
China (Hong Kong)**Public Sector Reform in Hong Kong
and Singapore:
Reform Trajectories and Explanations****Anthony B. L. Cheung**

Much of the debate on 'new public management' (NPM) is concerned with its normative superiority, or otherwise, as a model of public sector management over old-style public administration. A growing literature has developed in the West explaining the NPM boom and the political and institutional dynamics behind it. In Asia, the NPM literature is only just beginning to take form. This article adds to this growing 'explanatory' literature by reviewing recent public sector reforms in East Asia (in this case Singapore and Hong Kong). It explores the interface between domestic/national settings and the international NPM trend in terms of the formation of reform strategy and directions; *as well as* the interaction among major policy actors in NPM policy agenda-setting.

It concludes that the Singapore-Hong Kong model of NPM reform in the 1990s is typical of reforms by bureaucrats for bureaucrats through bureaucrats. The bureaucracy-led reform trajectory followed an agenda that sought to enhance public bureaucratic power and competence rather than to denigrate them. The two city states' administrative-state configuration, sustained by bureaucratic paternalism and institutional legacies, has rendered a *bureaucrats-driven* reform almost unavoidable. The politics-bureaucrats bargain has been relatively stable and is not seen to be upset by NPM reforms, although most recently such bargain is beginning to undergo readjustment in Hong Kong.

China (Hong Kong)**Against the Trend: Public Management
Reforms in Hong Kong****Martin Painter**

Has Hong Kong public administration become more 'managerialist'? The answer to this question emerges from a broader inquiry about the pace and direction of administrative reforms in Hong Kong: what factors have influenced the adoption and implementation of measures to improve public management? Rather than 'trend-spotting', the focus is on underlying political and administrative relationships within the reform process. A simple 'demand and supply' model is used to analyze

the 'administrative reform game', with bureaucrats and the political executive as the main players. It is concluded that, while managerialist ideas have been influential in Hong Kong, New Public Management (NPM) practices have not gained a strong foothold. Factors other than those that explain the adoption of NPM measures elsewhere are important in explaining actual reform processes and outcomes. These factors relate principally to the manner in which institutional arrangements and traditions shape the role of the bureaucracy in government. Suggestions are made about how the model might be developed for comparative analysis of administrative reform.

China (Hong Kong)

The Policy Process in The HKSAR

John P. Burns

In spite of some changes to the external environment and modest reform of the accountability system, the past two decades of public policy making and implementation in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) seem to be remarkable for their continuity. The Basic Law, Hong Kong's mini-constitution, gives exaggerated importance to consensus decision-making, which provides strategic veto points for some, especially business, interests. Still, in most cases the civil service has been able to prevail.

This paper compares the public policy process in 2002 to the one that existed in the mid-1980s, as described by Scott (1986). It conceives of the policy process as involving a number of stages ranging from agenda setting and policy formulation and adoption to policy implementation and evaluation. It also considers that different types of policy are characterized by different decision making styles. It is concluded that, while some aspects of public policy in HKSAR have undermined policy coordination, public confidence, administrative capacities, Hong Kong's bureaucratic elite, the administrative officer grade continues to play the dominant role in policy making, although we can see that Hong Kong's policy process has adopted some NPM-like approaches.

Singapore

**The Public Service Commission
in Singapore:
An Evaluation of its First 50 Years**

Jon S. T. Quah

The introduction of meritocracy in the Singapore Civil Service (SCS) can be traced to the establishment of the Public Service Commission (PSC) on January 1, 1951. This article evaluates the PSC's first 50 years by examining the impact of two major changes: the adoption of the shell performance appraisal system for assessing senior civil servants in the SCS; and the devolution of the PSC's functions to the Education Service Commission (ESC) and the Police and Civil Defence Services Commission (PCDSC) in 1990 and the 31 personnel boards in 1995. The PSC's first aim of localizing the SCS was achieved with the attainment of self-government in June 1959. However, the PSC's second objective of maintaining meritocracy in the SCS increased its workload during 1951–1989 through the assumption of the additional functions of disciplinary control and the granting of scholarships and training awards. To reduce the PSC's increased workload, the Public Service Division was formed in 1983, the ESC and PCDSC were created in 1990, and the system of 31 personnel boards was introduced in 1995. However, as the adoption of the Shell system did not accelerate the promotion of high-flyers in the SCS, the government had to rely on salary revision to reduce the brain drain to the private sector from 1972 onwards. While the PSC has succeeded in attracting the "best and brightest" Singaporeans to join the SCS, the special treatment of the scholar-bureaucrats has resulted in serious morale problems among the majority of civil servants, who are non-scholars and low-flyers. The challenge facing the PSC is to resolve this morale problem by minimising the disparity in salaries, fringe benefits, and promotion prospects between the scholars and non-scholars in the SCS.

Singapore

**The Principles and Practices that
Shape Government Procurement
in Singapore**

David S. Jones

The paper examines the practices and principles that have shaped government procurement in Singapore in recent years. It will cover the various stages in the

procurement process from drafting procurement specifications, advertising the intended procurement and informing would-be suppliers, evaluating and selecting tender submissions, drawing up contract details and post-contract adjustments, and dealing with errant or sub-standard suppliers. The paper will consider the principles and issues that shape these processes. They include the promotion of open competition and avoidance of preferential selection and limited sourcing, non-negotiation with prospective suppliers, delegation of procurement decisions to line agencies and ministries (government procurement entities) with minimal of centralised control. Of equal importance is the commitment to high standards of probity involving measures to prevent and detect corruption in the award and drafting of contracts. Some of these principles and practices have been reinforced by Singapore's accession to the WTO Government Procurement Agreement in 1996. The paper will consider the reasons why these principles have been adopted and what drawbacks may arise in their implementation.

Republic of Korea

Measures for the Efficient Management of Quasi-Governmental Agencies

Pan Suk Kim

Many quasi-governmental agencies operate under the umbrella of the Korean government. Such agencies receive contributions, commissions, or support from the government. There are about 500 such organizations operating in support of the Korean people, but they have a poor public image. They are often portrayed in the media as unaccountable and inefficient. They have been criticized by civil society because many quasi-governmental agencies have operated without comprehensive evaluation and monitoring systems. External criticism of the agencies has manifested itself in a demand for management innovation within these agencies. Indeed, the push for reform has expanded to include the governmental agencies as well as the quasi-governmental agencies overseen by the Korean government. In response to the reform movement, the Ministry of Planning and Budget (MPB) has targeted such quasi-governmental agencies for management overhaul. In reality, however, the Ministry can only recommend independent management innovations due to a lack of regulatory authority over such agencies. Currently, the effectiveness of the management innovation efforts undertaken by the government is being hampered by meager legal and systematic support. In order to bolster the government's oversight authority, the MPB drew up a draft "Basic Law for the Management of Quasi-Governmental Agencies." The draft law was prepared with consultation of affected authorities and submitted to the National Assembly in 2002. The purpose of this paper is to review the overall status of quasi-governmental agencies in Korea

and the management challenges they face; to assess similar cases from overseas; and to examine possible measures for more efficient management of these quasi-governmental agencies.

Republic of Korea

Reforming Government with Information Technology: The Korean Style?

Heungsuk Choi

The South Korean government declared an official launch of e-government in 2002. The e-government comprises information systems for 11 major government services. It seemed that building of the e-government became possible as the newly established Special Commission on E-government managed to resolve jurisdictional conflicts between ministries. This study analyzes the politics of e-government undertakings in South Korea. It first describes the development of e-government policy for the past two decades, and delineates some major characteristics of the South Korean e-government policy. The study points out that these characteristics include comprehensiveness, fragmentation, orientation toward operational efficiency and citizen services, and inclination toward new technological solutions. The study then analyses underlying forces at the macro, sub-system, and micro politics levels that lead to those characteristics. The study maintains that heavy involvement of the macro political system, high susceptibility of the macro political system to the expert input, institutional designs of the informatization subsystem have been conducive to those characteristics of the South Korean e-government policy.

China

The New Round of Administration System Reform and Government Function Change

Du Gangjian

Administrative departments have been creating complicated procedures in the administrative system, and it sometimes works for obtaining and keeping the interests of administrative departments. To obtain those profits, they stampede and prohibit market admissions, while it brings unnecessary hindrances to enterprises, to society and to citizens.

For 20 years, government has made several big institutional reforms. Government institutional reform is an important aspect of administration system reform. The reform is brought with the transformation of governmental power. This transformation of power is quite difficult, because these reforms mean taking away the "rice bowls" from department leaders.

This paper will report the trend of current, new round of administration system reform and try to examine its challenges.

Japan

Local Planning at the Crossroads: NPM and Participation in Contemporary Japan

Kengo Akizuki

This chapter focuses on a relatively unknown aspect of Japanese local activity — planning. It illustrates the future possibility and limitation of NPM reform for Japanese localities. The author argues that although today some local leaders try to take advantage of NPM recipe to make its planning more cohesive and strategic, many of those efforts will fall short of expectation, mainly because the localities deeper and longer commitment to participatory causes.