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The future of public organizations

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Abstract

Public administration as both an academic discipline and a field of practice is subject to a process of change on several accounts such as philosophy, structure and mechanism. In this context the public organizations as the most important component of public administration are considerably affected by this process. These organisations as appointed public service managers which are formalized by strict regulations have undergone a development process parallel to that of states. In the present conditions, what the concept of “*the future of public organizations*” refers is the new perspectives that these organizations will gain in terms of the structures and mechanisms they have. In this process of change, the effects of globalisation process which created a great pressure on public organizations for change must also be taken into account. The effects of this pressure on public organizations are experienced in different levels depending upon the development levels of different countries. In the literature on public organizations there are some general acceptances about the nature of the change. According to these acceptances, the partnership between public and private sectors will develop, the principles of private sector will be applied in public sector, e-government implementations will play an important role in the public sector operations and so on. So the aim of this study is to assess the projections on public organizations which are supposed to be realized in future. In the assessment the factors such as the organization structures, the concept of new public service and the international developments in administrative terms are used as the means of the examination and the future of public organizations is described.

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1. Introduction

Turning and shaping the future; means being prepared for unprecedented situations (Dixon, 2009:12) Public organizations may be an important source of data when a discussion initiate regarding the future developments or changes on administrative domain is an may be initiated. Organization refers to structures that connect with each other along with pre-determined purpose or purposes can be taken. In this context, an organization is a type of social grouping. It is referred a bureaucratic groupings in the contemporary sociology and public administration literature (Bozkurt&Ergun&Sezen, 1998: 189). Drawing from theoretical basis of futurology, this study focus main causes of changes in public organizations. It also attempts to certain assumptions about the future of organization. The futurology tries to discover what we can know, about the future of and how we can use this knowledge in shaping the future (Dırık, 2003: 710-711).

Organizations are classified in several ways including the public and private organizations on the basis of property (Öncü, 1976: 27). Public organization is a structure that has public goals and performs relevant operations. Specificity of the public organizations stems from its provision for meeting public needs and public order. As public

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organizations are affiliated with the state, they have a different statute and position compared to other organizations because of they appertain to the state. (Örnek, 1994: 15). The term of “change” is often used in discussions on the future of organizations. Prediction of change’s direction, understanding the needs and preparation for the future are critical for organization’s management. Since past is not able to be planned, organized, and controlled, administrative actions should be structured according to the future (Yeniçeri, 2002:21)

There are many futurologies that make predictions about the socio-economic changes of the future (Yeniçeri, 2002: 44-51). For example, In the *Third Wave*, Alvin Toffler signaled the developments on the computer, electronics, information. He also predicted that news trends would affect the structure of public organizations like flexible production, part-time work, and work at home in 1980. In the *End of History*, Francis Fukuyama proclaimed the sovereignty of liberalism would become dominant ideological base the political-administrative area. However in *State Building* of 2004 stated that “liberal world order collapsed and the minimalist liberal statute in every corner of the world replaced by more high-level type of center and left in a state which is actively”. John Naisbitt and Patricia Aburdene, published *Megatrends 2000* in 1990. The book explores the most significant and comprehensive changes that influenced human being in the last ten years. These are universal economic booms, the rebirth in art, the emergence of free-market socialism, rise of universal life styles and nationalism as well as the privatization of the welfare state. It is possible to add Patrick Dixon’s *The Next 100 Years* (1998) this list. He describes future by using each letter in the word. It goes like that Fast-Urban-Tribal-Universal-Radical-Ethical). (Dixon, 2009: 12). He argued that substantial number of his predictions occurred like replacement of TV by the Internet, China’s rapid increase, growing globalization protests, etc.

There have been also growing literature on futurology in Turkey. These include Şahin Alpay’s 1991 research report called “Turkey in 2020”, Mehmet Ögütçü’s article called “*In fact The Future Starts No: Turkey’s Vision 2023*”, Server Tanilli’s “*How A Future For Humanity*”, Murat Yalçın’s “*Predictions For The Millennium*”, and reports prepared by TUSIAD, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and TUBITAK’s (Dırık, 2003: 739-742).

Public organizations are influenced by such widespread forecasting trends. Predictions about the public organizations become very important for theorists and practitioners in a situation that managerial, political, social, technological changes are accelerating as well as these organizations have functional mechanisms.

2. Developments Affecting the Public Organizations

Redefinition of the state’s role started a process in which the roles of public organizations have to be redefined. The influence of the New Public Management approach can not be underestimated in this process. Since the 1980s, administrative reform efforts, in many places like New Zealand, England, and America emerged under the title of “New Public Management” (Page, 2005: 713). New Public management reforms were also observed in countries like Brazil, Korea, Portugal and Sweden. Significant changes occurred the central organizations of states apparatus (Geri, 2001: 445). The traditional model of public administration became flexible and market based model in the mid-1980s. (Hughes, 2003: 1). As a response to discussion on downsizing of the State, Fukuyama initiated a debate on the strengthening of existing ones and the creation of new ones the early 2000 (Fukuyama, 2005: 7). State performs its duties through public organizations. When the duties of state change, public organizations became mechanisms of new tasks. The state’s duties depend on time, dominant political and economic approach, social struggles and political power (Örnek, 1994: 44).

Factors that may cause in various domains of public organizations can be listed as following:

- Questioning of the public administration intellectually, narrowing the activity sphere of public organizations along with the reducing the role of state government (Bilgiç, 2008: 95).
- An internationalization of conceptual tools regarding management, human governance, performance, accountability, ethics, public-private partnerships, efficiency-effectiveness. Such internationalized terms are involved in –public administration reforms across nations regardless of being developed or developing country.

- Configuration and operation of public organizations around the Public Management (Ateş, 2008: 188).
- Increases in the number of beneficiaries of public services, the increases and expansion in public tasks and public services.
- Emergence of “governance” model which allows cooperation between public administration and private sector and voluntary organizations.
- Rise of an idea that sole units providing goods and services to the public may not be public organizations any more (Bilgiç, 2008: 97).
- Technological innovations and their impact on managerial processes, requiring the rearrangement of the organizations.
- Social change, rising public expectations, changing nature of these expectations.
- Emphasizing in understanding of democratic governance and its implementation through citizens’ participation in decisions regarding provision of services.

3. Predictions for the Future of Public Organizations

3.1. Flexible Organizational Structures Will Increase

First of all, it is important to underline to fact that downsizing of state will lead to the minimalization of the public organizations structures. Flexible organizational structures will increase in the public sector upper bodies, entities such as regional development agencies will continue and new types of entities will emerge (Özer,2005: 371). The formal structure of public organizations which have adhocratic, resistant and centralized organization structures will become more flexible (Eryılmaz, 2010; 66-67). Non-governmental organizations like associations, foundations, unions, community organizations and the public of non-governmental organizations will more frequently work as brokers in. The number of flexible models such as *the Public Interest Companies* will increase. The labelling of Public Interest Companies are often discussed since two contra - dictionary terms- 'public interest' and 'company' is combined in a single label (Karasu, 2011: 119).

3.2. Bureaucracy Will Not Diminish

Bureaucracy will not diminish, despite increase in flexibility. Weber's bureaucracy model is being challenged by growing less hierarchical forms of organization. But they probably will not disappear such as dinosaurs disappear all at once (Giddens, 2000:322). Parallel with the variation in public organizations, there are some determinations implying that the units which were established for audit will create a new bureaucracy (Eryılmaz, 2010, 67). For example, in the 2000s, institutions and regional administrations of the public organizations were closed as a part of reform program aiming to downsize Turkish public administration structure. This was published in the Official Gazette dated April 5, 2002. Accordingly, almost 200 District Office would have been closed until May 2003. With the formation of Vice Ministry in 2011, a new bureaucracy created a hierarchical level (Aydın, 2011: 274). This seems a further step towards the growth of public administration rather than downsizing of bureaucratic organizations will not disappear, but they will continue with other types of groups and organizations (Giddens, 2000:323).

3.3. Debate on the Public Service Will Continue

New Public Management approach, has led to the concept of “*The New Public Service*” (Denhardt&Denhardt, 2007: 25-26). The concept has brought different approaches to the general quality of public service, its expression forms. Public organizations that provide public service have lost its main role. Therefore it will increase “narrowing crisis” in public service (Karahanoğulları, 2004: 355), it will raise the efforts for provision of an adequate level of services offered. In this context, welfare state will transfer a large part of the social services, to non-profit institutions, resulting in a large scale privatization (Dixon, 2009: 296). Privatization globally will become widespread in some services like telephone, electricity, public transportation. Within the context of downsizing of

public administration, the tasks of the central government will be transferred to the private entities through privatization or they will be transferred to local governments after they are modernized and restructured (Aykaç, 1999: 9). However, there will still be people who disagree with the idea of privatization and transferring power.

In order to provide effective public service, new methods and surveys will keep going on. For instance, recently in order to bring the new standards of public services, new surveys are getting more important. In this subject, Turkey has enacted a regulation concerning with public services Regulation on procedures and Principles in 2009. Nowadays this kind of research has been continuing. For example public organizations have presented tables to display the standards of public service organizations in their web pages. The topic of public service will be keep go on to the role of state and the requirements of the society as the daily point issue. Public-Private Partnership will be increase. The public organizations, private sector and non-profit sector are entering more collaboration each other in future and their boundaries will be flexibility (Feldman, 2010: 159). Public-Private Partnership model may lead to confusion about the public-private activity area. The quality and quantity of the activities expected from the state will be changed. As a result, there will be a controversy about the responsibility areas of the public and private sectors, especially in the crisis conditions. As an example of public-private partnership, The Department of Public-Private Partnership has been established under the Ministry of Health (2007) in Türkiye, by the Law No: 5683. The established department as the main service unit model of public-private partnership about the health service organization of the Ministry of Health has become one of the essential organization (Karasu, 2011: 236).

3.4. The Power of Information Technology will be Emphasized

Technology has impressive affect on society and organizations. As a matter of fact many things are affected by technology such as; what kind of jobs to do, the quality of the goods and services that have been offered (Yeniçeri, 2002: 32-36). Globalized affairs have provided important changes in terms of organizations. All modern organizations are depend on knowledge concern with specialization and knowledge circulation. By the increasing of information technology in general may lead to use the flexibility and the professionalization of organizations. (Giddens, 2000: 323). Knowledge and information will prevail in the future. Two scenarios about knowledge and information are mentioned: firstly, knowledge will be increasingly centralized and controlled and marketed through traditional economic and political processes. Secondly and more hopeful possibility is that knowledge will be widely distributed throughout society, so that increasing rather than decreasing numbers of people will have knowledge and they, in turn have power (Denhardt, 1999: 280). Information Technologies which public organization pay importance is going to be rised to the position and its effectiveness in society and their organizations, the importance given to the public in general and event-based social life, his position will increase. Using of information technologies in organization from mode of service delivery to re-structuring of organizations is going to be increased in every day.

3.5. The Leader Quality of Administrators in Public Administration Will Gain Importance

The qualities of public administrators are determined by the official arrangements. But, the process that has started restructure of public administration has increased expectation levels from public administrators. The expectations from administrators are increased not only act to the rules, but they should have visionary perspective and the mentality of participation management. Just to set the rulers manage and not 'visionary, participants' expectation of the administrator to perform his job as managin attributes increasing by moving/will increase. Something can be said about future leaders: 1-helps the group or organization understand its needs and potential, 2-Integrates and articulates the group's vision, 3- acts as a trigger or stimulus for group action. And the leader will not just bos sor the manager, the leader will necessarily be everyone (Denhardt, 1999: 289). Many approach like perception management, information management, crisis management, performance management, and strategic management offer some principles about managers. This condition will affect public sector in terms of management parameters.

Conclusion

In discussions on the future of public organizations, the 1970 administrative reform processes aiming at restructuring public administration are significant source points. Steps taken for launching reforms demonstrate that crises and the role of reforms change simultaneously. Discussions on whether the role of states is increasing or decreasing is changing the nature of the processes of public organizations. Time to time, following questions raise, what will happen to the functions structural characteristics of organizations, how will the level of participation in the organization, whether the importance given to organizations's economic and socio-psychological aspects, how will the effectiveness of them should be improved what will be the position of public organizations via to the private sector which qualifications will be sought personel to what extent their legal their legal status will be influenced by political changes. Although label of "New Public Management" is not a novel concept any more, its classical attributes triggered heated debates (Hughes, 2003: 8).

The New Public Management recommended to public organizations getting support from civil society and private sector organizations in fulfilling their functions, allowing flexible structures to of eliminate negative dimensions of bureaucracy, rappaaching with a more market-based model. Aforementioned discussions held in the last thirty years resulted in fundamental changes in public organizations. However, organizations as dynamic structure will meet demands for change due to the environmental, political, economic conditions. Such a continuity keep the various proposals alive while a proposal is accepted in a certain period, it will be rejected in another time.

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