

5

New Public Governance Framework for Developing Local Communities

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Within the South African context, the New Public Management highlighted a number of challenges. In relation to this, the New Public Governance framework has targeted these challenges. This was done by pinpointing the important role of the citizens within governance. In view of our democracy, the citizen is no longer ignored and their contribution to governance is now highlighted as vital. The needs and values of citizens have to not only be highlighted, but also acknowledged in contemporary governance. Steps are being taken away from traditional bureaucratic governance toward more citizen-centric approaches that reinforce a greater element of trust in the government-of-the-day. New Public Governance focuses on people-centred governance. New Public Governance takes away from the sole provision of goods and services that were characteristic of previous government approaches. It incorporates the citizens holistically in government because they interact actively with the government system and by acknowledging the ideas and values of the citizens. In this value-chain, citizens have become co-producers within the communities instead of just being consumers. By focusing on the values, the importance of ethical governance has surfaced. In doing so, the trust in the government of the day can be promoted. A need to contextualise and compare New Public Management and New Public Governance is fundamental as a foundation. In addition, the conceptualisation of values cannot be overlooked. This sets the tone for putting ethical leadership within governance into perspective and guides deliberations on the role played by public trust in developing and uplifting local communities.

Keywords: Ethical leadership, Local, New public governance, Public trust, Values.

Introduction

Public administration in the 21st century is currently undergoing dramatic changes. The changes accompanying contemporary public administration have become increasingly evident in both advanced economies and in many parts of the developing world. The changes espoused in developing constituencies in effort to overcome contemporary democratic challenges have been driven by a combination of globalisation influences and the pluralisation of service provision. Policy problems faced by democratic governments have a tendency to be complex and wicked rather than simple and linear in focus (Robinson, 2015). The influences and complexities in democracies sought new approaches to tackle entrenched democratic challenges. The past two decades in particular have

been indicative of alternatives to classical bureaucratic government. The New Public Management and New Public Governance approaches have emerged as popular alternatives to classical approaches. While both these contemporary approaches exchange lessons and evolve from each other, these approaches are ultimately positioned in a manner to empower democratic governments to tackle the over-arching combination of policy processes, implementation and service delivery complexities (Klijn, 2012).

According to Cropley (2015:5), the "core property of society is that it examines the way people make sense out of their own concrete, real-life experiences ...". Lune and Berg (2017:19) go on to state that "human behavior does not occur on the basis of predetermined lockstep responses to preset events or situations". Thus, the role values and the importance of public trust, qualitative research facilitates the analysis of governance and public leadership from a behavioural science point of view. This encompasses human behaviour and societal contexts as a cyclic and negotiated interpretation of the environment in order to improve local conditions. Mohajan (2018:24) similarly asserts the necessity to interpret citizens' perceptions in their natural environment, giving a snapshot of the local understanding, knowledge and values of the 'citizen' while considering the processes and factors that surface from the circumstantial social setting. Thus, incorporation of the socio-political aspects of values and citizen-focused insights that classify democracy and governance within the South African context are not to be overlooked. Ukwoma and Ngulube (2021:9) capture the essence of using theoretical constructs in generating and shaping "transformative knowledge" of local communities. Consequently, triangulated theoretical constructs provide multiple sets of understanding of the societal phenomena declaring action from democratic governments for transformed local communities.

The Concept of Values

The application of values comes into effect in multiple contexts. Given these multiple contexts that take effect, the generalisation in meaning comes into play. That is, in general terms, values can subsequently mean beliefs, standards, needs, wants or interests. It comprises principles, societal norms and moral obligations (Pauls, 1990:4). Hitlin and Piliavin (2004:360) affirm that values are abstract in nature and are predominantly combined with psycho-social phenomena. They go on to say that values possess cultural and historical "variability in their content". Thus, the role of values within societal contexts are instrumental in developing and advancing communities. On the basis of individual or societal behaviour, normative theories of value apply to the context of democracies. The practical normative theory of value, in particular, is pertinent to government practice as it highlights coherent discourse as the criterion to evaluate individual and social actions that are needed to replace traditional modes of thinking in government (Pauls, 1990:11). The normative approach is functionalist, where culture or community is a determining factor in guiding communal actions. The role and contribution of citizens within democracies are heightened as normative values are "evaluative beliefs that synthesize affective and cognitive elements" that orientate citizens and facilitate their participation in their communities