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Guy Peters

Public Policy Studies: Academic Roots and Practical Significance

David Rosenbloom and Mohamed Alaa Abdel-Moneim

What can Arab Public Administration Scholars learn from the Fluidity of the Field in the US Experience?

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Arab Center for Research & Policy Studies

CONTENTS

EDITOR'S NOTE

As *AlMuntaqa* nears the end of its third year, we are looking for ever more ways to be creative and to break new boundaries. In this issue we try a different approach to the journal, by focusing on one topic: Public Administration and Public Policy in the Arab World. Moreover, we are privileged that this issue is co-edited by a special guest, Dr. Mohamed Alaa Abdel-Moneim, an expert in Public Administration in the Arab World. He has not only co-edited the issue but managed to recruit an all-star lineup for the issue including but not limited to Dr. David Rosenbloom and Dr. Guy Peters. We are thankful to Dr. Abdel-Moneim for his valuable contribution as a co-editor, coordinator and for writing two of this issue's studies including its opening study. Moreover, we would like to thank Dr. Rosenbloom for contributing to the issue and for making several valuable comments on some of the studies in the issue. Finally, special thanks are due to Chris Hitchcock for going above and beyond his responsibilities as a translator, and for serving as my right hand despite the complications that have arisen as a result of Covid-19.

ARTICLES

A Critique of Public Administration and Policy Scholarship in Arab Countries

The Benefits of Comparative Analysis and an Agenda for Future Research

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Public Policy   Public Administration   Arab World   Comparative Public Administration

The comparative approach to the study of public administration and policy has started to attract the attention of scholars and academic institutions during the past few decades.[2] Fred Riggs has argued that public administration scholars attempting to generate reliable administrative knowledge have to apply a comparative perspective. The forces of globalization should compel scholars to develop theories of public administration with an "ecological understanding" of government operations.[3] There is a growing consensus that "American exceptionalism" should not restrict the geographical focus and theoretical development of public administration and policy research.[4]

Future generations of public administrators and policy scholars and analysts thus need training that helps them address increasingly complex problems in scholarly analysis and development management, and draw lessons in implementation from different countries with an appreciation for culture and context.[5] As Zemrani, Trent, and Abutabanjeh note in this issue, modern organizations must work effectively with diverse populations and adapt to diverse needs. They need to design culturally competent policies and practices that draw on global experiences with a sensitivity to variations in contexts and local needs.

International societies of public administration and policy, such as the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA) and the American Society of Public Administration (ASPA), have shown attention to comparative studies in public administration and policy. ASPA has established the Section on International and Comparative Administration (SICA), Section on Effective and Sound Administration in the Middle East (SESAME), Section on African Public Administration (SAPA), and many other regional sections, reflecting an awareness of the importance of dialogue among scholars and practitioners who work in different regions to sharing and comparing experiences.

Despite this attention, comparative public administration and policy still has a long way to go in order to establish its presence as a core subject in public administration and policy graduate programs.[6] Out of 296 NASPAA member schools reviewed by Manoharan and colleagues, only 34% offered at least one course in global/comparative public

2   Jamil E. Jreisat. 2005. Comparative Public Administration Is Back in, Prudently. *Public Administration Review* 65(2): 231-242.

3   Fred W. Riggs. 1991. Public Administration: A Comparativist Framework. Guest Editorial: Public Administration: A Comparativist Framework. *Public Administration Review* 51(6): 473-477.

4   Ferrel Heady. 2001. *Public Administration: A Comparative Perspective*. New York: Marcel Decker Inc.

5   Aroon Manoharan, Wendel Mirbel, Tony J Carrizales. 2018. Global Comparative Public Administration: Are graduate programs responding to the call? *Teaching Public Administration* 36(1):34-49.

6   Jamil E. Jreisat. 2005. Comparative Public Administration Is Back in, Prudently. *Public Administration Review* 65(2): 231-242.

administration, and less than 45% of these schools listed the comparative course as a core requirement.[7]

Chinese public administration occupies center stage among the cases addressed in these courses. Other cases include Ghana, South Africa, South Korea, Switzerland, and the UK.[8] Arab and MENA countries are almost entirely absent. As Rosenbloom and Abdel-Moneim point out in their article in this issue, one reason could be the absence of a concrete theory of public administration in the region. Despite the lessons that could be learned from the Arab World, Arab scholars remain largely focused on approaches from the management sciences, and as noted in Al-Mersheid's article, pay little attention to the relationship between research and practice. Another reason for this absence is the lack of rigorous peer review and limited attention to methodological issues.

This issue of *Almuntaqa* focuses on highlighting the general trends in public administration and policy research in Arab countries, particularly in terms of its relationship to the study and teaching of these fields in the US. It draws attention to gaps in analysis and the need to utilize a perspective that understands the diversity and conflicts in these fields of research, while understanding the importance of context to both teaching and research.

Although research in public administration and policy in Arab countries builds on Western sources, it does not pay as much attention to the value conflicts and dynamics that characterize how these fields developed in the West. As such, Arab scholars often present a rather stark, and possibly simplistic, dividing line between politics and administration, with a view of the former as the source of law and the second as the tool of implementation. Another characteristic of this research is the perception of administration as focusing on individual organizations while policy as a field that focuses on analyzing the outcome of political institutions. Little attention is paid to the dialectical relationship between the two fields.

Furthermore, Arab studies tend to perceive the development of public administration and policy as representing a linear path mirroring economic and social changes in the West. As such, little attention is given to the effects of context and culture. Arab scholars and academic institutions therefore need to become more open to learning from comparator countries and engaging in comparative research with colleagues from non-Arab institutions to advance the region's contributions to the fields of public administration and policy and enhance their contributions to addressing real issues.

I begin this article with an overview of the development of the fields of public administration and policy, followed by an overview of Arab scholars' approaches to the development of both fields as well as the main topics under study. Following this overview, I recommend a number of issues that Arab scholars and academics in public administration and policy can focus on in their comparative studies in order to contribute to some of the real needs of reform in the region. I conclude with stressing the importance of understanding context and culture in research and teaching of public administration and policy, and then comment on the main contributions to this issue.

I: Public Administration Studies and the Search for Identity

Public administration, as a discipline with clear boundaries, predates public policy. In the US, interest in the field began to emerge in the late 19th century, in particular with Woodrow Wilson's famous 1887 article, which advocated a separation of politics from administration and the establishment of an independent discipline for the study of public administration as a branch of public sector management studies.[9]

Over the course of the 20th century, the study of public administration had a difficult time positioning

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7   Aroon Manoharan, Wendel Mirbel, Tony J Carrizales. 2018. Global comparative public administration: Are graduate programs responding to the call? *Teaching Public Administration* 36(1):34-49.

8   Aroon Manoharan, Wendel Mirbel, Tony J Carrizales. 2018. Global comparative public administration: Are graduate programs responding to the call? *Teaching Public Administration* 36(1):34-49.

9   Salwa Sha'rawi Jum'a, "Ḥālat ʿIlm al-Idāra al-ʿĀmma fī'l-Qarn al-ʿIshrīn: Ruʾya Naqdiyya", *an-Nahḍa*, Cairo University Faculty of Economics and Political Science, Issue 1 (October 1999), p. 66.

itself among other social science disciplines. It faced a series of existential crises that cast doubt on the usefulness of its work, particularly with regard to its units of analysis and methodological approaches.

In the early years of the century, particularly in the US with the Reform Movement, public administration had concentrated all its efforts on producing a science of government administration that aims at achieving efficiency and effectiveness. During this period, it had enjoyed a stable position as a subdiscipline of political science, and was recognized as such by the American Political Science Association (APSA) on its founding in 1903.[10] But by mid-century, the central hypotheses that had previously underpinned the classical theory of public administration came under attack – in particular the notion of separating politics from administration, and the discipline's ability to produce generalizable knowledge with its focus on organizations and administrative principles.

The first serious criticisms directed at classical public administration appeared in the 1930s. The human relations movement, for example, criticized the emphasis on organizations as the units of analysis, and advocated focusing on the individual as the key actor, arguing that the excessive organizational focus produced a mechanistic and unrealistic conception of how administration works.[11]

While such criticisms were influential, they came from inside the field, remaining true to its general principles of promoting efficiency and effectiveness and the separation of administration from politics. Herbert Simon's suggestion in his *Administrative Behavior* that it is the *decision* and not the organization that is the most worthwhile unit of analysis, represented a more significant challenge to

the discipline.[12] In his famous 1946 article in *Public Administration Review*, Simon criticized the popular "proverbs" of public administration for being based on a set of contradictory principles that are not based on serious research.[13]

This was followed by Dwight Waldo's seminal 1948 work *The Administrative State*,[14] which brought about a veritable paradigm shift in the discipline.[15] Waldo highlighted central hypotheses underpinning Orthodox public administration, critiquing many of them as unrealistic – in particular the idea of a 'neutral' science of public administration, as he argued it ignored the fact that the discipline was governed by the values of the industrial revolution and closely tied to the development of the US from an agrarian to an industrial society. He also attacked the prevailing principle of the separation of politics and administration as unrealistic.[16] These arguments spawned a number of influential schools of research and practice within public administration, including research into representative bureaucracy, street level bureaucracy, political control of the bureaucracy, bureaucratic politics, and the dialectical relationship between democracy and bureaucracy.[17]

Simon and Waldo did not only put an end to the orthodox model's dominance. Their scholarship also raised questions about the utility of public administration research focusing on organizations and its limited epistemological capacity to produce generalizable conclusions. Simon's work, among others, redirected the attention of social scientists away from organizations towards the individual, the decision, and power relations as the units of analysis, in order to produce experimental studies with generalizable conclusions.[18] These developments

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10   Donald F. Kettl, *The Transformation of Governance: Public Administration for Twenty-First Century America* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), p. 9.

11   David Rosenbloom & Howard McCurdy, "Introduction: Dwight Waldo's The Administrative State," in: David Rosenbloom & Howard McCurdy (eds.), *Revisiting Waldo's Administrative State: Constancy and Change in Public Administration* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2006), p. 2.

12   Herbert A. Simon, *Administrative Behavior: A Study of Decision-Making Processes in Administrative Organization* (New York: Macmillan, 1947).

13   Herbert A. Simon, "The Proverbs of Administration," *Public Administration Review*, vol. 6, no. 1 (1946), pp. 53-67.

14   Dwight Waldo, *The Administrative State: A Study of the Political Theory of American Public Administration* (New York: Ronald Press Company, 1948).

15   Paradigm shift in the Kuhnian sense. See: Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago/ London: The University of Chicago Press, 2012 "1962").

16   David H. Rosenbloom and Howard E. McCurdy (eds.) *Revisiting Waldo's Administrative State: Constancy and Change in Public Administration* (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2006).

17   For an overview of the prevailing theoretical approaches to public administration, see: H. George Fredrickson & Kevin B. Smith, *The Public Administration Theory Primer* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2015).

18   Kettl, p. 10.

widened the gap between public administration and other social sciences. Political science, sociology and economics sought to create theoretical models based on large data sets ("large-N research") in order to produce generalizable results with predictive utility. But public administration could not follow this path, because its classical unit of analysis, the organization, does not by its nature come in large numbers, which meant that the available datasets do not allow for statistical analysis.[19]

As a result of these criticisms, a growing conception argued that the field of public administration lacked any scientific basis and was largely impressionistic, public administration research thus began to lose the interest it once had even among practitioners. Indeed, the emergence of public policy as a discipline in the 1960s was part of an effort to create a more scientific field of public affairs, drawing on the principles of microeconomics and statistical analysis rather than the traditional emphasis on organization and workflow.[20]

Public policy formed part of the broader rejection of public administration's epistemological framework, influenced by general epistemological trends present within the social sciences as a whole since the mid-20th century as well as the specific criticisms of writers like Simon. As such, the presence of both disciplines in a given institute or faculty did not mean agreement on methodology or on the objects of research. Case studies and organization-focused research, and later the training of government employees, remained the drivers of research in public administration, while public policy focused on methodologies drawn from microeconomics, statistical analysis, and management sciences.

In approximately the same period, academics within public administration began to emphasize the practical dimension of administrative studies, particularly with regard to training new public sector employees for work in government. The founding of the American Society of Public Administration (ASPA) in 1939 reflected the widening gap between public administration and political science, with the former seeking to carve out an independent niche for itself among the social sciences as a field interested above all in practical results and practical utility.[21]

With the intellectual developments of the 1970s and the rise of right wing governments in the USA and Europe, there was a marked reorientation towards market mechanisms as a solution to public sector problems, an idea which guided many studies and practical efforts at administrative reform during the final quarter of the twentieth century.[22] The importance of these efforts to the renewed interest in public administration studies notwithstanding, they also represented a real challenge to public administration as a distinct academic discipline. One of the field's most influential books of the late 20th century, for example –Osborne and Gaebler's *Reinventing Government*[23] – was the work not of public administration academics, but of a journalist and a former county executive officer.[24]

Nonetheless, public administration scholarship contributed to the ideas and practical applications that drew on these new trends which topped the agendas of many Western governments (and, with regard to economic reform and structural adjustment, in many third world countries as well). At the same time, debate continues among academics, practitioners and international institutions over reforms based on private sector and business management models, which combine elements of institutional reform with efficiency raising based on neoclassical economics and managerialism. Many public administration academics have argued that such reforms are a return to the orthodox model of public administration, with some even referring to them as "Neo-Taylorism" in reference to Frederick Taylor, who laid the groundwork of the discipline in the early 20th century.[25]

In sum, the political, economic, and social environment, as well as the values component, have

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19   Ibid, pp. 10-11.

20   Ibid, p. 12.

21   Ibid.

22   Owen Hughes, *Public Management and Administration: An Introduction*, 2nd ed. (London: McMillan Press Ltd, 2012), pp. 8-51.

23   David E. Osborne & Ted Gaebler, *Reinventing Government: How the Entrepreneurial Spirit is Transforming the Public Sector* (Reading, MA: Addison Wesley, 1992).

24   Kettl, p. 21.

25   Frederick C. Thayer, "Productivity: Taylorism Revisited (Round Three)," *Public Administration Review*, vol. 32, no. 6 (1972), pp. 833-840.

been major determinants of the academic and practical work of the discipline of public administration. Efforts to produce global frameworks and models have remained closely connected to an understanding of environmental factors. The same applies to the field of public policy, despite its efforts to use statistical models to produce more generalizable results, a more in-depth understanding of public policy issues, including the factors determining success or failure, and the ability to evaluate achievements, continues to require case studies assessing the reasons for adoption of particular policies in certain contexts and the results they have achieved.

II: Methodological and Ontological Issues in Arab Public Administration

In the previous section, I gave a brief overview of the field of public administration, the academic sources it draws on, the disputes over normative claims and values that have characterized it, and its shifting relationship with political science and in particular with public policy. I noted that having begun as separate disciplines, public administration and public policy have at times overlapped, but methodological differences have continued to divide them. These differences have not received much attention in the Arabic public policy and public administration literature, although there are occasional references to them.

As noted above, there is a growing recognition that the uniqueness of public administration in the US should not define how research and training is conducted elsewhere in the world, and that reaching generalizable knowledge about public administration and policy requires attention to context and culture. However, many of the Arab studies that have dealt with the development of public administration have focused almost entirely on the development of the field in the US. Salwa Sha'rawi Jum'a's study,[26] for example, traces public administration from Wilson's separation of politics and administration to Simon and Waldo's contributions in the 1950s, concluding with new developments such as the new interest in quality and the expansive use of private sector tools in government work.

Such studies tend to present the development of the discipline in the US as a series of "waves" of research interest travelling in particular directions, each displacing what had come before in a near-linear fashion. The presentation thus focuses on major transformations in administrative thinking based on these waves, which are driven in turn by economic, social, and intellectual waves. The expansion in the role of the state, for example, is linked to the growth of the administrative apparatus and its acquisition of broad developmental and social functions, leading to administrative bloat and subsequently to the prioritization of the values of efficiency and effectiveness. The victory of the free economy, meanwhile, led to a "rolling-back" of the state and thus of its administrative apparatus and a shift towards a state that "steers" but does not "row", as Osborne and Gaebler put it.[27]

But given the dominance of the normative element and the ongoing disputes over values between different schools of thought within public administration, it seems difficult to argue about waves displacing one another. At the height of the "Government Reinvention" and "let the managers manage" boom of the 1990s,[28] David Rosenbloom, the editor of *Public Administration Review* at the time, wrote his "Don't Forget the Politics!" article, in which he considered the political consequences and the constitutional and value-laden issues that should not be forgotten when conducting administrative reform.[29] These

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26   Jum'a.

27   Osborne and Gaebler.

28   Donald F. Kettl, "The Global Revolution in Public Management: Driving Themes, Missing Links," *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, vol. 16, no. 3 (1997), pp. 446-462.

29   David H. Rosenbloom, "Public Administrative Theory and the Separation of Powers," *Public Administration Review*, vol. 43, no. 3 (1983), pp. 219-227; David H. Rosenbloom, "Reflections on 'Public Administrative

Theory and the Separation of Powers'," *The American Review of Public Administration*, vol. 43, no. 4 (2013), pp. 381-396.

ideas resonate with several theoretical and practical studies that have dealt with the new dispute between methodological and practical approaches to public administration in both advanced and developing countries.[30]

Alongside a lack of real effort to engage with the ideological debates underpinning public administration studies internationally, there is also little discussion of the development of the field within the Arab world itself and whether the field has theories rooted in the Arab or Islamic reality. We even find a shortage of Arabic literature looking at the trends and methodologies that predominate in Arab public administration studies. And while Western journals like *Public Administration Review* are replete with studies on the "state of the art" with regard to methodological issues, points of focus and important conclusions,[31] such studies remain rare in the Arab World, restricted to a few articles and doctoral dissertations.[32]

III: Arab Public Administration Research in Comparative Arab Perspective[33]

The values that predominate in the three disciplines that have influenced the field of public administration (political science, management, and law) had a direct impact on public administration studies. There has been an ongoing debate over which of these values should take priority – particularly the values of efficiency, effectiveness, due process and representation – because they can often conflict with one another: Sunshine Laws, for example, may slow down operations, undermining efficiency, while attempts to guarantee fair representation in the bureaucracy for all sections of a diverse society may contradict the principle of meritocracy. Therefore, public administration studies continue to be marked by an overlap of practical questions with normative considerations and disputes over values.

As noted earlier, many specialists in the fields of public administration and policy in the Arab world adopt a linear perspective to describe the relationship between these two fields. This perspective stipulates that public *administration* concerns itself with the functioning of the state's administrative apparatus (government bodies and departments, administrative units, etc.) in order to implement *public policies* effectively and competently.[34] *Public policies* are thus a matter for governments, while the role of the administrative apparatus is limited to "achieving generalized goals by selecting the most appropriate means, making recommendations and proposals concerning how best to achieve those goals."[35] This idea reflects the classical separation between policy and administration adopted by Orthodox Public

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30   See also, for example: Derick W. Brinkerhoff & Jennifer Brinkerhoff, "Public Sector Management Reform in Developing Countries: Perspectives Beyond NPM Orthodoxy," *Public Administration and Development*, vol. 35, no. 4 (2015), pp. 222-237; Graham Harrison, "Economic Faith, Social Project and a Misreading of African Society: The Travails of Neoliberalism in Africa," *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 26, no. 8 (2005), pp. 1303-1320; Abu Elias Sarker, "New Public Management in Developing Countries: An Analysis of Success and Failure with Particular Reference to Singapore and Bangladesh," *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, vol. 19, no. 2 (2006), pp. 180-203.

31   See for example: Krister Andersson, "Commentary - Responding to 'A New Look at Comparative Public Administration: Trends in Research and an Agenda for the Future'," Public Administration Review, vol. 71, no. 6 (2011), pp. 839-840; Richard D. Bingham & William Bowen, "'Mainstream' Public Administration over Time: A Topical Content Analysis of Public Administration Review," *Public Administration Review*, vol. 54, no. 2 (1994), pp. 204-208; Tony Carrizales & Tia Sherèe Gaynor, "Diversity in Public Administration Research: A Review of Journal Publications," *Public Administration Quarterly*, vol. 37, no. 3 (2013), pp. 306-330; Jody Fitzpatrick et al., "A New Look at Comparative Public Administration: Trends in Research and an Agenda for the Future," *Public Administration Review*, vol. 71, no. 6 (2011), pp. 821 -830; David J. Houston & Sybil Delevan, "Public Administration Research: An Assessment of Journal Publications," Public Administration Review, vol. 50, no. 6 (1990), p. 674; Hugh T. Miller & Cheedy Jaja, "Some Evidence of a Pluralistic Discipline: A Narrative Analysis of Public Administration Symposia," *Public Administration Review*, vol. 65, no. 6 (2005), pp. 728-738; Robert A. Stallings & James Ferris, "Public Administration Research: Work in PAR, 1940-1984," *Public Administration Review*, vol. 48, no. 1 (1988), pp. 580-587.

32   See for example: Muhammad Awadh Ali Al-Arabi, "Tawajjuhāt al-Bāḥithīn al-ʿArab fī'd-Dirāsāt al-Manshūra bi-Dawriyyāt al-Idāra al-ʿĀmma al-ʿArabiyya fī'l-Fatra 2000-2011: Taḥlīl Kayfī wa-Kammī li'l-Majāl wa'l-Minhāj", unpublished doctoral dissertation submitted to the Cairo University Faculty of Economics and Political Science, 2014.

33   This section is based on: Mohamed Alaa Abdel-Moneim. 2020. "Abḥāth al-Idāra al-ʿĀmma wa-ʿAlāqatuhā bi's-Siyāsāt al-ʿĀmma fī'l-ʿĀlam al-ʿArabī: Ruʾya Naqdiyya", *Siyasat Arabiya* 42: 7-18.

34   Atiya Hussein Efendi, "Ḥāl al-Maʿrifa fī Majāl al-Idāra al-ʿĀmma", *Aḥwāl Miṣriyya*, issue 2 (Autumn 1998), p. 13.

35   Ibid, p. 15.

Administration, which remained dominant from the late 19th century through to the mid-20th century.

This is not to say that Arab public administration scholars have not paid attention to the dialectical relationship between politics, policy, and public administration,[36] or to the important insights of the three disciplines. They have recognized that the role of public administration is not limited to the implementation of public policy but extends to influencing policymaking and conflict resolution within the administrative apparatus or between different state authorities.

However, a simplified vision of the relationship between the two fields is still prevalent in much of the Arabic literature. It perceives public administration as the interface transforming policy set out by the government (in the form of laws, executive decrees, and regulations) into public products and services. It presents a specific vision for public administration that boils down to ensuring efficiency and effectiveness. It therefore provides a clear idea of what its methodology should be, drawing heavily on management and law (particularly administrative law) and emphasizing quantitative methods as those most capable of producing generalizable principles.

Muhammad Abdelfattah Yaghi has studied the values, topics and methodologies of Arab public administration research. His paper provides a description of various Arab periodicals in the fields of public administration and policy (publisher, study content, the academic background of article authors, etc). Yaghi concludes that public administration topics come third in terms of frequency after economics, and right before business management/law topics.[37] Adel Muhammad Riyan has likewise discussed the use of qualitative and quantitative methodologies in Arab public administration, drawing on a sample of 416 Arabic-language studies. Riyan concludes that most studies use quantitative methods, with the majority covering business management.

Despite the importance of these efforts, they suffer from several methodological problems, not least a lack of clarity, particularly in explaining how they coded the literature – and the lack of a reliable criteria for data collection. More importantly, they lack an ontological starting point that identifies the units of analysis, an integrated vision of the values that should guide administration in the Arab world and how to measure them, and relationships between the administrative apparatus and the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government.

This observation notwithstanding, several Arab studies and academics have presented case studies on public administration teaching and research in the region, either descriptive or prescriptive (prescribing requirements that academic institutions should meet). One trend has focused on assessing particular graduate programs. Zurayk, El-Fadel and Nuwayhid, for example, presented an evaluation of the environmental studies program at the American University of Beirut.[38] Other studies have looked at public administration or public policy programs in a particular country, such as Bremer and El-Baradei's comparison of four public administration and public policy courses at different Egyptian colleges,[39] Ahmad Rashid's study of public policy teaching in Egyptian universities,[40] and Zemrani's review of public policy courses in Morocco also fall within this category.[41]

Another trend has sought to present a broader vision of public policy and management sciences teaching in the Arab World. Ali and Camp, for example, conducted a study of graduate management science programs at eight Arab universities. They conclude that these programs rely on materials and theories that are borrowed or translated from the US – without

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36   Salwa Sha'rawi Jum'a, "Ḥālat ʿIlm al-Idāra al-ʿĀmma fī'l-Qarn al-ʿIshrīn: Ruʾya Naqdiyya", *an-Nahḍa*, Cairo University Faculty of Economics and Political Science, Issue 1 (October 1999), p. 84.

37   Muhammad Abdelfattah Yaghi, *Wāqiʿ ad-Dawriyyāt al-ʿArabiyya al-Mutakhaṣṣiṣa fī'l-ʿUlūm al-Idāriyya* (Riyadh: KSU, 1984). Yaghi's data was collected by sending questionnaires to periodical staff, which raises questions about measurement reliability.

38   Rami Zurayk, Mutasem El-Fadel & Iman Nuwayhid, "The Interfaculty Graduate Environmental Sciences Program of the American University of Beirut: An ESD Initiative in the Arab World," *International Review of Education*, vol. 56, no. 2-3 (2010), pp. 299-314.

39   Jennifer Bremer & Laila El Baradei, "Developing Public Administration and Public Policy Master's Programs in Egypt," *Journal of Public Affairs Education*, vol. 14, no. 3 (2008), pp. 439-462.

40   Ahmad Rashid, "al-Idāra al-ʿĀmma fī'l-Jāmiʿāt al-Miṣriyya", *an-Nahḍa*, Cairo University Faculty of Economics and Political Science, Issue 2 (2002), pp. 63-73.

41   Aziza Zemrani, "Teaching Public Administration: The Case of Morocco," *Journal of Public Affairs Education*, vol. 20, no. 4 (2014), pp. 515-528.

taking into account environmental differences or any real effort to come up with a vision as to how to develop or improve the quality of studies within the Arab context.[42]

In the aftermath of the Arab uprisings that began in 2010, many academics turned to studying the qualitative changes resulting from these developments. Zahra, for example, discussed the opportunities presented to public administration professors by transformations taking place in the region, which allow them to address issues such as entrepreneurship, attracting talent, capital, modern technology, and cutting-edge administrative systems from all over the world.[43]

Still other studies have turned their attention to the challenges that public administration research and teaching must confront given higher popular expectations of bureaucratic performance in the wake of the Arab uprisings. Dina Wafa, for example, suggests how professional public administration

programs could adapt to the events that followed the removal of former President Hosni Mubarak in Egypt, including the need for greater crisis management training. She likewise discusses the need for a more efficient administrative apparatus in the post-Mubarak era, focusing on the role that the American University of Cairo's School of Global Affairs and Public Policy (GAAP) could play in bringing this about.[44]

These studies indisputably helped feed embryonic discussions and debates about the nature of the field, its ontological premises, its methodologies, values, trends and most important contributions. Whether the aim is to address the status of the field or to examine how administrative structures and policy decisions were affected by political developments, Arab scholarship will benefit from comparative analyses and collaboration with researchers from other regions in order to contribute to the region's problems. The following section suggests several areas where Arab scholars can benefit from a comparative perspective.

IV: Comparative Public Administration in Arab countries: An Agenda for Research and Teaching

A comparative lens is indispensable if Arab public administration scholarship seeks to develop either theory or practice. As previously noted, Western textbooks are main resources for teaching public administration and policy in the Arab world, usually American textbooks in the eastern Arab world and French in the Maghreb.

There is a need to combine the study of Western and non-Western administrative models in a way that can better serve the Arab world's socioeconomic and political environments and developmental needs. Administrative systems in comparator countries can provide insights that could help understand administrative behaviors in the region and provide frameworks for analysis.

As previously noted, Western academic institutions are paying increasing attention to administrative

systems in countries such as China, Russia, South Africa, and South Korea. Scholars in the Arab world can explore administrative systems in these and other countries in search for successful reform stories and to prepare students for competition in a global job market and increasingly competitive global environments. They can also help with a better appreciation of the contexts where administration and policy making and implementation take place, hence helping to generate generalizable knowledge. Examples of areas where Arab scholarship and teaching in public administration and policy can benefit from are discussed below.

1. The Role of Technocrats

Politicians, legislators, political parties, and interest groups, among others, play central roles in public

42   Abbas J. Ali & Robert Camp, "Teaching Management in the Arab World: Confronting Illusions," *The International Journal of Educational Management*, vol. 9, no. 2 (1995), p. 10.

43   Shaker Zahra, "Doing Research in the (New) Middle East: Sailing with the Wind," *Academy of Management Perspectives*, vol. 25, no. 4 (2011), pp. 6-21.

44   Dina Wafa, "Egypt in Transition: Responding to Social and Political Changes in Executive Education," *Teaching Public Administration*, vol. 31, no. 2 (2013), pp. 174-185; Dina Wafa, "Capacity-building for the Transformation

of Public Service: A Case of Managerial-level Public Servants in Egypt," *Teaching Public Administration*, vol. 33, no. 2 (2015), pp. 115-129.

affairs in the US and other Western countries. Values conflicts are therefore a key characteristic of the study of public affairs in these countries.

Bureaucracies arguably play a more central role in Arab countries than elsewhere.[45] The value of efficiency is therefore paramount in public administration research in Arab countries, as the article by Rosenbloom and Abdel-Moneim in this issue shows, and approaches from the management sciences are dominant. This reflects a belief that technocrats, or the state bureaucracy, are the key actors in the field. Arab scholars should ask whether this perception is an accurate representation of reality, and search for ways to improve the provision of goods and services, fight corruption, and increase popular participation within the context of a system where technocrats play a central role in the formulation and implementation of public policies.

China could represent an appealing case for Arab scholars and educators interested in examining and drawing lessons highlighting the role of technocrats in economic transformation and how to develop this role. In fact, and especially given its economic growth, global economic presence, and military power, China has already become a destination for public administration and policy students from developed and developing countries.[46]

The Coronavirus pandemic, however, has demonstrated the limitations of both the state-centered model of the US as well as the Chinese provincial model. Guided by the 1990s New Public Management (NPM) movement, the semi-independent states of the US have compiled a web of contract relations with not-for-profit and private actors that have complicated the country's ability to respond to the pandemic. These webs of relationships created incompatible databases and led to an overall fragmented healthcare system. Furthermore, reports of states competing for medical supplies in the open market became a source of serious concern and calls for central government intervention.

Despite its previously global appeal, the pandemic also put the Chinese administrative model to the test. The technocratic managerial elites, perceived as key to leading China's economic reforms,[47] were unable to provide the rapid response that was necessary to control the global pandemic. The failure of the Chinese and US models to present rapid responses to this global crisis is evidence to the fact that intergovernmental coordination and implementation models require a strong central state apparatus and high standards of administrative ethics. Furthermore, the crisis proved, especially in the Chinese case, that technocrats work within a political context and political considerations that interfere with their decisions and values' priorities.

Public administration research and teaching in Arab countries should draw lessons from these experiences, as well as others where technocrats backed by executive support seem to be the backbone of economic and social reforms. Furthermore, Arab scholars and students should address the relationships between technocrats, civil society organizations, and the business community. Given the rise of the role of the military establishment in managing the economy in countries such as Egypt, public administration scholars and students should address the facts and values surrounding this presence, the relationship between military and technocratic elites, and their effects on economic performance, the provision of public goods and services, and the functioning of the markets. Again, comparative analysis could prove very helpful in this area.

2. NPM Reforms

The widespread applications of New Public Management (NPM) reflect the global rise of neoliberal economic policies starting the 1980s. The theoretical foundations of NPM are neoclassical economics, with its belief in market mechanisms and competition, and managerialism, which a number of studies have described as "Neo-Taylorism." In developing countries, international organizations, contractors,

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45   See for example Amr Adly's interesting analysis of the role of the Egyptian bureaucracy in constraining the country's potential for political transition: Amr Adly. 2015. Triumph of the Bureaucracy: A Decade of Aborted Social and Political Change in Egypt. Available through: https://carnegie-mec.org/2015/01/31/triumph-of-bureaucracy-decade-of-aborted-social-and-political-change-in-egypt-pub-58924.

46   Chen Jia and Ding Qingfen. 2010. Overseas officials head to Chinese classrooms. China Daily. Available through: http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2010-08/05/content_11098280.htm.

47   Si Chen. 1998. Leadership Change in Shanghai: Toward the Dominance of Party Technocrats. *Asian Survey*. 38(7): 71-687.

and donor agencies have played important roles in the spread of NPM clones in areas such as education and healthcare, in addition to public sector reform.[48]

Many Arab countries have adopted NPM reforms, with varying degrees of success. The UAE for example, has established a public sector apparatus that is efficient by international standards, while deregulating the economy and expanding the role of free markets in providing public services. In Qatar, on the other hand, the government attempted to overhaul the education system by shifting to a school-based management (SBM) system. The government transformed all public schools into Charter-like schools dubbed "Independent Schools". After 13 years starting 2004 and huge public investment, the lack of capacity and public opposition led to the termination of this reform program and a return to centralized control over schools.[49]

These examples show the need for learning from experiences across Arab countries. Given the similarities between clusters of regional countries, such as GCC countries, experiences in one country should be used as a learning laboratory for others. Policy learning and adoption between Arab countries has occurred since independence around the mid-twentieth century. More recently, the partnership agreement between Egypt and the UAE reflects the willingness to share experience and learn from successful cases in governance and public sector reform.

Many NPM applications have been tested by the COVID-19 pandemic. In the US, as mentioned above, the 1990s NPM reforms created a fragmented web of not-for-profit and private healthcare providers that complicated the response to the pandemic. Calls for the federal government to step in to assist individual states and avoid outbidding drew attention to the need for coordination among subnational entities and public agencies. They also drew attention to the central role of the federal government in this process. Several Arab countries witnessed similar events. In Egypt, for example, the government stressed the role

of the Egyptian Authority for Unified Procurement and Medical Supplies as the sole provider of medical equipment and drugs in order to avoid price speculation.

The challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic only highlighted the value conflicts that characterize public administration and policy research and teaching in the West. This has been especially the case given the rise of the role of the military in the economies of a number of regional countries, particularly Egypt and Algeria. While the executive branch stresses the ability of the military establishment to efficiently allocate resources and implement policies, the political opposition point to the importance of transparency and accountability, as well as adjudication through civilian rather than military courts. These debates are likely to continue in the foreseeable future. Therefore, Arab scholars and students of public administration and policy can learn a lot from these debates and associated empirical evidence from countries across the world.

3. Fighting Corruption

Arab countries have achieved varying degrees of success in fighting corruption and promoting high standards of ethical behavior within their bureaucracies. The UAE has made significant strides in fighting corruption. Its score on the 2019 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) is 71/100, ranking 21 out of 180 countries, making it one of the "cleanest" countries in the region. Despite this achievement, the country's efforts directed at anti-money laundering (AML) and counter-terrorist financing (CTF) are still far from lowering its ML and TF risks.[50]

In other countries, tribal customs, social norms, and sectarian politics have hindered efforts at fighting corruption.[51] The latter factor is particularly clear in the case of Lebanon, where a combination of bureaucratic incompetence and sectarian politics has undermined public trust in the government as well as the bureaucracy. This has manifested in public

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48   Mohamed Alaa Abdel-Moneim. 2020. Between global and national prescriptions for education administration: the rocky road of neoliberal education reform in Qatar. *International Journal of Educational Development* 74(C): 1-16.

49   Ibid.

50   The Financial Action Task Force (FATF). 2020. Anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing measures – United Arab Emirates, Fourth Round Mutual Evaluation Report. Paris: FATF. Available through: http://www.fatf-gafi.org/publications/mutualevaluations/documents/mer-uae-2020.html.

51   John Dixon, Shahjahan Buhyan, and Yılmaz Üstüner. 2018. Public Administration in the Middle East and North Africa. *International Journal of Public Administration* 41(10): 759-764.

outrage against government ineptness as well as bureaucratic corruption – events that preceded the catastrophic 2020 explosion at the Port of Beirut.

There is a lot that Arab scholars and students of public administration and policy can learn from a study of comparative cases in fighting corruption from within and outside the region. Such studies should be guided by an understanding of the social and economic context in order to create paths to navigate these contextual limitations.

4. The Role of E-Government

Investments in e-government have been widespread across the region. In Egypt, investments in e-government aim at providing better services, diversifying the channels of service delivery, and fighting corruption by separating service providers from recipients. Inspired by, and in cooperation with, the UAE, Egypt has created a Government Excellence Award that provides individual and institutional rewards for public service excellence. The "Excellent Institution in Providing Smart Services Award" is one of three other institutional awards. Other countries, including Jordan and Lebanon, have achieved notable successes in providing e-government services.

Public administration and policy research can benefit from exploring the role of policy learning and transfer among Arab countries. Similarly, differences in culture as well as human and infrastructural resources among Arab countries can provide helpful lessons in terms of the arrangements and preparations needed for the success of e-government initiatives, especially in terms of increasing access to public services and the potential to fight corruption.

Conclusion

Arab scholars of public administration and policy need to focus on comparative cases from within as well as outside the Arab region, with a focus on the field's own diversity and value conflicts. This comparative research agenda will help guide theoretical development as well as practical contributions.

The study of public affairs requires an in-depth understanding of the nature of the societies under study. As discussed above, several public administration scholars have noted the absence of a theory of public administration in the Arab World. The teaching of public administration in Arab countries thus continues to rely on Western sources,[52] as the studies reviewed above show. This is one explanation for the limited practical applications of social science research to practical problems in the region, as Al-Mersheid notes in this issue. It also limits the ability to create generalizable knowledge about public administration and policy in the region.

Arab public administration research requires an understanding of how the field have developed in countries other than the US (or France in the Arab Maghreb region, where the French legal model has a clear influence on the study of public administration).

Internationally, countries like China, South Africa, and South Korea have established a presence on comparative public administration courses in Western countries given their global economic and political prominence, as well as their administrative models which present new paradigms to consider. For Arab countries, there is a need to include comparative courses that orient students to lessons that can be learned from comparator countries, especially where specific successes have been accomplished in fields such as education, health care, and economic governance.

This special issue of *Almuntaqa* sheds light on public administration and policy research and teaching in the Arab world. The articles included raise important questions and encourage academics and interested parties in the region to look more closely at the issues and the methodologies used in the study of public affairs, as well as to develop a research and teaching agenda that engages with the points of intellectual and methodological disagreement that characterize this field in the West, while understanding the unique context in the region. This will allow public administration and policy research and teaching make theoretical and practical contributions to the ongoing developments in Arab societies.

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52   Ali and Camp, pp. 10-17.

Guy Peters' paper on the academic roots and practical significance of public policy studies reviews the many forms that studies in the field take –both as an academic pursuit and a technical discipline that has a direct impact on people's lives, whether by influencing government policy or by providing information to citizens allowing for more active participation. He defines the sphere of public policy studies as the sum of all government activities, whether direct or via agents.

In keeping with the aim of looking at public administration and policy in the region from a comparative angle, Peters contends that public policy has a universal dimension that determines the underlying dimensions of analysis, primarily the emphasis on rooting decision-making in solid data and methodologies and the ability to examine the reasons behind adopting a specific policy alternative. However, he also highlights policy studies of a local nature influenced by the nature of society and its political and legal framework. The study lists eight basic characteristics shared by public policy studies, citing experiences and studies from the Arab World.

Meanwhile, David Rosenbloom and Mohamed Alaa Abdel-Moneim trace the intellectual development of public administration in the US. They focus on the common American administrative contention that to understand how public administration works, one must first understand the constitutional separation of powers and the inevitable conflict of values that it produces within the administrative apparatus, a conflict that reflects disagreements between the different ideas and currents animating each of the branches of government. They contend that this has made the boundaries of public administration uniquely fuzzy, with the field drawing ideas and values from a range of different disciplines.

These fuzzy borders have allowed the field a remarkable ability to provide theoretical and practical contributions across different circumstances and different political and constitutional cultures in different countries. In the Arab World, Rosenbloom and Abdel-Moneim argue that it is the methodologies of business management and law that have prevailed, with effectiveness and efficiency held up as the ideals of administration; other values, such as representation and due process, have not received sufficient attention. The study calls for an urgent re-evaluation of the ontological premises of the field and for Arab academics to learn from the fuzzy and disputed boundaries of the field in the US so as to allow the field to contribute to the ongoing political, legal, and organizational transformations in the region.

Finally, a study by a group of North African academics evaluates Tunisian policymaking practice with regard to higher education quality assurance. This study is the product of a research project bringing together scholars from eight Arab countries with the aim of critically assessing public policymaking and practice in Arab countries and suggesting a broad research agenda for future Arab public policy and administration studies. The study deals with the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Authority (IEAQA), focusing on the role of local and international actors in the making and implementation of public policy. It identifies various weaknesses in the IEAQA's quality assurance policies, weaknesses which have impacted negatively on higher education and on other aspects of Tunisian public policy.

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Public Policy Studies: Academic Roots and Practical Significance[1]

B. Guy Peters[2]

The study focuses on public policy studies as an essential pillar of public policy education in academic universities on the one hand, and as an important player in determining the role of the state and government in the field of policymaking on the other. It suggests eight commonalities in the study of public policies, arguing that although public policy making has been influenced by the cultural and social features of the political system, these participants can be presented as a new theoretical contribution to public policy education. It recommends that focus should be on preparing public policy analysis models based on an analysis of the regional context and an understanding of the diversity and impacts of different theoretical contributions in the areas of policy analysis and policy studies.

Public Policy   Policy Analysis   Comparative Policy Studies   Public-private partnerships

Public policy studies exist in many different forms. Most visibly, it is an academic pursuit, with departments and schools of public policy in many universities around the world. Public policy also has an important role in the world of practice, with governments needing to understand the policies they are implementing and to design new and, one hopes, better policies. Finally, although less obviously perhaps, policy studies also exist at the level of the citizen who is the consumer of those policies. But citizens need to be more than passive consumers of policy and should have the capacity to assess the goods and services being produced by governments and advocate for improvements.[3]

If we accept the importance of public policy and policy studies then the next question to be asked is what exactly do we mean by the term "public policy"? There is a widely diffused common-sense understanding of the term, but is there a more precise definition? One standard definition of public policy is "...the sum of government activities, whether pursued directly or by agents, as they affect the lives of citizens". This definition privileges the role of the State in policy and governance more than some scholars might like, but does note that agents are involved, and frequently involved, in service delivery. The most fundamental point, however, is that what really matters is what happens to citizens as a result of the interventions of the public sector (and its agents) into the economy and society.

The development of several lines of inquiry into public policy – policy studies, policy sciences, policy analysis – has contributed to a rich array of studies in a group of related domains surrounding policy. Some, such as policy analysis, focus on the dynamics of the individual policy and attempts to enable the policy maker to make the best choices among a set of available alternative policies. Some such as policy studies are concerned with the success and failure of policies, but also are interested in the reasons that certain policies are selected when governments and their allies are faced with a particular problem. The policy sciences tend to integrate the other two, but also focus on decision-making as choices are made

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about which policies to implement.[4] The distinctions between these different strands of policy research are far from watertight, and may be contested by some scholars, but clearer distinctions between these various disciplines and sub-disciplines need to be made if good policy is to be made clear.

As a contribution to this special issue on public policy in the Arab countries, it is important also to argue that policy studies is at once universal and culture-bound. Many of the models of policy, whether about the assessment of policy or the process by which policies are made are universal: The actors involved may differ, but the underlying dimensions of analysis are the same. On the other hand, however, the way in which policies are assessed, and the interpretations that may be applied to the policies and their outcomes, tend to be embedded in the society and culture. Thus, the policy analyst needs to be very careful when s/he attempts to offer advice about what is a "good" policy or attempts to understand why particular policy choices have been made. Without an understanding of the society, it is very easy to make the wrong decisions, even with policies that appear reasonable in other settings.[5]

The remainder of this essay will develop eight points about the study of public policy. I will be using the term "policy studies" throughout, but all of the strands of thinking about policy mentioned previously will be considered. I will be discussing these eight propositions independently, but it will rapidly become apparent that they are intertwined. Attempting to disentangle the relationships within policy studies, or within any area of inquiry for that matter, is useful for purposes of exposition, but may also attempt to tear apart a complex whole too readily.

These eight propositions about the study of public policy are applicable in almost any setting, although they may be influenced by culture and the social and political characteristics of the political system that is making and implementing the policy. Some aspects of policy are culturally embedded, while other aspects of policy may be more or less universal. The question for the analyst is which aspects are which? The focus of this special issue on public policies in the Arab countries may provide an opportunity to consider to what extent history, culture, social variables and politics influence policy choices and policy success. And the impacts of those social and cultural variables may be even on the way in which policy is conceptualized.

Policy Studies is Academic and it is Practical

The first point about policy studies is that its status as an academic enterprise does not diminish its important practical implications. Indeed, good academic work in public policy will usually have implications for the real work of government. Thus, public policy studies can be conceptualized as a discipline like architecture or engineering, with a strong academic foundation but also with a substantial potential to contribute to solving practical problems. It must be seen as being at once intellectually demanding and substantively useful.

One of the tasks for schools of public policy is training the analysts who will do the policy analysis within government and within think tanks. That training is in academic and theoretical approaches to policy, along with methods that can be used to supply policy analysis to policymakers working in the "real world".

The good student emerging from an education in public policy will know the relevant theory, but will also know when to abandon theoretical speculation and begin to apply the knowledge. This may be true even for students who choose academic careers in public policy who must have one foot, or at least a few toes, in practical policy analysis.

Although both purely academic and more applied studies of policy have an essential place in public policy studies, there is more than a little tension between them. The academic version of policy studies is interested in explanation, and often is retrospective. At least when practiced by political scientists and by public administration scholars, academic research is less interested in the details of costs and benefits in economic terms and more interested in the political and social costs and benefits. In other words, these

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4   This to some extent reflects the role of Harold Lasswell and his advocacy of the policy sciences.

5   See the discussion below on policy transfer and "evidence-based policy".

disciplines (see below) want to know how politics and society shape policy and its implementation.

Usually described as policy analysis, the more applied version of policy studies may be somewhat less interested in the correlates of choice than it is with the correlates of success. The policy analyst is less interested in why a policy was selected than if it will work once it is selected. Thus, this strand of policy studies is inherently prospective, and must have strong theories about the ways in which policies (and the societies and economies within which they are implemented) function to be able to make their analyses and make their predictions.

Policy Studies Involves Insights from Other Disciplines

Leaving aside the question of whether policy studies itself constitutes an academic discipline, public policy has a number of dimensions, and consequently, policy studies is informed by a variety of different academic disciplines and approaches. The effective student of policy studies will therefore have to have some acquaintance with a range of academic approaches. He or she may be, and indeed should be, strongly grounded in one discipline but need to be able to integrate findings from others into their research on policy.

My own discipline, political science, has a great deal to say about public policy. That is perhaps natural since political science explores how the public sector functions, and the processes through which legislation is adopted.[6] As well as examining the processes by which policies are made, political science also attempts to explain the choices that governments make, using a variety of political and social variables. And a burgeoning body of literature examines how the agendas of government are determined, and which issues are addressed and which are not.[7]

Economics constitutes a second foundation for policy studies. Many of the techniques central to policy analysis, e.g. cost-benefit analysis, are based on the utilitarian logic of economics. These methods that utilize a common measuring rod for public program based on money enable the policy analyst to compare policies and help decide which will be of greatest benefit for society. While some argue that the monetization of the outcomes of public programs is misguided and ignores many important features of public action, economic analysis of policies remains central to studying public policy. Economics has also supplied analytic perspectives such as principal-agent models and transaction cost analysis that can aid in the design of public programs.

Mathematics and statistics have also contributed to the study of public policy. The contribution of these disciplines is both in providing means of measurement and analysis and in supplying ideas about the design of programs. The first set of contributions may be rather obvious, involving the use of statistical analysis in particular, to analyze the possible causes of desired outcomes of policy interventions and to evaluate the success of programs. The second sort of contribution involves approaches such as game theory that enable modeling of decision contexts that may enhance the capacity to design programs.[8]

Economics, along with mathematics and statistics, are perhaps especially important in public policy studies because they permit the modeling of the future impact of policy interventions. Economics provides a strong theoretical base for such models, and its assumptions about the behavior of individuals in society when faced with certain incentives and disincentives permit more prospective analysis than might be possible for other approaches. And obviously mathematics and statistics provide the techniques to develop and to evaluate those efforts at modeling future impacts of policy choices.

Public management and public administration are also important for public policy. Any policy that is formulated and adopted will have to be implemented, and if the designers of programs do not take into account sufficiently implementation questions their programs will be more prone to failure. Within many

6   Birkland, T. A. (2015) *An Introduction to the Policy Process*, 4th ed. (New York: Routledge).

Jones, C. O. (1984) *Introduction to the Study of Public Policy*, 3rd ed. (Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole).

7   John, P. (2006) The Policy Agendas Project; A Review, *Journal of European Public Policy* 13, 975-86.

8   McCain, R. A. (2009) *Game Theory and Public Policy* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar).

academic institutions, policy administration and public policy are closely linked, but there are also approaches that denigrate the public administration and focus only on the more "scientific" economics and statistical issues rather than the more unruly issues of actually making a program work.

Students of public policy ought also to have some grounding in law. In all societies, public policies are generally written as law, so simply being able to convert policy ideas to viable legal statements is important. And understanding law will also help understand the administrative process, perhaps especially the process of writing secondary legislation necessary for implementation.

Policy scholars, and perhaps especially policy practitioners need to have a grounding in philosophy, and particularly ethics. What is a good policy? Is it more than just one that creates the greatest economic benefits for society, regardless of the distribution? Questions such as these illustrate how and why analysts need to be prepared to bring a set of principles to bear when thinking through policies. Some classic studies of policy issues, e.g. Calabrese and Bobbitt have built on ethical challenges facing decision-makers in the public sector, and the ethical challenges for policy will only become more pressing as continued austerity, demographic changes and technology require thoughtful decisions about complex issues.[9]

Finally, it is imperative that policy studies are informed by the academic disciplines that are concerned with policy problems–policy analysis requires substantive policy knowledge. Policy analysts involved in health policy, for example, would be well served by an understanding of public health issues and the structure of the medical industry. Without this substantive knowledge, they can make some very fundamental mistakes when designing programs. Some aspects of policy analysis are fungible across policy fields, but many are not, so the task of the analyst is to bring policy analytic expertise to bear in a field that is already crowded with experts.

Policy Studies Is an Approach of its Own

Although policy studies has borrowed a great deal from other academic disciplines, it also has a distinctive set of questions and approaches of its own. These go beyond the rather obvious focus on policy and the emphasis on decision-making about policy to include specific bodies of research that are in some ways the core of policy studies. Other disciplines will have something to say about these research questions, but the bulk of the discussion has been among policy scholars themselves.

One of the most distinctive elements in policy studies is the study of policy instruments.[10] Although this focus of policy research has some roots in economics and in political science, it has developed more autonomously within policy studies.[11] Like so many other aspects of policy studies, there are different perspectives on instruments. For example, some approaches have focused on catalogs of instruments and attempts to detail the choices available for policymakers. Others have examined the way in which those decisions on instrument choices are made.[12] Still other components of the instruments literature attempt to link instruments with political and social forces operating within the policy process.

A second distinctive element of policy studies has been the emphasis on policy problems. To attempt to improve the economy and society, governments and their allies must solve problems, but to do that they must understand the nature of the problems. While there may be "solve leverage" gained by using common sense functional names for policy problems–health, infrastructure, etc.–more leverage

9   Calabrese, G. And P. Bobbitt (1978) *Tragic Choices* (New York: W. W. Norton).

10   Hood, C. (1984) *The Tools of Government (*Chatham, NJ: Chatham House).

Salamon, L. M. (2002) *The Tools of Government: A Guide to the New Governance* (New York: Oxford University Press).

Lascoumes, P. And P. Le Gales (2007) Introduction: Understanding Public Policy Through its Instruments–From the Nature of Instruments to the Sociology of Public Policy Instrumentation, *Governance* 20, 1-21.

11   Kirschen, E. S. (1964) *Economic Policy in Our Time* (Amsterdam: North Holland).

12   Linder,S. H. And B. G. Peters (1984) From Social Theory to Policy Design, *Journal of Public Policy* 4, 237-59.

can be gained by thinking about the problems in a more analytic manner.[13] For example, does the problem involve public goods or private goods? How complex is the problem? These analytical categories can be linked, at least to a limited degree, with the design of interventions by government.[14]

"Wicked" problems are an important subset of the problems faced by the public sector in a number of countries and may require more detailed attention. Although there are a number of characteristics that describe wicked problems in full, the fundamental notion is that it is difficult to identify causation, or even to define the problem in any definitive manner.[15] These problems are also linked with other problems and differentiating those issues can be difficult or impossible. To those difficulties for policymakers scholars have added the problem of time and the absence of governing institutions to create "super-wicked problems".[16]

The study of wicked problems is not important only because of the interesting name; the category of problems grouped as "wicked" represent the most difficult challenges for contemporary governments and includes issues such as climate change, poverty, and obesity.[17] In addition, these problems lead the policy researcher on to thinking about problems of complexity in policy problems, and the policymaking process.[18] Most of our thinking about public policy is linear, while the world is often extremely non-linear: in other words, small changes in one variable may produce large and unruly changes in other variables. Consequently, many of the most important problems facing governments entail a fundamental rethinking of our conceptions of policy and policy analysis.

Evaluation research is a third distinctive element of social science research within policy research.[19] Although evaluation research has roots in academic disciplines such as public administration and sociology it has developed and flourished within policy studies.[20] As the name implies evaluation research is dedicated to assessing the impacts of public policies and using that information to improve policies. Although many of the research techniques used in evaluation research are similar or identical to those used in other social sciences, the questions being asked may not be. For example, for a good evaluation researcher it may not be sufficient to know if a particular intervention was successful, he or she would want to understand the unintended consequences as well, and include them in the analysis.[21]

Public Policy is a Game many People Can Play

Up to this point, the discussion of public policy has been more centered on government than might be true of actually policymaking and implementation in the real world, or in much of the academic literature on public policy. Public policy commonly involves some relationship between State actors and the private sector, whether market or not-for-profit. It is, however, generally useful to begin with the formal policy activities of the State and then see what other actors are involved. After all, public policy depends on the authority of the State, regardless of what entity may actually be making and implementing the policy.

But even with a legitimate and effective State for making public policy, involving private sector

13   Hoppe, R. (2010) *The Governance of Public Problems: Puzzling, Powering and Participation* (Bristol: Policy Press).

Peters, B. G. And J. A. Hoornbeek (2017) Understanding Policy Problems: A Refinement of Past Work, *Policy and Society, forthcoming*

14   Peters, B. G. (2018b) *Policy Problems and Policy Design* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar).

15   Rittel, H. W. J. and Webber, M. M. (1973) Dilemmas in a general theory of planning. *Policy Sciences* 4, 2, 155-169.

16   Levin, K., Cashore, B., Bernstein, S. and Auld, G. (2012) Overcoming the tragedy of super wicked problems: Constraining our future selves to ameliorate global climate change. *Policy Sciences* 45, 2, 123-152.

17   The concept of wicked problems has become extremely popular, and any number of problems that by no means meet the criteria for "wickedness". See Candel and Peters (2017).

18   Geyer, R. And S. Rihani (2010) *Complexity and Public Policy* (London: Routledge).

19   Vedung, E. (2007) Policy Evaluation, in B.G. Peters and J. Pierre (eds), *Handbook of Public Policy* (London: Sage)

20   Freeman H.E. and Rossi P.H., and Wright, S.R. 1980. *Evaluating Social Projects in Developing Countries*. Paris: OECD.

21   Sieber, S. D. (1980) *Fatal Remedies: Dilemmas of Social Intervention* (New York: Plenum).

actors in the policy process is still common and even necessary. Many of those organizations have substantial legitimacy of their own and can also provide public sector decision-makers with information that can improve the quality of policy. The State can also coopt private actors, making them in part responsible for the policy and minimizing future opposition. Finally, involving the private sector can reduce costs for the public sector and leverage private resources and expertise.

The means for involving the private sector in public policy are numerous, and in some instances rather complex. At the stage of policy formulation and design a number of advisory committees can structure the provided inputs from social actors, and think tanks often linked with political parties or interest groups also become involved. There may also be mechanisms for ordinary citizens to make comments on proposed legislation in open hearings and the like. The most powerful example of such mechanisms is clearly the referendum.[22] All of these mechanisms may help improve policy, and also improve the democratic nature of policymaking.

The role of the private sector in implementing policy can be even more important than that for policy formulation. Many public policies are contracted out to private sector actors, whether market or non-market. These services may range from protective services, e.g. private prisons to the full range of social services including health and education. Public-private partnerships may also be used to implement and perhaps to design, public policies. The modern State is much less a direct provider of public services than the designer and source of funds of those services,[23] and therefore to understand policy one must additionally understand the role of the private sector.

A number of Arab countries have achieved progress in establishing PPPs and improving the contribution of the private sector in providing public services, such as the United Arab Emirates. Private corporations play an increasing role in providing security services for public entitites and even in providing troops in military combat. Again, the UAE provides an interesting example. This reliance raised its own questions marks regarding public accountability and human rights.

The role of the private contractors, including international consultants, received its share of scrutiny in the countries that utilized this approach. One clear example has been the implementation of School Based Management (SBM) in Qatar – a project that was contracted to RAND Corporation. This project raised unfamiliar public opposition and open criticism of the government educational policies for reasons that range from capacity limitations that affected implementation, to fears of cultural invasion and diluting the Islamic and Arab character of the country. After 13 years between 2004 and 2016, Qatar's public school system reverted back to centralized control by the Ministry of Education.

Making and implementing public policy using the private sector assumes, of course, that there is a viable private sector, just as it assumes there is a viable State. Both assumptions may be incorrect. In many developing societies the civil society is weak and does not have the proliferation of not-for-profit organizations, other than perhaps religious organizations, that are so much involved in public policy in developed systems. And likewise the market may be weak and poorly organized, meaning that many means of delivering services such as contracting out will not be viable. And those deficiencies may be faced within the context of a weak state in which effective policymaking is already difficult.

Policy Studies Should be Comparative

Most policy studies are conducted within a single country and for a single policy question, or within a single policy domain. This narrow focus of policy

research may make a good deal of sense for more practical studies of public policy, attempting to provide the best answer for a policy question facing a

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22   Qvortrup, M. (2018) *Referendums Around the World (*London: Macmillan).

23   This corresponds to the advice coming from the New Public Management that government should "steer and not row". That is, governments are better at setting goals than they are in actually delivering the policies.

government. For the academic pursuit of public policy, however, such a narrow focus is much less desirable. The world constitutes a natural laboratory for public policies, and by comparing policy interventions made in different settings there is the opportunity to develop stronger theoretical understanding of how public policies perform.

Comparison should not be limited to comparison across political systems.[24] Comparisons across policy domains can also be useful for understanding what factors influence the success or failure of public programs. Gary Freeman has argued that the differences across policy areas are often more significant than the differences across political systems.[25] Take for example, a policy domain such as health that is dominated by skilled professionals and serves the entire population as compared to a domain such as social welfare that has less powerful service providers and serves only a relatively disempowered segment of society. The politics will certainly be different, as will the patterns of provision.

The use of comparative evidence from other political systems, and to some extent other policy domains, has become all the more important as "evidence based policymaking" has become a popular approach to designing public programs (Pawson, 2006).[26] While one would hope, and expect, that all policymaking is based on evidence, this phrase has come to signify greater attempts to use evidence coming from policy interventions made in other settings as guides for policymaking. This evidence not only can guide better policymaking but can be a means for policymakers to ensure that their own interventions appear validated by experiences elsewhere.

But comparative policy analysis is not easy, and successful evidence-based policy may be even more difficult. To do comparative policy analysis requires both a strong foundation in policy studies and also some understanding of comparative politics and/or comparative sociology. What factors in the political and social systems are likely to influence the adoption of certain types of policy, and their level of success once adopted? There are numerous examples of failures when attempting to copy policies and make them work in different settings, most based on faulty assumptions about the generality of incentives and motivations for individuals across cultures.[27]

This special issue is dedicated to public policy in the Arab countries, and as such may provide an important opportunity to think about learning and policy transfer. This opportunity is available both within the countries of the Arab region as well as between the Arab region as a whole and the remainder of the world. Examples of policy learning within the region are plentiful. Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries share similar policy directions because of both policy transfer as well as regional competition. Economic liberalization and education decentralization are important examples that deserve further examination. Recently, Egypt has started its Government Excellence Award building on the experience of, and technical support from, the UAE.

Learning and engaging in reform experiments based on international practices are also widespread. The Arab Maghreb region is clearly influenced by Europe as well as other regions. Egypt's education reform strategy in 2017 builds on cooperation with international partners such as the UK and the World Bank, in addition to consultants and international corporations such as Pearson. Qatar's neoliberal education reform experience, which was originally designed by the RAND Corporation and ended up in 2016 with the return to the Ministry of Education (MOE) system, should draw attention to the importance of surveying and understanding the local context as a pretext for successful reform.

For the latter part of the exercise, developing some idea of what the essential elements of policy and policymaking are in Arab countries[28] and then attempting to see how they compare with what are the apparently dominant ideas about policy in other countries could be important for comparative analysis.

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24   Comparisons across subnational units within a single country can also be useful, especially in federal regimes where the states or provinces have a good deal of autonomy to make their own policy choices.

25   Freeman, G. P. (1985) National Styles and Policy Sectors: Explaining Structured Variation" *Journal of Public Policy*. 5, 467-496.

26   Cairney, P. (2016) *The Politics of Evidence Based Policy* (Berlin: Springer).

27   Batory, A, A. Cartwright and D. Stone (2017) *Trial and Error: Policy Experiments, Failures and Innovation in Central and Eastern Europe* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar).

28   For some idea of principles that may guide policy and administration in Arab countries see Samier (2017).

This might be done first for non-Arab, majority Muslim countries such as Indonesia and Pakistan before being expanded to include a broader cross-section of states. Again, this comparison could inform both academic theory and more practical policymaking.

In summary, although there are many challenges in learning effectively about policy across political systems, there are also many potential benefits from investing in learning from other policymaking systems. Rather than having to confront every new policy challenge with a tabula rasa the policymaker can learn from the experiences of others, provided he or she learns carefully. Meanwhile, the academic student of policy can also learn more about what patterns of causation, or at least of association, exist, and how our theories and analytic schemes can be improved through comparison.

Policy Studies Should be, at Least in Part, Prospective

As mentioned above, the policy analytic strand within policy studies is very much future-oriented. The work of the policy analyst is in large part to advise policy makers which policies would be most likely to solve the policy problem at hand. That does not involve looking into some crystal ball but rather the application of social science models and methods to predict the consequences of an intervention. This prediction of future consequences has obvious perils but is necessary if governments are to make informed decisions.

But even the more academic approaches to public policy have begun to think seriously about policies prospectively. I say "begun" but there has been some interest in policy design in this strand of policy research for some time.[29] The earlier design literature, and indeed much of the contemporary discussion of policy design, has focused on how best to link policy instruments with policy problems.[30] This literature has been somewhat technocratic, with an assumption – implicit or explicit even – that it may be possible to develop an algorithm that maps instruments into problems and provides the designer a clear and effective solution for the problem.

Some of the newer design literature in public policy has, however, moved away from the technocratic approach that uses engineering as an exemplar to think about policy design as analogous to the design of a product. The exemplar here may come more from the arts than from engineering. For example, much conventional design has emphasized narrowing

choice until some final decision is made, but the newer design literature argues for focusing more on broadening the range of options to be considered.[31] Similarly, rather than focusing on an individual policy, or even policy domain, the new design literature attempts to expand the analysis and to link any newly designed policy with relevant policies in its own and surrounding policy domains.

The new policy design approach is very appealing intellectually, but it also may be difficult to implement politically. Political leaders want, and need, answers for their problems. They expect their policy analysts to provide those answers and not to be spending their time generating more choices rather than narrowing the choices. Further, those policymakers may want very specific answers for very specific questions rather than more diffuse answers that cover the interactions of a range of policy areas. While the new policy design methodology may ultimately produce better answers, it may not do so in the timely manner that the policymakers would desire.

Whether the approach to policy design is old or new, the need for policy scholars to think about the future is inherent in the craft. While it is important to understand the political dynamics involved in the creation of a policy, and to understand policy history, policy analysis is about thinking about the future. Even if the policy scholar is attempting to understand the past, s/he should be thinking about what can be learned to make future policies more effective,

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29   Linder,S. H. And B. G. Peters (1984) From Social Theory to Policy Design, *Journal of Public Policy* 4, 237-59.

Bobrow, D. And J. S. Dryzek (1987) *Policy Analysis by Design* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press).

30   Howlett, M. I. Mukherjee and J. J. Woo (2015) From Tools to Toolkits in Policy Design Studies: The New Policy Design Orientation Toward Policy Formulation Research, *Policy & Politics* 43, 291-311.

31   Peters, B. G. (2018b) *Policy Problems and Policy Design* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar).

or what can be done to make the policy process function more effectively. Again, the academic and the practical aspects of public policy studies are, and should be, closely intertwined.

Policymaking Never Ends

Much of the literature, and the practice, of public policy appears to assume that each policy is being written on a *tabula rasa*. Although each policy is designed to meet the particular needs of the time, and even if it is successful at that time may well require revision and reform. Most policymaking is remaking existing policies, based on changing circumstances, changing political priorities, or new ideas. In some ways the remaking of policies is easier than actually making a truly new policy. The issue has already been accepted on the policymaking agenda and there is some general understanding of the issue. On the other hand, however, there are interests – clients and government employees – who may have a vested interest in the existing policy and may feel threatened by attempts at change.

The experimental nature of public policy is central to the continuous nature of policymaking. Although politically it may be necessary to advocate policies as if they were the definitive solution for the problem being addressed, the policymaker and the analyst would be aware that many policies are in essence experiments.[32] In policy domains such as social policy, and even climate change, the knowledge of causation and of the complex interactions among variables is so weak that decision-makers are essentially experimenting. Their experiments are done in good faith, may be based on some evidence, and it is hoped that they will, but they remain experiments.

The continuous process of policymaking is a means of learning and refining policies. Following from the (almost inherently) experimental nature of policies, policymaking must be open to refining policies, and remaking policies, more often than might be hoped by policymakers and by citizens.[33] But having the openness and the capacity to refine policies should produce better outcomes for citizens. That said, politicians often can make more gains for their careers by advocating new and (presumably) innovative policies, rather than engaging in the difficult work of refining existing programs.[34]

Policy Studies is a Normative Enterprise

When going through the catalog of disciplines that are related to public policy studies I mentioned the importance of philosophy and ethics. It is crucial to understand the normative nature of public policy studies, and the need to integrate moral reasoning into any analysis of policies.[35] Alan Meltsner once argued that policy analysts who did not have their own values and did not use them when working on policy issues were only "baby analysts".[36] The adult analyst will be conscious of his or her own values and use them to assess policy proposals.

Public policies always involve values. They involve advantaging some portions of the society and imposing burdens on other members of society, usually the taxpayer. Deciding on social policies involves deciding how much government values the well-being of less affluent citizens relative to the well-being of more affluent citizens who will be paying taxes to support the programs (Hills, 2017).[37]

32   Campbell, D. T. (1991) Methods for the Experimenting Society, *American Journal of Evaluation* 12, 223-60.

van Egen. N., L. Tummers, B. Bekkers and B. Stein (2016) Bringing History In: Policy Accumulation and General Policy Alienation, *Public Management Review*, 18, 1085-1106.

33   Carter, P. (2012) Policy as Palimpsest, *Policy & Politics* 40, 423-43.

34   The continuing attempts to "repeal and replace" the Affordable Care Act in the United States is a good example. For ideological as well as political reasons members of Congress have invested thousands of hours attempting to repeal the Act rather than working to make it perform better.

35   Klimczuk, A. (2015) Public Policy Ethics, in D. Wright, ed., *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences* (Oxford: Elsevier).

36   Meltsner, A. (1976) *Policy Analysis in the Bureaucracy* (Berkeley: University of California Press).

37   Hills, J. (2017) *Good Times, Bad Times: The Welfare Myth of Them and Us*, rev. ed. (Bristol, Policy Press).

Deciding on defense policy involves values of security and safety, as well as fundamental issues of war and peace. Normative concerns are much more difficult to quantify than are the economic values that tend to dominate the consideration of public policy, but they are no less real.

Policymaking does involve values, and it almost always involves favoring one set of values at the expense of others. When any significant policy is being considered the values of the actors involved will almost inevitably clash. Consider, for example, the array of think tanks that dot the landscape in Washington and in other national capitals. Within these organizations there are advocates of programs within the same policy domain that have very different values and based on those values also have very

different solutions for the problem being addressed. No analysis of the costs and benefits of the programs is likely to be able to resolve those differences–they are much more fundamental.[38]

And perhaps the most important normative feature of policy studies is the commitment to solving public problems. While policy studies can be an interesting academic exercise, its ultimate goal is to improve the lives of citizens, whether in one nation or more broadly across the world. The tools that have been developed for analysis can be used to assess the best ways to make those improvements, but regardless of the methods the purpose of public policy studies is elimination, or at least amelioration, of problems facing societies. In this sense policy analysis is apolitical, although the final choice of the policy will be intensely political.

Summary and Conclusions

This paper illustrates an attempt to present some of the central features of public policy studies, and to demonstrate how policy research is developing, and should develop. This is true for the Arab world, and indeed for any other setting. Policy research both borrows from other academic disciplines and adds its own unique features to produce a comprehensive approach to the problems facing society. Policy studies is also both retrospective, attempting to explain outcomes; and prospective, attempting to shape those outcomes. Policy studies is a complex and multi-faceted field of inquiry that has some elements that may appear contradictory.

Scholars of public policy in Arab countries need to understand that policy studies are culture-bound. Therefore, they need to develop models for policy analysis, both retrospective and prospective, based on analyzing the context in the region. Arab scholars also need to understand the diversity of influences and richness provided by the variety of theoretical contributions to the fields of policy analysis and policy studies, mainly political science, economics, ethics, public administration and policy, and statistics. In this endeavor, there is a need to draw lines between universal and culture-bound approaches to analysis.

The complexity and the internal tensions are to some extent what give policy studies its strength and its dynamism. The interplay between academics focused on theory and analysis and applied analysts focused on questions of "what works?" can enhance both strands of thinking. That said, getting the two communities to come together and to collaborate may be easier said than done. Each will stereotype the other in rather unfortunate terms and may contest the control of the field. But the opportunity for cross-fertilization of academic and applied approaches to policy research is there for the taking.

For all its virtues, policy studies can never be a panacea for all the problems confronted by present-day societies. Policy analysts can advise decision-makers about the benefits and costs of policy options, and perhaps also generate some of those options, but policy analysis cannot make decision-makers select the best option. Any number of other factors–ideology, partisan politics, personal preferences–can and do intervene to produce less desirable policy choices. As Aaron Wildavsky argued some decades ago, the task of policy analysts, and the discipline of policy studies, is to "speak truth to power", but power will not necessarily pay attention.

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38   Cost-benefit analysis itself, and indeed almost all economic analyses of policy, involve values in an implicit manner. These analyses are utilitarian and assume that consequences–measured in financial terms–are more relevant than other types of values. See Sunstein (2013).

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Don't forget Law and Politics!

What can Arab Public Administration Scholars learn from the Fluidity of the Field in the US Experience?[1]

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This article looks at why Arab public administration scholarship has lagged behind the needs of political and administrative reform and situating public administration within the context of political governance. This article draws insights from the development of the field in the US experience, its fuzzy boundaries, and value conflicts resulting from the three tributaries that have fed into its structure and content, namely law, business administration, and political science. The study concludes with a discussion of how different origins and political context have meant public administration research in the Arab world is disconnected from the ontological and methodological diversity that contribute to the richness of the field in the US experience.

Public Administration   Arab World Bureaucracy   Law   U.S. Public Administration

The Arab world is going through turbulent times. What appeared to be pro-democracy popular uprisings in late 2010 ended up with civil wars, unrest, and stalled transitions. The field of public administration could provide valuable contributions to the process of peaceful and democratic transition, building independent and representative civil service, and guaranteeing citizenship rights.

However, public administration scholarship from the region failed to address the needs of transition, and presenting insights into the values' conflicts that generally accompany such periods. Therefore, a UNDP report noted that, although the failure of policy reform was an important factor behind the so-called "Arab Awakening", studies and technical support provided to Arab countries in transition remain focused on building electoral institutions, writing constitutions, settling conflicts, and reforming security sectors[4]. On the other hand, the public administration and policy dimensions remain precariously missing[5].

This article sheds light on the reasons behind the lag of Arab public administration scholarship behind the needs of coping with the questions of political and administrative reform, and situating public administration within the context of political governance. This article draws insights from the development of the field in the US experience, its fuzzy boundaries, and value conflicts. We conclude with a discussion of how different origins and political context detached public administration research in the Arab world from the ontological and methodological diversity that contribute to the richness of the field in the US experience.

We argue that two main factors can help us understand this situation where public administration research is detached from the political developments in the region. First, the origins of public administration research in the Arab world in the managerial sciences created a focus on the values of efficiency, while the multiple foundational streams for the field in the US experience created fuzzy boundaries that encouraged contestation over values, methods, and ontology.

Second, the rather autocratic political context in the region, characterized by a convergence of power within the executive branch, created a view of the bureaucracy as an elitist arm of the executive used to maintain social control. As such, the politics-administration relationship found more attention in the field of political science. Questions relevant to public administration and politics did not acquire enough attention. These questions include issues related to accountability, governance, political control, bureaucratic representation, and bureaucratic values.

For the sake of clarity, we begin with standard definitions of public administration. We then move to a review of its main underlying feature, which is that it is inherently normative and lacks consensus regarding what its dominant values should be or how they should be conceptualized and ranked in terms of importance. Next, we review the main influences on the field and its development in the Arab world. In this review, we focus on both the theoretical foundations and political context. We end with a brief conclusion noting that, although public administration's intellectual crisis cannot be resolved, it offers a dynamic degree of fluidity enabling public administration continually to adjust to changing conditions, ideologies, and the ordering of value preferences. In order to be better able to contribute to a coherent understanding of governance, politics, and values in the public sphere, Arab public Administration scholarship needs to address these terrains.

Definitions

Public administration is generally thought of as "the action part of government, the means by which the purposes and goals of government are realized."[6] Sometimes it is considered a design science of means, analogous to engineering or medicine. At the same time, however, others contend that it is inherently political in the sense of participating in the formulation and implementation of public policies. They reject the notion that public administration serves as a "transmission belt" for mechanistically transforming policy inputs into outputs and outcomes. Perhaps foremost in the rejection of the transmission belt model is research on "street-level" administration by police, teachers, social workers, and inspectors. It is now widely recognized that street-level administrators make public policy through their collective enforcement decisions. The same is true of other public administrators, though it may be less visible.

Another point of diversion relates to precisely where public administration fits as an academic subject. Whereas many contributors to the field view public administration as a social science, others consider it an art, craft, and philosophical endeavor. This disparity leads to a divergence over methodology. Those in the social science camp assert that quantitative methodologies, especially regression analysis, best serve progress in developing public administrative knowledge; those viewing public administration as art, craft, and philosophy argue that qualitative methods, such as case studies and historical institutional and interpretive research are most suitable to building knowledge in the field. These positions have largely fractured what had previously been a relatively unified field into two distinctive approaches, public management and public administration. Public management is a narrower approach focusing on cost-effective achievement of agencies' core mission objectives. Public administration continues to focus on that but also considers public administration's roles in nation building, governance, and promotion of broad political values including transparency, representation, participation, and human rights.

To the extent that academic public administration has a dominant framework, it consists of the three overarching competing perspectives of management, politics both in the sense of policy and the arrangement

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6   John J. Corson and Joseph P. Harris, *Public Administration in Modern Society*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963).

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and distribution of political power, and law. Within this framework, public administration is comprised primarily of the academic disciplines of management, political science (including public policy studies), and law. However, it also draws substantially on economics, history, communications, sociology, and other social sciences. Its major contribution as a field of study is to integrate knowledge from these disciplines by building theories and identifying techniques for effective government action. As noted, though, "effective" is subject to multiple values and definitions.

Because the range of public administrative action is extensive, reaching into almost every province of human concern, public administration is sometimes considered coterminous with civilization. Consequently, it incorporates normative and cultural dimensions including the study of public values and comparative government. In the 1930s, "efficiency" was considered "axiom number one in the value scale of public administration." While efficiency remains central and is frequently the default value when we lack a consensus on how public administration should operate, today it competes with a host of political and governmental values. Consequently, the boundaries of public administration as a field of study and practice are very broad, unfixed, "fuzzy," and overlapping with multiple other disciplines.

Public Administration's Normative Problem

In 1947, the famous American political scientist Robert Dahl challenged the notion that public administration could be a science. He argued that public administration is inherently normative, culture bound to an unknown extent, and difficult to study scientifically because it is based on human behavior. Here, we are concerned with the first of these challenges, that public administration has embedded normative dimensions at its core. Dahl contended that "[t]he first difficulty of constructing a science of public administration stems from the frequent impossibility of excluding normative considerations from the problems of public administration." He supported this observation by noting that "The doctrine of efficiency... runs like a half-visible thread through the fabric of public administration literature as a dominant goal of administration". [7] This was exemplified by Luther Gulick's claim that; "In the science of administration, whether public or private, the basic 'good' is efficiency".[8]

Dahl offered no remedy for freeing public administration of its embedded normative values and none has been found, though not for want of effort by those who define the field as the social science of public management. As recently as 2015, Richard Stillman, another major contributor to the field, calls on us to "notice the glaring, often unarticulated, normative questions" in the work of some of today's leading public administration and public management scholars. Echoing Dahl, he claims, "No matter what new categories, language, or methodologies spring forth, none escape the nagging BIG value dilemmas inherent within" many contemporary areas of public administrative inquiry.[9] In short, Dahl's contention "that the study of public administration must be founded on some clarification of ends" remains pertinent.[10]

The normative problem deepens when one considers focusing the study and practice of public administration on efficiency. In 1948, Dwight Waldo, perhaps the major public administrative thinker of the second half of the twentieth century, asked "efficient for what? Is not efficiency for efficiency's sake meaningless?"[11]. Similarly, Marshall Dimock, also a twentieth century leader, noted "we do not want efficiency for its own sake" [12]. We may want

7   R.A. Dahl, "The Science of Public Administration: Three Problems", *Public Administration Review, 7*(1), 1947, 1-11. doi:10.2307/972349

8   L. Gulik, "Science, Values, and Public Administration", in: L. Gulick & L. Urwick (Eds.), *Papers on the Science of Administration* (New York: Institute of Public Administration, 1937), pp. 191-195.

9   R. Stillman, "Foreword", in: M. E. Guy & M. M. Rubin (Eds.), *Public Administration Evolving: From Foundations to the Future* (New York and London: Routledge, 2015).

10   Dahl, ibid.

11   D. Waldo, *The Administrative State: A Study of the Political Theory of American Public Administration*, (New York: Ronald Press Company, 1948).

12   M.E. Dimock, "The Study of Administration", *The American Political Science Review, 31*(1), 1937 28-40. doi:10.2307/1948041

public administrators to be efficient in everything that they do. Yet, we also must recognize that there are huge tradeoffs between efficiency and the pursuit of other values. For example, in Western legal systems, procedural due process is notoriously inefficient. It involves adversary hearings or trials presided over by neutral hearing examiners and judges, delay, expense, and often convoluted rules of evidence that seemingly defy commonsense. Similarly, freedom of information requirements in the U.S. and elsewhere divert resources from agencies pursuits of their missions and involve appeals and litigation. "Representative bureaucracy," which values administrative recruitment and selection procedures that generate civil services which demographically look like the societies they serve and regulate, can conflict with merit systems devoted to bringing the most talented—read "efficient"—personnel into public bureaucratic positions. On a simpler level, efficiency can also conflict with its "sibling" value of economy, depending on the scale of activity. A pen can be less efficient though more economical than a word processing if one only writes a couple of letters a year.

Such tradeoffs present an insolvable problem because the spectrum of public values is very extensive. Jørgensen and Bozeman compiled an inventory of public values based on 230 public administration/public management studies. They identified 72 values and placed them into seven categories as follows:[13]

Public sector's contribution to society: common good, public interest, social cohesion, altruism, human dignity, sustainability, voice of the future, regime dignity, regime stability.

Transformation of interests to decisions: majority rule, democracy, will of the people, collective choice, user democracy, local governance, citizen involvement, protection of minorities, protection of individual rights

Administrators and politicians: political loyalty, accountability, responsiveness.

Relationship between administrators and environment: openness-secrecy, responsiveness, listening to public opinion, compromise, balancing of interests, competitiveness-cooperativeness, stakeholder or shareholder value.

Interorganizational aspects: robustness, adaptability, stability, reliability, timeliness, innovation, enthusiasm, risk readiness, productivity, effectiveness, parsimony, businesslike approach.

Behavior of public employees: accountability, professionalism, honesty, moral standards, ethical consciousness, integrity.

Relationship between public administration and citizens: legality, protection of individual rights, equal treatment, rule of law, justice, equity, reasonableness, fairness, professionalism, dialogue, responsiveness, user democracy, citizen involvement, citizen's self-development, user orientation, timeliness, friendliness. (Redundancies have been omitted).

Not all of these public values are central to the activities of all or most public administrators and their agencies. Zeger van der Wal et. al. added to the study of public administrative values by analyzing both the literature on administrative ethics and public administrators' ordering of work related values. Their ranking of the ethics literature is:[14]

1. Honesty

2. Humaneness

3. Social Justice

4. Impartiality

5. Transparency

6. Integrity

7. Obedience

8. Reliability

9. Responsibility

10. Expertise

11. Accountability

12. Efficiency

13. Courage

14. Prudence

13   Torben Beck Jørgensen and Barry Bozeman, "Public Values: An Inventory", *Administration and Society*. *39*(3), 2007, pp. 354-381. doi:10.1177/0095399707300703

14   Z. Van Der Wal et al, "Central Values of Government and Business: Differences, Similarities and Conflicts", *Public Administration Quarterly*, *30*(3/4), 2006, pp. 314-364.

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15. Serviceability

16. Cooperativeness

17. Responsiveness

18. Dedication

19. Effectiveness

20. Innovativeness

21. Lawfulness

22. Loyalty

23. Consistency

24. Autonomy

25. Stability

26. Representativeness

27. Competitiveness

28. Profitability

29. Collegiality

30. Self-fulfillment

Van der Wal's ranking based on a survey of Dutch practitioners is: [15]

1. Incorruptibility

2. Accountability

3. Honesty

4. Lawfulness

5. Reliability

6. Transparency

7. Impartiality

8. Expertise

9. Effectiveness

10. Dedication

11. Serviceability

12. Efficiency

13. Collegiality

14. Responsiveness

15. Innovativeness

16. Social justice

17. Obedience

18. Self-fulfillment

19. Sustainability

20. Profitability

Note that efficiency ranks twelfth on both of van der Wal's lists, strongly suggesting that it is no longer axiom number one in public administration, if it ever was. Similarly, Jørgensen and Bozeman include several surrogates for efficiency, such as effectiveness, sustainability, reliability, parsimony, and professionalism.

Given this extent of value pluralism—and Jørgensen and Bozeman's and van der Wal's analyses are based only on the public administration literature in English—how can thinking about public administration's normative dimension be productively framed? Although it has limitations, as noted earlier, the dominant approach is to organize values according to three dimensions of public administration: management, politics/policy, and law. These dimensions are relevant to all public administrative systems in developed nations though their content and weight vary from regime to regime. Public administration inherently involves executive (management), political/policy (legislative), and legal *functions*, however they may be arranged.

In separation of powers systems, each of the functions may be subject primarily to the authority and values associated with separate branches of government. In the U.S., for example, management falls within the purview of the presidency, politics/policy with the legislature, and law within the courts. Because U.S. public administration manages the execution of the law, engages in policymaking and politics through the distribution of burdens and benefits in rulemaking and budgeting, and adjudication of individual cases, the separation of powers collapses into administrative operations and is subject to supervision by all three constitutional branches of the government. In non-separation of powers systems, administrative agencies engage in these functions to one degree or another and are subject to different supervisory arrangements. In China, for example, the judiciary is relatively much less prominent in public administration than in the U.S. Supervision is by the

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15   D. Jelovac, et al, "Business and Government Ethics in the "New" and "Old" EU: An Empirical Account of Public - Private Value Congruence in Slovenia and the Netherlands", *Journal of Business Ethics, 103*(1), 2007, pp. 127-141.

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Communist Party, and is diffused throughout the national, provincial, and local public bureaucracies.

The key to the management-politics-law framework is that the functions of execution (implementation), politics/policy, and law are associated with values and those values drive their organizational structures, views of individuals and the public, cognitive approaches or ways of knowing, decision-making, and budgeting and personnel systems. For instance, in the U.S. execution values cost-effectiveness and responsiveness to customers, politics and policymaking emphasize the importance of representation, responsiveness, and accountability, while adjudication looks toward constitutional integrity, procedural due process, equal protection of the law, and robust individual civil rights and liberties. These values drive execution to be organized in a businesslike manner, politics/policymaking to value organizational pluralism in the sense of broad representation of the public and overlapping and competing missions and jurisdictions, whereas adjudication is organized according to court-like adversary procedure headed by neutral decision makers. Execution views individuals and the public as cases and customers, politics/policymaking looks at them as members of groups such as women, farmers, small business persons, and minorities, and adjudication considers individuals as unique individuals per se or members of a class of litigants.

Cognition also varies with execution valuing science, experimentation, and performance as the basis for determining what is correct, politics/policymaking emphasizing agreement among stakeholders and public opinion as a basis for knowing, and adjudication using inductive case analysis, deductive application of established legal doctrine, and normative reasoning.

In terms of decision-making, the respective approaches look toward administrative performance, Charles Lindblom's "muddling through" model, and reliance on legal precedent in an incrementally developed case law.[16] For budgeting, the three approaches are performance-oriented, incremental distribution of burdens and benefits, and rights funding. For personnel, execution emphasizes merit, politics/policymaking, social representation, and adjudication

values equal and fair treatment of public employees and a broad array of rights for public employees.

It is important to emphasize that the values associated with management, politics/policy, and law may be in tension or conflict with one another. This is probably inevitable in separation of powers systems and, perhaps to a lesser extent in parliamentary democracies and developed authoritarian governments. Yair Zalmanovitch finds beneficial "trialectic" synergy in the interaction among the management, politics/policy, and law approaches.[17] For instance, the U.S. administrative system is highly tolerant of conflicting missions, competitive relationships among agencies, agency independence, and litigiousness. Though appearing chaotic elsewhere, these qualities are suitable for a separation of powers system and pluralistic political culture. The give and take among the three approaches is viewed as functional in promoting democratic-constitutional governance. In China, by contrast, a greater emphasis is placed on unity, harmonious relationships, and upstanding cadre behavior in the national effort to promote further economic development and reduce or eliminate corruption and other forms of maladministration. Nonetheless, though execution dominates and administrators make policy, currently, there is a strong effort to advance rule by and rule of law within Chinese administration.

There is a great deal we have yet to study and learn about public administration. Its complexity and contradictions are daunting. However, advancement requires recognizing that it cannot usefully be reduced to a single value, set of values, or approach. The problem of its value pluralism and multiple competing perspectives must be met head on.

With this broad overview of public administration and its central normative challenges, we now turn to studying the nature of public administration scholarship, its dominant values, and understanding of the nature of administrative phenomena in Arab countries. This overview is based on reviewing the available literature published in Arabic, as well as reviewing articles published in 2017 in the *Arab Journal of Administration.*

16 Charles E. Lindblom, "The Science of "Muddling Through"", *Public Administration Review. 19*(2), 1959, pp. 79-88. doi:10.2307/973677.

17 Y. Zalmanovitch, "Don't reinvent the wheel: the search for an identity for public administration", *International Review of Administrative Sciences, 80*(4), 2014, pp. 808-826. doi:10.1177/0020852314533456

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Public Administration in the Arab World: the lost boundaries!

There is a belief among Comparative Public Administration scholars that Arab countries have generally been left out of this field of research, to the extent that some scholars have argued that there is no theory of administration in the Arab world.[18] This observation arguably manifested itself following the Arab popular uprisings starting in late 2010. There is growing perception that the field had played no significant role in providing roadmaps for building functional and independent civil service, or helping during periods of transitions. The UNDP report cited at the beginning of this work highlights this point.

As an academic discipline, Public Administration in the Arab world started as a branch of law, particularly administrative law, and the earliest journals publishing articles in administrative sciences in the region starting the late 1950s were law journals.[19] The origins in law is not unique to Public Administration scholarship in the Arab world. It is possible, however, that the continued dominance of legal approaches did not allow for expanding the research focus into issues related to public administration and the constitution, separation of powers, the role of courts, the implementation of judicial decisions, and other issues that have the potential to create the knowledge necessary for administrative scholarship to respond to changing conditions.

Management sciences also played an important role in the early stages of Public Administration scholarship in Arab countries, especially through journals published by schools of Commerce. In 1952, the Faculty of Commerce at Cairo University issued the first widely recognized Arab journal with a focus on administrative sciences, titled "The Journal of Economics, Politics, and Commerce." The 1970s witnessed a further expansion of journals

that specialize in administrative sciences. Again, schools of Commerce pioneered many of these journals. The business administration focus of these journals directed attention toward issues related to organization, organizational behavior, and human resources management.[20]

The origins in law and management, accompanied by less attention directed to the relationship between politics and administration, led to a focus on the study of the management part of government, with a particular focus on efficiency as the motto of the public sector. A PhD dissertation in Cairo University reviewed empirical research published in a sample of 13 Arabic journals of Public Administration between 2000 and 2011.[21] The study found that the majority of authors in these journals specialize in business administration (48%), followed by public administration (24.9%). Regarding the studies that focus on public administration, the plurality focus on organizational behavior (27.2%), a field that crosses the interests of public and business administration.

A related observation concerning Arabic language research in Public Administration is that there is actually little focus on administrative issues as opposed to other fields such as economics and business administration. A number of studies have noted that public administration topics represent a minority in Arab journals that focus on administration sciences.[22] On the other hand, articles that focus on economics usually represent a majority, followed by Public Administration, Business Administration, and Law.[23]

We corroborated these findings through our own analysis of all studies published in the Arab Journal of Administration in 2017. This journal is the official publication of the Arab Organization for

18   E. Dedoussis, "A cross-cultural comparison of organizational culture: Evidence from universities in the Arab world and Japan". *Cross Cultural Management: An International Journal, 11*(1), 2004, pp. 15-34. doi:10.1108/13527600410797729; P. Iles et al,"Managing HR in the Middle East: Challenges in the Public Sector", *Public Personnel Management, 41*(3), 2012, pp. 465-492. doi:10.1177/009102601204100305

19   M. K. ElKariouty. *Muqaddima fī'l-Idāra al-ʿĀmma* (Amman: Dar Wael For Publishing and Distribution, 2012); M.A. Yaghy, *Wāqiʿ al-Dawriyyāt al-ʿArabiyya al-Mutakhaṣṣiṣa fī'l-ʿUlūm al-Idāriyya* (Riyadh: King Saud University, 1984).

20   M. A. A. Al-Araby, *Tawajjuhāt al-Bāḥithīn al-ʿArab fī'l-Dirāsāt al-Manshūra bi-Dawriyyāt al-Idāra al-ʿĀmma al-ʿArabiyya fī fatrat 2000-2001m: Taḥlīl Kayfī wa-Kammī li'l-Majāl wa'l-Manāhij* (Cairo: Cairo University, 2014).

21   Ibid.

22   W. I. A. AlHindi, "Wāqiʿ Buḥūth al-Idāra al-ʿĀmma fī Majallatay Jāmiʿat al-Malik Saʿūd "al-ʿUlūm al-Idāriyya" wa-Jāmiʿat al-Malik ʿAbdulʿazīz "al-Iqtiṣād wa'l-Idāra": Dirāsa Taḥlīliyya", *al-ʿUlūm al-Idāriyya*, 7(1), 1995, pp. 99-139.

23   Yaghy, ibid.

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Administrative Development, an affiliate organization of the Arab League. The dataset of 46 articles shows that the plurality of authors comes from the field of Business Administration, followed by Finance. The majority of articles that could be defined within the field of administrative sciences focuses on either organizational behavior and management, or human resources/personnel management.

The units of analysis in Arabic language research in public administration is often the individual, and most studies use quantitative methods.[24] We also corroborated this finding through our review of articles published in the Arab Journal of Administration. According to the logic mentioned earlier, this could be a reflection of a perception of public administration as a social science. According to another perspective, this trend could be a reflection of the relative ease of using quantitative methods by Arab scholars, especially give the lax peer review processes.[25]

The focus on the individual as the main unit of analysis in Public Administration research published in Arabic also reflects the lack of attention to organizations, organizational environments, and the role of intra- and inter-institutional relations. This observation should direct attention to the need for broadening the methodological and theoretical starting points of Arabic language research to include approaches from political science and law, especially to be able to provide advice to countries going through different transitions such as Tunisia, Egypt, and Syria.

The Normative Question

Unlike what we have seen in the previous discussion of Public Administration in the US, normative questions found little attention in the Arab world. A number of Arab governments have published codes for professional and ethical standards expected from public employees. Such codes are familiar in different parts of the world, and represent an approach to guarantee ethical standards of public service. One interesting observation about this code in the Egyptian case published in 2014, for example, is that it makes no reference to human rights, protecting whistle blowers, or questions of administrative discretion. The code reflects an orthodox separation between politics and administration. The Egyptian code include the following principles, which reflect the values of the public sector as prescribed by the government:[26]

1. Respect for the law

2. Neutrality

3. Integrity

4. Diligence

5. Effectiveness and Efficiency

The stated values miss reference to such values as humaneness and social justice, which reflect administrative discretion, and the need to direct the public employee's discretion toward serving the public. Furthermore, these values also miss reference to the business part of government, which has gained attention in recent values' surveys in Western countries as highlighted above. These values include responsiveness, innovativeness, and competiveness. These omissions reflect an orthodox prescription for public service as a design science of management, and public service as a "transmission belt" for implementing public policies.

The Kingdom of Bahrain has also issued a code for professional behaviors and public sector ethics. Similarly, the code mentions five principles, which reflect the prescribed values of public service (Public Service Authority - Kingdon of Bahrain, 2016):

1. Respect for the law

2. Neutrality

3. Integrity

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24 A. M. Rayyan, *Istikhdām al-Manhaj al-Kayfī wa'l-Kammī fī'l-Baḥth: Dirāsa Istiṭlāʿiyya li-Wāqiʿ Adabiyyāt al-Idāra al-ʿArabiyya*, paper presented at the the Third Arab Conference on Administrative Research and Publishing, Cairo, 2003.

25 Ibid; Editorial Board, "Taḥrīr Dawriyyāt al-Idāra al-ʿArabiyya al-Muḥakkama", *al-Majalla al-Maghribiyya li'l-Idāra al-Maḥaliyya wa'l-Tanmiya* (32), 2000, pp. 113-120.

26 Egyptian Ministry of Planning, *Mudawwinat al-Sulūk al-Waẓīfī li'l-ʿĀmilīn bi'l-Jihāz al-Idāri li'l-Dawla bi-Jumhūriyyat Miṣr al-ʿArabiyya* (Cairo: Ministry of Planning, 2014).

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4. Diligence

5. Economy and efficiency

The almost identical wording in both documents of the values that should exist in public service reflects the similar origins of public administration among Arab countries. It also reflects a dominant discourse that could have spread because of the influence of scholars from a limited number of Arab countries, mainly Egypt, Syria, and Iraq.

In line with the social science perspective, as opposed to the normative perspective, prevalent among Arab scholars of public administration, the majority of studies addressing public sector values in the region aimed at describing the prevailing values rather than prescribing what these values should be. While we can infer efficiency and effectiveness to be the number one mottos of public administration scholarship in the Arab world, there has been a more conscious effort to pinpoint other prevalent values in Arab bureaucracies and among Arab bureaucrats. A good deal of attention focused on the role of culture and Islam in determining the values of Arab bureaucrats.[27]

Studies published between the 1970s and 1980s seem to reinforce some of the stereotypes surrounding the Arab culture, and hence Arab bureaucracies. A number of studies stressed the rigidity and excessive centralization in Arab bureaucracies, as well as low productivity.[28] There seems to be a level of agreement that certain characteristics of Arab culture have direct effects on the behavior of managers in the region. These characteristics include power deference, uncertainty avoidance, and need for affiliation. These characteristics generally result in nepotism, consultative decision making but rejection to delegate decision-making authority, and unclear accountability channels.[29]

A number of catchwords emerged to reflect some of the stereotypes prevalent about Arab values and their organizational reflections. Some of the terms used include "the prophetic-Caliphal model" of leadership, which reflects the dominance of authoritarian leadership and lack of institutionalism.[30] In the GCC countries in particular, there seems to be a high level of consciousness regarding the effects of family ties and tribalism on the nature of work in public organizations. This was reflected in catchwords such as the "Sheikh as CEO," and analysis of the *majlis* as a decision-making and conflict resolution structure. Such perspectives saw these institutions and practices as sources of divergence from the Western (also read *modern*) administrative traditions.[31]

More recent research has paid attention to the issue of convergence with global administrative practices, especially given the economic, if not political, liberalization of economic and social sectors in a number of Arab countries.[32] This research has generally found a level of convergence with global practices in areas such as participatory decision-making and human capital development. This has resulted mainly from openness to foreign labor, international managerial practices, and international education, particularly in GCC countries. On the other hand, some characteristics such as low institutional capacity continued to hinder the full utilization of available capacities.[33]

Unfortunately, there has been little attention to the tradeoff between efficiency and other administrative

27   P. Iles et al, "Managing HR in the Middle East: Challenges in the Public Sector", *Public Personnel Management, 41*(3), 2012, pp. 465-492. doi:10.1177/009102601204100305

28   M.K. Badawy, "Styles of Mideastern Managers", *California Management Review, 22*, 1986, pp. 51-58; B. Khadra, "The Prophetic–Caliphal Model of Leadership: An Empirical Study", *International Studies of Management & Organization, 20*(3), 1990, pp. 37-51. doi:10.1080/00208825.1990.11656535; M. Palmer et al, "Bureaucratic Flexibility and Development in Egypt", *Public Administration and Development, 5*(4), 1985, pp. 323-337.

29   A.J. Ali, "Decision-Making Style, Individualism, and Attitudes toward Risk of Arab Executives", *International Studies of Management and Organization, 23*(3), 1993, pp. 53-73; B. Bjerke and A. Al-Meer, "Culture's Consequences: Management in Saudi Arabia", *Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 4*(2), 1993, pp. 30-35; Iles et al, ibid.

30   B. Khadra, ibid; M. K. Badawy, ibid.

31   M. Biygautane et al, "The Evolution of Administrative Systems in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar: The Challenge of Implementing Market Based Reforms", *Digest of Middle East Studies, 26*(1), 2016, pp. 97-126.

32   M.A. Abdel-Moneim, *A Political Economy of Arab Education: Policies and Comparative Perspectives* (London and New York: Routledge, 2015); L. Nolan, *Liberalizing Monarchies? How Gulf Monarchies Manage Education Reform*. (Doha: Brookings Doha Center, 2012).

33   K.O. Al-Yahya, "Power-Influence in Decision Making, Competence Utilization, and Organizational Culture in Public Organizations: The Arab World in Comparative Perspective", *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 19*(2), 2009, pp. 385-407. K. O. Al-Yahya, *Empowerment and Human Capital Utilization Deficit in Public Sector Organization: Gulf States in Contemporary Perspective* (PhD), University of Connecticut, 2005.

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values. Notions such as the separation of powers, due process, freedom of information, and representative bureaucracy did acquire some attention.[34] However, even the available studies addressing these issues only describe their status in Arab bureaucratic settings, such as the presence of representation within bureaucratic agencies, without addressing the normative competition among these concepts and the values they reflect.

The "Separation of Powers" Question

As explained earlier in the discussion of the boundaries of public administration research in Arab countries, topics related to the separation of powers and administrative law did not acquire much attention; and research remains focused on theoretical issues within a closed or semi-closed organizational settings. Research on administrative decentralization and local governance, possibly motivated by international and donor attention, is one of the few topics that reflect some attention to relations between different levels of government.

This absence of attention to legal and political approaches to the study of public administration could be attributed to the rather authoritarian nature of Arab political systems, with the only possible exception of Lebanon and, recently, Tunisia. This authoritarian nature makes the focus on the political and judicial branches irrelevant to administration. Administrative structures exist as the arm of the executive branch, or the ruling regime, to maintain its dominance, and are largely insulated from popular or institutional forms of scrutiny.

From this perspective, the origins of present-day ills of the public sector in the Arab world are not only a result of its imperialist roots alone, but also of the period of state expansion between the 1930s and 1960s. This is the period of independence for countries that later came to be known as the Arab Republics, such as Egypt, Syria, and Tunisia. The systems that developed during this period maintained a central role for the state in the economic, political, and social spheres. The economic system was based on import substitution industrialization (ISI), and a central role for public enterprises. The social contract created during this period traded economic for political rights. As a result, Arab bureaucracies became tightly linked to the ruling establishment for their very existence, even following economic reform and structural adjustment measures that began to spread across the Arab region starting the second half of the 1980s.[35]

The expansion of the public sector in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries followed a somewhat different logic. Instead of developing mainly as the regime's arm to implement its developmental strategies and maintain its dominance over the society and culture, public sector expansion in GCC countries came mainly in response to oil rents. The flow of resources from oil exports, especially following the oil boom of the 1970s, allowed Gulf monarchies to increase public spending and engage in large-scale developmental projects that required developing the state apparatus. Furthermore, the regional monarchies needed to distribute the oil rents in order to buy the loyalty of their populations. Government employment was an approach to achieving this goal. A significant part of the state as well as private sector bureaucracy relied on expatriate labor to fill its ranks, mainly from other Arab countries given the small populations and low quality of labor at the time. This labor also came with their centralizing and hierarchical culture.[36]

Given the authoritarian nature of Arab regimes and the perception that administrative agencies play the role of state arms for societal control, public

34   M. Herb, "A Nation of Bureaucrats: Political Participation and Economic Diversification in Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates", *International Journal of Middle East Studies, 41*(3), 2009, pp. 395a-395a. doi:10.1017/S002074380909148X; H.S.M. Youssef, "al-Tamthīl al-Bīrūqrāṭī fī Baʿḍ al-Ajhiza al-Markaziyya (al-Ḥukūmiyya): Dirāsa Maydāniyya ʿan al-Mamlaka al-ʿArabiyya al-Saʿūdiyya", *Dirāsāt al-ʿUlūm al-Idāriyya* (Jordan), 24(2), 1997, pp. 338-351; A.S. Al-Khasawna, "al-Insijām bayn al-Qiyam al-Bīrūqrāṭiyya wa'l-Qiyam al-Ijtimāʿiyya fī Dawlat al-Imārāt al-ʿArabiyya al-Muttaḥida min Wijhat Naẓar al-Muwaẓẓafīn al-Ḥukūmiyyīn", *al-Iqtiṣād wa'l-Idāra* (King Abdulaziz University), 23(1), 2009, pp. 37-84; A.I. Al-Shiha, "al-Iṣlāḥ al-Idārī fī'l-Mamlaka al-ʿArabiyya al-Saʿūdiyya: Min al-Bīrūqrāṭiyya al-Markaziyya ilā Tawsīʿ Sulṭāt al-Majālis al-Maḥalliyya", *al-Majalla al-ʿIlmiyya li'l-Idāra* (Saudi Arabia), 8, 2015, pp. 63-93. 3

35   Cammett, M., Diwan, I., Richards, A., & Waterbury, J. (2015). *A Political Economy of the Middle East* (Fourth Edition ed.). Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press

36   M. Cammett et al, *A Political Economy of the Middle East*, 4th ed. (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 2015).

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administration is often perceived not as "the action part of government" as in the Western/American experience, but rather as the "inaction part of government." Not only has public administration been a tool for state control, but also an approach to buy loyalty and create employment opportunities. As such, a level of corruption could be tolerated to compensate for the low salaries in poor Arab countries, as well as allowing deference to local customs in societies were public office is perceived as an approach to rent distribution.[37]

Given the lack of channels for popular control on Arab bureaucracies, and widespread perceptions of bureaucracies as tools for political control, it makes sense to expect low levels of trust among Arab populations in the established institutions. There is a widespread perception that there are limited channels for popular control over the executive branch. The Arab Opinion Index 2017-18, which surveys nationally representative samples from 11 Arab countries, report high levels of distrust and dissatisfaction with state institutions as well as public services. While the survey showed high levels of trust in the military and security institutions, followed by the judicial branch, levels of trust dwindled regarding the executive and legislative branches of government.[38]

The same report also reflects high levels of dissatisfaction with public services. Improving the situation for poor people, finding solutions for unemployment, and the distribution of public services among the various regions of the government (70%, 73%, and 57% are either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied, respectively). Levels of satisfaction are over 50% for providing water and electricity, but lower for sanitation, education, and health. This reflects a sense of marginalization based on income and geography that is rarely addressed in the Arabic public administration studies.[39]

One interesting observation in Arabic public administration studies is that although administrative law did occupy some attention, studies that address legal issues in public administration are largely descriptive and dominated by legal approaches (as opposed to a synthesis of legal and administrative approaches). Topics under this umbrella include administrative discipline, and the role of some oversight agencies such as the Accountability State Authority in Egypt. Other topics appear even more purely legal such as drafting, managing, and adjudicating government contracts.[40] Accordingly, legal research in the Arab world fails to integrate knowledge from the law field to promote effective government action and understand the challenges of policy change.

Until the 1990s, Arabic studies on the role of legislatures in the policy process, and the relationship between legislatures and bureaucracies were scarce. It has often been argued that the role of Arab legislatures, where they exist, is limited to rubber-stamping decisions issued by the executive branch. As explained earlier, most Arab regimes, especially in the so-called republics, are bureaucratically controlled in the sense that bureaucracies provide a source for political recruitment, regime stability and reproduction, in addition to their role as resource allocators. In such regimes, legislatures might very well end up as a source of patronage for the dominant elites.[41]

Traditionally, Arab legislatures played a minimal role in the political oversight of bureaucracies. Given week political institutions and civil society organizations, and the seeming independence of bureaucratic organizations that lack a clear incentive to be responsive to popular needs, legislatures in a number of Arab countries played the role of a liaison with the bureaucracy.[42] This phenomenon explains the importance Arab parliamentarians allocate to establishing good relations with Minsters and other members of the executive branch in a largely patronage systems. The aim of these relations is to secure a channel to transfer their constituencies' petitions to

37 Abdel-Moneim, *A Political Economy of Arab Education: Policies and Comparative Perspectives*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2015); Cammett et al, ibid.

38 Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, *The 2017-2018 Arab Opinion Index* (Doha: Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, 2018).

39 Ibid.

40 Al-Araby, ibid.

41 R. Springborg, "Legislative Development as a Key Element of Strategies for Democratization in the Arab World", *The Arab Studies Journal, 3*(1), 1995, pp. 95-100.

42 Ibid.

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the administrative body. Such relationships clearly turn the separation of powers concept void.

Especially following the Arab uprisings of late 2010, a trend in the literature analyzed the economic and political foundations of neopatrimonialism in the region; and the roles played by bureaucracies as tools of control as well as corrupt and rent-seeking agents.[43] Other studies addressed the political role of bureaucracies in maintaining traditional power structures and limiting the potential for democratic transition. For example, one insightful analysis discussed how the Egyptian bureaucracy, with its close ties to the regime established since the Free-Officers' revolution in 9152, worked to abort three projects for reform in the decade preceding and directly following the 2011 uprising. These projects are (1) Gamal Mubarak's project to succeed his father as President and establish a neoliberal economic and social path, (2) the January revolution, which was met by either containment or repression, and (3) the Muslim Brotherhood project to cultivate their own networks within the bureaucracy and judiciary following electoral successes. In all three projects, the bureaucracy prevailed in its attempts to maintain the established political and social regime.[44]

Despite its helpful insights into understanding the relationship between politics and administration in Arab countries, this research remains dominated by approaches from political science, and fails to address the breakdown of the bureaucratic bodies and their dominant values. A main shortcoming that future studies need to address is the lack of clarity regarding what constitutes the state bureaucracy. Some studies use a narrow definition of the state bureaucracy that equates it to civil service, while others have used a broader definition that included other institutions such as the military and judiciary.[45]

CONCLUSION

The nature of Arab political regimes shaped the orientation of public administration research in the region. Arab public administration research focuses on the managerial stream as the dominant approach, perceives public service as a transmission belt for public policies, and is mainly scientific as opposed to normative. As such, it fails to provide insights into understanding the outcomes of policies in the region, and approaches to guarantee peaceful political transitions.

Comparing the boundaries and approaches of public administration research in the US to those in the Arab experience shows the limitations of research in the Arab region, and explains the absence of a public administration theory for Arab countries. The perceived "intellectual crisis" of the field in the US could actually be a source of richness, at least when compared to the Arab focus on management and efficiency as the motto of public service, and the absence of other considerations related to the ethics of public service and the separation of powers. The inherent fluidity of the field creates dynamism that allows public administration to respond to constantly changing conditions, ideologies, and ordering of value preferences.

We summarize the differences between public administration research in the US and Arab countries according to our analysis in Table 1 below. The main dimensions of comparison include theoretical origins, values, and methods.

In conclusion, public administration research in Arab countries needs to benefit from the fuzziness and contestation prevalent in the field. Without exploring these new boundaries, the field will remain irrelevant to current regional developments as well as to any serious attempts to reform policy making and implementation the region.

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43   A. Nehme, *The Neopatrimonial State and the Arab Spring*, (Beirut: Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs, 2016).

44   A. Adly, *Triumph of the Bureaucracy: A Decade of Aborted Social and Political Change in Egypt*, (Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2015).

45   Nehme, ibid; Adly, ibid.

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Table 1: The many faces of "needed" Public Administration Research in the Arab World

Dimension of comparison	US	Arab
Overall approach	Public Administration	Public Management
Sources	Politics, management, and law	Management and law
Values	Multiple and contested	Dominated by efficiency
Units of analysis	Individuals, groups, organizations, institutional settings	Individuals within closed organizational settings
Methods	Quantitative and qualitative	Dominated by quantitative methods
Boundaries	Fuzzy	Absent boundaries in the sense of an absence of a clear definition of the field. It sometimes coincides not only with the values, but also methods and topics, of business administration and economics. Absence of a discussion of politics and law.

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Quality Assurance in Tunisian Higher Education:
A case-driven analysis of prevalent policymaking practice[1]

Intissar Kherigi[2], Khalil Amiri[3], Sofiane Sahraoui[4], Ichrak Klai[5], Sana Ajmi [6]

The study focuses on the policymaking process in the higher education sector in Tunisia and critically assesses it through a case study of the important reforms in the first decade of the twenty-first century. It included the move to a new certification structure, adapted from the Bologna European model of higher education accompanied by a parallel quality assurance reform with the creation of a competent body. The study is organized into three parts: the first briefly describes the modern higher education system in Tunisia, the policies pursued in this field, and the major reforms that the country has experienced since independence. The second deals with the challenges of forming higher education policies, reforms, and quality assurance systems in Tunisia. The third presents the research methodology and the main results. The conclusion discusses the weaknesses, causes and potential impacts of the policy process.

Quality Assurance   Policy Making   Tunisia   Higher Education

This study is part of a comparative empirical investigation of policymaking practices in the Arab region, conducted in the context of an umbrella project involving a number of researchers from eight countries in the region. The objective of the umbrella project is to critically assess policy aking processes and practices in the Arab region with the goal of elaborating an agenda for public administration research in the region grounded in the region's realities and defined by its key stakeholders. A group of researchers from across the region participated in this project, each examining a particular policy theme in their country of origin as a case study. Despite encompassing disparate policy themes, the collective research effort has a shared focus on the policymaking "process", seeking to draw conclusions and recommendations that are transferrable between various spheres of public policymaking and between countries in the region.

This paper examines policy making practices in the Tunisian sector of higher education, specifically with respect to quality assurance (QA) related reforms. Important reforms have been conducted in the past decade, namely the migration to a new degree structure aligning the country with the Bologna model of European higher education reforms. These reforms were supposed to be accompanied by parallel reforms in the area of quality assurance. However, progress on the latter front has encountered several obstacles. This paper looks at the policymaking process behind the quality assurance aspects of the Bologna inspired reforms. The investigation relies on evidence collected from a thorough literature review and a series of semi-structured interviews with the various stakeholders involved in the policy process. This evidence is then used to critically assess the various stages and practices of the policymaking process and to benchmark them with international best practices in the field.

The rest of this paper is organized as follows. Section 2 reviews some important background information, including a brief description of the policy theme, an overview of the modern Tunisian higher education system and a brief account of the major reforms it has undergone since its inception shortly after the country's independence. Section 3 reviews previous literature on the subject, specifically on higher education reform and quality assurance systems. Section 4 describes the research methodology and summarizes the key findings. Section 5 includes a discussion of the various shortcomings identified in the policy process, their likely root causes and implications. Section 6 summarizes the paper.

Background On Tunisia's Higher Education System

In 2005, the government of Tunisia launched its largest reform of higher education since the 1958 law that established the basic system of education in the country. This reform, dubbed LMD, follows the 'Bologna' model of European higher education reforms, which prescribes a degree structure of 3, 5, and 8 years of study respectively for the bachelor, master, and doctoral training of students. Implementation of the LMD started in 2005 and continued until all programs were fully converted to the new degree structure.[7]

Within a few years of it being made obligatory for higher education institutions to move to the new degree structure, many institutions had successfully converted to the LMD format. This was probably one of the quickest conversions in the history of Bologna process implementation.

Quality Assurance was supposed to be an integral element of the reformulation of the higher education system in the country in line with the Bologna principles. Quality assurance is meant here as external quality assurance, meaning external review by an independent teaching and learning body, the employability of graduates, the quality of input into the educational process – be it students (i.e. admission process) or faculty (i.e. faculty qualifications, teaching evaluations and scholarships) – and the internal processes put in place to ensure the quality of higher education provision. To this effect, the 2008 Higher Education Law introduced concepts of quality assurance into higher education and provided for the creation of a national evaluation, quality assurance and accreditation authority. International cooperation programs with the World Bank and the European Union in the field of higher education also included support for strengthening quality assurance mechanisms and training for universities and the new national QA entity.

However, the National Authority for Evaluation and Quality Assurance (known by its French acronym IEAQA) was only set up in November 2013 and conducted its first reviews in 2016, mostly to validate the legal status change of various higher education institutions. By the end of 2018, it had accumulated around 60 reviews, 22 of which were legal status change validations, 9 institutional reviews, and 29 program reviews. The number of reviews had gone down significantly in 2018, with only 8 being conducted compared to 23 in 2017. It goes without saying that the review reports are not published. Nor are the evaluation indicators themselves available on the IEAQA website.[8]

This national problem coincided with a near total absence of internal quality assurance processes within higher education institutions. Moreover, student participation in quality assurance or in any other aspect of the reforms was virtually non-existent, contrary to the Bologna process prescriptions. In sum, Bologna process implementation in Tunisia was restricted to the new degree structure and totally disregarded other substantial changes dictated by the process, including quality assurance. Although, thanks to the establishment of IEAQA, quality assurance is not completely absent from the system, there is no significant implementation either.

This paper focuses on the policy process behind the establishment of a quality assurance system for HE in Tunisia. Our study asks what evidence was

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7   See Sahraoui S. (2007), *Implementation of a New Degree Structure in the Context of Higher Education Reform in Tunisia*, Dissertation submitted in part-fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Education, University of Oxford, p. 8.

**8**   http://www.ieaqa.com/index.php/fr/

collected and, in the formulation of the policy, who the stakeholders involved were, whether there was enough ex-ante impact analysis performed, and how the process of policy formulation and implementation proceeded. It analyzes the factors behind the failure to formulate and implement a clear policy on quality assurance, a central component of the Bologna reform process.

Tunisia's modern higher education system was officially established with the education act of 1958. There are five main categories of higher education institution: universities (*jāmiʿāt*), faculties (*kulliyyāt*), institutes (*maʿāhid*), *écoles* (*madāris*) and Higher

women) distributed between 13 public universities comprising 204 higher education institutions and 72 private institutions, accounting for a little more than 30000 students. Financing for public higher education institutions is largely provided by the state. Almost 100,000 students receive government grants and scholarships. There is a growing private university sector

As the table below shows, higher education access rates in Tunisian higher education hover around 35%, similar to those of Algeria and Egypt and significantly lower than Jordan and Lebanon. [9] [10]

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Access rate	31.7%	33.5%	34.6%	34.6%	36.2%	37.3%	37.6%	36.9%	33.69%
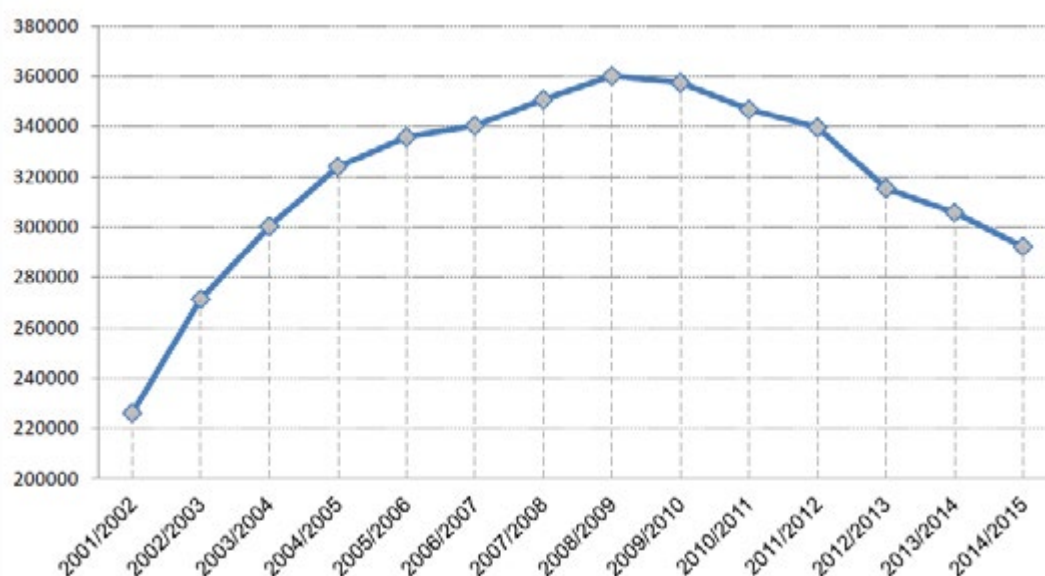
Source: Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (2016)

Institutes of Technological Studies (ISETs). The latter lie within the purview of the Directorate-General for Technological Studies.

As of the 2018 academic year, Tunisia has 22,000 teaching staff, including 12,500 full-time doctorate holders, and 270,000 students (62% of whom are

The 1990s witnessed a substantial increase in the number of students in higher education, with enrolment rates tripling in little over a decade from 15,600 in 1997 to 54,000 in 2005-2006.[11] This was not matched by a proportionate increase in resources and funding, leading to overcrowding and contributing to a decline in quality of teaching and

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9   *L'Enseignement Supérieur et la Recherche Scientifique en Chiffre, Année 2005-2006*, Bureau des études, de la planification et de la programmation, Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur de la Recherche Scientifique et de la Technologie.

10   *L'enseignement supérieur en Tunisie: dynamique et analyse de la performance,* Etude No 1, Février, 2016, Institute tunisien de la compétitivité et des etudes quantitatives.

11   *Evaluation des Résultats des Activités de Développement: Tunisie*, Programme des Nations Unis Pour le Développement, May 2012.

an increase in dropout rates. This was accompanied by a sharp increase in unemployment rates among university graduates - from 3.8% in 1994 to 10.4% in 2004.[12] Access rates dipped further from 2016-2018 as a result of changes to the grading criteria for the Baccalaureate (end of secondary education national exam): while in the past a student's GPA during their final school year provided 25% of the final grade, this grade is now entirely exam-based.

Recognizing the urgent need for reform, the government set out a new higher education program in 2006, the *Programme de Developpement de l'Enseignement Supérieur et d'Appui à la Qualité*, (PDESAQ) with the aim of improving the internal efficiency of the higher education system and strengthening the knowledge, competency and skills of graduates, contributing to a more knowledge-based economy. This is at the core of the quality assurance system sought by the Bologna style of reforms.

In 2005, the Ministry of Higher Education launched a major reform of higher education, the LMD reform. This reform implemented political commitments by Tunisia, together with the EU and Southern Mediterranean countries, to create a "Euro-Mediterranean Higher Education Area" by harmonizing higher education systems – in particular by introducing the three-cycle Bologna degree system and reforming university governance and quality assurance.[13] The Tunisian government argued that adoption of the Bologna process would facilitate mobility for students between higher education institutions in Tunisia and between different higher education systems, enable greater compatibility and exchange between Tunisian and EU universities and boost employability.[14]

The Ministry of Higher Education gave higher education institutions the option to enroll within the new system within three years. By 2006, the LMD system had been adopted by all higher education institutions.[15] All courses at Tunisian universities, with the exception of medical, architecture courses and engineering courses, are now based on the structure of Bachelor degrees, awarded on achievement of 180 credits; Master's degrees, awarded after a further 120 credits have been achieved; and Doctorates, at the end of 3 years beyond the Master's.

The 1989 Higher Education Law was the first to introduce the aim of increasing the employability of graduates through an emphasis on external effectiveness of higher education. A quality assurance system was first introduced in 1995 with the establishment of the *Comité National d'Evaluation* (CNE) and the *Comité National d'Evaluation des Activités de Recherche* (CNEAR). The CNE's functions included carrying out internal and external evaluations of Tunisian higher education institutions according to certain criteria: namely, production and performance.

Under the former system, higher education institutions produced their own internal evaluation reports and submitted them to the CNE. However, the system was widely recognized to be ineffective and failed to provide a systematic analysis of performance. Furthermore, there was little incentive for universities to improve the quality of their teaching, and universities had very little autonomy or involvement in the development of the objectives and goals assigned to them in a highly centralized system.[16]

The Law of 25 February 2008 introduced concepts of quality assurance into higher education. It provided for the creation of a national evaluation, quality assurance and accreditation authority. The new Agency's composition, procedures and remuneration of members were to be set by decree and its president and members appointed by the same mechanism.

In addition, the 2008 law sought to reform university administration by offering institutions the opportunity to move from centralized management to a more flexible and autonomous form of management by establishing themselves as public academic and technological institutions (EPSTs), provided that they

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12   Country Diagnostic Report: Tunisia, World Bank, 2015.

13   Catania Declaration, 2006.

14   See *Implementation of a New Degree Structure in the Context of Higher Education Reform in Tunisia*, Sofiane Sahraoui, Dissertation submitted in part-fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Education, University of Oxford, 2007, p. 8.

15   *Implementation Completion and Results Report on a Loan (IBRD-73920) in the Amount of EUR 61.3 Million (US$ 76.0 Million Equivalent) to the Republic of Tunisia for a Second Higher Education Reform Support Project,* World Bank, 17 March 2015, Report No: ICR00003297.

16   *Haut Comité du Controle Administratif et Financier*, M. H. Zaiem, December 2008.

met certain conditions relating to the quality of their management.

The Ministry of Higher Education launched a quality assurance program in 2011, the PAQ (*Programme d'Appui à la Qualité*), with the aim of improving teaching standards and introducing a new decentralized system of financial management for higher education institutions. However, progress towards establishing the new quality assurance system has been very slow. The new Quality Assurance Agency envisaged by the 2008 law was only established in November 2013 when a new law brought it into existence. Although the Agency has a budget line, staff and location, it is yet to become functional and many questions remain around its precise functions, focus and priorities.

The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research oversees the development and implementation of higher education policy. The higher education system has been characterized as "resolutely centrally managed".[17] The Ministry sets the mission and goals of universities. It consults the

Universities Council (*Majlis al-Jāmiʿāt*), a national body composed of the heads of all the country's universities and responsible for ensuring that higher education strategic guidelines are implemented. This body is also responsible for accrediting higher education institutions, enabling them to award master's degrees and doctorates.

The government's higher education reforms of 2005-14 received direct support from the World Bank (a loan of $76 million) and from the European Union's Tempus program. The EU's EVAFOR program trained a pool of Tunisian university professors in the quality-based approach and contributed to the evaluation of university courses.

The implementation of the LMD reform was managed by a national steering committee (*Commission nationale de pilotage*) whose function was to recommend new bachelor's degrees (*License*) for approval by the Ministry of Higher Education.[18]

Literature Review

The mass expansion of higher education in Tunisia in the 1990s made it a policy area of high national priority. The major challenge facing the higher education sector was how to manage this rapid transformation from an elite to a mass education system and maintain the quality of higher education and its relevance vis-à-vis the workplace.[19] This challenge is shared by many countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, where graduate unemployment rates have risen in recent decades, becoming particularly acute in the last few years – nearing 30% in Tunisia and Egypt in 2013.[20]

Higher education has come to the fore in recent decades with a new emphasis on the "knowledge economy" as the key to economic development and

growth. The new global paradigm of the "knowledge society" emerged in the 1990s, putting forward knowledge as the key to economic development and prosperity.[21] This shift to a new economic model necessitates changes to various areas of economic, social and cultural policy, above all higher education policy.

The World Bank, one of the proponents of the "knowledge society", emphasizes higher education as the key to the "creation, dissemination, and application of knowledge as well as for building capacity".[22] Higher education thus becomes key not only to a nation's economic development but to its survival and integration within the global economy. Without better higher education, the

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17   World Bank, 2015, p. 15.

18   Sahraoui, 2007.

19   *Quality Assurance in Universities of Developing Countries: The Case of Tunisian Higher Education, 6th International Conference on Education and New Learning Technologies*, IATED, 2014.

20   *Les jeunes et l'emploi en afrique du nord: rapport de synthese, Organisation Internationale du Travail (OIT)*, Genève, September, 2017; *Benchmarking governance as a tool for promoting change*, Working Paper, Adriana Jaramillo, World Bank, 2013.

21   Sahraoui, 2007, p 38.

22   *Constructing Knowledge Societies: New Challenges for Tertiary Education*, The World Bank, 2002, p. 4.

World Bank and UNESCO task force on higher education and society concludes, "developing countries will find it increasingly difficult to benefit from the global knowledge-based economy".[23] The global dimension of higher education and its role in economic development thus raises the question of how to improve quality of teaching to make graduates both well-equipped for the new knowledge society and globally competitive to ensure integration within the global knowledge-based economy.

This emphasis has dovetailed with the Tunisian government's growing concerns about the employability of university graduates. The 1989 Higher Education Law singled out employability as a major objective of higher education. The sharp increase in university enrolment figures in the 1990s and the accompanying rise in unemployment rates among university graduates led to increased concerns about the gap between university teaching and labor market needs. Employability was a major objective of the 2005 and 2006 higher education reforms and was cited as a key rationale for the changes.

Alongside this renewed focus on higher education as a vector of economic development, new dynamics emerging within Europe in the 1990s emphasized standardization of higher education across different countries. The Bologna process launched in 1999 by the Ministers of Education and university leaders of 29 countries sought to create a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) linking together different higher education systems, implementing measures to facilitate mutual recognition of academic qualifications and promoting mobility and exchanges between institutions. The extension of the process to non-European countries was, according to Lepoivre, prompted by concerns over the growing gap between the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean, constituting "nuclei of potential political tensions".[24] Tunisia came together with other southern Mediterranean countries to call for the creation of a Euro-Mediterranean Higher Education

Area, announcing a commitment to this in the 2006 Catania Declaration.[25]

The LMD reforms launched in 2005 and the associated quality assurance measures were thus seen by decision-makers and other stakeholders as mandated by Tunisia's international agreements, part of commitments made to international partners.[26] The Tunisian government received support to implement the reform process from the World Bank and the European Union's Tempus Program. The World Bank's $76 million Second Higher Education Reform Support Project (PARES II) provided support to the government's PDESAQ 2006-14 reforms. The program sought to expand university capacity, revise the legal framework to give greater autonomy to universities, develop a quality assurance and accreditation system and develop financing mechanisms that would provide higher education institutions with incentives to improve their quality and performance.

The program evaluation found a 100% success rate in adoption of the new LMD degree structure by universities by the official deadline. However, in the area of quality assurance, the evaluation report notes that as late as 2014, "although the Agency has been created, it is not yet functional and there are questions about whether the Agency is likely to achieve its mission under its current Director-General". The evaluation found "considerable resistance among some higher-level officials to the fundamental reforms of higher education management" and "reluctance to be seen to be supporting reforms that were inconsistent with centrist principles".[27] Major shortcomings were identified in policy monitoring and evaluation (M&E) – while data on project outcomes was supposed to be collected by new "observatories" that were to be established at each higher education institution, the 2012 report noted that "most of the observatories only exist on paper".[28] However, the project team found "a distinct improvement" following the revolution, as the new government renewed its commitment to the

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23   *Higher Education in Developing Countries: Peril and Promise,* The World Bank, 2000, p. 9.

24   *La réforme de l'Espace Européen de l'Enseignement Supérieur Quelques clés d'analyse pour les universitaires des pays tiers participant aux programmes européens de l'enseignement supérieur,* Bureau Europe de l'Ouest et Maghreb, 2007, p. 67.

25   Sahraoui, 2007, p. 40

26   Sahraoui, 2007, p. 44.

27   World Bank, 2015, pp. 11, 30.

28   *Ibid.*, p. 17.

reforms and pushed ahead with establishing the new quality assurance agency. Beyond this report, the lack of progress on the establishment of the QA agency and any significant inroads in QA within higher education institutions has to be read in the context of a gentleman's agreement between all members of the higher education establishment, including the political leadership in the government and ministry of higher education, the ministry's bureaucratic hierarchy, higher education institutions leadership, and the all-powerful workers' union (National Union of Tunisian Workers). The lack of accountability within the system provided for by the absence of any QA provision seems to suit all parties.

More generally, monitoring of educational outcomes has also been identified as a weak point in the MENA region. Indicators to assess the performance of higher education institutions are scarce and there is a near absence of data on student learning outcomes in higher education.[29] In a comparative study of university governance, the World Bank found that few universities in the region have surveys in place to monitor the time it takes graduates to find employment, the areas in which they find employment, or their average salaries.[30] This poses a significant challenge in assessing the external effectiveness of higher education. While the external effectiveness of a higher education system is primarily tied to economic growth, studies in many countries in the region (Algeria and Egypt for example) have shown that there is a gap between demand for skills in the labor market and skill provision within the education and training system.[31] This skill gap is generally a symptom of quality deficiency in educational provision.

Comparative studies of higher education institutions in the MENA region reveal common challenges but also significant differences. Tunisia's universities appear to have markedly less autonomy in comparison with other countries in the region. Universities have little room to make their own decisions on many academic,

human resources, and financial matters – much less than universities in Egypt, Lebanon, Palestine or Morocco.[32] In contrast, private universities in Tunisia enjoy significantly more autonomy.

In quality assurance, the World Bank's benchmarking report found that in Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia, approximately a quarter of the sample universities do not have a quality assurance system in place. This is in sharp contrast with Egypt, Iraq and Palestine, where all participating universities had a quality assurance system in place. External quality assurance systems were found to be less common than internal systems and when they do exist, are often under government oversight.

However, progress is being made. Several MENA countries have created quality assurance agencies in recent years and the number of countries mandating quality assurance in higher education has increased. A scoping study of the region's agencies found a positive trend towards greater independence – most agencies no longer report directly to the head of the executive branch (President/Monarch) but to a higher education authority. Agency members are largely no longer appointed directly by the highest level of leadership in the country and a variety of stakeholder groups are represented, particularly higher education institutions, government and industry and labor market representatives.[33] Many agencies are now playing a more active role in producing external quality assurance reports in comparison with a similar study in 2008, indicating that quality assurance capacity is being built.

Nevertheless, existing quality assurance agencies continue to face financial and operational challenges. In a study of quality assurance agencies, they cite their top three obstacles as being: lack of "quality assurance culture" and experience, limited resources/funding, and lack of autonomy.[34]

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29   World Bank, 2013.

30   World Bank, 2013, pp. 30-31.

31   *International Labor Organization (ILO)*, 2017, p. 11

32   World Bank, 2013.

33   Sahraoui, S. *Second Scoping Study: Survey of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education in the Arab Region*, Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, October 2012.

34   Sahraoui, 2012, pp. 93-94.

Research findings

The policy making process is typically represented as a multi-step cycle comprising the stages shown in Figure 1. The cyclical nature of the conceptual model highlights the iterative nature of policy making. Successive and continuous refinements of a policy are often required in response to the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the policy's implementation. Refinements are necessary because realities on the ground change, and also because of the nature of the policy making process, for no matter how much evidence is integrated into the early stages of the cycle, the process remains imperfect and relies to some degree on trial and error.
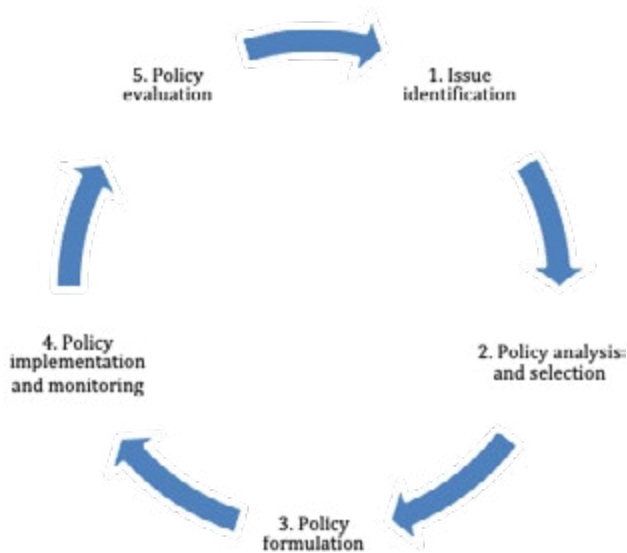

Figure 1. A diagram of the various steps in the policy cycle.

The policy cycle is often depicted by the five steps of Figure 1, namely:

1. Issue identification and agenda setting.

2. Policy analysis: Identification and ex-ante evaluation of policy alternatives.

3. Policy formulation.

4. Policy implementation and monitoring.

5. Policy evaluation.

The objective of this study was to analyze each stage of the policy relating to the introduction of a quality assurance system and identify its key characteristics, in particular how each stage in the policy cycle was carried out, who was involved, how the various stakeholders interacted, and how much objective evidence was integrated in the decision making process at that stage.

The research methodology consisted of analyzing secondary sources, including academic publications and institutional reports, together with a set of semi-structured interviews with the various stakeholders in the policy process. The following stakeholders were identified at the outset: Political authorities (ministers and their cabinets, members of parliaments), public administration (public administration officials, bureaucrats/technocrats, state think thanks), academia (active and retired professors and university administrators), students and civil society organizations (student associations, civil society organizations, labor unions, trade and business organizations, media, independent think tanks), and international agencies and institutions (financial institutions, technical support and aid agencies).

We collected the opinions of the following stakeholders from accounts reported in secondary sources, namely published articles, public statements, and media interviews:

*   Political authority: Minister of higher education.

*   Academia: Deans of private and public higher education institutions.

*   Labor and Trade union representatives.

We complemented this evidence with a series of semi-structured interviews with the following key actors:

*   Public administration: head of the Quality Assurance Agency.

*   Academia: retired university and active university presidents.

*   Private higher education institutions: deans of private higher education institutions (HEIs).

*   International financial institutions (IFIs): Local and regional representatives of the World Bank, the institution that financed a major multi-year program of higher education reform.

*   Students: Representatives of the two principal national student unions.

We also set up a social network special interest group on quality assurance in higher education in Tunisia. The group is growing in membership, and is attracting teachers, students, and parents. While the discussions so far have not lead to important additional evidence for the paper, it will certainly serve as an important resource for future research on the issue, especially as the group grows in membership and scope. The group is particularly useful in facilitating quick polls and opinion surveys.

We now summarize the analysis of the feedback from the various stakeholders according to the policy cycle framework set out in Figure 1 and its various stages.

Firstly, the issue identification and agenda setting stage. It appears that the key thrust behind the law establishing a quality assurance and accreditation agency was not homegrown. All the local stakeholders interviewed, such as representatives of the public administration, university administration and professors, confirm that the initiative was originally driven by recommendations of external actors, mainly international financial institutions and international partners, in particular the World Bank and the European Union. The objective of the Ministry was to implement these recommendations and to align Tunisia with its European neighbor, specifically its Bologna reform process.

Nevertheless, the situation has developed since then. A local homegrown discourse in favor of a quality assurance system in Tunisian higher education has developed albeit in limited circles. This discourse has developed from a growing realization that the quality of the training provided by Tunisian HEIs, both public and private, is behind international standards, as demonstrated by the position of Tunisian universities in international rankings. The continued high rates of unemployment of university graduates combined with the shortage of labor in some sectors has also underlined the inadequacy between the skills sought by the local economy and the training delivered by most HEIs.

The fact that the quality assurance framework was originally driven by external actors is problematic, however. It appears that there was no real debate on the causes of quality degradation in the higher education sector: Is it the lack of accountability and the weakness of external or internal M&E systems? Or is it rather the lack of university autonomy and the excessive centralization? Or is it inadequate infrastructure and inadequately trained faculty? In the absence of in-depth objective studies and an open and broad dialogue, the analysis of the real causes of the quality challenge is often superficial, and issues surrounding quality are often reduced merely to shortages in adequate infrastructure and resources.

The representatives of the student unions were particularly of the view that the agenda is defined by external IFIs, namely the World Bank. They insist that there was no real consultation, and any communication from the Ministry on the subject was a mere formality after the policy proposals and decision had already been finalized. Their view is that the reforms do not answer the real needs in the Tunisian higher education system, and that solutions are projected from the European, especially French, context, which is quite different from local realities.

Representatives of student associations (national student unions) point out that the migration to the new degree structure, LMD, was "supposedly" motivated by the need to address the mismatch between higher education training and the needs of the job market, thereby alleviating the problem of high unemployment among university graduates. The unemployment situation has not improved, however, following the implementation of the LMD system. Quite the opposite – according to them, it has worsened. They conclude therefore that the policy did not emerge from an understanding of local needs and did not integrate objective evidence concerning local realities. They add that few studies were undertaken to identify the major challenges faced by the Tunisian higher education system. Student associations concur that the Ministry simply implemented recommendations of international donors with a privatization agenda, relying on little evidence beyond simple aggregate statistics on higher education enrolment and rates of unemployment.

This opinion that policy-making related to quality assurance in higher education lacked appropriate studies and evidence is echoed by the local representative of the World Bank, who is a former director of a university mission and a former public servant within the Ministry of Higher Education. He points out that the unit responsible for studies and planning within the Ministry does not carry out enough monitoring and evaluation studies regarding higher education institutions and the quality of their

teaching and programs. Rather, it simply stores basic data and statistics about HEIs such as numbers of local and foreign students, faculty, budgets, and other basic information. Moreover, on the internal front, internal quality units are weak and have not really developed since they were not created as real meaningful entities. Without functional internal quality units, it is hard to identify the quality gaps at the institutional and program levels.

There appears to be a consensus from student unions, former public officials, professors and university administrators that reform policies are often initiatives tied to the programs of external funding agencies motivated by a desire to align the country to European standards and processes. There is little genuine participation by domestic stakeholders in identification of the issue and its root causes and designing policy solutions. This creates significant challenges for policy implementation further down the road, as various stakeholders feel totally disengaged, adopt a distrustful position, and sometimes actively oppose the reform initiative from the moment it is introduced. This points to a significant structural problem in the way consultation is carried out, and the strategies adopted by political authorities to engage stakeholders in the initial stages of policy design, to facilitate smoother participation in later stages of implementation.

Next, on policy analysis and selection. The consensus among domestic non-governmental stakeholders was that not enough consultations had been conducted. One university president reported that he was given 24 hours to respond to a policy proposal on quality assurance by the Ministry, suggesting that the consultation was a mere formality. Several actors have expressed the view that there was no real interest in collecting a variety of opinions and arriving at a consensual policy proposal that reflected an understanding of real needs based on a broad debate. It is difficult therefore to identify any other policy alternatives that were considered at the time the policy was formulated, since it seems to have been conceived, drafted and imposed top-down by the Ministry, according to numerous stakeholders.

The country's history of strong social welfare policies and in particular universal access to free education appears to contribute to distrust towards M&E and quality assurance initiatives. Professors' unions consider M&E systems and quality assurance policies to be the first step towards introducing free market concepts into education, a path that will end with privatization. The concept of public-private partnerships in education is still largely unknown or misunderstood. The fear of privatization and the threat it is seen to pose to free universal access to education is behind antagonistic positions towards many quality related reforms. This is exacerbated by the lack of clarity on the part of the government with regards to its vision of how education should be financed in the future.

Moreover, quality is a slightly foreign concept to North Africa and generally francophone countries.[35] The legalistic francophone tradition of policy making and the strong role of the centralized state might be behind the lack of focus on accountability and evaluation in higher education institutions. This might also explain the lack of policy alternatives proposed by the non-government actors at this stage of the policy process, given their lack of familiarity with the proposed concepts.

Moving on to policy formulation, the policy proposal appears to have been developed in a relatively closed circle. The desired policy outcomes were not clearly stated and are not documented, beyond the contents of the law itself. Non-governmental domestic stakeholders state that they were not presented with much evidence to support their informed engagement. Some continue to question the motives of IFIs and the need for a quality assurance agency in the first place. Some professors argue that such a quality and M&E-focused approach might restrict academic freedom by involving external authorities in deciding the content of courses. This fear of external control is confirmed by the head of the quality assurance agency as a main cause behind resistance from stakeholders in academia.

Stakeholders identified significant problems within the law establishing the quality assurance agency, in particular the fact that the entity does not enjoy independence but was established under the supervision of the Ministry of Higher Education, which does not reflect international best practice. The head of the agency claims that he is still trying to get

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35   Quality assurance in higher education is more advanced in other parts of the Arab region than in the Maghreb region – see *Benchmarking governance as a tool for promoting change*, Working Paper, Adriana Jaramillo, World Bank, 2013.

the law changed so that the agency is independent, as per international best practice.

A segment of university faculty appears to have an interest in the continuation of the current state of affairs. The lack of transparency and evaluation gives them a great deal of freedom in terms of attendance, pay, and performance in the classroom. As in any well-thought-out reform, policymakers must ensure that the winners outnumber the losers, and that key stakeholders are brought on board. Many stakeholders expressed dissatisfaction at inadequate communication and consultation by political authorities, and a deficit in political leadership. The resistance of unions to quality improvement initiatives, for example, is not unsurmountable, especially if they are involved early on in the elaboration of policies. The case of education reforms introduced by the education department of the counties of Washington and Montgomery provides an example of different strategies for engaging stakeholders and aligning interests.[36] Early participation in the reform process by the union in Montgomery made a significant difference to their willingness to accept policies that linked teacher salaries with evaluation of teacher performance based on the value added and the progress registered by their students. Meanwhile, similar reform attempts in Washington failed, partly due to a non-inclusive policy making process.

Despite recommendations by various stakeholders that the agency be independent from the Ministry, this was not adopted. Conferences were organized where international best practices were presented. Unfortunately, these best practices were not taken into account in this regard. This has been compounded by the problem of overwhelming centralization in the Tunisian higher education system; the Ministry is just as accountable as the universities. It is difficult for the current institutional arrangements not to

compromise the freedom of the agency and the credibility of the evaluations it conducts, especially on public universities.

As far as implementation and monitoring is concerned, the agency has now been set up – albeit many years after the law was initially passed – and now employs over thirty staff members as well as a number of external evaluators. As noted above, by the end of 2018 it had already conducted 60 reviews, but it is not clear how the outcome of the reviews was communicated back to the institutions concerned in order to improve on the quality of their provision. Moreover, the sharp decrease in the number of reviews in 2018 (8) compared to 2016 and 2017 (28 and 23 respectively) could be an indication that the Agency is losing steam. A new invitation to tender posted on the Ministry of Higher Education website has announced the creation of a National Agency for the Evaluation and Accreditation in Higher Education and Scientific Research.[37] It is not clear however if this new Agency will replace IEAQA or will boost its capacities and endow it with an autonomous status. Irrespective of this, the posting of an invitation to tender at this stage is a clear indication that policy implementation is being redirected to better pursue objectives that have not yet been achieved

Finally, to perform evaluation of the policy, its objectives should be clear. These have not been properly articulated. It is difficult to imagine that evaluation could be conducted properly in the absence of clear objectives. It appears that the mere creation of an agency seems to convince some parties that the policy has been successfully implemented and objectives met. However, the invitation to tender referenced above seems to indicate that the policy to create the IEAQA as a tool of improving the provision of higher education seems to have failed and there is an attempt to go back to the drawing board and rework the policy.

Analysis and discussion

The accounts of the various stakeholders confirm that the policymaking process was seriously deficient in many important aspects, and throughout the various

stages of the policy cycle. We identify here the key deficiencies that impact the policy making process in the field of introducing a quality assurance system

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36   https://bit.ly/2XUqMhI

37   Avis the preinformation relative a un marche de services: Appui a la creation d'une agence nationale d'evaluation et d'accreditation dans le domaine de l'enseignement superieur et de la recherche scientifique, EMORI – Lot ANEA.

within higher education in Tunisia. While the policy case study is specific, most of the identified challenges and shortcomings are general to many policy making exercises. The lessons, in terms of diagnosis as well as proposals and recommendations, are likely to be transferrable to other spheres of public policy making.

Improper issue identification and lack of adequate research on weaknesses and strengths of existing systems. Almost all stakeholders have confirmed that insufficient evidence was collected on the existing higher education system, its internal efficiency, or external effectiveness, before the policy was proposed. The policy objectives were not therefore clearly stated and tied to existing shortcomings, strengths, and weaknesses. This led to a disconnect between the policy and the various actors who are key to ensuring the success of its implementation.

Interviews with leading university presidents show that they still question the motives and the objectives of the quality assurance policy proposals.

Lack of adequate participation and buy-in. Real participation is lacking. A university President confirmed that the Ministry does not have a genuine interest in participative governance. For example, the Council of University Presidents was enlarged to include DGs of the Ministry a decade ago, thereby drowning the voices of University Presidents in any vote and skewing it in favor of the Ministry. Despite presidents being nominated effectively by the ministry, however, their input is still distrusted. Evidence suggests that political authority was not ready to accept parallel or counterbalancing authority. Of course, with lack of genuine belief in the value of wide participation, any consultations would not be conducted in any meaningful way. Another University President reports that consultations were not genuine and that input was ultimately ignored in favor of a solution completely drafted within a few offices in the Ministry.

Lack of consensus around reforms due to lack of a political champion and a manifest deficit in leadership. It is clear that the key stakeholders are not supportive of the reforms, do not understand them in detail or are wary of their implications. This is symptomatic of a deficient policy making process, especially in the early stages. Before formulating a policy, it is important to ensure wide participation, communicate the objectives of the policy clearly to all stakeholders, outline its benefits and reassure groups that resist it because of its implications on their interests.

Lack of transparency. There is a genuine reluctance towards introducing mechanisms for transparency. This is a major deficiency in the policy making process. Budgets, internal data about governance processes, information about the performance of institutions, faculty, and students are not shared with the various stakeholders and with society at large. Our interviewers report that even universities are not aware of the details of the Ministry's budget.

Weak culture and tradition of policy evaluation. There is a pervasive lack of policy evaluation.

Prevalent culture of unaccountability. Universities currently have few mechanisms by which they can be held accountable, especially by students. There are no compulsory course or teaching evaluations. The Ministry, for its part, is not keen to decentralize, and HEIs are not keen to take on more autonomy as it will imply a bigger degree of accountability.

Excessive centralization/lack of sufficient autonomy. Many universities do not mind the lack of autonomy as it means lower levels of accountability. Central administrations are wary to cede autonomy to universities. This creates a stable equilibrium favoring mediocrity.

Distrust of independent institutions. There are few examples and very little history of well-functioning independent institutions in Tunisia. Independence immediately raises the fear of institutions and processes that are out of control, unfair, lack quality standards, or are totally unaccountable. This reaction goes beyond public officials to university professors and other stakeholders.

Summary

This paper studies and critically assesses the policy making process in the sector of higher education institutions in Tunisia, through the case studies of the reform policies related to introduction of a quality

assurance agency. Important reforms have been conducted in the past decade, namely the migration to a new degree structure aligning the country with the Bologna model of European higher education, which was supposed to be accompanied by parallel reforms in the area of quality assurance. Progress on this front has been much slower, however, and has encountered several difficulties.

While things did not seem to have changed much with the 2011 "Jasmine revolution," with the Ministry of Higher Education blocking any change towards a pervasive QA system that would hold institutions of higher learning accountable for the quality of educational provision, there has been movement of late towards a reinvigorated and more active IEAQA. This is the result of funding provided by the European Union and the World Bank to enact an effective QA system in Tunisian Higher Education. However, it is still not clear whether the new QA system will supersede the current one that has been in place since 2013 or improve on it. Moreover, the new system includes research alongside teaching and learning. QA of research is easier both from a technical point of view as well as a political point of view. The

Tunisian higher education system is organized such that teaching and research are managed separately. They also take place in different spheres of the higher education space. Research is primarily a function of research units and laboratories which are managed by the State Secretariat for Scientific Research (dependent on the Ministry of Higher Education). Teaching and learning, on the other hand, are the core functions of universities and are mired in a laissez-faire system that only strong leadership and a clear vision can unravel. Moreover, and although the subject of the 'reform' is still QA in higher education, the new process is not the continuation of the previous policy process presented in this paper. It is rather a new process, albeit using holdovers from the the old one, to put in place QA in Tunisian Higher Education. Compared to its predecessor, this process seems to be more participative, although it is still too early to make a definitive judgment. What both policy processes share is external stimuli, namely the European Union and the World Bank. Without the "legitimation" effects of such bodies, policymaking seems to have very little chance of succeeding.

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La réforme de l'Espace Européen de l'Enseignement Supérieur Quelques clés d'analyse pour les universitaires des pays tiers participant aux programmes européens de l'enseignement supérieur, Bureau Europe de l'Ouest et Maghreb, 2007, p. 67.

Cultural Competency Teaching and Practice in the MENA[1]

Aziza Zemrani[2], Deborah L. Trent[3], Sawsan Abutabenjeh[4]

The study focuses on the policymaking process in the higher education sector in Tunisia and critically assesses it through a case study of the important reforms in the first decade of the twenty-first century. This includes the move to a new certification structure, adapted from the Bologna European model of higher education accompanied by a parallel quality assurance reform with the creation of a competent body. The study is organized into three parts: the first briefly describes the modern higher education system in Tunisia, the policies pursued in this field, and the major reforms that the country has experienced since independence. The second deals with the challenges of forming higher education policies, reforms, and quality assurance systems in Tunisia. The third presents the research methodology and the main results. The conclusion discusses the weaknesses, causes and potential impacts of the policy process.

Cultural Competence Teaching   Policy Making   Tunisia   Higher Education   MENA

Across the globe, youth and adults with access to even broadcast media are made aware of governmental challenges to deliver basic services in an equitable way. Challenges intensify when people perceive economic and social injustice. Their demands are mediated by public administrators with varying success, depending on the political will of government leaders, cultural norms, and available resources. World regions – the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) among them – struggle with internal and external influences from drought to sectarian strife to competition in global capital markets. These challenges are causing societal change at such a rapid pace that even the wealthiest nations, with highly skilled administrative and educational workforces, cannot meet basic human needs.

By providing culturally appropriate and accessible services, the significance and positive perception of a government office is likely to increase. If public service providers are to effectively serve the culturally diverse population of the modern era, their levels of baseline cultural competence must be determined and organizational change instituted to increase the cultural competency of the service providers. Cultural competence and cultural competency are employed here and throughout the literature interchangeably. A culturally competent organization is grounded in "knowledge, skills, and values to work effectively with diverse populations and to adapt institutional policies and professional practices to meet the unique needs of client populations".[5]

The purpose of this article is to survey the research efforts of MENA governments and educational institutions to integrate awareness of history, religious law and traditions, family systems, and language with diversity training skills in public agencies and

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5   F. Satterwhite and S. Teng, *Culturally-based capacity-building: An approach to working in communities of color for social change,* Oakland: National Community Development Institute (2007), accessed 11 April 2019 at:

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master's programs in public administration (PA). This article reviews the relevant research and practice of the last 20 years, suggesting a theory of change for future U.S.-MENA partnerships to bridge gaps in training and teaching.[6] The article builds on the good governance efforts of ASPA, its Section on Effective and Sound Administration in the Middle East (SESAME), the Doha Institute, American University in Cairo, the Association for Middle Eastern Public Policy and Administration (AMEPPA) and other MENA-related organizations in the analysis and recommendations for future collaborative research as well as the NASPAA efforts.

The study contributes to theory, pedagogy and practice through document analysis of MENA cases, arguing that cultural competency among public administrators is a process of "evolutionary, not revolutionary change".[7] Examples of process-tools for navigating demographic, economic, and environmental change are suggested, including the National Center for Cultural Competence in the United States and rigorous program evaluation as suggested by Weimer and Zemrani and Carrizales et al.[8] The program evaluation process consists of research on programs which are implemented to achieve some positive effect on a group of individuals.[9]

Section 1 reviews the existing literature. Section 2 explains the research methods. Section 3 provides an analysis and discussion of the results. Section 4 concludes by proposing an agenda for future research along with the research limitations, aiming to foster collaboration among U.S. and MENA scholars and practitioners for innovative classroom and experiential learning as well as on-the-job training.

Cultural Competence in the MENA

As previously stated, a culturally competent organization is grounded in "knowledge, skills, and values to work effectively with diverse populations and to adapt institutional policies and professional practices to meet the unique needs of client populations".[10] Culturally competent policies and practices by which government organizations improve communication and service provision are key components in achieving socioeconomic equity among increasingly diverse publics (Gooden, 2017).

Getting to cultural competence can be considered a journey in leadership development. Hamid (2017) discusses that the empowerment of future generations of public servants, calling for more collaboration among schools of PA around the globe to more deeply explore how the overall, "meta" curriculum and practitioner skills can encourage analytically rigorous leaders; that is, through a curriculum that is more globally oriented.

Hamid (2017) also notes a 2003 UN conference on reforming PA curricula and cites, inter alia, Bremer and El Baradei (2008), on both market needs and social needs being mismatched with curricula. Based on a survey of 40 American University in Cairo Global Public Affairs students, he sees four competency areas which are: technological skills, "customer" or "client" satisfaction – which could be framed in the context of this paper as "citizen accountability" or responsiveness to citizens or citizen-centered delivery systems – thinking critically, and teamwork. Cultural competency would seem to most correspond to the last three. Indeed, Hamid argues that focusing on these

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6   Deborah Trent, *Transnational, Trans-Sectarian Engagement: A Revised Approach to U.S. Public Diplomacy toward Lebanon*, Dissertation: The George Washington University, Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration (2012), http://pqdtopen.proquest.com/doc/1038836409.html?FMT=AI; Nicholas Weimer and Aziza Zemrani, "Assessing the Level of Cultural Competencies in Public Organizations," Public Administration Quarterly, 41, no. 2 (2017), pp. 273-296; Catherine Craven, "Thinking About Governance Through Diasporas: Decentering the State and Challenging the External/Internal Binary," SFB-Governance Working Paper Series, No. 76, Collaborative Research Center (SFB) 700 (2018); Deborah Trent. "Many Voices, Many Hands: Widening Participatory Dialogue to Improve Diplomacy's Impact," University of Southern California Center on Public Diplomacy Perspectives Paper 4 (Los Angeles: Figueroa Press, 2018), accessed 4 October 2018 at: https://www.uscpublicdiplomacy.org/sites/uscpublicdiplomacy.org/files/useruploads/u39301/Many%20 Voices,%20Many%20Hands%20Web-Ready%205.30.18.pdf (Internet), accessed 20 October 2018 at http://www.sfb-governance.de/publikationen/sfb-700-working_papers/wp76/WP76.pdf

7   Zemrani and Lynch, "Morocco's Dance with Democracy".

8   Weimer and Zemrani, "Assessing the Level of Cultural Competencies"., ibid; Carrizales et al, ibid.

9   P.C. Cozby & S. Bates, *Methods in Behavioral Research*, 12th ed, McGraw-Hill Education (2012).

10   Carrizales et al, ibid.

specific competencies – which include ethics – would help to mitigate corruption, societal conflict, poverty, and other challenges of increasingly diverse cultures.

Exploring other MENA curricula, the Moroccan School of Public Administration (ENSA), shows a more traditional curriculum despite the clear vision of a more responsive public servant. The educational challenge is at the heart of ENSA's "project." It focuses on several dimensions: the skills and qualities expected of a senior Moroccan official in the next 10 years; the expectations and needs of administrations in terms of senior management and support; the extent to which ENSA can realistically meet all these expectations; and articulating the content of trainings with changes in PA perspectives. It is to these challenges that the initial training cycle must respond. Indeed, it is a new generation of "senior civil servants" that ENSA should henceforth train. The re-engineering of the training aims to make them "very competent civil servants," "effective managers," true "vectors/accelerators" of the reforms and "ambassadors of the values of the public service," but one needs to read between lines if there is any call for training for cultural competency (ENSA website, retrieved April 9, 2019). Modern and distinctive pedagogical methods are favored to ensure professional training and a differentiated rendering of scenarios, case studies, work portfolios, and simulations to encourage stronger involvement of professionals and practitioners.

Globalization has propelled both positive and tumultuous political "opening-up" in the broader Middle East. The so-called "spring" of Arab civil society in the last decade has resulted in a sustained democratization in Tunisia. The Saudi Arabian monarchy has begun to grant women some political rights, while major shifts in economic policy compel all adults to become less reliant on government subsidies. The Syrian civil war has created the biggest

refugee crisis post-World War Two (UNHCR, 2018) their general resistance to returning to Syria.

Similar to many citizens around the world whose voices go unheard by local, national, and international agencies, Middle Eastern families, farmers, and small business owners do not equally benefit from efforts to improve public service delivery. Forced migration, internal displacement, foreign and expatriate labor, and globalization have affected cultural diversity differently within each Arab nation. These intra-national and MENA-wide socioeconomic shifts will continue to require government administrators recruited for and trained in cultural competency.

Since 2010, ASPA publications and conferences have treated cultural competency skill-building as a key area of focus for theory and practice. For example, in *PA Times*, Wilson (2015) notes that the accelerating demographic diversity of urban and exurban locales compels us to pay more attention to cultural competency skill-building.[11] With the turn of the millennium, ASPA has also been expanding international ties. SESAME was founded about five years ago, with a mission to increase MENA-U.S. communication and collaboration (https://aspasesame.weebly.com/). Scholar and SESAME member J.S. Ott and colleagues contributed the section's first research effort on cultural competency.[12] The present article is the second. More are anticipated in the future research agenda.

How does cultural competency facilitate good governance? Globalization has increased the networked orientation of public service delivery and government-citizen relations.[13] Increased cross-sector governance and access to information, transportation, and capital in most countries have heightened awareness of and need for more public accountability, or good governance.[14] The standard of good governance is participatory, transparent, responsive, equitable, inclusive and cost-effective implementation of government programs that follow the rule of law.[15] Denhardt and Denhardt (2011)

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11   Catherine Wilson, "The Importance of Cultural Competence in Public Administration," *PA Times* (2015), accessed 31 October 2018 at: https://patimes.org/importance-cultural-competence-public-administration/

12   Ott et al, ibid.

13   Donald Klingner, "From Local to Global," in: Mary E. Guy and Marilyn M. Rubin, Eds., *Public Administration Evolving: From Foundations to the Future* (New York: Routledge, 2015), pp. 64-82.

14   Ibid.

15   Yap Kioe Sheng, "What is good governance?" United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (undated), accessed 31 October 2018 at: https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/good-governance.pdf

Diversity Courses
N=65
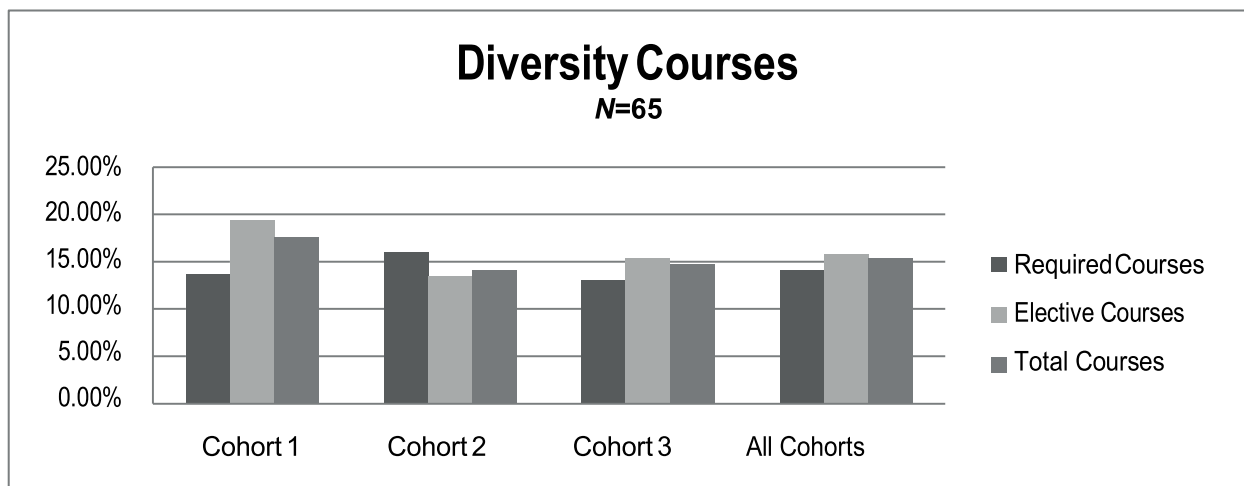
Reprinted with permission from Nick Weimer, Thesis for the completion of the requirements of the MPA program, University of Texas Pan American, 2011.

show with examples from around the world how accountability is strengthened when public employees focus on shared identity-making and cross-sector deliberation of collective interests within and among increasingly diverse societies.[16] The practice of representative bureaucracy – wherein a governmental agency workforce reflects the ethnic, racial, and economic characteristics of the people being served – fosters performance and increases public trust. Because migration and globalization are increasing diversity within and across societies, maintaining such representativeness – and promoting social equity – requires cultural competency scholarship and training everywhere.[17]

The quality of governance and teaching PA are two interrelated issues that should be addressed all together in the MENA countries.[18] As highlighted in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, the promotion of democracy and good governance, including efficient and effective PA, is among the best ways to ensure that the moral values of freedom, equality, solidarity, environmental protection, and shared responsibility are respected. Democracy and good governance are goals in themselves because of the values on which

they rest, where cultural competency is a key factor across the different themes.

The limited status of cultural competency as a component of or contributor to good governance is common beyond MENA. Weimer investigates the extent to which the Masters in Public Administration (MPA), as a terminal professional degree program, provides cultural competency education.[19] Weimer examines the content of all NASPAA-accredited courses. The figure below shows that less than 20% of three cohorts (of 2010-11, 2009-10, and 2008-09 accredited PA programs) were offering required or elective courses in diversity and cultural competency.

Good governance in the areas of human security and law enforcement will continue to increase the need for cultural competency training as populations become more diverse socioeconomically. Frequent news reports indicate the need for reform to reduce racial profiling, discriminatory regulation, and other unconsciously or intentionally biased crime prevention methods in the United States, MENA, and elsewhere.

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16   Janet and Robert Denhardt, *The New Public Service: Serving, Not Steering* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2011), pp. 28-29, 195-200.

17   S.T. Gooden, "Social Equity and Evidence: Insights from Local Government," *Public Administration Review,* 77 (2017), pp. 822-828

18   Aziza Zemrani, "Teaching Public Administration: The Case of Morocco." *Journal of Public Affairs Education* 20, no. 4 (2014), pp. 515-28.

19   Nicholas Weimer, "The Culturally Adapted Public Administrator: How Accredited MPA Programs are Preparing Administrators With Cultural Competency," partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Public Administration, University of Texas Pan American (2011).

Appreciation for and implementation of cultural competency is a leader's work, strengthening both the skills of the lead manager or elected or appointed official as well as the organization and publics being served.[20] In the process of public sector leadership capacity development, both colleges and universities and management development institutes have critical roles to play by providing adequate training that meets the challenges of a diverse and global citizenry.

Stakeholder mapping for rigorous program evaluation is the basis of a robust toolkit for PA faculty and managers to support culturally sensitive and appropriate relations, policy innovation, and good governance overall. Fundamental to these process-tools is identifying, recognizing, and collaborating mutually with all interested and affected stakeholder groups.

Initial planning of a cultural competency training and implementation agenda should be guided by a theory of change.[21] Theorizing change through an inclusive and participatory process across stakeholder groups establishes shared goals and helps anticipate obstacles to implementation (Taplin & Clark, 2012).[22] A stakeholder-centric mapping of the assumptions, inputs, outputs, longer-term outcomes, and impacts of a cultural competency or other program helps generate a plausible, logical path from the status quo to the desired results (Ibid, p. 8).[23]

While the need for culturally competent public service providers is clear, operationalizing and training can be extremely difficult and costly for many public service agencies. Therefore, it is critical for a public manager to first consider all desired outcomes and their expected effects on all stakeholders before beginning the process of organizational change. For example, s/he should assess the current cultural make-up of the community being served and that of the agency or unit in question. It is likewise important to survey the specific needs and desires of the community, e.g., whether the public agencies are producing culturally appropriate and responsive programs, incorporating cultural competency into the agency's mission and operations, and identifying the connection between the agency's daily operations and the intended results. The manager should also calculate the cost of implementing the requisite training and organizational change, and alternatively, the cost of not implementing training and organizational change. These and many more priorities must be addressed before shifting a public program towards cultural competence, and the program evaluation process is a valuable model for assessing all of these areas.

Public-private partnerships for teaching and training are utilized across the globe. The National Center for Cultural Competence in the United States and the Pan-American Health Organization are two examples.[24]

Effective implementation of the foregoing tools and processes depends on morally grounded bureaucratic and political will. How power politics and corruption vary across cultures/societies and should be a cultural competency factor in PA skill-building and management training. Prasad, Martins da Silva, and Nickos present ways for understanding the nature of corruption from society to society and how to reduce it in a practical way.[25] What is considered an abuse of political power in one society may not be in another. It is a very important issue in determining how cultural competency training can improve service delivery and minimize the risk of corruption.

Weimer and Zemrani scan the horizon for future issues in professional and organizational development.[26] These authors see cultural competency as the next BIG thing that will confront organizations head-on, moving

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20   Chris Taylor Cartwright, *Assessing the Relationship Between Intercultural Competence and Leadership Styles: An Empirical Study of International Fulbright Students in the U.S.*, Dissertation: Portland State University (2011), https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/open_access_etds/759/

21   Dana Taplin et al, "Theory of Change TECHNICAL PAPERS: A Series of Papers to Support Development of Theories of Change Based on Practice in the Field," NY: Center for Human Environments (2013), accessed 22 October 2018 at https://www.alnap.org/help-library/theory-of-change-technical-papers-a-series-of-papers-to-support-development-of-theories, p. 2.

22   Dana Taplin and Heléne Clark, "Theory of change basics, a primer on theory of change" (2020), accessed at:

http://www.theoryofchange.org/wp-content/uploads/toco_library/pdf/ToCBasics.pdf on 13 June 2018.

23   Ibid, p. 8.

24   Carrizales et al, 2016.

25   Prasad et al, *Approaches to Corruption: a Synthesis of the Scholarship*, Studies in Comparative International Development (2018), accessed on:

https://doi.org/10.1007/s12116-018-9275-0, first online 21 August 2018.

26   Weimer and Zemrani, "Assessing the Level of Cultural Competencies".

to a more globalized society. They offer a thorough and thoughtful approach to assess needs and develop a culturally competent staff. It seems that cultural competency training might be especially helpful for first responders no matter the context, especially in very disrupted states of the MENA region.

Given all this, the authors offer the following theory of change for encouraging and sustaining culturally aware teaching curricula and PA across the region:

For the MENA, an evolutionary integration of cultural competency across government agencies and their implementing partner institutions and organizations will reflect the languages, history, and values of Islam and the other Abrahamic faiths. They will blend gradually, over time, with governance trends in other global regions. The blending process can be facilitated by collaborative, inclusive, and participatory multi-sector, multi-stakeholder program planning, implementation, and evaluation.

In future research, the change theory will be informed, reinforced, and adjusted using the process-tools of inclusive program design, monitoring, and evaluation.[27]

Methods

To achieve the purpose of this study, the authors used an inductive, qualitative document analysis approach. According to Bowen, document analysis is defined as a "systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents—both printed and electronic (computer-based and Internet-transmitted) material".[28] The purpose of reviewing the documents is to analyze systematically the content of a variety of documents to make conclusions based on the research objective.[29] In order to perform document analysis, O'Leary's (2014) steps process was applied by identifying a list of critical documents; collecting research documents; assessing their credibility and biases; examining their evidence; and then analyzing the collected documents.[30] Then document analysis

was used to paint an overall picture featuring the variety of research surveyed on the efforts of MENA governments and educational institutions that integrate awareness of history, religious law and traditions, family systems, and language with diversity training skills in public agencies and master's programs in PA. The reviewed documents are websites, the government published reports, and organizational and institutional documents using keywords including cultural competence/competency, PA, public management, good governance, training, teaching, curriculum development, and Middle East. These methods are limited to gathering, reviewing and interrogating secondary data.

Findings

To address the overall state of cultural competency instruction and practice in the MENA, as shown below in Table 1, the document analysis identified 16 studies related to the status and future needs of MPA programs conducted in and on MENA educational and government institutions. Of these, one is also

globally oriented, seven are regionally focused, and eight are country-specific.

One regional study argues that, regardless of the MENA's rich culture and long history of administration, the region continues to be inefficient in public organization, requiring reform at the level of a cultural "overhaul".[31] Another analysis

27   Kenneth Bush and Colleen Duggan, eds. *Evaluation in the Extreme: Research, Impact and Politics in Violently Divided Societies*, International Development Research Centre (2015), accessed 31 October 2018 at: https://idl-bnc-idrc.dspacedirect.org/bitstream/handle/10625/54839/IDL-54839. pdf?sequence=1#page=316, pp. 133-134; Weimer and Zemrani, ibid; Trent, *Transnational Engagement*.

28   G.A. Bowen, "Document analysis as a qualitative research method", *Qualitative Research Journal*, 9(2) (2009), pp.27-40.

29   E.R. Babbie, *The Practice of Social Research,* 12th ed., (Wadsworth: Cengage Learning, 2010).

30   Z. O'Leary, *The Essential Guide to Doing Your Research Project* (California: Sage Publications, 2014).

31   Behrooz Kalantari, "Middle Eastern Public Management: A Cultural Approach to Developmental Administration." *Public Organization Review* 5, no. 2 (2005).

addresses governance reform priorities related to the MENA.[32] Those related to cultural competence are: to decentralize PA, transferring knowledge to the local level and civil society, increasing participation, inclusion, and diversity; and emphasizing human resource development for more participation and inclusion, in this case, through training.[33] A third suggests that PA practices in the Middle East can be improved by operationalizing competencies in measurable ways, inculcating impartiality and collective decision-making, and auditing ethics compliance.[34]

Three studies on Morocco inform the present research: Zemrani and Lynch; Zemrani; and Weimer and Zemrani.[35] The first of these three argues for slow, "evolutionary" change while noting that revolution may occur if the king and others with great power abandon constitutional reforms and other political reforms. This research explores the Moroccan experience in its endeavor toward a more democratic government through more effective PA and the ability of public administrators to meet new and more complex challenges. The article discusses the evolution of the higher education system, focusing on the teaching of PA. In the process of public sector leadership capacity development, both colleges and universities, and management development institutes, have critical roles to play by providing adequate training that meets the challenges of a diverse and global citizenry.

On Egypt there are three studies that inform efforts to build public service capacity, including cultural competency training. First, there is a need to improve management structures in Egypt and the Middle East in general.[36] Second, political will and government endorsement of transformational reform, as well as favorable perceptions of managers toward training and intra-organizational support for inclusive training, are key to public sector transformation.[37] Third, training should aim to raise critical thinking and management analysis skills.[38]

One relevant study from and on Iran was located.[39] Although it deals with employee/productivity levels in public libraries in Iran, and not cultural competency of employees, the findings indicate that the cultural characteristics of an effective library have a positive effect on its administration. "Managers can bring important changes or modification to the organization to improve organizational status and influence leadership and management practices by surveying organizational culture. This process is called organizational culture management".[40]

One study was also found on Iraq. It finds that PA practitioners and scholars within and beyond Iraq must more fully appreciate and mediate the problems of ethnic division, corruption, and infrastructure vulnerabilities by applying "an Islamic way of thinking" about the primacy of faith and family.[41] The article seeks to provide an overview of Iraq's PA characterized by political and social chaos. The problems that plague the PA system in Iraq are connected to social imbalance caused by the war, the negative effects of the quota system within the public service based on ethnicity and religious affiliations, corruption, and the lack of consultation for advice for policy making from other nations.

Qatari PA is mentioned in a case study on the United Arab Emirates (discussed below), noting

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32   Adriana Alberta, and Fatma Sayed, "Challenges and Priorities in Reforming Governance and Public Administration in the Middle East, Northern Africa, and Western Balkans," in: *Special Workshop on Public Administration in Arab-Mediterranean Countries,* INAP, Madrid, Spain, September, vol. 22. 2007.

33   Ibid.

34   Paul et al, "Managing HR in the Middle East: Challenges in the Public Sector," *Public Personnel Management* 41, no. 3 (2012).

35   Zemrani and Lynch, "Morocco's Dance with Democracy"; Weimer and Zemrani, "Assessing the Level of Cultural Competencies"; Zemrani, Aziza. "Teaching Public Administration".

36   Tarek Hatem, "Egypt: Exploring management in the Middle East," *International Studies of Management & Organization*, 24, no. 1-2 (1994).

37   Dina Wafa, "Capacity-building for the Transformation of Public Service: A Case of Managerial-Level Public Servants in Egypt," *Teaching Public Administration 33*, no. 2 (2015).

38   Jennifer Bremer and Laila El Baradei, "Developing Public Administration and Public Policy Master's Programs in Egypt," *Journal of Public Affairs Education 14*, no. 3 (2008).

39   Soraya Ziaei, et al, "Identifying Dimensions and Components of Competent Organizational Culture of Public Libraries in Iran," *Palma Journal*, 16, issue 3, no. 2 (2017).

40   Ibid, pp. 477-8.

41   Cosmina Craciunescu, "Iraq's Public Administration Policies: An Overview," *Review of Public Administration and Management* 5, no. 1 (2017).

its majority expatriate workforce, wealth, openness to globalization, and a "unique combination of traditional and formal organization".[42] Qatar is also among the nations discussed by Meek (2018) in the development of a framework for integrating cultural competency into the curriculum of PA programs for improved governance in "disrupted states".[43]

Regarding the status of cultural competency teaching and training in Turkey, a study led by a Turkish scholar in collaboration with a U.S.-based faculty researcher was one of two English-language peer-reviewed analysis with any bearing on the present article. Onder and Brower (2013) offer a "broad overview of Turkish PA" over the past 20 years.[44] They explain how Turkish and American PA differ, while basic theories, research practices, and pedagogy are similar. While this study draws helpful comparative context, especially for a major MENA power, a need for more research on the topic at hand is indicated. The second study focuses on the teaching of analytical methods among undergraduate students of public policy, calling for a new cadre of administrators to create a skilled cadre of government-employed.[45]

Three analyses of PA teaching and practice in the United Arab Emirates inform current and future approaches to advance cultural competence and good governance in this nation and others in the region. Two are by Arab scholars and one short, cross-national comparative essay is a collaboration among a SESAME member and two students.[46]

From the literature on public health evaluation come many insightful approaches to intentional culturally sensitive management. For example, cultural competency of program administrators includes not only self-awareness of one's preferences and biases but also, toward the citizens served, "cultural humility" about their lived experiences, identities, perceptions, and the behaviors they generate.[47][48]

Bridging gaps across generations is another key dimension of cultural competency. Integration of cultural competency in MPA teaching and training in the MENA, as elsewhere, stands to promote the understanding of the millennial generation of, e.g., the impact on their quality of life of global climate change. This would foster evolutionary change through governmental action to protect the environment and reduce human suffering, instead of violent revolution.[49]

Overall, the table arrays some general and specific comments about the relationships between cultural competency, diversity, and service delivery. There is a common thread across all the articles about the necessity of cultural competency in the MENA region and how these skills can be honed through education and training. The second common thread is good governance and how teaching PA can be effective in reaching that goal.

Conclusion

This article is an early attempt to survey the English-language theorizing and case studies around cultural competence levels and training in the MENA. The literature review finds a dearth of research in English

42   J.W. Fox et al, *Globalization and the Gulf* (Routledge, 2006).

43   Jack Meek, "Making a difference: Good governance in disrupted states", *Journal of Public Affairs Education*, 24:2 (2018), accessed at: https://doi.org/10.1080/15236803.2018.1458011

44   Murat Onder and Ralph S. Brower, "Public Administration Theory, Research, and Teaching: How Does Turkish Public Administration Differ?" *Journal of Public Affairs Education 19* (2013).

45   Mete Yıldız et al, "Teaching Public Policy to Undergraduate Students: Issues, Experiences, and Lessons in Turkey," Journal of Public Affairs Education 17, No. 3 (2011), pp. 343-365.

46   Samier, Eugenie. 2014. "Designing Public Administration Curriculum for the United Arab Emirates: Principles for Graduate Programmes for a Modernising Arab Islamic State." *Administrative Culture*, 15, no. 2, pp. 222 - 246.

47   Ott et al.

48   Janaka Jayawickrama and Jacqueline Strecker, "The Ethics of Evaluating Research: Views from the Field," in: Bush and Duggan, *Evaluation in the Extreme*.

49   Zemrani and Lynch; V. Bobadilla and E. Harris, "Through the Student Lens: A Review of Understanding Environmental Policy", *Public Administration Review*, 75: 633-635 (2015).

	TABLE 1: REGIONAL AND NATIONAL CASES			
#	**Author(s)**	**Article**	**Research Focus**	**Observation**
1	Peter Mameli	Under New Management	Citizen involvement and training of authentic public sector leaders in MENA countries.	Addressing best practices from a comparative perspective
2	John Bhuiyan Dixon, Shahjahan Bhuiyan, Yılmaz Üstüner	Public Administration in the Middle East and North Africa	Defining the relationship between the state and civil society, for good governance	Though many Arab nations have western-style administrative institutions, implementation varies by locale because of differences in cultural patterns, societal structures and behaviors.
3	Aziza Zemrani	Teaching Public Administration: The Case of Morocco	Improving PA education to support administrative reforms among MENA countries undergoing transitions in their political, economic, and societal affairs	Curricula should be adapted to the needs of society to increase good governance
4	Murat Onder and Ralph S. Brower	Public Administration Theory, Research, and Teaching: How Does Turkish Public Administration Differ?	Adaptation of PA curriculum to meet the needs of Turkish society emphasizing critical thinking and sound research methods	Turkish and U.S. PA share basic theories, research practices, and pedagogy a common thread in the other articles examined in the present study
5	Sophie Hennekam, Louba-Tahssain-Gay, Jawad Syed	Contextualizing Diversity Management in the Middle East and North Africa: A Relational Perspective	HR/diversity management and policy practices in MENA countries is severely under-researched	The only article in the present study to address diversity, though not how to improve practice though cultural competence courses and assessment as per Weimer and Zemrani, below
6	Behrooz Kalantari	Middle Eastern Public Management: A Cultural Approach to Development Administration	The underlying causes of political and administrative ineptitude in the MENA	Suggests that administrative problems can be addressed through a 'cultural overhaul'
7	Cosmina Ioana Craciunescu	Iraq's Public Administration Policies: An Overview	An overview of Iraq's public administration characterized by political and social chaos.	Adaptation of western PA teaching orientation is not sufficient to improve governance there
8	Paul Iles, Abdoul Almhedie, Yehuda Baruch	Managing HR in the Middle East: Challenges in the Public Sector	Examines the appropriate elements of contemporary HRM as practiced in the west in comparison to Middle Eastern countries	More research and training is needed in conflict of interest mitigation, unbiased decision-making, ethics, fair competition, and transparency.

9	Mete Yildiz, Mehmet Akif Demircioglu and Cenay Babaoglu	Teaching Public Policy to Undergraduate Students: Issues Experiences, and Lessons in Turkey	Analyzes the diffusion of public policy teaching in Turkey	Developing a new generation of public policy analysts will promote administrative competence, including in cultural awareness
10	Tarek Hatem	Egypt Exploring Management in the Middle East	The focus of most management research in Egypt has been primarily the public sector and large-scale enterprises	The purpose of the research is to find avenues through research that would improve management structures in Egypt and the Middle East in general
11	Dina Wafa	Capacity-Building for the Transformation of Public Service: A Case of Managerial-level Public Servants in Egypt	Examines institutional challenges to capacity building in Egypt since the civil society uprisings of "the Arab Spring"	Political will and government endorsement of transformational reform, as well as favorable perceptions of managers toward training and intra-organizational support for inclusive training, are key to public sector transformation
12	Eugenie A. Samier	Designing Public Administration Curriculum for the United Arab Emirates: Principle for Graduate Programs for a Modernizing Arab Islamic State	Explores guidelines and major themes for PA curriculum development	Curricula should reflect Arab history and sovereignty as context for students' culturally competent creation of responsive public policy and programs
13	Adriana Alberti and Fatma Sayed	Challenges and Priorities in reforming Governance and Public Administration in the Middle East, Northern Africa, Western Balkans	Highlights the governance challenges that the Middle East, North Africa, and parts of the Mediterranean region have been facing in recent years	Priorities related to the MENA are: decentralize public administration; emphasize human resource development including training for more participation, inclusion, and diversity
14	Jennifer Bremer and Laila El Baradei	Developing Public Administration and Public Policy Master's Programs in Egypt	Egypt confronts challenges in the area of skills and capabilities due to increase in global interactions and internal reforms within government and society	Training in critical thinking skills and managerial analysis should be targeted
15	Nicholas Weimer and Aziza Zemrani	Assessing the Level of Cultural Competencies in Public Organizations	A call for more training and assessment for evaluating the level of cultural competency for better service delivery	Program evaluation is a key tool for developing and sustaining culturally appropriate public programs
16	Soraya Ziaei, Mohammad Reza Amiri, Hadi Sharif Moghadam, Bibi Marjan Fayyazi	Identifying Dimensions and Components of Competent Organizational Culture of Public Libraries in Iran	Employee productivity levels in public libraries in Iran.	The organizational cultural characteristics of an effective library have a positive effect on its governance

and a similarly small number of reports about cultural diversity training in PA, neither of which is atypical across the globe. Yet, such training and practice are strongly indicated by rapidly diversifying populations and societies due to accelerations in migration resulting from climate change and political instability, globalization of communication technology, and expanded transportation and trade. This closing section offers an agenda for future collaborative research informed by the foregoing analysis and its limitations.

Following from the evolutionary theory of change and case analysis, future research and curriculum development should explore the dimensions of cultural diversity training and policy grounded in Islam and the other Middle Eastern religions. This grounding includes sensitivity to historic, colonial suppression of religious and tribal traditions that divided, exploited, and excluded people. Research should explore how to craft programs that recognize the often hybrid nature of Middle Eastern identity, local customs, along with the need to foster national unity and to avoid reflexively continuing or adopting neoliberalist socioeconomic development approaches. Such programs will require more self-awareness of conscious and unconscious biases and fostering of cultural humility among students, scholars, and practitioners. In the classroom, at the street level, and conducting fieldwork, these experiences will benefit individuals, communities, and society.

Testing the evolutionary change theory should be part of the future research agenda, reinforced using the process-tools of stakeholder mapping and inclusive program design, monitoring, and evaluation. For example, in the context of human security, there is some evidence that listening to engage with and understand the "collective honor" dynamic amid crowds of Middle Eastern protestors may strengthen law enforcement officers' capacity to resolve conflict with them.[50]

As an exploratory work on a rapidly changing societal issue, the present study has several limitations. It is confined to a literature review in English only. It is not a primary search of curricula on cultural competency across the MENA; instead it relies on published case

studies of the need for and implementation of such curricula as related to good governance. To at least partly address these limitations, future research can include a survey of literature, catalog courses, and syllabi at universities and training institutes in Arabic, Farsi, Turkish, Kurdish, French, and other languages of the region.

The program evaluation process – aided by multi-stakeholder public-private partnering on curriculum and training – can provide the monitoring and student/employee participation and feedback necessary for responsive cultural competency programming and overall organizational cultural competence.

ASPA is most likely to help bridge the gap between theory and practice and have a more "pracademic" perspective. Practitioners and academics need to have open forums on the issue or topic under exploration and training workshops. For example, the Section on Organizational and Professional Development (SPOD) offered a workshop during the 2016 conference in Seattle facilitated by Drs. Chris Cartwright and Aziza Zemrani. (Dr. Cartwright is the Director of the Institute of Intercultural Communication, Portland, Oregon.) Another possibility is a conference among members of SESAME, other ASPA chapters and sections such as the International Chapter, the Section on International and Comparative Administration, and SPOD, AMEPPA and NASPAA. A special journal issue could follow.

There should be joint efforts by ASPA, AMEPPA and NASPAA in raising awareness of cultural competence, service delivery, and good governance, especially in emerging countries of the MENA region. NASPAA, with its new direction as a global network, can work with ASPA to develop some programs or certifications to be aligned with the leadership courses offered in public affairs curricula.

More effective cultural competency assessment and training in the Ferguson, Missouri police force might have prevented the slaying of young Michael Brown and the ensuing civil unrest.[51] In the MENA, awareness among civil and military officers of subnational power dynamics and corruptive practices might have de-escalated the violent communication

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50 Winston Sieck et al, "Violent and Peace Crowd Reactions in the Middle East: Cultural Experiences and Expectations," *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression*, 5, Issue 1: 20-44 (2011), https://doi.org/10.1080/19434472.2011.616668

51 Weimer and Zemrani.

that fed civil strife and regional conflict in the last decade.[52] In the United States and MENA countries, assessment and diversity training – that recognize the wide variety of indigenous religious traditions and political institutions as well as exogenous cultural influences – strengthen management of borders, refugee assistance, and immigration services for short-term security and long-run social equity. Strengthening the evidence base will increase political will of government leaders to fund cultural competency assessment and training in the MENA. In the pursuit of better governance, SESAME looks forward to forging local-to-global research and training partnerships across sectors and disciplines.

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52   M. Prasad et al, *Approaches to Corruption: a Synthesis of the Scholarship*, Studies in Comparative International Development (2018), https://doi.org/10.1007/s12116-018-9275-0, first online 21 August 2018.

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ANALYSIS FROM THE ARAB OPINION INDEX

Armed Resistance versus Nonviolent Strategies: An Analysis of Palestinian Public Opinion

Dana El Kurd[1]

This brief reviews Palestinian public opinion on preferences for non-violent strategies versus violent strategies, and examines what variables impact this dynamic. Particularly, I focus on the effect of social cohesion on people's preferences. I argue that preferences for armed strategies following institutional collapse are not always determined by social cohesion, or lack thereof; taking up arms may in fact be a legitimate strategy preference, not an anarchic reaction that societies "default" to when there are no other options.

> Armed Resistance   Nonviolent Resistance   Palestine   Palestinian Public Opinion

The Palestinian Authority today is facing enormous pressure. Lack of international and regional political support, coupled with declining economic support and internal legitimacy, has led to a situation in which the PA's days may be numbered. This is especially true given Israel's seeming commitment to eminent annexation of much of the PA's promised territory. But Palestinian society today has undergone immense transformation since 1994; Palestinians are more fragmented, demobilized, and politically stagnant than ever before.[2] If the Palestinian Authority collapses, and its formalized institutions which have overtaken Palestinian society for the past two decades disappear, how will Palestinians respond?

Will the territories degenerate into violence, or will Palestinians coordinate to undertake strategies to organize a Palestinian response?

This brief reviews Palestinian public opinion on preferences for non-violent strategies versus violent strategies, and examines what variables impact this dynamic. Particularly, I focus on the effect of social cohesion on people's preferences. I argue that preferences for armed strategies following institutional collapse are not always determined by social cohesion, or lack thereof; taking up arms may in fact be a legitimate strategy preference, not an anarchic reaction that societies "default" to when there are no other options.

Previous Literature and Theoretical Expectations

Studies of civil wars and conflict have put forth a number of explanations as to why people choose to engage in violence during critical junctures, such as civil conflict, uprising, or institutional/state collapse. Specifically, there has been a push to recognize the importance of social dynamics in determining violent versus nonviolent, or armed versus unarmed, strategies. As one scholar notes, the "motivation to act…is not formed in isolation; instead it is the product of myriad social interactions."[3] Thus it is

important to consider in what ways social dynamics specifically impact these motivations.

Some scholars point to the social ties of opposition organizations, i.e. the "direct interpersonal connections that link challenger groups to the broader population," as a major determinant of violent versus nonviolent strategies.[4] According to this research, the less insular or isolated a "challenger" group is, with greater ties to the civilian population, the more likely they will be able commit to and sustain nonviolent campaigns of civil resistance.[5] On a similar note, scholars such as Parkinson have pointed out that ties which motivate political action need not be only a function of shared ideology, but may rely more on "quotidian" social connections that facilitate direct and regular contact and therefore foster a sense of shared interest.[6] Across a variety of contexts, the "weakening of social structures" has been linked to a rise in violence.[7]

Other researchers look at the relationship *between* challenger groups and find that group fragmentation leads to more violent outcomes.[8] If not all groups can commit to nonviolence, then it becomes difficult to sustain such a strategy. Cunningham similarly emphasizes that "internal divisions in opposition movements increase chance of conflict with the state," in the context of civil conflict.[9] Finally, research on "spoilers" within conflict shows how extremist groups may undermine ongoing negotiations by fragmenting moderates.[10]

Finally, in my own research, I have attempted to expand the concept of social ties or group fragmentation to look at "social cohesion" more broadly, defining social cohesion as a sense of "collective purpose" in a given community.[11] I disaggregate that concept to

mean the capacity for collective action and intergroup cooperation between different segments of society, fueled by shared preferences. Much of this literature agrees that increased social ties/cohesion results in the adoption of nonviolent strategies over violent ones, generally speaking, given the higher cost of maintaining non-violent resistance in the face of state repression. This higher cost necessitates societal buy-in, via a number of mechanisms, in order for a nonviolent strategy to succeed. Moreover, as Cunningham notes, successful nonviolence requires simply a greater number of participants than violent strategies. This again corroborates the idea that social buy-in is key; high participation rates and extensive coordination is impossible to achieve without social cohesion.

In our case, Palestinians have undertaken major shifts in both social cohesion and capacity for mobilization. During periods such as the first intifada, or uprising, social cohesion was high. As a result, a unified leadership was able to emerge, and Palestinian resistance factions were overall able to adhere to a shared strategy of nonviolence. At other times, such as during the second intifada, there were instead a number of competing fronts. Palestinian political parties were unable to arrive at a unified strategy, with resistance against Israeli crackdown quickly turning violent and groups such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad pursuing extreme tactics such as suicide bombing. At times, there was such a lack of cohesion that Palestinians even turned the violence against each other. It is important thus to understand: Why did Palestinian society sustain nonviolence in some campaigns and not in others?

To answer this question, it is important to reassess our understanding of why people engage in violence.

4   Ches Thurber, "Social Ties and the Strategy of Civil Resistance," *International Studies Quarterly* 63 (2019): pp. 974-986, https://doi.org/10.1093/isq/sqz049.

5   Ibid.

6   Sarah Elizabeth Parkinson, "Organizing Rebellion: Rethinking High-Risk Mobilization and Social Networks in War," American Political Science Review 107, no. 3 (2013): pp. 418-432, https://doi.org/10.1017/s0003055413000208.

7   Robert D Kaplan, "The Coming Anarchy," The Atlantic (Atlantic Media Company, February 1, 1994), https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1994/02/the-coming-anarchy/304670/.

8   Wendy Pearlman, *Fragmentation and Violence: Internal Influences on Tactics in the Case of the Palestinian National Movement, 1918-2006* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).

9   Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham, "Actor Fragmentation and Civil War Bargaining: How Internal Divisions Generate Civil Conflict," *American Journal of Political Science* 57, no. 3 (2013): pp. 660, https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12003.

10   Andrew Kydd and Barbara F. Walter, "Sabotaging the Peace: The Politics of Extremist Violence," *International Organization* 56, no. 2 (2002): pp. 263-296, https://doi.org/10.1162/002081802320005487.

11   Wendy Pearlman, "Precluding Nonviolence, Propelling Violence: The Effect of Internal Fragmentation on Movement Protest," *Studies in Comparative International Development* 47 (2012): 28.

Violence is not just the absence of a nonviolent option, but also a strategy in and of itself. As Humphreys & Weinstein note, social ties can actually spur membership in violent groups.[12] And violence sometimes works, depending on how one gauges success. For instance, in the Palestine case specifically, some scholars point out that Hamas's engagement in violent tactics such as suicide bombing was actually effective in gaining concessions from Israel.[13] If taken in isolation, that could be read as a

success by those who study these dynamics, and by the participants in violence themselves.

In the next section, we examine public opinion data on preferences for violent versus non-violent strategies across two main groups: those who perceive society as cohesive, and those who do not. In this way, we can see if, in a preliminary sense, whether social cohesion has an impact on people's preferences. Furthermore, this will help us come to some conclusions as to what we can expect from Palestinians in the event of the PA's collapse.

Analysis[14]

Respondents were given the following question: what should the Palestinian factions do in the event of the PA's collapse? The options were:

1. Palestinian factions must organize local nonviolent resistance campaigns.

2. They must return to armed resistance.

3. They must work through international organizations to pressure the international community.

The basic results of this question can be found below in Figure 1. Armed resistance is the most preferred option, followed by local nonviolent campaigns and finally, by a close margin, the international nonviolent strategy last. This corroborated polling done by other organizations, such as the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research; in their latest poll, they also found that most Palestinians prefer armed resistance, given what they see as the futility of the ongoing process and the impending annexation threat.[15] It is nevertheless important to

Figure 1: Palestinian Preferences for Violent versus Nonviolent Strategies

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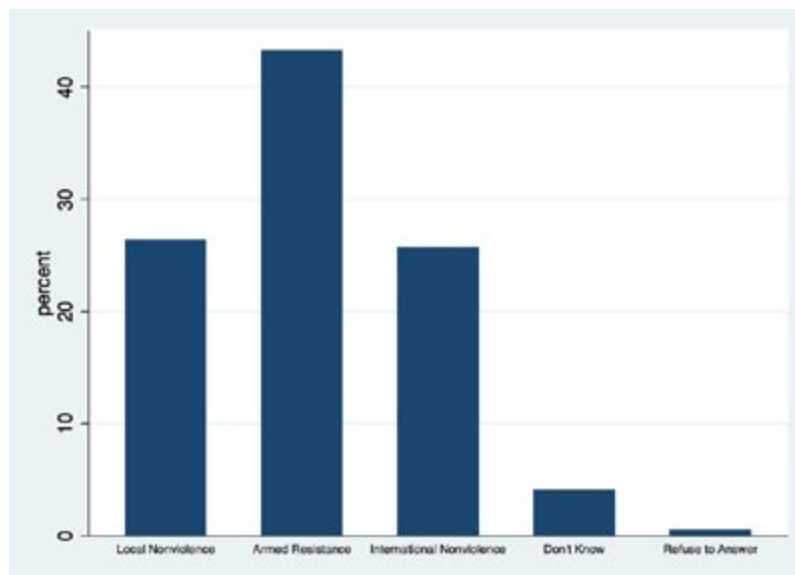
12   Macartan Humphreys and Jeremy Weinstein, "Who Fights? The Determinants of Participation in Civil Wars." *American Journal of Political Science* 52, no. 2 (2008): pp. 436–455.

13   Robert A. Pape, "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism," *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 03 (August 2003): pp. 343-361, https://doi.org/10.1017/s000305540300073x.

14   This was conducted through the Arab Public Opinion Index, a project of the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies.

15   June 2020 Poll, Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research.

note here that the absolute majority of respondents prefer some form of nonviolent strategy, in spite of increased repression, land theft, and a peace process designed to keep them without a state or right to self-determination. This challenges the notion of grievance theory, i.e. that grievances as a result of repression or resource deprivation spurs violent rebellion.[16]

There are also statistically significant differences between respondents from Gaza and respondents from the West Bank (Table 1). Understandably, those in Gaza are more likely to support armed struggle, given the ongoing blockade, severe repression and war, as well as the ineffectiveness of negotiations between Hamas and the state of Israel. Conversely, they are also slightly less likely to support local nonviolent campaigns, again given their limited impact on the blockading power.

Table 1: Overall Results

Preference	West Bank	Gaza
Local Nonviolence	26.4%	25.1%
Armed Resistance	43.3%	45.7%
International Nonviolence	25.7%	26.9%
Don't Know	4%	2.2%
Refuse to Answer	0.5%	0.2%

Pearson chi2(4) = 11.807   P value = 0.019**

To determine whether perceptions of social cohesion have an impact on preferences for future strategies, we also directly asked respondents whether or not they perceived society as being cohesive, or divided and polarized. If social cohesion has an impact on preferences, we should see a statistically significant difference between those who perceive society as cohesive versus those who do not. What we find using a chi-square test is that the two groups are different at a statistically significant level. The raw numbers show most Palestinians do not believe that society is cohesive; this is in line with studies on the erosion of social cohesion in the Palestinian territories following the creation of the Palestinian Authority. But, between the two groups, those who perceive society as being cohesive are less likely to support violent action. This comports with the literature on this subject as well. Interestingly, those who perceive society as cohesive are also more likely to support international non-violence.

Table 2: Results by Perception of Social Cohesion

Preference	Society is Cohesive	Society is Polarized and Divided
Local Nonviolence	25.8%	26.8%
Armed Resistance	40.7%	44.8%
International Nonviolence	31.2%	24.6%
Don't Know	2.1%	3.3%
Refuse to Answer	0.3%	0.4%

Pearson chi2(12) = 39.575   P value = 0.000***

Finally, there are a number of variables which could possibly impact preferences for nonviolent versus violent strategy. These include: income, education level, involvement with a political party, and political grievance.[17] We include these variables in a multinomial regression analysis, in addition to a dummy variable capturing territory (1 for West Bank, 2 for Gaza), with future preferences being the main dependent variable.[18] Results can be found below:

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16   Ted Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970).

17   Wording of these questions can be found in the appendix.

18   A multinomial regression analysis is suitable when the dependent variable (in this case, the question on preferences) is a nominal variable, meaning there is no intrinsic ordering to the answer choices. Regression analysis can include multiple variables at one time, and helps to assess whether there are statistically significant relationships between each variable and the main dependent variable. It also allows us to determine the direction of the relationship between each variable and the dependent variable, by looking at whether the coefficient is positive or negative, as well as the size of the impact of each variable on the outcome.

Table 3: Regression Results

Nonviolent Resistance	Model 1 Multinomial logit model	
	(Base outcome)	
Armed Resistance	Income	-0.135*
		(0.082)
	Gaza	0.249**
		(0.139)
	Political Affiliation	0.104
		(0.085)
	Education Level	-0.033
		(0.042)
	Political Grievance	0.001
		(0.005)
International Nonviolence	Income	-0.098
		(0.092)
	Gaza	0.249
		(0.155)
	Political Affiliation	0.174**
		(0.089)
	Education Level	-0.043
		(0.047)
	Political Grievance	-0.003
		(0.006)
	N (total)	1504
		LR chi2(20) = 51.46
		Prob > chi2 = 0.0001

Income is significant at the $p<0.1$ level, and has a negative impact on people's preferences for violent resistance versus nonviolent. This means the wealthier a respondent is, the less likely they prefer armed resistance. Secondly, the territory variable continues to be statistically significant. Being in Gaza makes respondents more likely to support armed resistance, as the basic analysis also showed. And finally, affiliation with a political party has a positive impact on the likelihood of preferring international nonviolent strategy to local strategy. This is an interesting result, as one would presume those who are more politically active in local politics would believe more in the efficacy of local action, but perhaps this speaks to the internationalization of the Palestinian issue, and the position of the largest Palestinian political party – Fatah – which continues to engage in negotiations and various international campaigns. However, this is only one hypothesis and more research is needed to determine the source of variation we see on this issue.

Implications and Conclusion

The legacy of the Oslo Accords and the creation of the PA has clearly fragmented Palestinian society and impacted social cohesion within the territories. This is demonstrated via public opinion polls, such as the one above, and through existing research on this subject. As a result, Palestinians have lost faith in the efficacy of nonviolent protest as well as the international community. A return to armed resistance is the most popular preference among Palestinian respondents, both in our polling as well as previous polling by other institutions.

But, even if the PA were to collapse tomorrow, the legacy of demobilization and fragmentation that it leaves behind bodes poorly for Palestinian resistance, armed or not. The current state of fragmentation among Palestinian society means that different political factions are less effective at coordinating with each other on common strategies and objectives.[19] If the PA is unable to serve as the representative of the

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19   El Kurd, *Polarized and Demobilized,* Chapter 3.

Palestinian people in the territories vis a vis Israel, and is unable to quell Israeli aggression, we can expect some level of chaos within the territories as a result. When the second intifada erupted, Palestinian factions were divided on how to proceed, with some taking up arms and some not. This led to a less than optimal outcome in terms of their ability to face Israeli aggression, and at times it even led to intra-Palestinian armed conflict. Today, those dynamics threaten to repeat themselves. The clear lack of leadership facing Palestinians, and the deeply divided populace the PA leaves behind, means Palestinian factions face a unique challenge if/once the PA is no more.

It is clear that Palestinians find business as usual when facing the Israeli occupation no longer acceptable, and that they find the status quo untenable. These grievances can be harnessed to demand concessions from the Israeli side, if Palestinian political elites can effectively unite around a common strategy. Their track record bodes poorly as of late, but it may still be possible. The cessation of security coordination between the PA and Israel is a good first step. This may also especially be the case if Palestinian political elites are able to recognize where Palestinian organizing is most successful, and where new leadership has the potential to emerge. Examples of mobilization which has occurred, despite steep odds, include how Palestinians have attempted to revive the popular committees in particular towns and neighborhoods,[20] as well as the mutual aid societies in the wake of the covid-19 pandemic.[21] Youth leaders and their new repertoires of contention are key here. The most impactful organizing in recent years has emerged in untraditional spaces – on the margins of the territories such as in the villages, and in areas with few of the traditional institutions in play such as in Jerusalem. It is to these spaces that Palestinian political elites should look in order to harness the popular will. Only in this way can Palestinians emerge from the chaos with an effective, targeted campaign against the Israeli occupation, armed or not.

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20   El Kurd, *Polarized and Demobilized,* Chapter 4.

21   Zaha Hassan and Nathan Brown, "Could the Pandemic Jump-Start National Reconciliation in Palestine?," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, May 20, 2020, https://carnegieendowment.org/2020/05/20/could-pandemic-jump-start-national-reconciliation-in-palestine-pub-81833.

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BOOK REVIEWS

The city in the Islamic World: From Imitiation to Modernization: A Reading of The Arab City and Modernity

Abderrahim Benhadda [1]

Author:	Khalid Ziyadeh
Publisher:	Riad El-Rayyes
Date of publication:	2019
Number of pages:	255

Riad El-Rayyes published Khalid Ziyadeh's *The Arab City and Modernity* in 2019. This book builds on a significant body of works by the author, who has written about modernisation and modernity since authoring a book on the causes of European progress. He has also written about the books published following the wave of eighteenth-century diplomatic missions to Europe which carried the desire for modernisation to the Islamic world. Furthermore, Ziyadeh has written books on Arabic and Islamic cities, and texts relating to them. For its part, this book contributes to a growing scholarship on cities in the Islamic world in the modern era, and is among the texts, both by Arabic and non-Arabic scholars, which focus on urban history. This is a work which mounts a considered challenge to many of the long-standing stereotypes concerning Arabic and Islamic urban history.

The book consists of five chapters: the first of these both introduces and problematises the term "city"; the second chapter is dedicated to Ottoman urban history, while the third focuses on Ottoman urban elites; chapter four focuses on modernisation, and the final chapter focuses on history, society, and modernity.

It should be noted that Ziyadeh's interest in urban history dates back to the 1980s, and that he gathered the material for this book when he was working on his first publications. His interest in the city did not wane, despite the time he spent researching other topics in the intervening period. At the outset, he highlights two boundaries which will serve as a framework: the first is that, geographically, the cities in question are those in the eastern Mediterranean. Secondly, the historical period covered is the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a period during which European modes of urbanisation represented a "sweeping current" (p. 11). The book transcends this historical period outlined in the introduction, as Ziyadeh jumps to the nineteenth century, and even covers the twentieth century modernisation of certain cities following World War I. He also goes beyond the geographical boundaries when discussing issues pertaining to cities beyond them, though there are few examples of this. This is all done with the aim of clarifying and explicating certain phenomena which many researchers have previously considered more local or regional in nature.

Ziyadeh titles the opening chapter in a way which foregrounds his awareness of the difficulties faced by those who study urban history in the Islamic world: "The Islamic city: the term and its problematisation". This chapter begins with a description of Alexandria from Ibn Khaldun, written at a time when the balance of power in Egypt was moving away from the city to Cairo. For their part, Muslim geographers presented

the "Islamic city" according to inherited frameworks, and in his conclusion Ziyadeh does not skirt around this truth; emphasising the point, he states that Muslim geographers did not find "anything wrong with copying their predecessors word-for-word". Unsurprisingly, we find travel writers from the sixteenth century repeating verbatim what had been written centuries earlier by al-Balawi, al-Idrisi, and al-Bakri.[2] There is a significant problem concerning some texts which cover the history of these cities, namely those texts which were written during a particular historical period, and whose titles bear the names of these cities, but which only mention the cities themselves in passing.[3]

There are differing views on how to think about the 'city' in the sources: the perspective on the city in the eyes of the travel writers is not the same view found in the books of the tax authority or market authority, which differs in turn from the perspective of the philosophers and jurists. These different texts are quoted to show the difference between their perspectives. Ziyadeh spends some time presenting the idea of a historian-stroke-philosopher of the city. This discussion introduces Ibn Khaldun, and there are many citations from his *Muqaddima*. The conception of the city in this text can be said to lie at the intersection between the built environment, the city, and its government. Ibn Khaldun drew on many sources for this, including Greek texts which returned to prominence in discussions of urban history by the Enlightenment thinkers of the eighteenth century. On reviewing texts by these thinkers, whether they were philosophers, historians, or jurists, it becomes clear that their understanding of the city springs from ancient Greek sources, which paid special attention to cities, and how they flourish and decline.

The "Islamic city" is a term born of Orientalism, and the author shows the links between Western orientalist scholarship and the emergence of a number of concepts, including "the Islamic city", itself the product of a European rationalisation which "builds models and value systems, and tends towards abstraction" (p. 26). Ziyadeh investigates several models which were employed in discussions of the "Islamic city", initially discussing the work of Louis Gardet,[4] who made the link between the emergence of cities and desert trade. There is a description, based mostly on the works of al-Mawardi, of the four main areas within a city: the marketplace, the fortress, the cloth market, and the mosque, and he considers that these four "are recurring features of a model which is ever present" (p. 28). The author cites a study carried out in 1976 and overseen by the British Arabist Robert Bertram,[5] which both Arab and Iranian researchers participated in, all of whom were prisoners of the concept of the "Islamic city" (p. 29). There is also discussion of the line connecting various European orientalist studies informed by Max Weber's view[6] that eastern cities had lost their independence at a time when western cities were the height of civilisation and rationalisation.

However, the Orientalism which gave us the idea of the "city" was not unified, and there were in fact many differing schools of Orientalism. In light of this observation, Ziyadeh discusses a study by Claude Cahen on *Popular movements and urban autonomy in Islamic cities in the Middle Ages*, as well as Axel Havemann's study "The Vizier and the Rais in the Islamic World" (p. 33), and Lapidus' chapter "A History of Cities in the Mamluk Empire". All these authors attempted to study the city in the Islamic world without using western cities as a model example.

The book's second (and longest) chapter is focused on the "Ottoman city". Before discussing the chapter's contents, the following observations should be emphasised:

• Scholarship has only recently begun paying attention to the Ottoman city, compared with the Western and Arab research on the classical periods of Islamic history.

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2   On this point, see the journey of Abu al-Hasan al-Tamkruti to Istanbul in the year 1589: Abu al-Hasan al-Tamkruti, *al-Nafḥa al-Miskiyya fi al-Sifāra al-Turkiyya*, Edition: ʿAbd al-Latif al-Shadhli (al-Rabat; al-Matbaʿa al-Malakiyya, 2002)

3   Perhaps the best example of this is the book "*Kitab Tarikh Damascus*" whose author dedicated it to dragomen, Arabic literature, and the different fields of the Islamic sciences. See: Abu al-Qasim Ibn ʿAsakir (al-Hafiz), *Tārīkh Madīnat Dimashq – Ḥamāha Allāh – wa-Dhikr Faḍliha, wa-Tasmiyyat man Ḥalla Bihā min al-Amāthil aw Ijtāza bi-Nawāḥiha min Wardiha wa-Ahliha*

4   Louis Gardet, *La cité musulmane, vie sociale et politique* (Etudes Musulmanes I.) (Paris: Vrin, 1954)

5   Robert Bertram Serjeant (ed.), *The Islamic City* (Paris: UNESCO, 1983)

6   Max Weber, *La ville*, traduit de l'ammend et introduit par Aurélien Berlan, coll. "Politique et sociétés" (Paris: La Découverte, 2014), p. 280.

- What distinguishes this new scholarship is its ability to make use of archival documents, since the Ottoman state was highly bureaucratic and archival records abound

- A large number of studies have focused on Istanbul, since it was the capital of the Ottoman state and contains a large number of cultural artefacts. A mere glance at the index of publications of the Turkish Historical Association[7] reveals a huge number of studies published by the Turkish institution alone on the subject, on top of the hundreds of works on Istanbul produced in Europe, America, and the Arab world.

As in the first chapter, the author lists those texts which have dealt with the Ottoman city, discussing many of them and presenting their conclusions. Among all these texts, Ziyadeh considers a study by H. A. R. Gibb and Harold Bowen titled *Islamic Society and the West*,[8] to be the first which deals with the Ottoman city. Perhaps its most important finding was that "the characteristic which distinguishes the city is sects, whose importance we cannot overstate. If religion was the Islamic foundation (of the city), then sects were the stones with which the foundation was built" (p. 50).

Ziyadeh goes on to provide a summary of Robert Mantran's study *Istanbul in the Seventeenth Century*,[9] a study he considers to be distinguished by its extensive use of Ottoman archival documents, as well as for its departure from the stereotypes of other orientalist studies. In this exemplary study, there are few impressions, unfounded theories, and prejudices (p. 52). The study also covers the transition of the city from the Christian era into the Muslim era, which happened without it losing its openness. Istanbul was, after all, a multi-confessional capital city, home to many languages and nationalities, though the Ottoman Sultans had tried to give the city a more Islamic character prior to 1517 by building mosques. Ziyadeh utilises this exceptional study to mention a number of key episodes in the city's history from the seventeenth century until the beginning of the twentieth, and in the chapter he brings into focus the

fact that Istanbul was "the first (Middle-Eastern) city to undergo reforms of the European type" (p. 55).

The author finds discussion of the newfound reliance on documents and different archives (which have taken the place of the previous heavy reliance on annals, travel writings, and geographical writings) to be an appropriate point to discuss the accomplishments of Andre Raymond in his study *Artisans and Merchants in Eighteenth Century Cairo*[10]. Raymond himself made rich use of the records of shariaʿ courts in Cairo (p. 58), as well as letters from consuls, which combined to provide him with information on prices, currency, and precise indicators of economic development. Building on this, he was able to analyse the financial and food crises which hit Cairo throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This exemplary study enabled him to produce his foundational text on the great cities of the Ottoman period, in which he lists the common features of a number of large Arab cities (p. 60). Perhaps the most important conclusion Raymond reached was that the Arab city was organised, contrary to the view of Western scholars who claimed that it lacked organisation. Raymond also concluded that the Arab city did not go into decline during the Ottoman period, rather that it witnessed steady growth which is manifest in a number of indicators (increasing population, expanding urban area), even when compared with the Mamluk period. These conclusions reflect the wide-reaching revisions which Western scholars of the Ottoman city in particular, but also of Ottoman history more generally, have reached.

Another pioneering work in this field is the encyclopaedic work titled *The City in the Islamic World*, which both Western and Arab scholars contributed to. The book primarily focuses on frameworks, distancing itself from the term the "Islamic city" and instead using "the city in the Islamic world". Ziyadeh spends a great deal of time presenting the book's contents and the most important issues it covered, and in doing so he finds himself returning to Raymond (who also contributed to it), praising his critique of orientalist scholarship.

7   Yusuf Turan Gunaydin, *83 Yılın Kitapları: Türk Tarih Kurumu Bibliyografik Kataloğu 1932-2014,* (Ankara: Turk Tarih Kurumu)

8   Gibb, Hamilton and Bowen, Harold, *al-Mujtamaʿ al-Islāmiyy waʾl-Gharb*, Translation: Ahmad Aybash (Abu Dhabi: Dar al-Kutub al-Wataniyya, 2012).

9   Robert Mantran, *Istanbul dans la second moietié du XVIIe siècle*: *Essai d'histoire institutionelle, économique et sociale* (Paris: Maissonneuve, 1962)

10   André Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants au Caire au XVIIIe siècle*. Damas: Institut français, 1974

He also returns to the multiple sources used in the study of urban history, frequently referring to the shariaʿ court records, which have by now become "unparalleled source material", and remarking that the process of "benefitting from them and their use, and using them to draw up methods" is still in its infancy (p. 65). At the same time, Ziyadeh notes that European sources, especially consular and commercial sources, present themselves insistently to urban historians studying the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

After concluding the section in which he critiques studies of the Ottoman city and attempts to define his own framework, Ziyadeh moves on to discussing Ottoman cities, beginning with Istanbul. Rather than going into depth describing its multi-civilisational foundations, residents, and artisans, he prefers to highlight the circumstances surrounding the city's transition from being the capital of the Christian Byzantine Empire, to becoming the capital city of the Ottoman Islamic Empire. This entails description of the demographic shifts in the city which began in the fifteenth century, and which subsequently conferred it its cosmopolitan status. In the same discussion, Ziyadeh covers the economic and political transitions which caused Izmir to become "the first Ottoman city to benefit from the global economic system, and display a cultural pluralism which later manifested itself in the schools and newspapers which were founded there" (p. 73).

When discussing Arab cities during the Ottoman period, Ziyadeh focuses on the fact that these cities had been able to prove their Arab credentials throughout the Mamluk period and remained desperate to defend that status during the Ottoman period. These cities developed due to the impact of the demographic revolutions taking place globally at the time, as well as the European merchants' activity, which turned many of these cities into leading commercial centres. The modernising reforms carried out by the Ottoman state (under Ibrahim Basha in Syria and Muhammad ʿAli in Egypt) also played a large role in modernising Arabic and Islamic cities: it meant the cities of the eastern Mediterranean were opened up to European trade, which in turn led to conflicts between pro-modernisation factions and those who thought that nothing but harm would come from opening up to trade (p. 68).

Aleppo, Alexandria, and Cairo garner special attention from the author, since the infrastructures of these cities were altered in line with the modernising aspirations of the Ottoman state: hospitals were built and public services (including police forces) were set up, as well as councils such as the Ornato council[11] in Cairo, which was tasked with "organising streets, roads, and buildings" (p. 81). These cities also saw the establishment of new religious institutions such as churches due to the demographic changes they experienced.

But modernising was not without cost. The price paid for modernising in Beirut, for example, was the removal of what remained of the old city during the First World War. In this regard, Beirut is no exception when the fate of other cities in the Middle East is considered. Modernity did not arrive in Beirut via Europe exclusively, but also from the Ottoman state. The latter had adopted a policy of modernising its administration and legal and educational systems, and saw Beirut as a model example of a city willing to respond to the call for urbanisation (p. 92). This modernising current was exemplified by the French mandate in Lebanon, which according to Ziyadeh, turned the city on its head in many respects. The old city disappeared, and the modern core of the city began abandoning the suburbs and immersing themselves in its new urban economy. This is partly what distinguishes Beirut from other neighbouring cities. The Ottoman control of Arab cities contributed in large part to deep-seated changes to the demographics of these cities: by opening them up to foreign communities their social fabrics and economies were altered. The reforms enacted by the Ottoman state led to profound changes. The ideas which circulated in the missionary and national schools played a large role in paving the way for modernity, and as part of this process the cities become a ripe environment in which these currents and ideas could compete.

In the third chapter, titled "Urban elites: ʿulamà, civilian elites, and the military", Ziyadeh discusses

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11   Reimer treated the history of the Ornato council in Alexandria in a detailed study tracing the development of the council from its creation in 1834 in a chapter titled "Urban Government and Administration in Egypt, 1805-1914"

The author covered the same topic in another detailed article. See:

Michael J. Reimer, "Colonial Bridgehead: Social and Spatial Change in Alexandria, 1850-1882," *International Journal of Middle East Studies,* 20 (1988), pp. 531-553.

the transformations to the social fabrics of Arab cities since the seventeenth century. The author establishes the link between the decline of the Ottoman state starting in the late sixteenth century, as well as the socio-political changes which Arab cities underwent during that time. Economic changes, a financial crisis, and the desire to introduce reforms designed to restrict the army all eventually led to the emergence of elite families who dominated the cities, and extended their influence to the surrounding rural areas, which had been a significant source of wealth (p. 112).

As evidence of this, he cites what happened to the great Arab cities from Algeria to Tripoli under the Karamanli dynasty, and to Baghdad under Mamluks of Georgian origin. On the other hand, Arab families came to prominence in the Arab Levant, most notably in the cases of Fakhr al-Din al-Maani in Lebanon, and the al-Azm family which ruled Tripoli, Saida, and Damascus. However, all of these were short lived dynasties.

Here the author turns to discussion of studies which have dealt with the emergence of notables and elites in the Arab cities. The first such study presented in the chapter is Albert Hourani's "Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables"[12] published twenty years ago. In that study, Hourani introduced his comparative analysis of his concept of the notables, which was informed by the "patriciate". Hourani distinguished between three types of notable: the ʿulamả, who were traditionally the ones who spoke in the name of the Islamic city, the military elites, who had laid down their routes during the Ottoman period, and the civilian notables who came from the influential families in these cities (p. 117)

The second such study is Philip Khouri's *Urban notables and Arab nationalism*[13], published in 1993. Hourani and Khouri's theses can be seen as mutually complementary, as Khouri too was informed by the Weberian school, seeing himself as "indebted to Weber's theories on the relationship between ideology and political bureaucracy" (p. 124). Khouri stressed the complete alignment between the notables (urban elites) and the Ottoman authorities in Istanbul, to such an extent that politics was defined as the mutual interaction between the local elites and the

Ottoman government (p. 125). Nevertheless, Khouri disagreed with Hourani's use of the term "notables" in his analysis of the structure of political authority, as according to Khouri its usage suggested the existence of a unified political class, which was not the case (p. 125).

As for the ʿulamả, they had secured a vitally important role for themselves during the Ottoman period. Having become part of the ruling elite, they were seen as a conservative force during a period of reform and modernisation. There is ample evidence in the history of Arab cities during this period to confirm this view. The role of the ʿulamả in politics diminished in these cities, as the modernisation of education led to the emergence of new educated elites who were convinced of the necessity of political reform. The aim of this reform was to "reduce the role of the cities and join them together with the intention of strengthening the concept of the nation, which would transcend narrow and sectional loyalties" (p. 130).

In the fourth chapter "Modernisation", Ziyadeh discusses case studies of modernisation in four cities from the Islamic world: Cairo, Aleppo, Beirut, and Istanbul. The chapter begins with discussion of Cairo from the time of the French occupation in 1798, which was a pivotal year not just in the history of Cairo, but in the history of all Middle Eastern cities. The French began the process of modernising the city by issuing laws and making changes which affected all the main arteries of the city, by extending roads and erecting new structures. These initial changes were met with opposition among the general population. This opposition brought into sharp relief not a difference in representation, but also as the clash between the wider understanding of the city in the Islamic world as compared to how it was conceived of in positivist European laws. The French had no choice but to resort to institutionalising their efforts by creating a council which brought legislative and municipal authorities together (p. 141).

Three years were sufficient for the efforts of the French authorities to bring about large-scale change to Cairo. These were "both an effect and a cause" and paved the way for the changes of the subsequent decades. The speed of the transformation under the French did

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12   Albert Hourani, "Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables", in: William R. Polk & Richard L. Chambers, *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East: The Nineteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), pp. 41-68)

13   Philip Khoury, *Urban Notables and Arab Nationalism* (Cambridge: CUP, 1983).

not give the Egyptians a chance to take stock, and their resistance was transformed into admiration. The ruler of Egypt, Muhammad ʿAli, was among the first to be impressed by the French-led urban transition, and he did not hesitate for a moment in adopting the European vision for the city. From the moment he came to power in 1805, "it was as if he was continuing the work which the French had begun before him" (p. 146). This modernising trend continued with his successors, reaching its zenith during the reign of Khedive Ismail, who was enamoured with French culture and implemented the advice of the French architect Georges Eugene Haussmann. Perhaps the most important thing to be noted following these attempts at modernisation is the expansion which the city experienced. The governor of Egypt, for various reasons, preserved the old city, and sought instead to build new districts. This led to a duality unprecedented in the urban history of the Islamic world. This led to the establishment of two different societies, with each going in different directions. While the modern city was growing, neglect was afflicting the old city on several levels (p. 152).

In Aleppo, the situation was different. While Cairo began witnessing large-scale changes and the early stages of modernisation in the early part of the nineteenth century, the earthquake which struck Aleppo in 1822 was an ominous sign for a city which subsequently saw significant decline. This downturn was only made worse by the departure of its European and Jewish residents who had contributed so much to its openness. Tense relations with the central government in Istanbul may have deepened this crisis, and despite some economic growth in the second half of the nineteenth century, it continued to experience demographic decline. While the French had a positive role in Cairo, their role in Syria was marked by its negative impact as "they focused their efforts on pitting the countryside against the city by undertaking land surveys and seizing large holdings from their owners, the important families of the cities" (p. 158). The situation in Aleppo did not settle until the Syrian Revolution (1925-1927), which unlike Damascus, the city played no part in. The latter had undertaken modernising infrastructure projects, starting with the expansion of the railway network, which enabled the expansion of the city and the emergence of new districts, including the eventual emergence of Armenian and Assyrian areas.

Modernisation in Aleppo only began in earnest after the First World War, with the building of wide streets furnished with cinemas, cafes, and bars. This meant that Aleppo had managed to enter the modern world in a space of time, a process which in Cairo had taken a long time.

As for Beirut, modernisation proceeded there much as it had in Aleppo, as the city transformed in a short time from an old city into an exceptionally modern one. This transformation was perhaps not linked exclusively to the French Mandate, but also to another political transformation: the declaration of the independent state of Greater Lebanon, with Beirut as its capital, or as the author himself puts it, with "Beirut being the state itself" (p. 163). The city was soon afforded all the trappings of a modern city with the building of hospitals, universities, and various schools. On top of this, the city's layout was modernised, and urban planning came to be governed by regulations and laws.

Ziyadeh sees Istanbul, the fourth city covered in this chapter, as having preserved its traditional system of laws and regulations, despite having undergone an unparalleled process of modernisation (p. 166). This process began in the third decade of the eighteenth century, and comprised the building of European-style palaces, engineering schools, as well as a printing press. In this way, its path of development did not differ from that of other Ottoman cities.

Through this overall view of the four cities presented by Ziyadeh, it appears that in each case their passing through the gates of modernity is linked to the West. When I say the West, I do not necessarily mean colonialism, though colonialism of course had a clear influence on modernity and modernisation. Rather, the West here represents a model which these cities followed when their urban infrastructures were redeveloped. The advent of modernity was also connected to the elite families which served as conduits of modern ideas. Lastly, the transformations these cities experienced were linked to political transformations. We have seen how municipal councils played a role in reshaping the city; indeed, they oversaw the organisation of urban space, and the reforms enacted by the Ottoman state clearly left their mark on the city. Moreover, there was the role played by roads in the modernisation of these cities, as the Arab cities witnessed a new dynamism through

the expansion of the railways and paved roads: as Fernand Braudel once said: "cities are their roads".

In the fifth chapter, titled "History, society, and modernity", Ziyadeh covers some interrelated issues. Perhaps what distinguishes this chapter is the way it alternates between the theoretical and the applied through its discussion of the following three issues:

- The relationship between history and ideology, and how the combined efforts of archaeology and ideology contributed to the discovery of cities in the Arab and Islamic world. This was not a process connected solely to colonialism, as is evident in many examples from Egypt, in which French archaeologists stressed Egypt's Pharaonic history in order to sever any ties with its Ottoman history. The same process took place in North Africa, where French archaeologists tried to exclude the Islamic period, in an attempt to connect the region's present at the beginning of the twentieth century to its Roman past. This matter can also relate to nationalist ideology, as in Lebanon where the idea of "Phoenician Lebanon" rose to prominence and likewise, in Turkey, where nationalists put Ottoman history to one side, paying closer attention instead to the ancient cities of Anatolia.

- The author displayed great engagement with the sociological currents which have been central to the study of the city. Max Weber's study of the city has become a pillar for historians and a framework for discussing the Arab and Islamic city; this trend goes back to Weber's rejection of the existence of any city outside of the geographical boundaries of the West, on the basis that they did not meet enough of the conditions he laid down when defining his concept of the city. Indeed, he spoke of "ghost cities". Weber thought that the West alone had produced a complete set of the requirements needed for a city (p. 181). After the Orientalists had cited these requirements to such a large degree, historians have gone to great lengths to refute Weber's theories on the city.

- In the chapter, Ziyadeh uses a George Balandier[14] quote on the issue of the dynamic nature of imitation and modernity as a launchpad for discussion; as it happens, neither modernity nor imitation earn the description of being dynamic. This point is most evident in his discussion of how the nobility presented a challenge to modernity. In the nineteenth century, the requirements to be considered a member of the elite changed with the introduction of the new school system, and it became possible for the middle-class to gain new positions in this new nobility. These new elites were split into two factions: those who had opposed colonialism and adopted nationalist ideas, and those who had no hesitation opening up to the West, with some of them even having no qualms working openly with colonial authorities. All the while, the working class was busy resisting westernisation in all its forms and remained isolated in the old and established urban social fabric. In addition to this discussion, which alternates between the theoretical and the practical, the author covers the role of political parties as they relate to the dynamic nature of modernity and imitation.

In this final chapter, Ziyadeh returns to the issue of the history of modernisation in the Arab world, especially as it relates to periodisation. In his view, modernisation took place in three phases: the first phase was the era of Tanzimat reforms in the first half of the nineteenth century, whose aim was to strengthen the state's institutions by reforming their administration and modernising the education system and army. The city was a theatre in which this modernising wave played out, as the Tanzimat reforms sought to modernise the built environments, albeit in an unsystematic fashion, and despite attempts to modernise municipal government. The second phase was the colonial period, starting in the 1830s and lasting until after the First World War. It is worth noting that the impact of colonialism on the Arab urban environment varied from one country to the next and differed from one colonial power to the other. The third period is the period of independence, when national governments were established. It was during this period that modernisation plans were drawn up, which had these very cities in their sights. The author utilises the issue of urban planning (which was included in every government development plan) to present the most important findings of studies in

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14   See the sixth chapter, "La tradition et le modernité", in: George Balandier, Anthropologie politique (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1993), pp. 193-226.

the field of urban planning, including the proceedings of a conference on urban planning in the Arab world.

In short, rather than limiting himself to providing an overview of the transformations which Arab cities experienced in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the author was obliged to go beyond that period to review the transformations which took place in Arab cities during the colonial era and beyond it. This approach was necessitated by the view that modernisation was a long-term process. A desire to present the findings of previous research was present in every chapter of the book; the author was not content to simply list these findings and gave expert critiques of them as well as highlighting their methodological and ideological underpinnings. On top of this, the book is noteworthy for its discussion of theories the city, whether they stemmed from sociology, anthropology, or political science. Earlier I praised the book for its ability to alternate between theoretical and practical discussions, as well as for the close attention paid to defining terms and concepts. This applies equally to the discussion and tracing of the idea of the city as it appears in writings both new and old, as well as to the ideas of modernity and modernisation. A final distinguishing feature of this book is its ability to link the local to the global, and the attention paid to historical context when discussing the urban fabrics of Arab cities; at every opportunity the book stresses the strong connection between the way life was in the urban centres of the Ottoman Empire in the east of the Arab world, both in the cities of the eastern Mediterranean and the cities of North Africa.

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In successive footnotes: Barnes et al .,p. 142.

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"Sovereign Wealth Fund Rankings 2015," Sovereign Wealth Fund Institute, accessed on 9/8/2016, at: http://bit.ly/1sQqBfr

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