Factors Affecting Implementation of New Public Management in Bangladesh

Farhana Ferdousi

Abstract
New Public Management (NPM) is a management philosophy used by the government since 1980s to modernize the public sectors. Although NPM based reforms originated in developed nations namely UK, New Zealand, Australia and USA, since 1990s it has been applied in developing countries too. In Bangladesh, although various efforts for reforming public administration have taken place since early 1970s after her independence, but reform efforts after 1990 have introduced some reforms ideas related to the NPM model for making public sector more effective and result oriented. Unexpectedly such initiatives to implement NPM oriented reform have not been effective to bring positive changes in Bangladesh public administration as per their objectives. This article mainly examines how the political and bureaucratic factors, faulty application process of NPM oriented reform and state tradition of continuous failure to implement reform influence the extent of NPM initiative and implementation in Bangladesh. By developing a theoretical model it has been shown that in achieving the outcomes of NPM model, how those factors play a determining role. Accordingly, this paper briefly reviews what constitutes NPM ideas and how does it apply in global context, followed by a discussion of the administrative reform and NPM in the context of Bangladesh.

Keywords: New Public Management, administrative reform, Bangladesh.

1. Introduction
In response to economic, institutional and ideological changes, as well as criticisms of inefficient and costly public sectors, public sector reform has become an international phenomenon (Bennington & Cummane, 1997; Hughes, 1998) As part of these reforms, a paradigm of public sector management known as new public management (NPM) has emerged in OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries and elsewhere(Hughes, 1998; Osborne & Gaebler, 1993; C. Pollitt, 1995) By the early 1980s, when the world is swept by the necessity of modernizing public sectors, Bangladesh, the newest state in South Asia, with no exception, had observed the public administration system in its highest level of inefficiency that not only worried national planners but also international donor agencies , which were financing different projects under structural adjustment plans. Therefore, various reforms strategies, some of which have the overtones of NPM principles have been recommended by various study reports (Ferdousi, 2012). Being influenced by the internal and external pressure, although several attempts have been made to introduce NPM oriented reforms in public management in Bangladesh, but poor implementation of such reform could not bring about the expected outcomes of the NPM model. Therefore, this study is a small attempt to identify some administrative reforms in Bangladesh that have the spirit of NPM ideology and to analyze some politico-bureaucratic factors that affect the level of initiatives and state of NPM like implementation in Bangladesh. Although there are huge study on NPM oriented reforms in developed countries, but researchers have been slow to work on this in developing countries. The reason behind this may be that the ideas or concept of NPM principles

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are revolving and subject to frequent changes and concrete success or failure are difficult to measure. Since this study have analyzed the factors affecting the NPM oriented reform initiative and extent of adoptability in Bangladesh, this will represent the case of developing countries and will also enhance the NPM literature in such countries.

2. Research Methodology

The descriptive research method has been used in this study and therefore, a vast of secondary materials available on the books, journals, newspapers and websites, has been used, interpreted and reinterpreted to substantiate the arguments. What kinds of public sector reform principles surround the widely known NPM model and how they differ from the traditional model of public administration have been explored critically. Experiences of developed as well as developing countries on NPM initiatives have also been taken in to account to assess the adoptability of such model in the context of Bangladesh. What major factors affect the NPM initiatives and outcomes in Bangladesh have been analysed critically and a theoretical model have been developed to visualize the situation.

New Public Management and its Application in the Global Context

During the last three decades, different definitions of NPM ( Table 1) have been suggested and the term NPM itself has several incarnations such as managerialism (C. Pollitt, 1993), market-based public administration (Lan & Rosenbloom, 1992) and entrepreneurial government(Osborne & Gaebler, 1992) . In the early 1980s definition by Garson & Overman( 1983) and in mid 1990s by Borins (1995), focused on managerial improvement in public administration. Christopher Hood (Hood, 1991) in his article “A Public Management For all Seasons” which is the widely cited academic literature on the concept of NPM, describes NPM as a doctrine including seven components. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has listed a group of managerial features in its NPM model of reform. According to them, the central theme of NPM is to provide managerial and financial flexibilities in the public sector. (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992) in their book Reinventing Government: How the Entrepreneurial Spirit is Transforming the Public Sector, have also described the main principles behind the NPM theory. They had put forward Ten Principles for reinventing the government. These Principles have added new approaches and orientation to the movement of NPM based reforms.

According to (Hughes, 1998), NPM has been adopted across nations based on economic and management theories. Economic theory allows market competition in delivering public services, contracting out functions of the government, and privatizing state owned agencies. Application of managerial theory in the public sector means flexibility in managing the functions of the government where public managers are empowered to manage their tasks and responsibilities with full autonomy like as the private sector.

The above NPM practices signify the change from the traditional Weberian theory and practice of public administration based on hierarchical order and bureaucratic neutrality to the NPM emphasis on a post-bureaucratic model that is anticipatory, strategic, results directed, based on executive leadership, market oriented, customer driven, and entrepreneurial (Massey, 1995). Therefore, one can argue that NPM is different in many ways from traditional public administration. Based on (De Araujo, 2001) and World Public Sector Report 2005 (UN, 2005)the following distinction between traditional administration and NPM are shown in the table (Table 2).

Thus the administration needs to be moved from rule to result orientation, from system to enterprise, obedience to reward, inaction to action, centralisation to decentralisation and from duties of administrators to the rights of citizens. Broadly the NPM aims at entrepreneurial role of public organisations with a market based public administration resulting in effectiveness and economy in the functioning of public organisations.

From the review of aforementioned literatures of NPM, we may summarize generally agreed managerial and economic features of NPM model of public sector reforms that include following
components—downsizing public bureaucracy, customer orientation, decentralization and delegation of managerial power and authorities, cost-reduction, contract based public service delivery, conversion of civil service departments into independent agencies, performance-based accountability, privatization of state functions, application of citizens charter, results based management and performance appraisal, competition in public service delivery.

Despite the different views, opinions and definitions about the meaning and implications of NPM doctrine, there is however no doubt that it has become extremely influential in public administration theory and practice since 1980s. It is claimed that United Kingdom and New Zealand are the two important countries where the NPM ideas has been first operationalised and their experiences are considered as central for understanding how the above NPM principles work in practice. In the UK, privatization was extensively pursued by the conservative governments of Margaret Thatcher and John major in the period 1979-97. Publicly owned industries, major utilities and the service sectors were sold out. In New Zealand similar process took place and between 1981-94, the number of employees in the public sector was reduced by 26.4 per cent. (Ehsan & Naz, 2003) In the UK, during the Thatcher regime, competitive tendering was also introduced to a number of services, such as waste collection, street cleaning, schools cleaning and catering services, personnel services, leisure management and housing management. Also in New Zealand, contracting arrangements became a frequently used method of service delivery, particularly in local government. In 1994, contracting covered almost fifty percent of the local government service provision in New Zealand (McCourt & Minogue, 2001). In UK, executive agencies have also been introduced into the traditional bureaucratic public service structure to take responsibility for implementing public policy in a specific area. By 1998, one hundred and thirty eight executive agencies had been established in UK, and 75 percent of the civil servants were organized into such agencies. Following the UK’s example, Japan also created executive agencies (agentification) with slight difference in thinking behind it. For example, the UK’s agentification was defined as ‘management reform in the civil service’, according to Prime Minister Thatcher’s statement (Hansard, 1988), Prime Minister Hashimoto defined agentification as streamlining the government. For policy analysis and evaluation, Government Policy Evaluation Act (GPEA) was established by Japan in 2001 which was modeled on the Government performance and Result Act (GPRA) of the US federal government in 1993 under the Clinton Administration. Among other Asian countries Singapore introduced performance budgeting and corporatisation under public ownership; Malaysia introduced citizens’ charter and performance based compensation for managers. Australia, another pioneer of NPM led reforms introduced a series of reforms such as corporatization, contracting out, market orientation, and quasi-market mechanisms in delivering public services. The application of NPM based reforms can also be seen in the Scandinavian countries. Their reform processes are influenced mainly by the managerial theories of NPM such as management by objectives, managerial autonomy, and power devolution etc. These practices have been well established in the Scandinavian administrative traditions within the broad values of welfare states (Christensen & Lagreid, 2001). The Scandinavian model of reform, however, differs from that of the Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-American countries.

Evidence of NPM oriented administrative reforms can also be found in some developing countries from 1990 onwards. One of the basic components of NPM is devolution of authority from the central government to semi-autonomous agencies which is a well established practice of the UK, can also be seen in some developing countries. For example, Ghana, Kenya, Zambia, South Africa, Malawi, Zimbabwe are following the process of corporatising their health sectors (Polidano & Hulme, 1999). NPM inspired autonomous body like Revenue Authority model in the public sectors is also implemented in sub-Saharan African countries such as Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia (Gautam, 2008).

2(Norway, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Greenland, and Iceland)
3(United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand
4United States of America, Mexico and Canada
From the aforementioned examples of application, it can be argued that the model of NPM for public sector reforms is not only adopted by the developed countries, increasingly it is also demanded attention from developing countries. Although the experiences of success over the application of NPM like reform are mixed, yet the developed nations are relatively successful as they have reasonable level of economic development, efficient market mechanisms and well developed public management system. They have embraced NPM like reform as the requirement emanated from their own context. But for developing countries, the ideas of NPM has been borrowed from the developed nations, in some cases taken as a new fashion inspired by the globalization and most other cases have been imposed by donor agencies, i.e., World Bank, International Monetary Fund and Asian Development Bank, due to aid conditionality. Therefore, the process and extent of application of NPM ideas differs from one country to another and its applications need more careful analysis of own cultural as well as political context.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>Definition / ideologies of NPM</th>
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<tr>
<td>(Garson and Overman, 1983)</td>
<td>“an interdisciplinary study of the generic aspects of administration….a blend of the planning, organising and controlling functions of management with the management of human, financial, physical, information and political resources.”</td>
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<td>(Borins, 1995)</td>
<td>“a normative conceptualization of public administration consisting of several inter-related components: providing high quality services that citizens value; increasing the autonomy of public managers; rewarding organization and individuals on the basis of whether they meet demanding performance targets; making available the human and technological resources that managers need to perform well; and appreciative of the virtues of competition, and maintaining an open minded attitude about which public purposes should be performed by the private sector, rather than a public sector.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christopher Hood (Hood, 1991)</td>
<td>describes NPM as a doctrine including seven components- 1. Hands-on professional management of public organizations, 2. Explicit standards and measures of performance, 3. Greater emphasis on output controls, 4. Shift to disaggregation of units in public sector, 5. Shift to a greater competition in public sector, 6. Stress on greater discipline and parsimony in public sector resource use,</td>
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Table 2: NPM Reforms Compared With Traditional Public Administration

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements</th>
<th>Traditional administration</th>
<th>NPM</th>
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<tr>
<td>Government organization</td>
<td>services provided on a uniform basis operating as a single aggregated unit</td>
<td>Break-up of traditional structures into quasi-autonomous units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control of public organizations</td>
<td>Control from headquarters through the hierarchy of unbroken supervision and checks and balances</td>
<td>Hands-on professional management with clear statement of goals and performance measurement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control of output measures</td>
<td>Control on inputs and procedures</td>
<td>Stress results and output control rather than procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management practices</td>
<td>Standard established procedures throughout the services</td>
<td>Using private sector management style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline in resource use</td>
<td>Due process and political entitlement</td>
<td>Check resources demands and ‘do more with less’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountability of senior officials</td>
<td>Accountable to politicians</td>
<td>Accountable to customers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key attribute</td>
<td>Impartiality</td>
<td>Professionalism</td>
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3. Theoretical Model of Factors Affecting NPM implementation in Bangladesh

NPM reforms in western countries have been significantly affected by four factors: political system, party politics, macroeconomic considerations, and state tradition. (Lee & Haque, 2006) added two more factors to the list, namely the role of IDAs (International Development Agencies) and the state of civil society, to analyse the case of south and Southeast Asia. (Gautam, 2008) found out four factors that influences ineffective application of NPM in Nepalese public administration: policy process of reform, political situation of the country, path dependency characteristics and bureaucratic behavior. According to (Sarker, 2006) there are some critical factors such as the advanced level of economic development, the existence of a formal market economy, the rule of law, the advanced level of administrative infrastructure and state efficiency for the success of NPM-oriented reforms. This study has analysed four major factors that constrained the effectiveness of NPM model in Bangladesh: political factor, bureaucratic behavior, application process of reform and state tradition (Fig. 1).

Fig 1: Theoretical Framework of the Study
Fig. 1 demonstrates the relationships between these factors and expected outcome of NPM. It has been argued that these four factors affect the nature and extent of NPM initiatives that will be taken and to what extent effort will be put forward for implementing that reform. In Bangladesh, privatization, contracting out, restructuring civil service, performance measurement, and decentralization are the mostly recommended principles of NPM which have been come in to being used rigorously after 1990s. But the expected outcomes have not yet been achieved. This study argues that the initiative of NPM was mostly directed by donor agencies; therefore, less effort has been given by the politicians and bureaucrats. Besides this predominating culture of the politics and bureaucracy; i.e., corruption practices inside the political parties and government employees, reluctant behavior of the bureaucrats to appreciate innovative policies, exert challenges for successful implementations of the recommended NPM reform.

4. Administrative Reforms and Implementation of New Public Management in Bangladesh

The effort of public sector reforms began in Bangladesh from 1971, after her independence. In the first term of the Awami League rule (1972-75), the government appointed two major committees in 1972, namely the Administrative and Services Reorganization Committee (ASRC) and the National Pay Commission (NPC). The term of reference was to reorganize the central bureaucracy, including local government, accompanied by devolution of power from the central to the local level and provide a national pay structure. The far-reaching recommendations of the ASRC made no impact on the government as the public sector employees of all categories resisted this move, as it might have made many employees redundant (Banglapidia, 2011).

The second commission of reform was pay and Services Commission 1977 (Sarker, 2004). Its main term of reference was to restructure civil service structure. In 1982, third commission was formed to examine organizational setup of ministries, divisions, directorates and other organizations. Their proposed recommendations were – reduction of the size of the government, reduction of the layers for decision-making, and delegation of administrative and financial powers down the hierarchy. Again in 1982, another commission was set up to reorganize the field administration and Upozillaparishad was created in order to improve the rural service delivery system. In 1983, another commission was formed to improve the functioning of public enterprises. Between 1985 and 1987, another three commissions were formed to review and finally abolish the previously created SSP (Senior Services Pool)(Kim & Monem, 2008). However, aforementioned efforts were based on traditional forms of reforms mainly for setting organizational structures, and formulating formal rules and regulations than making public sector effective and result oriented.

The people’s movement in 1990 restored the democratic political regime which was suspended from mid 1977-90 following the military or quasi military forms of governments. In 1991, the democratic government following their predecessors without making any innovative change also formed a commission to review the structure of local government. The NPM style reform initiative, although not very comprehensive, was first introduced in 1993, under the banner of Public Administration Sector Study by United Nations Development Program (UNDP, 1993). Their recommendations focused on making civil service more efficient by introducing performance management system, eliminating redundant government functions, and right sizing of civil servants through merit-based selection and promotion. In the same year, the Department For International Development (DFID) also recommended for merit-based recruitment and promotion, improvement of financial management system, incentives for better performance, improvement of accountability and transparency, establishment of ombudsman, strengthening of the audit office, and improvement of the training programs for increasing the efficiency of the civil servants. Later in 1996, recommendations provided by the World Bank (WB, 1996) study and Public Administration Reform commission report in 2000 (GoB, 2000), were more comprehensive and covered almost all the aspects of NPM oriented reform (Table 3).

Being driven by the internal or external forces i.e., World Bank, UNDP, ADB, DFID, and USAID, although efforts have been given to form commissions to prepare reports on public administration reform,
very few efforts have been given to implement such recommendations. Without some structural changes in civil service management and field administration, most of the reforms proposals either suffer in non-implementation, partial implementation or failure to bring expected outcomes. Especially, reforms along NPM model could bring very little evidence of real change. For example- although Public administration sector study, 1993 (UNDP, 1993); World Bank study(WB, 1996) focused on the merit-based selection and promotion, performance management system as to get the NPM outcomes like increased efficiency, accountability and performance, but the real situation in Bangladesh does not allow to achieve that expected outcomes. The principle of merit in selection and promotion is violated by the reservation of quota (10% for women, 30% for war veterans, 5% for tribal population and 10% for districts) system and politicized and corrupt practices by the public service commission (PSC). In case of promotion, government often rewards the partisan loyalists with undue promotion superseding the competent ones depriving the well performed officers. Performance appraisal is done based on Annual Confidential Report (ACR) which is widely criticised for not being very scientific and competence based. Therefore, salary of the civil servants is not related to performance.

Since the 1980s there has been an ongoing movement towards the privatization of public enterprises (Akram, 2004), one of the widely used principles in NPM model which was and still is being advocated by the US Treasury and the Bretton Woods Institutions as a part of the market oriented policy reforms. The most significant move in the privatization process occurred in Bangladesh in 1982 with the announcement of the New Industrial Policy (NIP). In order to encourage foreign private investment, the Foreign Private Investment (Promotion and Protection) Act of 1980 was promulgated and a “One-Stop” service agency, i.e. Board of Investment (BOI), was set up, commencing its operations in January 1989. To speed up the privatization program a special agency named as Privatisation Commission was also created in 1993. But the success of privatization program is constrained by some factors like improper valuation and assessment; indiscipline in financial sector; low enforcement of bankruptcy laws; ineffective tax administration associated by tax breaks, tax loopholes, in-discretionary concessions, and subsidies; unstable capital market; lack of corporate governance, and public accountability etc. (Momen, 2007), argued that in Bangladesh, the environment of privatization is dominated by five important sets of actors: politicians, business interests, bureaucrats, organized workers, and foreign aid donors. He also argued that privatization in Bangladesh, like many other countries of the world, created more avenues for the ruling politicians to distribute patronage among their friends and supporters.

Table 3: Some Important Administrative Reforms in Bangladesh which have the overtones of NPM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committees/Commissions/Study</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
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<tr>
<td>UNDP-sponsored Public Administration Sector Study, 1993</td>
<td>Civil service</td>
<td>Performance management system; rationalization of civil service structure; elimination of redundant government functions; merit-based selection and promotion; strengthening Public Service Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four secretaries’ report, 1993, sponsored by Overseas Development Administration, UK</td>
<td>Civil service</td>
<td>Merit based recruitment and promotion; improvement of financial management system; incentives for better performance; improvement of accountability and transparency; establishment of ombudsman strengthening of audit office; improvement of training programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Bank Study: Bangladesh Government That Works Reforming the Public Sector, 1996</td>
<td>Civil service, public enterprise, NGOs</td>
<td>Redefining frontiers of the public sector; enhancing level and nature of accountability and responsiveness of public organizations to different stakeholders; streamlining regulations, laws and processes; maintaining an efficient, committed and professional public service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Administration</td>
<td>Administrative</td>
<td>Determination of missions of public offices; improving the</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The NPM model demands more attention on decentralization as a means to ensure greater transparency, accountability and to provide customer responsive services. This principle of NPM has been introduced in Bangladesh through local government institutions which have been subjected to reorganize, rename, abolish and restart with the changes in the political regime. A recent assessment by the Asian Development Bank (ADB, 2001) found that the strong rhetoric of decentralisation does not match the reality, and the "centre retains a great deal of control, particularly over rural local government". The study also revealed that the "governments have manipulated local government institutions in their own political interests". In our centralized system, the local government bodies are deprived of functions, functionaries, finances and freedom (the four Fs). They are totally subservient to the bureaucracy and are now increasingly being controlled by Members of the Parliament. Several of the major local government reform efforts addressed secondary issues, i.e. number and level of tiers, relationship between tiers, composition, distribution of functions among the tiers and central government etc, at the expense of the core issues like devolution of authority for enabling local government to operate in an autonomous manner.

5. Factors Affecting Implementation of NPM Reform in Bangladesh

Administrative reforms in Bangladesh especially in 1990s although introduced some of the principles of NPM, the expected outcomes yet could not be achieved. This is either because that most of the NPM oriented reforms programs are suffering from non-implementation syndrome, or success of partial implementation is curtailed by other intervening factors such as political factor (political leadership and commitment, political history and culture), bureaucratic behavior, corruption (political and bureaucratic) and application process of reform.

➢ Political Factors

Any administrative reforms to be successful needs proper functioning among the political actors (President/prime minister, legislature and parties) in one hand, and bureaucracies on the other hand. As argued by (Moon & Ingraham, 1998), administrative reform is a product of the politicization process in which three actors – politicians, bureaucracy, and civil society communicate and bargain their political interest regarding government performance (function) and the administrative system (structure). According to them these three actors also comprises political nexus triad (PNT) where civil society is a new inclusion in the traditional “politics administration nexus”. In Bangladesh, the role of these three actors are demonstrated along the clientilism culture -where state (patron) provides resources to supporters (client)(Sarker, 2004). Bureaucracy is not free from politicization and unlike other developed countries politicization process is not constructive rather followed by huge corruption and criminalization. Therefore, two strong actors of PNT – politicians and bureaucrats are influenced by the narrow interest for personal or political gain rather than improving performance to better serve the citizens. Politicians in Bangladesh are claimed for doing vibrant corruption in accumulation and distribution of public goods and services and having no strong leadership role to lead the country toward
The administrative system is afflicted with corrupt practices in recruitment, selection and promotion. Indeed, corruption ‘undermines the public confidence in government; engenders wrong economic choices and constrains [the government’s] ability to implement policies; makes the poor pay the price; and threatens its strategy of private-sector-oriented growth’ (WB, 1996).

There are lots of examples of political and bureaucratic corruption in Bangladesh public management system which are usually remained unaddressed or unpunished but have been revealed severely during the regime (2007-2009) of caretaker (non-political) government. 5 The political parties in power found it useful to enlist the support of public servants holding important policy-making, implementation and local government-level positions. 6 There is an unwritten practice under which important top management positions are filled by ‘party loyal’ or ‘sympathetic personnel’ (Ali, 2004; Samaratunge, Alam, & Teicher, 2008).

Under such patronage distribution by political parties in power, principles of NPM such as performance and merit based system of management, decentralization, contracting out and privatization cannot work properly. The influence of civil society is not yet significant enough to make headway in pressuring government to implement NPM reform. Sometimes news media, NGOs, and other representatives from civil society are found to be working under political banner. Under this situation administrative reforms along NPM model cannot be implemented until and unless such reforms do not fulfill the interest of clientelist lobbies.

Weak political leadership, absence of long-term and clear vision, donor aided policy implementation without adequate analysis of existing culture and structure along with patronization, corruption, factionalism etc. exists as a barrier to the road to NPM oriented administrative reform in Bangladesh and therefore, it requires strong leadership role, commitment and support from the head of the government. 7

Bureaucratic Factors

Model of NPM offers some changes in administrative structure, culture and relationships. The new model demands flattened organizational structure, low power distance culture in administration and customer oriented service delivery perceptions and attitudes. But the administrative structure in Bangladesh is pyramid shape followed by centralised decision making process and bureaucratic culture is supported by high power distance configuration. In organizational context, power distance refers unequal relationships between upper and lower level staffs for example, New Zealand, UK, Australia, USA and Scandinavian countries have low power distance between and among the employees (Hofstede, 1991). Therefore, NPM based reform get high appreciation from among those countries where higher and lower levels employees play equal roles in setting and achieving organizational goals. But in case of Bangladesh, there is a wide gap between superiors and subordinates. Upper tiers consider themselves more knowledgeable and rarely hear the voice of the subordinates. Consequently, low level of trust is found among upper and lower level employees which brings challenges for implementing NPM based administrative reforms.

During that regime, one minister arrested for corruption charges revealed that an unofficial cell was created to prepare a list of candidates for appointment and promotions. The public agencies in charge had to comply with the directions of the ministers or his nominated agents (Nurul Haque, 2007). The report also revealed that hundreds of party loyalists were unduly recruited. Many were promoted to senior administrative positions. The private secretary to the Prime Minister (2002-2007) said in an interview that, ‘four classes of people close to the government were directly involved with the corruption of the past five years: First, decision-making ministers and government officials; second, the ministers’ sons and relatives who illegally influenced the decision-making ministers and government officials (socially influential); third, members of parliament (politically influential); and fourth and finally, professional lobbyists, beneficiaries and agents (financially influential)’ (Daily Star, 2007).

This also extends to public universities, the Election Commission, the Public Service Commission and the University Grants Commission. Vice-Chancellors and members of various constitutional bodies change office with every change in government (Ali, 2004).

Strong political leadership and commitment of Reagan \ Clinton governments in the USA, Thatcher \ John Major governments in the United Kingdom, Labor Government in New Zealand, Bob Hawke in Australia, and Mulroney in Canada, helped those countries to be successful in implementing NPM based administrative reforms.
reform. Moreover, their intra personal relationships are also undermined by the factionalism in public service such as: rivalry between generalists and specialists, freedom fighters versus non-freedom fighters, pro-Awami League versus pro-Bangladesh Nationalist Party civil servants, factionalism based on district affiliation etc. Low level of trust, factionalism and low level of salary in compared to private sector jobs which increase rent seeking behavior of employees makes the implementation process either slow or in some cases ineffective.

In addition to their intra personal relationships, bureaucrats need to maintain their relationship with the politician in terms of policy advice in one hand and citizens in terms of service delivery on the other hand. They are supposed to serve their political masters from the professional view points but professionalism is not much developed due to wide spread corruption and politicization in selection and promotion, wide gap between training and development, performance and reward system. Therefore, they support implementation of any reform only if it fulfills their political and personal gain. Their relationship with citizens is another important aspect for the promotion of NPM based reform. NPM principle strongly emphasize on customer satisfaction. Bureaucracy need to view the citizens as customer or client, and hold the attitude that customers have the right to ask for better services. But in our traditional bureaucratic environment administrators think themselves superior than citizens and therefore, expect citizens’ obedience toward the administrator. It is a general charge that in most of the public offices citizens witness unnecessary delay, harassment and rent seeking behavior. Many researchers argued that in Bangladesh, administrative reforms have faltered for lack of appreciation and support by the senior civil servants(Khan, 1991; Khan & Zafarullah, 1982; WB, 1996) who adopt a protectionist attitude toward the existing power configuration and see reform attempts as downgrading their present status, position, and power and perhaps include added responsibility ,new knowledge and therefore, orchestrate resistance to frustrate reform implementation. Therefore, it becomes a great challenge for Bangladeshi bureaucracy to adopt NPM work culture until they change their traditional bureaucratic behavior, perception and attitudes. This is a very difficult task to change once established norms and practice which have been practiced for a long time.

➢ Application Process of NPM

It is believed that home grown interventions of policies are more successful than transfer of such policy reforms because they are more likely to address local needs and institutional constraints. Implementation of such policy reforms must be preceded by adequate contextual analysis which is almost absent in case of Bangladesh. As argued by (Polidano & Hulme, 1999) while many developing countries have taken up elements of the NPM agenda, they have not adopted anything close to the entire package; and they are simultaneously undertaking reforms that are unrelated or even contrary to that agenda. Moreover, model of NPM originate from developed countries which have already developed market mechanisms and public management structure which is fully capable to adopt any policy innovation. According to (Dolowitz & Marsh, 2000), there are basically two ways of policy transfer- voluntary and coercive. The voluntary process is inspirable and comes through policy learning from others’ experience as a process of lesson drawing. Whereas the coercive process of policy transfer takes place when aid agencies impose their conditions to the loan recipient countries to adopt certain policies.

In case of Bangladesh, the idea of NPM reform was prescribed by international agencies, i.e., UNDP in 1993 and World Bank in 1996, which was the crucial time for diffusing NPM ideas, from developed to developing countries. Therefore, the reform process did not follow the first one, rather followed the coercive introduction. It is assumed that when conditions are attached from donor agencies then the whole reform agenda cannot be effective in real sense. In this condition, internal reform actors may not

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8In the report of (UNDP, 2004), the civil service of Bangladesh is portrayed as inefficient, ineffective, non-transparent, unaccountable and largely insulated from the public, unethical and unfair, non-responsive to societal demands, largely pre-occupied with process, rules and procedures and mainly interested in enhancing their own status, power, prestige, income and sub-system autonomy.
be motivated to apply a complete reform package effectively. They only concentrate to meet aid conditions made by the donors (Gautam, 2008). The same situation happened in Bangladesh reform journey too. Later in 2000, although NPM reform policies were also recommended by public administration reform commission, but little success came from such effort. One reason might be that there was time constraint as the AL lead government was nearly at the end of their regime (1996-2001). They took those reforms which would support their interest to be reelected other than paying attention to achieve the goal of NPM reform. Ineffective application of NPM reform was also assisted by the discontinuities of reform efforts. Since 1991, after restoration of democracy, two major political parties namely Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and Awami League (AL) are either in power or in opposition. One common practice is exhibited by both of the parties is that any reform initiatives taken by the party in power must be resisted by the party in opposition. Consequently, reforms initiated by the previous government must be abolished or changed by the successive government. Thus the discontinuities of reform efforts fail to bring forth the expected outcomes of NPM principles. Moreover, non-inclusion of stakeholders in decision making process also frustrates the implementation of such reform. When any reforms agenda is on the table, representative from each group on whom the decisions have some impact should be included. But in Bangladesh, this practice is mostly absent. Moreover, decision making panels are manned by under qualified or clientilist group, and are not free from resistance to formulate and execute laws. In addition, the role of the international donor agencies is so paramount that the country cannot resist any policy prescriptions of them whether relevant or not in our context.

- **History of Administrative Failure from Successive Governments**

Most of the reform attempts taken in Bangladesh since independence have the historical evidence of failure from each of the successive government. Therefore, it become a common culture that the successive government at the beginning of their regime will take some administrative measures to favor their patron client relationship, before the end of their term to attract number of voters in their favor and the next government will blame the previous one for all about the past reform measures and will do the same as the previous one done. Consequently, reforms result in failure to provide benefit to citizens’ demand. As argued by Zafarullah, in spite of several isolated attempts in the past to improve governmental performance, the bureaucracy remains insulated from the people and thereby non-responsive to their demands for basic goods and services (Zafarullah, Taslim, & Chowdhury, 1994). Report of the Administrative and Services Reorganisation Committee & Report of the Pay and Services Commission claimed that the most serious limitation of past reform efforts was the failure to perceive the structural and organisational dysfunctions which the administrative system had inherited and endured since the British colonial days. None of the reform plans addressed the inadequacies of the organisational dimensions of the public administrative system and suggested measures to correct them (GoB, 1977).

6. **Conclusion**

Any reform strategies to be implemented needs adequate commitment and support from the policy makers; action oriented support from the bureaucrats or policy implementers and therefore need to assess what structural, cultural, human knowledge and technological changes are required to support the implementation of such reform. From this perspective, the above discussion find out that the implementation of NPM oriented reform in Bangladesh have failed to bring expected outcomes of NPM principles. The reason behind this failure is associated with the political factors, such as the high degree of clientism, patronization and corruption, misuse of power for personal and political gain by members of the ruling party, as well as lack of political commitment toward implementing reform policies, the bureaucratic domination of the system, centralized decision making process, high power distance work culture as well as protectionist attitude of the civil servant toward implementation of reform, faulty application process of NPM principles which is mostly donor-driven and are reluctantly accepted by the government and state’s tradition of continuing failure to implement policy reforms.
Therefore, to establish efficient and effective public management practice in Bangladesh as well as getting expected outcomes from NPM model, following challenges should be met by Bangladesh public administration.

First, strong commitment from the successive government and political leaders should be demonstrated as they remain apex in the bureaucratic mechanism. Political leadership requires a clear, long-term vision with positive attitude and readiness to accept constructive changes toward establishing an effective public management system. Political leaders in power should not use the bureaucratic mechanism in their favor at the cost of greater benefit of the citizen and constructive political practices need to be introduced instead of confrontational politics which took ugly turns in Bangladesh over a decade.

Second, bureaucrats also need to change their attitude and beliefs and place the people at the centre of the administrative policy framework and for ensuring prompt delivery of services, effective system should be introduced and "client charter" should be displayed in every government office to help the people get service promptly and without any harassment. To make the apparently sluggish bureaucracy dynamic, effective training and evaluation programs should be organized to make them conversant with the modern and efficient public management practices.

Third, participation of civil society should be encouraged. Innovative and citizen-friendly administrative reform ideas could come from these group and they could make headway in pressuring government to implement those.

Fourth, donor agencies either need to understand the local situation before imposing any reform plans or need to be more efficient to pursue their proposed agenda, so that the successive government would be committed enough to implement those reforms.

Fifth, existing local government system should be revitalized to be more functional. A strong local government system can ensure good governance through transparency, accountability, effective participation and equal opportunities for all. It can also lay the foundation for a vibrant democratic system.

Finally, government instrument to control laws and order situation should be strict enough to avoid corruption in administration and punish corrupt behavior neglecting whoever done this. Otherwise, implanting the model of NPM, especially privatization, contracting out, is impossible.

**Future Research**

The present study is confined only to theoretical analysis of some factors affecting implementation of NPM oriented reform in Bangladesh Public Administration. Therefore, based on the model, empirical study could be conducted for future research.

**Reference**


UNDP. 993. Public administration sector study in Bangladesh. UNDP, Bangladesh, Dhaka.

