Book Review

Introduction to Public Administration in the Philippines: A Reader

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Introduction to Public Administration in the Philippines: A Reader evidences the growth and development of the theory and practice of public administration in the Philippine setting. It is an anthology—a collection of the best articles written mostly by the faculty members of the University of the Philippines College of Public Administration (UPCPA) from 1957 to 1991. These faculty members have recognized, with earnest intentions, the indigenization of Philippine public administration, depicting as clearly and as eloquently as possible, the uniqueness of the culture and context of Philippine public administration.

While intended for introductory courses in the undergraduate and graduate programs in Public Administration, this book goes beyond the confines of an introduction. In fact, the different articles treated a myriad of issues which could be used in pursuing higher concentrations like policy studies and development administration. The scholarship in the treatment of various subjects elevated the traditional concerns of Public Administration into higher conceptual and operational levels that it might be quite difficult for a freshman student to fully comprehend the content. Thus, it would be proper for the faculty member teaching these introductory courses to initially explain and clarify the lessons on Public Administration using the articles contained in the Reader as vehicles for an animated and enlightened understanding. In this manner, the familiarization of the students with the academic rigor and demand of the discipline will be easier.

While the formal study of public administration has been introduced in the 1950s, the Reader starts dramatically with the query: "Is there a Philippine Public Administration?" Answering the query positively, it revealed the unique culture of the Filipino way of managing the public service. While De Guzman

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regarded public administration as a government bureaucracy and a field of study in the Philippine context, Corpuz traced the evolution of Philippine Public Administration from the working of three major institutions: education, politics and government. However, the succeeding articles could no longer be treated as introductory. In fact, it requires a public administration man who is already "in the know" to write about revisiting the identity crisis of public administration in the Philippine setting. The same holds true with the development of a philosophy of Public Management Education. Cariño's dealing with the four dimensions of public administration perspectives—the technical aspects, the problem of democracy and accountability, the role of the people, and the issue of indigenization—is proper for higher Public Administration inquiry, and not just for introductory purposes, for how many of the freshmen students can think of these dimensions as they enter the program?

The presentation of Bureaucracy and Management in the second chapter is a landmark in the emerging indigenous development of the literature in public administration. Corpuz' critique in 1957 on the Weberian systematic analysis of the bureaucracy as it applies to the Philippine situation has maintained its relevance until today.

Reyes carefully analyzed the problems and issues on the nature and character of the bureaucracy in the process of moving from authoritarianism to democracy. The dilemma that emerged is how to reform the bureaucracy that served authoritarian governments so that it can adjust to democratic conditions. The dilemma entailed some testable propositions:

(1) that a resurgent democracy must necessarily restore the principles of balance of power among different branches of government;

(2) that the resurgent democracy can take stock of legacies observed and upheld in a dichotomy proposition as enduring contribution to good administration;

(3) that the politics-administration dichotomy may serve as basis for acknowledging that in a democratic society, administration cannot be insulated from the "hurry and strife" of politics.

The pendulum swings to balance bureaucratic power with political development. This is Cariño's thesis which is consistent with the Riggsian caveat on the danger of political development where an overdeveloped bureaucracy coexists with weak political institutions. Her prescription of balance pinpoints the urgency of calibrating political and bureaucratic institutions to lead to a greater redemocratization of the political system.

Caoili traced the evolution of modern management thought which is necessary in understanding the mechanisms behind the rise and growth of

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organization, but the process of tracing this evolution can be limited by various factors which include: the growing size of organizations, importance of technological efficiency, need for greater standardization of labor and costs, growth of administrative control and increasing interest in management.

"Is the New Public Administration relevant in Philippine Public Administration?" Pilar indicated such relevance in the philosophy, content purposes, processes and techniques as used in Philippine public administration. The matrix comparing the classical Public Administration with the New Public Administration is useful for adequate understanding of Public Administration in the Philippines. More importantly, Pilar stressed that the goals of New Public Administration are convergent with the goals of the Philippine government, and its tools and techniques are likewise supportive of the New Public Administration. A further query could be: "Can New Public Administration concepts be adopted as an indigenous model for Philippine Public Administration?"

Varela's paper which deals with the cultural perspective in organization theory presents an impressive discussion on the relevance of culture in Philippine setting. Interesting ambivalent values can be depicted in the culture of patronage, bureaucratic mediocrity, bureaucratic ambiguity, dualism, and graft and corruption. All these bear on the understanding and prediction of organizational behavior involving employee commitment and loyalty, leadership effectiveness and innovation, and organizational survival strategies.

Development and development administration is the focus of the third chapter which responds to the query: Public Administration for what and for whom? Introduction to Public Administration is usually limited to the traditional construct of organization and management, public personnel administration, public fiscal administration, and a little of local government. But this chapter introduces the students to the subject of development and development administration, which has found its niche in the doctoral program.

Krishnaswamy dealt with the definitional and analytical aspects of development and underdevelopment. The interesting insights presented which could stir discussion is the argument that the intervention of international institutions and practices can deter or facilitate the quest of developing nations for more global equity through international trade and aid policies. What comes to mind is the World Bank—IMF interventions in Philippine politics and economy which appear as deterrent to the country's development aspirations. This argument is central in the debt issue which has not been resolved until now.

Dubsky's paper shows that the difference between development administration and the traditional Weberian notions of administration do converge in their value commitments. It reorients administrative theory by looking beyond the value frontiers of Weberian efficiency and technical proficiency. This is significant because high production efficiency levels can

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always be harmonized with the goals of development. In other words, increased surplus provides the resources required in the pursuit of development goals and thrusts.

In Bautista’s paper, the contribution of the conflict model is more interesting than the structural-functionalist model where mandated stability is a development thrust. Today, there is no stability yet in the administration of development in the Philippines. The conflict perspective takes into consideration the problem of inequity which is a cruel reality. As stated in the paper, “the conflict school’s thinking provides more relevant answers to explain the rate of Philippine development.”

Reyes’ reexamination of economic models in the Third World is important in understanding the crisis of underdevelopment, evidenced by poverty, unemployment, wide income disparity, high population growth rate, low level of output, and other forms of social and economic deprivation. As the crisis continues, the rhetoric of development administration is losing steam because it failed to push people off poverty, as stagnation and economic backwardness continue to persist. What must challenge development administrators is the formulation of a new agenda for development: (1) to unravel the real causes of underdevelopment; (2) to develop a strategy, model or system based on the understanding of experiences of one’s own country as well as others; (3) to adopt a more objective appraisal of the development agenda; and (4) for developing countries to be more decisive in changing the character of their political systems, structures and processes.

A fitting closing article of development and development administration chapter is Abueva’s work, the thesis of which is on the use of development for social transformation. He pinpointed the necessity of value and structural changes which is directed toward (1) more altruistic orientation of nation and society, national independence with more collective self-reliance in the pursuit of a peaceful and just world, democratic and pluralistic state which is constitutional, democratic, socially oriented, and accountable; (2) people-oriented, nationalist, and sustainable development at the nationwide and rural-urban development levels; (3) progressive change characterized by egalitarian and decentralized distribution of wealth and power, greater equity in economic and social relations; and (4) emphasis on stewardship of property for the common good. All these should be geared towards achieving a Good Society and Authentic Democracy.

Coming across the chapter on the process of public administration, one could think of the basic O & M (organization and management), public personnel, fiscal administration and local government. The various papers discussed the integrative capacity of policy studies, and the geographic dimension of local governments. Policy studies is a new field of concentration in public administration. Being interdisciplinary, it deals with the study of public mathematical programming and models, the political context of policy formulation.
and implementation, use of economic theory and analysis, behavioral and nonbehavioral decisionmaking, and program management. An understanding of program management can improve the administration of government projects which are plagued, especially those which are capital- and resource-intensive, with underperformances, graft and corruption.

Briones' treatment of development public finance institutions is primarily historical and is already a part of her book, although some revisions are noted in the Reader. What is more contemporary is her collaboration with Sevilla and Baulita in the analysis of Government-Owned and Controlled Corporations (GOCCs). To satisfactorily harness the capability of these public corporations, the following issues must be resolved: (1) that privatization be the centerpiece of corporate reform and rationalization; (2) that the dilemma of reconciling demands from the international environment and issues of national interest be resolved; (3) that the role of government corporations in alleviating poverty be focused; (4) that policy measures be undertaken to integrate performance evaluation; and (5) that mechanisms for consultation, transparency, and democratization be integrated in its performance evaluation.

The papers of Tapales and Brillantes are interrelated and should be read together. While it is important to know what local governments are, how they relate with national governments and what they can actually do for the people, it is equally important to know the recent moves to decentralize. Both political and administrative decentralization have been accorded more contemporary meaning in local government under the New Local Government Code. Truly, decentralization can be a tool for development administration by (1) maximizing people participation in decisionmaking; (2) training lower levels of government to be self-reliant; (3) hastening decisionmaking by eliminating red tape; and (4) decongesting central government of certain functions which could be done better in lower levels of governments.

Cola concentrated on the groundwork, planning and legislation which are necessary in the reorganization of the Philippine administrative system. Several methods have been used in reorganization: secondary data collection, discussion with top-level government executives, conduct of survey, and sectoral consultation meetings. Yet, reorganization outcomes are generally determined by the way activities are operationalized and the extent by which a reorganization strategy is employed. The irony is that the post-independence reorganizations have failed to pare down expenses of the administrative system and have led to bloated bureaucracies rather than streamlining them. Now it can be asserted that evaluation and monitoring should be included as necessary ingredients in reorganizations, with identification of responsible administrators.

In the study of Endriga, the Civil Service is the venue for understanding the workings of stability and change. Significant historical insights are woven into the discussion, from the Spanish regime to the Martial Law Period. What has
been realized in managing the civil service? The following observations were reported: (1) juxtaposition of positive law and action which come in conflict with negative bureaucratic development; (2) basic conflicts between theoretical standards and our ability to maintain some amount of development; and (3) the capacity to obey the law and to pursue offenders which do not seem to have significant results. At present, while we can claim that our standards of bureaucratic behavior written in our laws are high, there is no noticeable diminution of graft and corruption because there are more public resources which can be diverted into private coffers. In the years ahead, conflict values in the service will continue, in spite of our efforts to hold high our standards of public service.

To enhance the performance of public administration systems as they deliver public goods and services to the public, several strategies were the foci of scholarly inquiry.

In the quest for development, Alfiler stressed the importance of people participation in various phases of the program cycle. For those interested in the success of development efforts through popular participation, the discussion of factors which promote or impede participation at the individual, community and government levels are highly informative and directive. What can be promptly done is to evolve and utilize an indigenous process of attracting popular participation among the Filipinos, consistent with the prevailing ethic and character. It will be a great distinction if we can achieve a truly Filipino participatory approach.

Iglesias emphasized empowerment to enhance local government autonomy. He adopts the Aquino development strategy to promote decentralization through local autonomy, and to increase the role of community organizations in development by transferring certain government functions to local communities. In doing so, he identifies issues and problems in community organizing to accelerate development, and the role played and strategies used by government in promoting community organizations. COs could play the roles of an implementing mechanism, as venue for people participation, and as effective channels through which beneficiaries and the community can influence the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of government programs, projects and services.

On citizen participation, Bautista presented her views on people power—its conceptual definition and nature against the background of the shortlived 1986 political revolution. Other than voting, citizen participation is crucial in deliberating on policies that may govern the nation; in formulating strategies to fulfill some policies, in implementing strategies, and in making assessment to determine goal achievement. The question raised was: How then can we effectively use people power as an alternative strategy in responding to political and administrative issues? Practical responses include: (1) participants must be
aware of the issue for which mobilization is directed; (2) the need for organizing participants and purposive planning in achieving goals must be stressed; and (3) it should necessarily be held by a cross section of the citizenry.

In another Alfiler paper, the strategy chosen was administrative accessibility to relate bureaucrat-client interaction. For a client-centered administrator, the proposed administrative accessibility checklist is very functional, though admittedly tentative in nature. The checklist has been divided into different areas of: planning, policy formulation, and plan implementation, with concerns for organizational structure, resources and procedures, and evaluation. If we can develop this checklist into a research instrument to measure the accessibility performance of government administrators and bureaucrats in various levels of government, the results would be highly indicative of access and interaction in the public service.

Social access to basic services to satisfy basic needs of the polity is central in Carino's paper. She pointed out that increasing social access is beset with problems—lack of effective demand, limited supply aggravated by competitive demand of higher classes, and the biases of policies and policymakers, unintended exclusion of key beneficiaries and attendant internal problems. To increase social access, certain values must be stressed among service providers-client interaction. These are commitment to equity, people-orientation, decentralization and involvement. The strategies include spatial and people-centered planning, changes in project design through the use of social soundness analysis, benefit monitoring and inclusion of social components, participatory approach, linkages, and a positive bureaucratic reorientation. Living out the values as these strategies are carried out ensures a more efficient and effective delivery of public services to identified beneficiaries.

Finally, the Reader ends with the identification of public service values from which the standards of efficiency and economy can build on.

Carino delved on the value of administrative capability, particularly its evaluation, meaning and operationalization in the Third World context. Highly informative was her comparison of four kinds of administrative accountability—traditional, managerial, program and process—in relation to four essential questions to accountability:

(1) Who is considered accountable?
(2) To whom is he accountable?
(3) To what standards or values is he accountable?
(4) By what means is he made accountable?

Ocampo's views on social justice stressed general equality and how this promotes harmony and integration at the expense of the poor and the
disadvantaged. He observed that to harmonize forces and classes, rather than to equalize human conditions of Filipinos, remains the object of the current administration. This view argues for harmony within the iron order of society, to pacify rather than satisfy demands for justice. While harmonization or integration could take a benevolent-looking form at critical junctures, it entails the use of violence as law.

Reyes' question is on the goals or values of development. It raised the issue: Are equity and growth mutually exclusive or mutually reinforcing? He averred that from the theoretical and pragmatic perspectives, there is really no conflict, i.e., both values can be pursued equally with more rigor. To attain both growth and equity values, appropriate policy instruments for growth must be maintained, provided that other instruments addressed to redistribution are enforced. Such policy interventions may include asset redistribution, democratization of education, rural employment promotion, functional redistribution of income, reorientation of project evaluation methodology, and a reorientation of the development planning framework.

The collaborative article of Tapales and Alfiler placed Filipino values as a unifying element in Philippine public administration and nation-building. From the Filipinos' historical experiences of sporadic unity under crisis, the traditional values have served as a galvanizing force only when the common interests of both the elite and the masses are significantly threatened by a more powerful internal or external power. The authors placed the value of nationalism which springs from the traditional value of kapwa. This could well augur the identity of being a Filipino as one nation. But as a firm foundation of pakikipagkapwa (an act of maintaining friendly relations with another or with others) in our interpersonal relationships, the core value of kagandahang loob (kindness) should be inculcated in every Filipino.

For public administration students, scholars, teachers, practitioners and researchers, a serious endeavor must be undertaken to "live and witness" the public service values of administrative accountability, social justice and equity, public accessibility, growth and development, and nationalism, in our pursuit of achieving a better society, alongside our equally important concerns for efficiency, economy, effectiveness and social outcomes.

Professors Bautista, Alfiler, Tapales and Reyes should be congratulated for finally completing this project. The book is indeed a Filipino landmark in public administration which can stand the rigors of academic and practical scrutiny. This Reader is a must for students, and a valuable reference for higher public administration courses.
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