can be considered to bring evolutionary changes and such reforms can bring incremental benefit and evolutionary transformation instead of dramatic and radical change for foreseeable future to come, in which it will be difficult to expect the dynamic governance to be a reality.

4.1.4 Organizational Goals

If the objectives are perceived to be vague and activities are not measureable and easy to observe, it cannot be properly measured. For an effective performance management a rather limited number of goals which are clearly stated and communicated to staff as well as activities and results to be observed and monitored are important enabling factors (Kusek and Rist, 2004). When asked about the characteristics related with organizational goals in work context of their organizations, 71.8% of the Oromia regional state public sector managers and civil servants agreed and strongly agreed about the clarity of goals. About 61.2% of the respondents also explain that the objectives are well communicated and made clear for employees while only 15.9% of them have doubts about the clear communication of goals within their organization. However, 67.7% of them believe that the objectives are numerous. They feel that their organizations have high number of goals. Discussions about aim ambiguity show that performance management is best realized when goals are limited, clearly set and communicated, and activities are easily observed and monitored.

We can understand that even though the objectives are clearly stated and communicated to staff, having many objectives may negatively affect the performance of the objectives. This indicates potential difficulties in applying performance management logic. Similarly, a significant number (57.6%) of employees and public sector managers reported that they mostly measure inputs and activities as compared to 43.5% who reported that they focus on outputs and outcomes in the measurement of performance of their organizations. It is clear from these data that most of the public sector organizations in the regional state focused on measuring short term activities and inputs rather than the long-term results such as outcome. Hence, attention should be given for evaluating long term results in performance management.

Whether political leaders use performance indicators to monitor work was also raised for the civil servants and middle level managers of the region. Accordingly, 48.3% of them disagreed as compared to 29.4% who agreed with the idea. It shows that top leaders of the organizations mostly do not use indicators in measuring performance of their organizations and this may lead to subjectivity of measurement.

Measuring performance and nominating high performers is very important for any organization. Recognizing achievement and celebrating success is an intrinsic part of every successful individuals and teams. With regard to aspects of rewarding of best performers and sanctioning those who failed to achieve their objectives, only 24.7% and 17.6% of them agreed with the presence of reward and sanctions as compared to those who disagreed i.e. 55.3% and 60.4% respectively.

Table 4: The practice of performance measurement in the organizations

Performance Measurement	N	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Medium	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Rank
Presence of clear goals		4.1%	11.8%	12.4%	32.4%	39.4%	3.91	1
Clarity of objectives for employees		10.6%	5.9%	22.4%	28.8%	32.4%	3.66	3
Number of objectives		4.7%	12.4%	15.3%	41.8%	25.9%	3.72	2
measuring activities is easy		16.5%	10.0%	30.6%	29.4%	13.5%	3.14	5
mostly we measure inputs and activities		11.2%	12.4%	28.8%	32.9%	14.7%	3.28	4
mostly we measure outputs and outcomes		14.7%	13.5%	28.2%	34.1%	9.4%	3.10	6
we are rewarded for achieving our goals		38.2%	17.1%	20.0%	17.6%	7.1%	2.38	8
we face clear sanctions for not achieving our goals		42.4%	18.2%	21.8%	12.9%	4.7%	2.19	9
political leaders monitor work by using indicators		31.2%	17.1%	22.4%	24.1%	5.3%	2.55	7

Source: Survey of 2016

It was also raised during interview and discussed in the report that in some organizations results are not properly measured due to ambiguity of goals, and false results are reported. Strategic results are not clearly identified to know to what extent the public is benefited. Due to failure of properly implementing BSC, it became difficult to differentiate best performing organizations from low performing ones, and supporting, rewarding and sanctioning are impossible.

Other problems associated with BSC implementation are failure to execute BSC in an organized manner, poor information management, focusing on short-term results, activities and inputs rather than long term-results such as outcomes and impacts, problems of aligning strategy with the day-to-day activities in many organizations of the regional state, poor leadership engagement in strategy execution due to low commitment and knowledge, and absence of strong regular monitoring and evaluation system. Hence, efforts need to be made for measuring long term results such as outcomes and impacts, and achievement of results should be linked with the rewards. There also need to reward successful performers and at the same time, those who fail to achieve the results need to be accountable.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

This research raised different issues by analyzing public sector executives' assessment of recent reforms and thereby determining to what extent Oromia public administration has experienced a turn away from the traditional Weberian model of public administration towards NPM or post-NPM ideas. Public sector reforms were implemented with the general intention of deepening of the professionalization of the public services, and hence to create a dynamic governance in the public sector.

The study shows a clear dominance of roles that are in line both with a Weberian self-understanding and a managerial self-understanding indicating a certain hybridization of these

two reform paradigms which are also called a Neo-Weberian model. In contrast, a more political self-understanding and roles in line with a more networked-governance reform model (post-NPM) are reflected to a lower extent by employees and middle level managers.

The study also confirmed that employees and public sector managers in the regional state are not properly empowered even though the reformed organizations need autonomous and empowered managers and civil servants. Regional bureau-level employees perceive relatively low degree of autonomy in many variables such as power of promoting, hiring and firing of employees, restructuring organizations, and developing and selecting policy options as part of their role as executives. As a comprehensive approach to public sector reform needs a strong strategic underpinning, implementing different reform programs is important for creating dynamic governance. However, results of the study show that such managerial reforms are not properly implemented. In addition, performance related pay, decentralization of financial and human resource decisions, and benchmarking which can highly contribute for the dynamism of the sectors are the least practiced management initiatives in the public sectors of the regional state. Appropriate measures were also not taken on the sectors based on their maturity level and this adversely affected the effectiveness of the reforms.

Therefore, the implementation status of the reform programs is at a lower level and the expected change in public sectors has not been achieved as expected. Poor implementation of NPM-inspired reforms in the developmental state context could also be challenging as they may not fit to such contexts since they are symbiotic with and based on a neo-liberal understanding of state and economy. So, strong organizational capabilities are needed to consider thoroughly major policy issues and take effective action.

5.1 Recommendations

It is better to improve the understanding of the employees on the NPM reform and post-NPM reform philosophies as opposed to the Weberian thinking to further deepen the implementation of the reform programs. Contextualizing the reforms to the developmental state ideology is also important. Focus should be given for post-NPM reforms (networked governance) as such reform initiatives seek to improve the horizontal coordination of public organizations and also to boost coordination between the state and non-state actors. This also contributes for dynamic governance.

The public sector managers and political leaders need to focus on empowering lower level units, departments and employees so that self-active and responsible employees, managers and units can be created. Since Balanced Scorecard (BSC) is a comprehensive reform tool and it focuses on measurement, its implementation should be given attention and the objectives set in the BSC should be revised and few Key Performance Indicators should be identified, managed and measured. This could also help to link performance and pay.

The performance measurement should focus on long-term results rather than inputs and activities and the performance should be linked with the rewards. The follow up and support given for the sectors should consider the unique feature and maturity level of the organizations. Human resource development based on human resource planning, need assessment and impact evaluation should be given due emphasis in the sectors of the region.

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