



# Introduction: Comparative Public Administration

*Murat Önder, Israel Nyaburi Nyadera, and Md. Nazmul Islam* 

The field of public administration is getting more international, supranational, and global nature day by day. With the influence and help of intense data crunching nature, subject and practice of public administration have gained more global perspective. Public administration being an interdisciplinary field by nature has also many dimensions to be considered. Noteworthy, public administration is not only a theoretical discipline, but also a practice that continuously affects our lives. Shafritz et al. (2017) adopt different definitions to capture the richness of “public administration” by clustering them

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M. Önder

Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Bogazici University, Istanbul, Turkey

I. N. Nyadera

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Egerton University, Njoro, Kenya

e-mail: [israel.nyadera@egerton.ac.ke](mailto:israel.nyadera@egerton.ac.ke)

School of International Relations and Diplomacy, Riara University, Nairobi, Kenya

M. N. Islam (✉)

Department of Political Science and Public Administration and Head of Türkiye, Asia and Indo-Pacific Studies, Institute for International Relations and Strategic Research (ULISA), Ankara Yildirim Beyazit University, Ankara, Turkey

e-mail: [nazmulislamglobal71@gmail.com](mailto:nazmulislamglobal71@gmail.com); [mislam@aybu.edu.tr](mailto:mislam@aybu.edu.tr)

Faculty of Communication, Ankara University, Ankara, Turkey

into four main categories. These classifications include political, legal, managerial, and occupational. This book offers to include cultural, religious, and institutional dimensions to better understand public administration comparatively. All these dimensions are therefore captured and addressed together in country case studies section. With the political dimension, we understand that “public administration” is what government does, within its political environment and it is also about doing things that cannot be done well individually but collectively. In addition to the political dimensions, country case studies also cover the nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and civil societies given their growing role in providing public goods. The legal dimension explores the foundations of public administration given that in most jurisdictions foundations of public administration are based on law and are bound by legal decrees. Public administration is law in action in the form of constitutional law, legal statutes, regulations, ordinances, codes, etc. Therefore, our approach also considers the constitutional framework of a country and examines how recent laws and regulations have been influenced by changes in management paradigms. The managerial dimension opens up discussion on the executive nature of public administration which enables the will of the public to be translated into action by the people responsible for running the public bureaucracy. In our analysis, we look at the legislative and policymaking processes and applications, local structures, and functions of public administration in a given country. In the occupational dimension, we examine the nexus between public administration and other occupational fields such as economics, medicine, engineering, and social welfare. Using the cultural dimensions, we encompass reflections of national imprints to the organizing and relations. Religion should not be disregarded when analyzing public administration since it has great influence in shaping the socio-political and cultural dimensions of a country (Islam & Hossain, 2020; Islam et al., 2020a, 2020b, 2021). Religion, despite its significance, we notice that most academic scholarly works tend to disregard its influence. In every country, we can find some strong institutions when we examine their historical experiences—for example, military bureaucracy in Turkey, nobility in England, big companies in USA, and some strong families in Philippines. It is within the framework of each of these fields that the political, legal, managerial, cultural, religious, and institutional aspects of public administration are transformed into practice by public administrators into the work of government.

Comparative public administration as a branch of public administration focuses on comparative analysis of administrative structures, functions, processes, and institutions. Comparison is not a new phenomenon. We have known that early philosophers and scholarly works have used comparative analyses. In its early years as an academic discipline public administration, pioneers in the study of American public administration, including W.Wilson and F. Goodnow, made full use of lens provided in European scholarship (Heady, 2001: 6). However, past and recent studies have drawn substantial inspiration from American models. Continuous search for efficiency and theories of public

administration after 1960s combined with emergence of new trends in public administration with the influence of many schools influenced by managerialism was basic motive in accelerating comparative research. The influence of Comparative Administration Group (CAG) sponsored by Ford Foundation cannot be ignored. The primary purpose of Comparative Administration Group was to formulate a universal comparative theory of public administration. And receiving early and generous funding from the Ford Foundation, which was about half of a million dollars, F.W. Riggs led many fieldworks, research programs, seminars, and experimental research projects (Rathod, 2007: 35). This momentum faced a challenge when the financial support and enormous technical assistance that researchers were getting started to reduce. Heady (2001) uses the honey-pot syndrome, to define the beginning of orthodoxy, with money and professional rewards. However, the problem was bigger than just losing the support of the Ford Foundation support. The underlying story here is that there's a multidimensional history to comparative administration study, and the CAG is just one chapter. There are both foundational ideas and mistakes to draw from evolution of comparative public administration.

Another common complaint about comparative public administration was its inability to build and establish itself as a field of study with a cross-national theory of public administration. Some scholars also criticized comparative public administration and argued that CPA examines the administration of public affairs in capitalist societies and CPA served the purposes of exporting products of capitalist countries together with the export of their administrative systems (Güler et al., 2009: 13–16). Another side of coin, Ford Foundation was accused by investing to advance capitalism as a counterpoint to the spread of Marxism.

One of the most important factor limiting efficient use of comparative study is the fact that administrative experience of different institutions at cross-national, regional, and local levels is based upon judgment of values and cultural bias (Rathod, 2007: 2). Focusing on theory building and generalizability of findings tends to ignore and/or disregard the unique situations in different countries. There are non-Western countries which have been largely ignored by scholars from Western countries because of ethnocentrism (Heady, 2001) or orientalism (Jreisat, 2012). Transplanting an alien administrative institution would be successful only if it is modified to suit the historical and social background of the country in which it is to be adopted (Rathod, 2007: 3). Jreisat (2005) articulates that today's public administration functions in a different time and faces different challenges, requiring new concepts and methods. We have to realize the massive influence of unfolding globalism, and comparative public administration opens the door for effective adjustment and transition from traditional, ethnocentric perspectives to a wider scope that integrates knowledge from various places and cultures (Onder & Nyadera, 2020b; Nyadera & Islam, 2020). Comparative research can also improve our knowledge of the administrative practices and other countries and adopt these practices which can fit better with our own nations.

We cannot fully recognize governmental systems or public administration unless we do know other systems of governmental and public administrations. We can know the basic structures of the institutions of a country and how the various elements of this structure interrelate to establish and implement public policy, but we cannot understand whether the institutions are really efficient, effective, democratic, or ethical without comparing them to the others (Chandler, 2014: 2). Of course, there are no absolute efficiency and effectiveness of public services which make it difficult to discern what could be required to produce perfect democracies or governmental systems. Therefore, it is only possible to make judgment on the effectiveness or ethical acceptability of the governmental systems that govern our lives if we are able to compare them. Different countries' governments might be less or more democratic, efficient, or effective than each other rather than measuring ideal situation. However, we should not lose the reality that comparison is more about a reflection mirror on ourselves, rather than focusing on projecting the said values on others. In other words, the notion that public administration is to be efficient, ethical, and democratic is taken for granted from our view, this is what cultural anthropologists learned in the 1980s.

Recently, cross-national comparative research has been on the rise and this has had an incredible impact on developing public administration theory (Jreisat, 2012; Onder, 2011) by drawing lessons from many different practices. There are various influential factors and justifications in revival and development of comparative public administration after short period of defunct and dispersion (Wart & Cayer, 1990).

1. **Globalization and transnational interactions:** Globalization pressures exerted by various forces have made comparative study more significant and relevant than before. Administrators in varied contexts find themselves working interdependently for the sake of economic cooperation and development, and their work thus increasingly requires awareness of the contexts in which their collaborators operate (Onder & Barış, 2017). This awareness arises most easily from comparative study. It is only through comparative research that we will be able to adopt and legitimize new institutions into current international order. While there are some common factors which may transcend the political, economic, and social context of local and national administration (Onder & Nyadera, 2020a), there are certain other important factors which are shaped by international economic situations (Rathod, 2007: 4).
2. **Social and technological developments** are equally important factors to consider when examining the increasing interest in comparative public administration (CPA) studies. Advancement in information and communication technology, machine learning, and artificial intelligence have made the use of big data more available and easier to analysis (Onder & Saygılı, 2018) in comparative study. Major socio-economic and political data collections, which have significantly improved over time, are now

- also regularly compiled by such institutions as the World Bank (World Development Report since 1978; “good governance” indicators since 1996), (UNDP; Human Development Report since 1990), and Freedom House (Freedom in the World since 1972) (Dirk Berg-Schlosser, 2012: 1). While the data may be more readily available and computerization makes it easier to gather and use the data, analysts need to understand the systems from which they originate to be able to make comparisons.
3. Comparison for the purpose of **prescription and promising practices**. According to P. H. Appleby, comparing and contrasting the administrative setup in different contexts would help to devote commonality of public administration. Students have also been increasingly showing more interest in comparative perspectives which in turn helps to bring richness in public administration learning and teaching. Comparative approach provides depth and breadth, significant for transforming public administration research, theory, teaching (Onder & Brower, 2013), and practices (Aydın et al., 2020). Comparison helps in theory building deductively or inductively by as scholars learn from different experiences. Comparative approach and methodology are central to both practical and academic aspects of public administration. As F. Riggs opines, “All Political Science and any scientific understanding of Public Administration needs to be comparative” (Riggs, 2002 in Otenyo et al., 2006: xxii).
  4. **Interest in good governance** motivates study. The New Public Management, which appeared in 1960s and became popular in the 1980s, has increased its influence on public administration and proposed effective transformation of the traditional public administration in order to achieve active and efficient state. However, after the decline of managerialism impact on public administration and the New Public Management because of critiques after the 1990s due to negligence of democratic processes and values, public service for citizens and the public interest which are main characteristics of the public administration got their legitimacy in the field of interest in good governance. Therefore, governance as an alternative approach has appeared and brought public administration back and closer to political science through what is known as locus and focus debate (Ayhan & Onder, 2017). In contemporary public administrations, governance paradigm has become a more successful approach in the theory and practice. This is because the governance framework brings with it values such as democratic processes, accountability, transparency, active citizenship, negotiation, and dialogues. Governance paradigm has been strongly supported by World Bank and United Nations, and other international organizations by funding governance projects (Yıldırım & Önder, 2019) have motivated comparative public administration research.
  5. As a tool for **self-reflection and theory building**. One of the salient features of comparative approach that is largely overlooked or underappreciated is the benefit it offers especially in reflecting back on what

is missed in one's own setting because it is taken for granted. It's not clear that this has been discussed much in the literature. Weick's (2007) article on the generative properties of richness touches briefly on this perspective. In order to understand and adopt things that are present in other cultures or contexts, it is necessary for us to engage on the richness, perhaps first of the foreign context, and then our own. A debate triggered in D. Lewis' (2015) article on abandoning the parallel worlds where he argues that we need to combine the insights of the two worlds rather than separating them is equally interesting. There are scholars who have emerged to challenge this opinion pointing out that we need to examine the underlying paradoxes, perhaps through an approach at Janus-facing logic (Howcroft & Wilson, 2003). The pursuit of the truth, assuming a singular objective truth, is a positivist orientation that seeks the mean in social conditions and in regression to the mean—and only the mean—in pursuit of generalizability, at the expense of diversity, variation, and richness. We can separate out two orientations pursuing substantialist vs. relational realities. Thus, the pursuit of substantialist mean is accomplished at the expense of considering reflective richness. But, does the relational necessarily provide tools for examining the taken for granted in the way that ethnomethodology does, for example? We need to note that we learn from our mistakes and from others' mistakes. This is a form of reflection.

This book is designed to study comparative public administration with reference to the changing forms and functions of public administration in selected countries. It helps to understand comparative aspects of public administration through the globe with recent developments in the field. The global context, the information revolution, and emerging democratization trends throughout the world starting with the fall of Berlin Wall to Arab Spring and pandemics are continuously reshaping the concept of governance and public management. The rise of economic power of China, struggle to keep the Europe Union integrity, expectation of the Western democracies that the USA maintains its global leadership role, and recent growth of Brazil, India, and Turkey are some examples of emerging powers and current issues. In this mercurial context, this book examines a broad range of issues relating the activities of public administration and governance in international settings. The book is designed to cover the classical concepts of bureaucracy, public policy and analysis, and prevalent research methodology in public administration from the lens of comparative public administration.

We will examine the public administration and related issues in the developing as well as in the developed context, while discussing its institutional embeddedness. In brief, the book provides an intermediate-level knowledge of comparative public administration, globalization, bureaucracy, public policy, country case studies, and comparative research methodology. The focus of attention will be on the methodology and philosophy of comparative public

administration with different cases. At the end of each chapter, key concepts and few discussion questions have been provided to capture main points and issues. The main aim of this book is to update current information about comparative public administration in theory and practices. As an academic discipline, public administration encompasses the study of establishing and maintaining public policy by government agencies, employees, and other stakeholders. We also take into account various applications, practices, and recent developments in different nations with our country case studies.

The summary of **objective of this book** is:

- to inform the students of political science and public administration with the fundamental concepts, definitions, approaches, historical development, and problems of comparative public administration and how they relate to contemporary issues throughout the world,
- to introduce country-specific administrative contexts,
- to obtain knowledge of contemporary global issues of comparative public administration research,
- to review comparative research methodologies and their application to issues of comparative public administration,
- to develop critical thinking skills and a deeper comparative understanding of the studies of human and societal behavior within the context of political science and public administration,
- to provide an opportunity for students to produce a research design for a paper that could evolve into a conference paper or publishable book chapter manuscript, and to get ample feedback on research design and other issues.

## I THE STRUCTURE OF THE CHAPTERS

This book provides historical development, conceptual and theoretical framework, comparative methodology, and features of developed and developing countries' public administrations. It is intended to have three main parts: theoretical and methodological framework of CPA, country case studies, and comparison of country cases across the globe. It is not an idealist comparative book in terms of testing, developing theories, and making inferences based on the similarities and differences tests. It is intended to present structures of different country's governmental systems to show how each particular country's governmental system differs or is similar to others in a predetermined dimensions and comparative frameworks.

Part I deals with the conceptual, theoretical, and methodological framework of comparative public administration. Therefore, it provides common concepts, themes, and theories in the subfield of comparative public administration. Four chapters cover history of comparative public administration,

conceptual and theoretical framework of comparative public administration, and administration of developing versus developed countries.

I. Arefeen, M. N. Islam, and Ahmed. S. in Chapter 2 with title of “[Historical Development and Future Prospects of Comparative Public Administration](#)” seek to study the history of comparative public administration, and they consider some of the main explanations of the followings themes, history of administrative evolution, evaluation of comparative studies, development administration, comparative public policy, and development of comparative administration development and its future. They trace the public administration field to the ancient civilizations. Civilizations around the world had their distinctive public administration system with different nature and feature. They try to explain significance of PA and CPA from the ancient periods of Chinese, Egyptian, and Mesopotamian civilizations to Islamic administration under khalifa-e-Rashedah to Ottoman Khilafat, and, currently, the dominant model of the modern system of public administration in the Western countries has comparative aspects to explore. American, European, Asian, Chinese, Russian, and Islamic administrations have become valuable models/examples of studying comparative public administration in twentieth century and recent decades with the inception of academic courses, methods, and models with emphasizing the empirical concentration. The emergence and willingness to implement new paradigms and reform packages of public administration are notable examples of the current day efforts and the outcomes of the comparative studies. New challenges in public administration are leading scholars to be more comparative in searching new methods and models to meet the needs of the future public administration.

In Chapter 3, “[A Framework for Comparative Analysis: Public Administration Across the Globe](#),” M. Onder and U. N Zengin offer and design comparative framework to study country cases by considering administrative history, central and local governments, civil service systems, nongovernmental organizations, and recent developments and reforms. The comparison identifies similarities and differences as well as highlights successful implementations. There are various approaches and models in comparative studies, such as Weber bureaucracy model, Riggs’ Prismatic model, Downs’ bureau model, Dorsey’ information energy model, and development models. Furthermore, a variety of quantitative and qualitative methods and techniques are used to do this comparison. Creating and doing comparative empirical designs in social sciences might be limited in different social settings such as the equivalence problem. Social, political, and cultural contexts that have significant influence on administrations and institutions might dramatically reduce the reliability and validity of causal inferences. Therefore, drawing a comparative framework sometimes might be an alternative method of comparison where experimentation is not possible, to develop generalizations in research and/or to discover best or unique practices. Good comparison framework is based on previous research and experiences of the scientific community. Paradigms and models



developed by researchers are used as instruments to make healthy comparisons. This chapter aims to provide the most appropriate framework to evaluate how each particular country or administrative system differs or is similar to others. Therefore, it offers country case framework and explains the contents of specific topics, titles, and subtitles commonly used in comparisons to guide writers of country case chapters and make the case studies comparable.

I. N. Nyadera and G. Dagba Chapter 4 with the title of “[Public Administration Features in Developed and Developing Countries](#)” provide fundamental definitions and main features of developing and developed countries with different perspectives and examples. There has been an interesting aspect of comparison that offers a much grander macro-level of analysis between developed and developing countries. This level of comparison offers readers, researchers, and policymakers an important foundation of comparative public administration that will also guide them in understanding specific country case studies. It also offers deeper insight into the relationship between public administration and development. For example, Rostows’ (1990) five-stage development pattern gives a framework for understanding economic growth and the importance of comparing a country’s public administration is equally important. This chapter seeks to explore the relationship and trends between developed and developing countries’ public administration. The chapter begins with examining the characteristics of developed and developing countries in general and then identifies the distinction between the two categories of countries based on the level of professionalism, political distance, adoption of technology, participatory governance, public–private partnership, and degree of training, among others.

In Chapter 5 “[Research Methodology in Comparative Public Administration: Significance, Applications, Trends and Challenges](#),” M. Onder and E. Ayhan focus on comparative methodology in general and comparative public administration methodology in particular. This chapter evaluates the following topics for CPA research: the significance of comparative research, trends, and possible approaches (e.g., systems theory, process tracing), contextuality (e.g., social and political contexts, and integral operating system), use of methodology (e.g., quantitative/qualitative/mixed methods, levels and units of analysis, data collection and analysis), and methodological problems and challenges (e.g., case selection, construct equivalence, causality, value bias, and the availability of data). They warn researchers and students interested in comparative research to be aware of the fact that it is not an easy task to compare more than one country because of various reasons they provide in their chapter.

Comparative public administration as an interdisciplinary nature conceptually and methodologically benefits from other academic fields. Both quantitative and qualitative research methods are welcome to test current theories or build new theories and do in-depth analyses. Comparative public administration scholars as social scientists need to use a number of approaches, methods,

and techniques for the better understanding of the various problems and questions in their fields. Comparative method seems to be not used properly, and systematic knowledge creation is not sufficient in doing research in the field. Scientific study of CPA, like all sciences, requires finding answers for big questions of the field by using the most appropriate approach and methodology to be able to overcome possible challenges that might negatively influence objectivity or confirmability, reliability or consistency, validity or truthfulness, and generalizability or transferability of the research.

In this chapter, therefore, they explain and discuss how to do research in comparative public administration theoretically and as an applied. The chapter wishes to introduce you to the comparative method and related statistical and non-statistical tools in order to help you to reduce these hazards and to develop standards for you and others to gain a more sustainable view on the world. In addition, it provides you commonly widely used research models and designs that help to avoid the mistakes and biases. At the end, they discuss fundamental issues that might have significant potentials in contributing to researchers who seek to fortify theories and practices with empirical findings in CPA research.

The second part of this book focuses on **selected unique country cases** from all over the world best representing their continents. Nomothetic studies of public administration were emphasized here, but descriptive information about unique country case studies was not neglected. In nomothetic studies, traditional way of explanatory but supported by empirical knowledge of the institutions and dynamics of the society under study. The desire to provide a framework for understanding public administration in a wide range of countries is essential in this part of the book. Each country administrative system was written by native (mostly) country specialist/s and researcher/s on comparative studies. In studying country cases, administrative history, political context, constitutional framework, central and local governments, and their civil service system were covered. The impact of dominant recent paradigm, governance on recent reforms, and civil society relations were also studied. Earlier comparative country case studies rather focused on new public management reforms. This book contributes with governance reforms and situation of nongovernmental organizations in a given country.

The third part of this book aims to provide summary of comparison across the globe and finish with concluding chapter for future prospects. In comparative chapter with the title of “[Cross-National Comparison of Public Administration Systems: Selected Cases across the Globe](#),” we (M. Onder, I. N. Nyadera, and N. Islam) intend to provide comparison of selected country cases’ administrative systems; structures, process, and functions based on the comparative framework provided in chapter “[Public Administration Features in Developed and Developing Countries](#)”. Each country case chapter was designed to illustrate and explain a machinery of governments in terms of structures, process, functions, and behaviors in depth. However, the comparative chapter is more than a description of a specific government but aims

to compare countries' public administrations in terms of their administrative culture, structures of central and local governments, civil services, civil society, and administrative reforms voyages. We aim to create a platform for theoretical and practical comparisons between institutional structures, their historical developments, and functions by considering main similarities and differences without ignoring unique traits of them.

In concluding chapter of “[Conclusion: Future Prospects of Comparative Public Administration Scholarship](#),” we provided brief summary of the book, made a general conclusion, and discussed the future prospects of CPA in light of recent developments across the disciplines and world. Rapid and continuous technological developments, the demands of marketization, globalization, democratizations, and civil society have dramatically changed the nature of public administration across the globe (Köylü & Onder, 2017) and fortified the significance of comparison and hence comparative public administration. A global public administration perspective offers more opportunities and clearer understandings of the strengths and weaknesses of public administration process, functions, and global problems. Comparative research provides many advantages thanks to the emerging trends and developments, which will keep and even increase its significance in the development of PA and CPA scholarship in the future. However, comparative research is often blamed with poor accomplishments for lacking a “clear identity” as a practice and academic discipline, being fragmented, and not employing comprehensive methods to create grand theories in comparative administration. Some of the very common general threats and challenges of comparative research are traveling, language, and equivalence problem and data limitations on both the availability and quality. To be able to reply, new demands of the millennium with new technologies and opportunities, future comparative public administration research: (a) need to utilize more systematic and interdisciplinary cooperative efforts, (b) need to incorporate indigenous models and native patterns and applications, (c) need to benefit from cultural and contextual values, (d) need to balance the conceptual and practical concerns of the field, (e) need to develop middle range analysis and models, (f) need to use of multi-case analysis and multi-methods/hybrid methods, and (g) need to establish bigger and better data sets, necessary for a comprehensive comparisons.

This book with its theoretical and country cases will be used for undergraduate and graduate level textbook and a supplementary book for Ph.D. students in public administration, political science, and international relations academic and applied fields. Anyone whose job has something to do with other nations is expected to benefit from the book to understand comparative public administration and other country administrative systems.

#### **Editors**

Murat ONDER  
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