



# EVALUATING MARKET DIRECTION OF MASTER'S IN PUBLIC SECTOR MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

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## ABSTRACT

*In a bid to implement New Public Management and reinvent the general public sector, empowerment through coaching of public sector managers has been at the prime of the agenda of most governments. Many public managers square measure attending totally different management programs either on personal, government or development partner sponsorship. This study set out to gauge the extent to which Masters publically Sector Management (MPSM) is market homeward-bound employing a case of MPSM program at Africa University, Mutare, Zimbabwe. A survey was conducted in order to receive feedback from students who graduated since the beginning of the program. The findings revealed that MPSM program at Africa University is customer-driven and meets the needs of its customers. The MPSM knowledge square measureas are relevant to the job performance of its customers. The study recommends that knowledge areas that encourage innovations particularly on business method engineering, integrated service delivery or one stop shop conception for government services ought to be initiated within the program. A doctoral program connected to MPSM ought to be introduced so those graduates is also ready to more their studies within the same filed. It is recommended that more studies be conducted to gauge different MPSM or connected programs therefore on compare the findings, and also to ascertain the relationship between relevance of and satisfaction derived from the MPSM program or other related programs. Although this is a case of the MPSM at Africa University, it is believed that the findings of the study can be beneficial to other universities or institutions offering similar or related programs.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

According to Tolofari (2005), public administration has always been under constant review. From the end of the 1970s to the 1990s, governments around the world were engaged in widespread and sustained reforms of their public administration. These reforms were born out of economic recession, but also had political, social, intellectual and technological drivers. These reforms which came to be termed New Public Management (NPM) focused on transforming public services into results-oriented organizations driven by performance measures and incentives among others. All these management changes in the public sector to make them operate businesslike were geared at attaining efficiency and effectiveness in the sector. In an attempt to implement NPM and reinvent the public sector, empowerment of public sector managers through training has been at the main agenda of most governments. Training is believed to result in efficient and effective running of the public sector by public sector managers. Possessing skilled and talented public servants is prerequisite to the success of the public sector. Different African governments have made efforts to train their managers by, among other strategies, setting up Public Management Institutes or Civil Service Colleges and supporting their staff for further studies in Public Sector Management and Public Administration and Management, for example, Uganda Management Institute (UMI), Kenya Institute of Administration (KIA), Malawi Institute of Management (MIM), National institute of Public Administration (NIPA), Lesotho Institute of Management and Public Administration (LIPAM), Tanzania Public Service College (TPSC) in Uganda, Kenya, Malawi, Zambia, Lesotho and Tanzania respectively. The Public Sector Management Training Program (PSMTP) is another such program being funded under the Africa Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) in collaboration with World Bank. The PSMPT is being implemented in Zimbabwe to cater for the Eastern and Southern African Countries, in Ghana to cater for the English Western and Central African Countries, and in Gabon and Senegal to cater for the French speaking African countries (ACBF, 2012). Under the PSMTP a 12- month Masters in Public Sector Management (MPSM) is offered to equip African countries with a critical mass of public sector managers with the skills and competences to enable the continent to meet its development challenges and to improve the performance of the public sector through the provision of a balanced academic and professional training in Public Sector Management (PSM) in Africa. The course is divided into four modules each with five course units and a research project. So far more than 120 Public sector managers at Africa University, Zimbabwe have successfully graduated through this



residential training program which began in 2006 and more public sector managers are expected to go through this program. According to Larbi (2003), customer orientation, as an application of NPM, has become an more and more necessary ingredient of success in the public sector. Responsive service delivery is now distinguished on the agenda of most countries. Several tools square measure being used to realize this, the main agenda being to receive customer feedback on service delivery. This feedback would be used to make enhancements to the service delivery. While varied tools have been wont to assess the performance of public sector managers through, for example, responding to customer feedback, the training programs have received very little attention. The authors believe that in order to own effective public sector managers, there is a necessity to own effective training programs that meet the wants of the trainees. The training of public sector managers is well even and appreciated and is in line with the main agenda of the NPM. However, to date no study has been documented to guage whether or not the MPSM program is meeting the trainee's desires and needs. By contrast, similar programs such as the Masters in Business Administration (MBA) and Executive master's degree are an issue of assorted studies that were allotted to determine whether or not or not they meet the wants of the business and therefore the findings of such studies square measure well documented (Blass & Weight 2005; Dubas, Ghani, Davis & Strong 1998). Similarly, it can be argued that public management pedagogy ought to be homeward-bound towards serving to students study public organizations, government and governance, and the role of the general public sector in a very mixed society and economy.

## **2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **2.1. About the MPSM Program at Africa University**

The Africa University field sits on 1542 acres of land, 17 kilometers north of the town of Mutare in Rhodesia. The University campus is placed in a very prime country, a valley setting with a lovely mountainous parcel that gives a scenic, tranquil and breathtaking atmosphere. Mutare is Zimbabwe's fourth largest city and the city of 1 of the country's 10 provinces; Manicaland. It is situated regarding 260 kilometers from Zimbabwe's capital, Harare. Mutare forms the country's eastern border city with African nation and is the country's entree to the ocean, as it is major overland route to the Port of metropolis in African nation (Africa University Prospectus, 2012). The MPSM program is offered within the faculty of Management and Administration and therefore the program is funded below the African capability Building Foundation (ACBF). At Africa University, the PSMTTP has two parts, namely the innovative Master's Degree in Public Sector Management (MPSM) and therefore the short coaching courses in management (Africa University Prospectus, 2012).

African countries with the critical mass of public sector managers with the skills and competences to modify the continent to satisfy its development challenges; to enhance the performance of the general public sector through the supply of a balanced educational and skilled coaching publically sector management in Africa (Africa University Prospectus, 2012). The Public Sector Management educational program provides an intensive, 12 month, full-time coaching program, leading to the MPSM. The program addresses the critical would like for extremely trained managers UN agency square measure in a position to answer the more and more complicated demands of implementing new and rising development frameworks, such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). These new realities have resulted in the have to be compelled to reform the African public sector (Sheidu, 2003). The MPSM is divided into four modules with five information areas every and scientific research. The program runs for 12 months. The participating countries embody African nation, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Rhodesia. According to the PSMTTP 4th Cohort day Report (2011), over 120 public managers in the varied countries have graduated in MPSM since the program's beginning in 2008. Table 1 below shows the twenty information square measureas that are coated in the MPSM at AU (Africa University Prospectus, 2012).

### **2.2. New Public Management**

According to Hood (1996), the study of public administration has been concerned primarily with the acknowledged paradigm shift from principles of public administration to those of public management since the early Nineteen Eighties.; an apparent move off from what's currently seen as a conventional, progressive-era set of doctrines of good administration, emphasizing orderly hierarchies, depoliticized bureaucracies, and the elimination of duplication or overlap, and toward what has been described as the NPM. Currently, the NPM is the principal paradigm in the discipline of public administration (Arora, 2003). Its common features include, inter alia, minimal government, debureaucratisation, decentralization, market orientation of public service, contracting out, privatization and performance management. Enshrined in these features is the desire to offer more efficient mechanism for delivering goods and services and for raising governmental performance levels (Kelly, 1998). According to Ayee (2005), the NPM perspective is often associated with positive, action-oriented phrases like: reinventing government, re-engineering, revitalization of the public service, organizational transformation, total quality management, paradigm shift,



entrepreneurship, empowerment, results over process, downsizing, now rightsizing, lean and mean, contracting out, off-loading or outsourcing, steering rather than rowing, empowering instead of serving and earning rather than spending. As Hood (1996) acknowledged, NPM is viewed as a management approach based on concepts generated within the personal sector and foreign into the general public sector. In other words, NPM is a dynamic approach adopted by states the globe over to restructure their bureaucracies purportedly so as to raised give services to the grouping (Hood, 1995), thus shifting the stress from ancient public administration to public management and pushing the state towards managerialism. The traditional approach of organization and delivery of public services, based on the principles of official hierarchy, planning, centralization, direct control and self-direction, is apparently replaced by a marketbased public service management or enterprise culture (Larbi, 1999; Walsh, 1995). This represents a paradigm change in the thinking and follow of public administration. The central feature of NPM is the commit to introduce or simulate, within those sections of the public service that don't seem to be privatized, the performance incentives and the disciplines that exist in a very market environment (Moore, Stewart & Haddock, 1994).

### **2.3. Implementation of NPM**

The NPM has been most comprehensively implemented in Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries, with Australia, New Zealand, USA and the UK because the lead reformers. However, aspects of these reforms are being applied in several developing and transition countries, especially those that square measure heavily donor dependent. Lindquist (2006) states the Canada Public Service has, too, changed, due to NPM. Practices at the federal level in Canada have been influenced by and still be related to New Public Management. The NPM in Uganda was conceptualized as before long as the National Resistance Movement (NRM) captured state power on Jan 25th 1986. The NRM's argument for this reform was to improve on its performance and to deliver the guarantees of the protracted people's revolution. Also, the reform was intended, in an responsible and clear method, to enhance the performance of the general public Service to realize good governance and optimum resource utilization that was in inadequacy thanks to the governing of the past regimes (Olum, 2004). In Zambia a major dimension of NPM was launched in 1993, it envisaged the establishment of a throw and additional effective public service.

### **2.4. New Public Management And The Training desires Of Public Sector Managers**

According to Hood (1991), among the NPM principles is the 'hands-on' professional management that emphasizes on holding managers manages. It stresses that professional management should be given substantive responsibility for management; the accomplishment of clearly fixed goals instead of being directors whose perform is primarily to administer rules. In Canada, in order to recruit, train and develop the kind of pros who might adapt to public service reforms, a policy of continuous learning was adopted in 2000. Continuous learning involves training and development, which the government is committed to providing permanent staff with probability} to form their personal learning programs and therefore the chance to follow it with a caveat relating to the operational needs of their organizations. Gow (2004) argues that the policy of continuous learning fits into a strategy of public service reform supported the notion of an expert public service working in partnership with political leaders. NPM initiatives have had the objective of constructing managerial behaviour publically sector organizations additional just like that within the personal sector and having knowledgeable and capable public managers is of basic importance lest NPM implementation remains rhetoric (Gow, 2004). According to Lekorwe (2010), it is critical that the general public sector is managed with efficiency and effectively since in most countries, especially developing ones wherever the public sector typically dominates the economy, the public sector contributes significantly to the performance and development of the economy. For the public sector to be managed optimally public sector managers have to be compelled to be equipped with the required skills through training and education. A continuous training program in best practice in administration and management must be in place to ensure that the staff is continually exposed to developments and new innovations in their field. Human resource capacity building for public service delivery has been recognized by developed, transition, and developing economies under the notion of the NPM reform (Taylor, 2001). According to Pablo, Reay, Dewald and Casebeer (2007), public sector managers are increasingly expected to use managerial strategies to improve organizational performance. It is observed that the public sector manager should be a capable manager and a change agent. He should imbibe attitudinal and cultural change, possess domain expertise and negotiation skills; be knowledgeable about the nature of the public sector, and capable of performing his traditional functions and role while taking cognizance of the imperatives of regional and continental cooperation and globalization. Benington, Hartley, Nielsen and Notten (2008) agree that public professionals need to be trained more appropriately for meeting actual political, economic and social needs and challenges and university programs of professional education can make a major contribution to this.



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