

THEORIES OF POLITICAL CONTROL OF BUREAUCRACY

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PRESENTATION OUTLINE

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2

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN POLITICS AND ADMINISTRATION AND MATTERS OF BUREAUCRATIC CONTROL

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INTRODUCTION



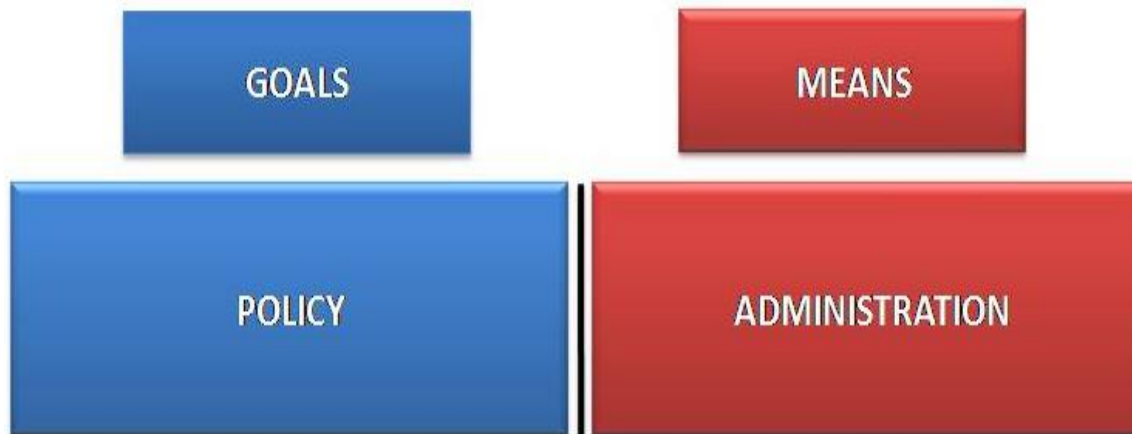
- The central question of this theory is : Does the bureaucracy comply with the law or with the preference of law makers or elected executive? The politics administration dichotomy traces to the origins of modern public administration.
- Woodrow Wilson set out the most formal and rigid version of the dichotomy by arguing in his seminal essay on modern public administration that politics should not meddle in administration and administration should not meddle in politics (1887/1941).
- Dwight Waldo and Herbert Simon challenged the dichotomy. To Waldo, all administrative acts were political at a fundamental level. To Simon, it was difficult empirically to unbundle politics from administration and vice versa.



THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN POLITICS AND ADMINISTRATION AND MATTERS OF BUREAUCRATIC CONTROL (1)



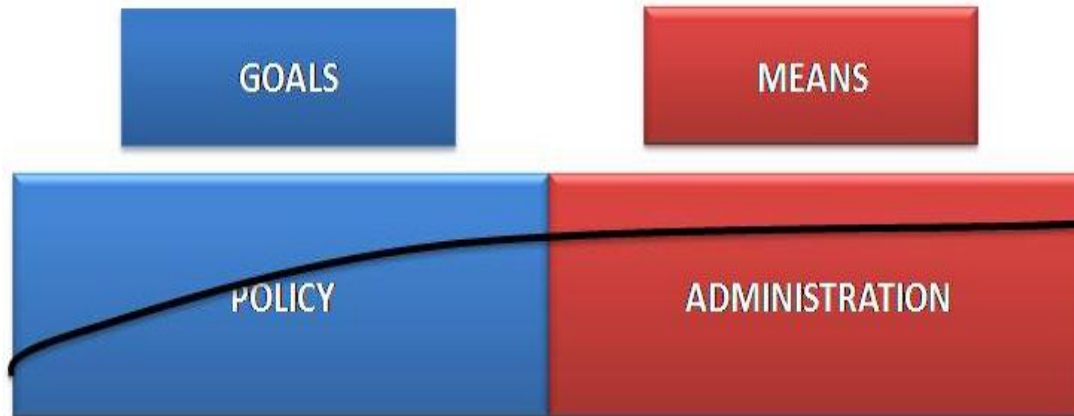
- The simple representation of the differences between policy and administration, following Wilson (1887/1941) and Goodnow (1900)



THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN POLITICS AND ADMINISTRATION AND MATTERS OF BUREAUCRATIC CONTROL (2)



- The empirical critique of the differences between policy and administration could be represented this way :



- So, there is no “firewall” between politics and administration. Empirically, this model is more nearly accurate, the evidence being that bureaucrats are often engaged in policy agenda setting and policymaking (Kingdon 1995; Bardach 1977) and that elected officials are often engaged in what would ordinarily be described as management or administration (Gilmour and Halley, 1994).

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN POLITICS AND ADMINISTRATION AND MATTERS OF BUREAUCRATIC CONTROL (3)



- ❑ One of the most interesting theoretical advances in the control of bureaucracy theory comes from the study of American council-manager from city of government.
- ❑ The political scientist James H. Svara has made extensive studies of cities employing the council-manager form and of relations between elected city councils and professional city managers (Svara, 1994).



THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN POLITICS AND ADMINISTRATION AND MATTERS OF BUREAUCRATIC CONTROL (4)



THE COUNCIL-MANAGER FORM

- ❑ Research on council-manager form cities is the more interesting because the education and culture of city managers.
- ❑ Most city managers hold master degree in public administration and take seriously their role as professional managers guided by the norms of efficiency, economy and equity, as well as a code of ethics.
- ❑ Although it is understood that city managers have policy role, most of them prize their political neutrality and their insulation from city politics.
- ❑ In the canons of city management the manager is to administer the day-to-day affairs of the city, appoint and dismiss all department heads, operate a strict merit system for hiring and promotion, manage all bids and contracts without favor, and prepare an annual budget for the council's consideration.

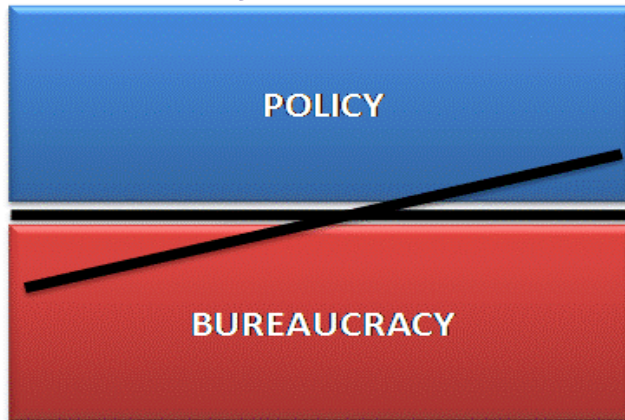


THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN POLITICS AND ADMINISTRATION AND MATTERS OF BUREAUCRATIC CONTROL (5)



RELATIONS BETWEEN ELECTED CITY COUNCILS AND PROFESSIONAL CITY MANAGERS

- Svara's research indicates that there are four models of relation between elected officials and administrators as follows : (Policy-Administration Dichotomy)



All the space above the heavy line is the responsibility of elected officials, Below the line the responsibility of administrators.

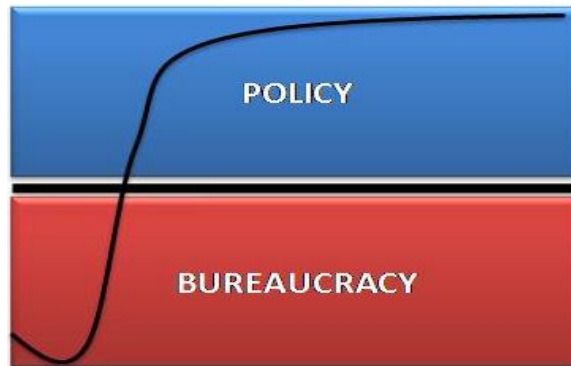
- The policy-administration dichotomy model set out in figure 2.3 resembles that in figure 2.1 and represent the traditions of municipal reform and the classic council-manager form of local government.



THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN POLITICS AND ADMINISTRATION AND MATTERS OF BUREAUCRATIC CONTROL (6)



RELATIONS BETWEEN ELECTED CITY COUNCILS AND PROFESSIONAL CITY MANAGERS



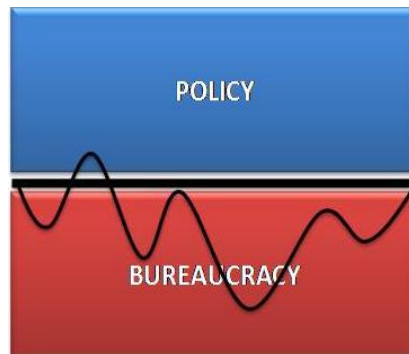
- ❑ Svara's "mixture in policy" model set out in figure 2.3b represent the influence of behaviorist David Easton (1965), Robert Dahl (1947), Wallace Sayer (1958), and others who defined politics and administration as the distribution of values, costs and benefits.
- ❑ Politician and bureaucrats both participate in this process of distribution and in it administrators have extensive opportunities to "set policy-initiating proposals, exercising direction, writing budgets and determining the delivery of services – and through implementation they shape policy formulated by elected officials"



THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN POLITICS AND ADMINISTRATION AND MATTERS OF BUREAUCRATIC CONTROL (7)



RELATIONS BETWEEN ELECTED CITY COUNCILS AND PROFESSIONAL CITY MANAGERS



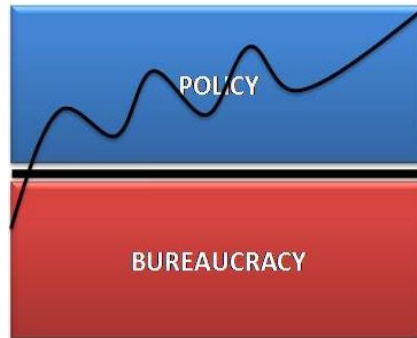
- ❑ Figure 2.3c described by Svava as the “mixture in administration” model and illustrates essentially the opposite of the mixture in policy model shown in figure 2.3b.
- ❑ The relationship represented here show deep probes by elected city council members into the day-to-day conduct of government administration.



THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN POLITICS AND ADMINISTRATION AND MATTERS OF BUREAUCRATIC CONTROL (8)



RELATIONS BETWEEN ELECTED CITY COUNCILS AND PROFESSIONAL CITY MANAGERS



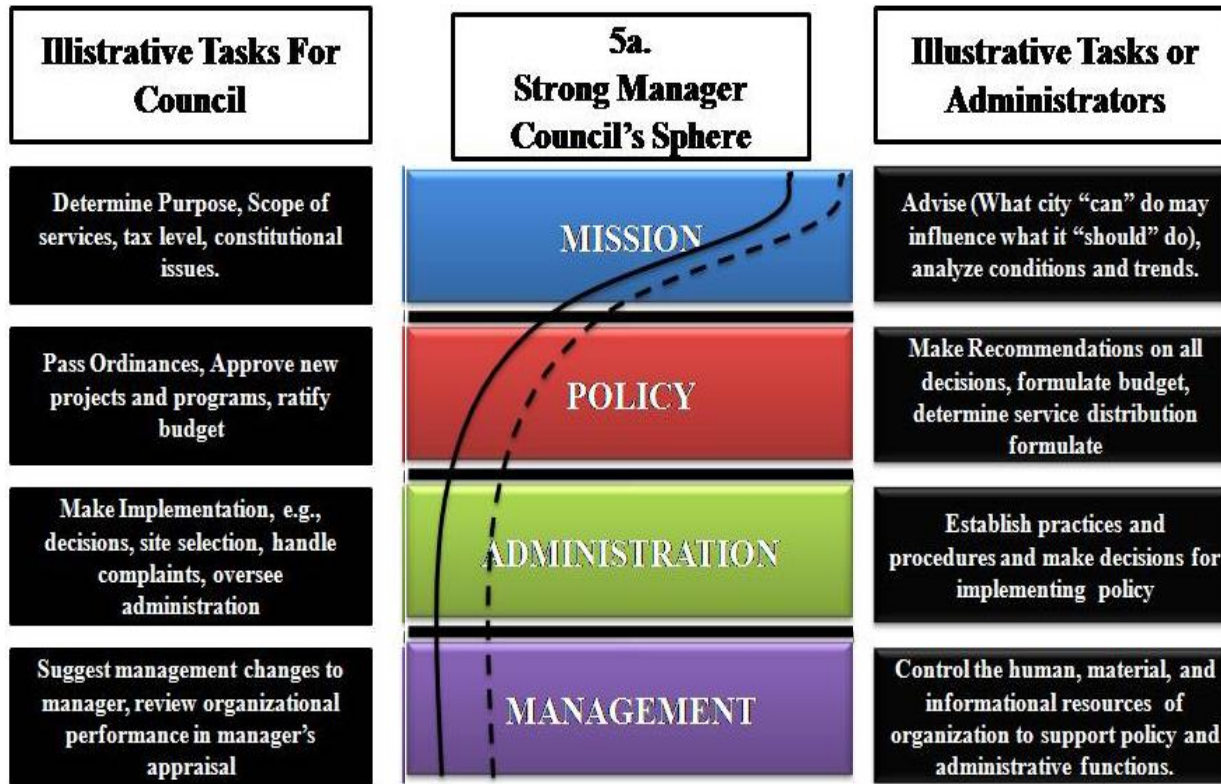
- ❑ Figure 2.3d illustrates the “elected official –administrator as co-equal” model; this shares many of characteristics of the mixture in policy model shown in figure 2.3b.
- ❑ public administrators have an inherent policy legitimacy and an ethical obligation to protect the interest of the underrepresented (sometimes called social equity), to acts as agent for the citizens, and to administer city affairs according to the law, council directives, and bureaucratic standards of efficiency and fairness.



THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN POLITICS AND ADMINISTRATION AND MATTERS OF BUREAUCRATIC CONTROL (9)



- Beside that, Svava then sets out the four-part model shown here as figure 2.4, parsing the dichotomy, which uses four rather than two categories of governmental activity and describe illustrative tasks for political officials and bureaucrats in each category.



THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN POLITICS AND ADMINISTRATION AND MATTERS OF BUREAUCRATIC CONTROL (10)



- ❑ Using the four-part model, he then arrays findings of his field research in four separate representations of the four-part model, shown here as figure 2.5. In the four boxes in figure 2.5, the dotted line represents the solid line shown in figure 2.4



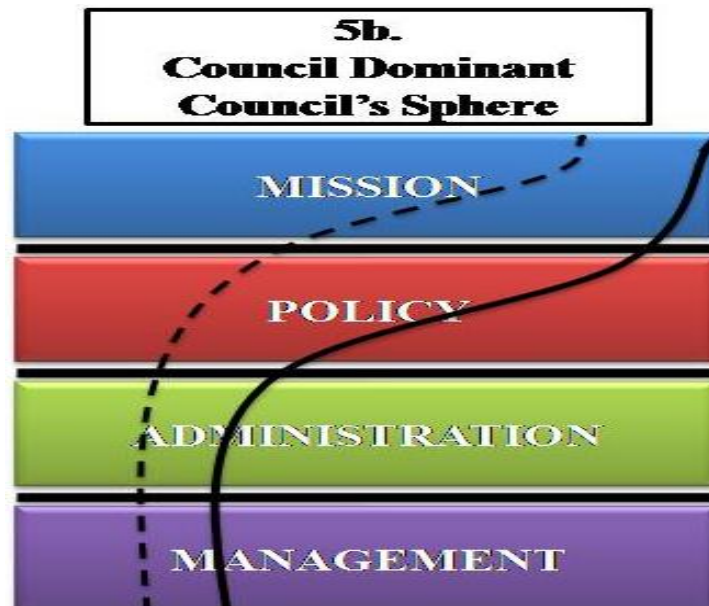
- ❑ Some cities are best described as having a strong manager, shown in box 2.5a. The most notable finding here is that the managers space for action is greater in all four functions of government.



THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN POLITICS AND ADMINISTRATION AND MATTERS OF BUREAUCRATIC CONTROL (11)



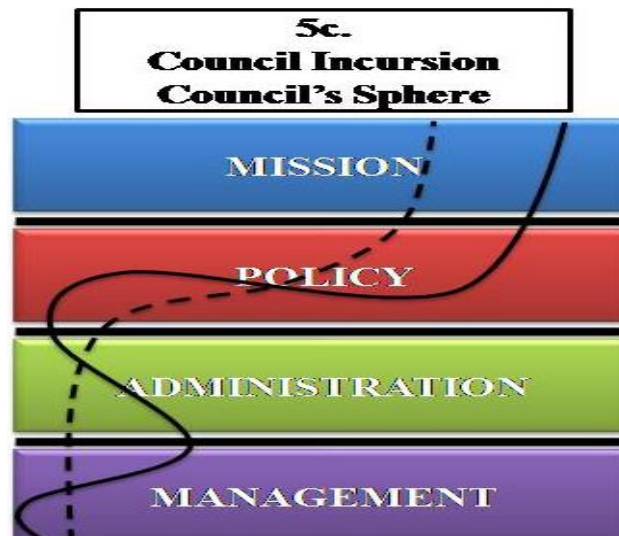
- The opposite of this is found in the council-dominant model set out in box 2.5b, which illustrates a wide space of council involvement at all four levels. This could also be called a council control-of-bureaucracy model.



THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN POLITICS AND ADMINISTRATION AND MATTERS OF BUREAUCRATIC CONTROL (12)



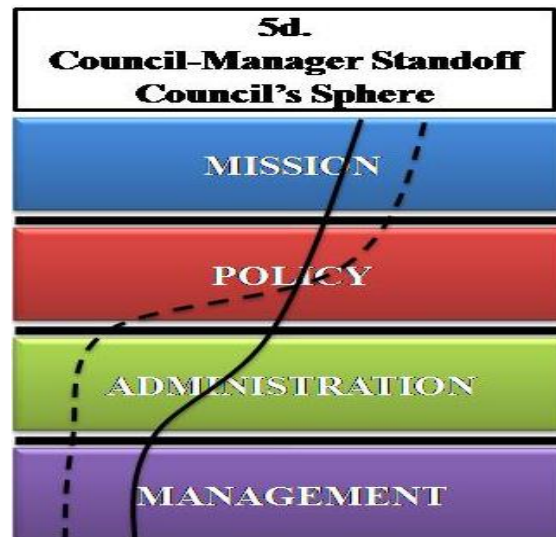
- ❑ The council incursion pattern shown in 2.5c describes a council that probes more deeply in all areas than in the typical model, yet is not consistently assertive in all areas. The incursive council makes administrators wary of offering any proposals concerning mission and is unpredictable in its reactions to policy recommendation from staff (Svara, 1994).



THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN POLITICS AND ADMINISTRATION AND MATTERS OF BUREAUCRATIC CONTROL (13)



- ❑ Box 2.5d illustrates a standoff between an assertive manager and an equally assertive council.
- ❑ They check and contain each other without the council's taking complete control the manager's getting what is believed to be deserved administrative discretion.



ARE BUREAUCRACIES OUT OF CONTROL ? (1)



- ❑ One group of theories concerning the control of bureaucracy could be described as theories of bureaucratic capture.
- ❑ This theory traces primarily to studies of the federal government, and particularly to studies of the regulatory process and the independent regulatory commissions.
- ❑ In one from of this theory, the industries regulated or licensed come, through time, to heavily influence or even to control their regulation (Huntington 1952).
- ❑ Another version of capture theory is that the bureaucratic process is dominated by triumvirate of policy actors –an interest group, a congressional committee charged with the oversight of a particular agency and a government agency- (Wood and Waterman 1994).



ARE BUREAUCRACIES OUT OF CONTROL ? (2)



- ❑ Client responsiveness theory is essentially traditional public administration theory emphasizing agency effectiveness and the instrumental values of effectiveness, and the instrumental values of efficiency, economy and equity (Frederickson 1997a). To what extent does this theory have an empirical warrant ?
- ❑ **First**, the seminal research on client responsiveness theory was done by Michael Lipsky in his classic, *Street-Level Bureaucracy : Dilemmas of the individual in Public Service (1980)*.



Are Bureaucracies Out Of Control ? (3)

-LIPSKY FINDINGS-



- ❑ Resources are chronically inadequate.
- ❑ The demand for services tends to increase to meet the supply.
- ❑ Goal expectations for agencies tend to be ambiguous, vague or conflicting.
- ❑ Performance oriented toward goal achievement tends to be difficult, if not impossible, to measure.
- ❑ Clients are typically nonvoluntary; partly as a result, clients for the most part do not serve as a primary bureaucratic reference group.
- ❑ Street Level Bureaucracy usually have at least some latitude or discretion in providing their services.
- ❑ Under conditions of scarce resources and high demand, bureaucrats ration services.
- ❑ To bring greater predictability to the resource stream, street-level bureaucrats husband such worker resource as time and energy.
- ❑ They control clients by the maintenance of distance, autonomy, expertise, and symbols, thereby reducing the consequences of uncertainty.
- ❑ Street level bureaucrats are often alienated from their work and exhibit forms of psychic withdrawal.
- ❑ Street-level bureaucrats tend to be middle –class and ration their service based on middle-class values such as work, thrift, and the like.



Are Bureaucracies Out Of Control ? (4)

- ❑ **Second**, Judith Gruber's (1987) research paints a rather less flattering picture of bureaucratic actions and attitudes toward political control. Drawing from James D Thompson (1967) theory was bureaucrats seek to buffer themselves from outside; from Anthony Downs (1967) theory that the bureaucracies prefer the status quo and resist change.
- ❑ She finds that bureaucrats "have a significance latitude of action and they like it that way" (92); "prefer outside actors who have very little power" (94); Do not welcome either city council or mayoral influence somewhat more welcome (96). Finally Gruber found bureaucrats to be greatly influenced in their actions and opinions by their professional association and by technology by their work; and that they resist political intervention that runs counter to these influences.



Are Bureaucracies Out Of Control ? (5)



POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATION VALUE

John Nalbadian, a city mayor and a professor of public administration sets out these contrasting value this way (1995) :

	Politics		Administration
Activity	Game	C I T Y M A N A G E R	Problem Solving
Players	Representatives		Experts
Pieces	Interest/Symbols		Information, Money, People, Things
Currency	Power		Knowledge
Conversation	What do you hear		What do you know
Dynamics	Conflict, Compromise and Change		Harmony, Cooperation and Continuity



AGENCY THEORY (1)

- ❑ This chapter closes with a review of the most popular contemporary theory of political control of bureaucracy : principal agent theory or, more simply, agency theory.
- ❑ The initial premise of this theory was that bureaucracies are either out of control or at least very difficult to control or at least very difficult to control. In this premise the bureaucracy hoards information, seeks autonomy and shirks.
- ❑ The assumption of course, is the relationship between elected leaders (principals) and civil servant of bureaucrats (agents) is hierarchical and could be understood to be a series of contracts or transactions between a buyer of services and a provider of services.



AGENCY THEORY (2)

- ❑ In the public context, the elected “buyer” attempts to shape the service to his or her preference by laws, regulations, executive orders, appropriations, hearings, and all manner of co-management. The bureaucratic “seller” of service is a mixture of professional education and expertise, responds to laws and constitutions and attempts to serve their clients.
- ❑ How do bureaucracies respond to political control? In their review of agency theory research of federal agencies, Wood and Waterman conclude that there are dynamic bidirectional relationship in which legislators signal preferences to bureaucrats and bureaucrats signal preferences to legislators.
- ❑ Despite the rather negative rhetoric in some agency theory – phrase such as agency deception, bureaucracies shirking, agency information hoarding, and the like – the general findings of research make useful contribution to public administration theory.



CONCLUSION (1)

- ❑ Theories of political control of bureaucracy are central to any sophisticated understanding of public administration. They are abundant in their variety and are tested using the full range of methodological technique.
- ❑ As theories of political control of bureaucracy indicate, to unbundle politics and administration is a key to understanding how politics control bureaucracy and how bureaucracy influences politics and policy.



CONCLUSION (2)

- ❑ After his retirement Waldo have an opinion about “what is the nature of reality of public administration?”. First, the separation of power is there – prominently and, for our purposes, permanently. Second, The politics-administration formula, perspective, approach, dichotomy –pick your own noun- was an attempt on the part of public administration to work with and/or around the separation of powers.
- ❑ Theories of Political Control of Bureaucracy are, in sum, among the most empirically robust and theoretically elegant in public administration.



Thank You !

