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## Paradigms of public administration and development of Thai modern bureaucracy over five decades

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### Abstract

This research studied the paradigms of public administration in coherence with the development of modern Thai bureaucracy during the decades from 1959 to 2006. Methods of the study were based on documentary research and interviewing experts of Thai public administration. Thai bureaucracy development can be described using three paradigms: 'Development Administration', 'New Public Management', and 'Good Governance'. Along these processes, there have been barriers to the development of Thai bureaucracy such as the impacts of dependency on international organizations regarding inspection problems, the attempt to copy management tools, and centralized decision-making.

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### Introduction

Modern Thai public administration was initiated from the founding of the Faculty of Public Administration at Thammasat University in 1955, which is considered as the first Institute of Public Administration in Thailand. Administrative authority was transferred to the National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA) in 1966. The establishment of the Public Administration Institute and Thai bureaucratic development in that period were results of collaboration between Thailand and the United States of America, post-World War II. In the early 1950s, there was a transition of Thai bureaucracy, especially in the matter of the increasing number of personnel who had graduated overseas, including new initiative projects which were supported by the United States (Samudavanija, 1998). In the late 1990s, Thai bureaucratic development adhered to the paradigm of New Public Management (NPM) (Bowornwathana, 2008; Painter, 2006; Songklin, 2008). As a result, it interested the authors to further study the research topic concerning what implications were

coherent with Thai bureaucratic development during the period 1959–2006 as well as what impacts Thai bureaucratic development generated. The authors argue that even if Thai bureaucracy implements a new paradigm of public administration, the implementation process will retain a traditional structure. Thus, there is an influence of hybrid performance in the development of Thai bureaucracy from the past to the present.

### Literature Review

#### Public Administration

The study of public administration was recognized by Woodrow Wilson's article entitled "The Study of Administration" published in 1887 with emphasis on two major concepts: (1) the separation of politics (policy-making) and administration; and (2) searching for scientific principles to improve the efficiency of government organizations (Denhardt, 2008).

Public administration is the concept of public sector management classified into two aspects: academic discipline, focusing on the creation of knowledge through research, teaching, and learning; and practical profession, regarding public sector management. Both aspects have an interaction.

Additionally, Wilson (1887) explained that the object of administration study was to rescue executive methods from

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confusion and to lead to stable principles. It is consistent with the perspective of White (1926) which stated that the object of public administration is the most efficient utilization of resources at the disposal of officials and employees. Greene (2004) concisely explained that public administration is the management of government agencies in providing service to people in various aspects in accordance with the public target. The authors have concluded the meaning of public administration as the science of process in the production of goods and public service in response to people's needs and grievances through the mechanism of bureaucracy.

### *Paradigm of Public Administration*

Jun (1986) depicted a paradigm concept as a broader framework into which theories fit. A paradigm is adopted for problem-solving and as the basis for theoretical exemplars, models, and research. Kuhn (1970, as cited in Jun, 1986) discusses a number of stages through which a science tends to progress. These stages are the pre-paradigm stage, the paradigm stage in normal science, the crisis stage, scientific revolution, and the new paradigm stage.

However, there are two limitations in applying a paradigm in public administration that cannot be judged by the volume of written works including that developed from research works, the number of books, and the number of articles in journals, as it is still uncertain whether or not all this information enables disclosure of the success to problem solving. It also includes the ambiguity against unanimity to accept a paradigm from a scholarly community and from a practitioner community.

The author views the paradigm of public administration as the framework that is composed of concept, theory, method, key actor, innovation, and instrument/tool as well as value which is coherent with the major conceptual framework specifically tantamount to bureaucratic development. At the same time, the change of paradigm has an implication on the transformation of the former conceptual framework to the new concept based on encountering problems and obstacles from the previous paradigm and being unable to solve those conflicts in a tangible way. As a result, the concerned party or academic society attempts to come up with the development of a new concept for problem-solving associated with ineffectiveness, injustice, and a lack of transparency.

### *Waves of Public Reform*

Global public reform has been divided into three waves. The first wave was counted as the golden age of planning which was between the mid 1960s to the late 1970s. The second wave was the new public management (NPM) which was between the late 1970s to the late 1990s. The third wave was the concepts of governance, network, partnership, transparency, and trust which were developed during the late 1990s to the 2010s (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011) as briefed below.

#### *Development administration*

Development administration (DA) was developed in the west particularly in the USA through a comparative administrative group which was established in 1961 having

Riggs (1917–2008) as the president of the group with support from the Ford Foundation to analyze the relationship between the administrative system and the political, economic, and cultural contexts in developing countries in particular. DA is divided into two aspects. First, the administration of development programs applies a policy and plans designed to meet the development objectives and second, the administration capabilities. Since the 1960s, DA has dominated developing countries and its core objective was to transit the existing government mechanism to expertise and modernity through administration development, technology, training from foreign experts, and establishing the institutions of public administration (Chakrabarty & Chand, 2012).

#### *New public management*

New Public Management (NPM) was the time for bureaucratic reforms in the 1970s–1980s which coincided with global economic chaos. The western welfare states had a high cost of management and were ineffective and were criticized as being centralized, lacking agility, being ineffective and unresponsive to the needs or the change of environment in such context. Such reasons led the search for reform by adopting and adapting the concept of business management to minimize cost but maximize effectiveness to meet the needs of people who were the service recipients with the support of the “3E”s (economy, effectiveness, and efficiency) (Fattore, Lapenta, & Dubois, 2012; Haque, 2007; Hood, 1991; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011).

#### *Good governance*

The concept of good governance (GG) came from the fade-out of the public sector roles over given values of the market which led to monopolizing societies (Chakrabarty & Chand, 2012). Formulating GG by the World Bank (WB) and the Asia Development Bank (ADB) in 1999 (Brewer, 2003) contained four elements: 1) accountability; 2) participation emphasizing coordination between the central agencies and the local agencies, private sectors, and affected various groups in developing the private organization and the civil society; 3) legal framework; 4) transparency or opening up of information to the public with clear rules, regulations, and decision-making of the government. In addition, Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011) pointed out that GG entails the steering of society through networks and partnerships between governments, business sectors, and civil societies.

### *Development of Modern Thai Bureaucracy*

Public administration is a major mechanism in the production of goods and public services in the bureaucracy. Jun (1986) indicated that bureaucracy is a feature of public administration.

Bureaucracy was proposed by Max Weber, a German sociologist (1864–1920) at the close of the 19th century (Jun, 1986). Weber (1973) proposed that the characteristics of bureaucracy are: 1) principle of official work enacted in rules, laws, and administrative regulations; 2) hierarchy of the office and levels of command authority; 3) management of the modern office is based upon written documents; 4) office

management focusing on specialization and expert training; 5) after developing the office; the authorities must work at full potential and become the major work; and 6) office management must adhere to rules and regulations.

Thai bureaucratic reform has a long history which began in the reign of King Rama V. His Majesty King Chulachomklao (1853–1910) was the first Thai leader to attempt to reform the bureaucracy (Mutebi & Sivaraks, 2007). Thai bureaucracy stepped into western bureaucracy when the Administration Act BE 2471 (1928) was enacted which was the first law applying the merit system. Later, there was a change from an absolute monarchy to democracy in 1932, but the bureaucratic development results were not constructive.

## Methods

This study uses documentary research, especially the data of public-sector policies such as government policy, the national economic and social development plan, and relevant laws as well as the results of bureaucratic development. In addition, this study also obtained information from the Thai Journal of Public Administration and the NIDA Development Journal from 1960 until 2006 by means of content analysis using the clustering and explanation-building technique (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The conceptual framework, method, and the results of the study, were verified by three scholars in public administration from different institutions—the National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA), Thammasat University, and Chulalongkorn University.

## Results

The paradigms of public administration in connection with the development of Thai bureaucracy between 1959 and 2006 comprise Development Administration (DA), New Public Management (NPM), and Good Governance (GG) as detailed below.

### *Development Administration*

Development Administration came into effect from the late 1950s to the late 1980s, during the governments of Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat (1959–1963) and General Prem Tinsulanonda (1980–1988). The significant characteristics of Thailand's Development Administration are: (1) building of institutions, especially the increasing number of agencies in the Office of the Prime Minister from 12 agencies in 1953 to 23 agencies in 1959 such as the National Economics and Social Development Council in 1959, the Bureau of Budget in 1959, and the Ministry of National Development, Department of Community Development; (2) inception of the first Institute of Public Administration in Thailand as the Faculty of Public Administration, Thammasat University in 1955 under support of the United States Operations Mission (USOM) and Indiana University (IU) in terms of curriculum design and faculty resources (Amornrat, 1960; Kittikachorn, 1962). However, it shifted to the supervision of the National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA) in 1966; (3) the first journal in public administration in 1960 (later changing its

name to the Development Administration Journal) has continued its operation until the present; (4) improving bureaucratic means such as improvement of financial and budgetary systems, especially the change from a Line-Item Budget to the Program Budget in 1960 with assistance from the Public Administration Service (PAS) as a consultant in the 1950s (Pathmanand, 1985; Satitniramai, 2013). In addition, the first National Economic Development Plan 1961–1966 was initiated as a result of the report on the study “A Public Development Program for Thailand” by the World Bank's working team who made observations on Thai economic status during 1957–1958; (5) human resource development both of operational staff and academics by their further study at the post-graduate level and overseas training particularly in the USA such as at Indiana University, the University of Michigan. More details are explained in Bowornwathana's work (2013) in relation to the classification of public administration scholars with degree completion from overseas; and (6) providing civil servants with training course in public administration emphasizing the principles of public administration (1927–1937) which is one of the paradigms of the US public administration in particular with the seven administration concepts (POSDCORB) of the article by Gulick and Urwick (1937) entitled “Papers on the Science of Administration” (Milkis, 2008). Jarnson and Berg (1962) stated that a workshop on administrator development in Thailand, which was attended by executives from ministries, was first organized in April 1960 by the Faculty of Public Administration, Thammasat University in cooperation with specialists from the USA.

The significant aspect of Thailand's development administration paradigm is consistent with the perspective of Chakrabarty and Chand (2012) that the popular technique for projects in the 1960s was a 5-year plan involving a budget agenda, training, and community development. This period was known as the technical assistance era. Haque (2007) commented that during the 1960s–1970s, the government established the National Institute Development Administration (NIDA) for the purpose of providing services in education and training in the development of public administration. In the 1970s, NIDA's academic programs were substantially focused on economic development and administration development. Bowornwathana (2013) explained that there were three main factors leading to the development of Thailand's Bureaucracy in this period consisting of: (1) the founding of the National Institute Development Administration (NIDA); (2) the formation of the National Economic Development Plan; and (3) the publication of the Administration Development Journal.

### *New Public Management*

New Public Management (NPM) has been in the spotlight from the early 1980s to the late 1990s (with adherence continuing up to the present). It distinctly appeared in the 6th (1987–1991), 7th (1992–1996), and 9th (2002–2006) National Economic and Social Development Plans. It was the transformation of the government's role from controlling and inspecting to supervising and promoting, and downsizing and restructuring public organizations by means of outsourcing

and contracting out. NPM had been continually implemented since General Chatchai Chunhawan's administration (1988–1991) until Thaksin Shinawatra's government (2001–2006). However, the results of bureaucratic development according to the NPM concept emerged in Chuan Leekpai's government (2nd premiership) (1997–2000) and became more tangible in Thaksin Shinawatra's regime (2001–2006). The significant aspects of the NPM paradigm are: (1) performance standards such as the Thailand International Public Sector Standard Management System (P.S.O), the Public Sector Management Quality Award (PMQA), and Performance Agreement; (2) "agencyfication" separating agencies from the ministerial, departmental, and state enterprise levels in the form of a public organization via the Public Organization Act 1999; (3) application of Information Technology (IT) to public administration such as E-Government and the Government Fiscal Management Information System (GFMIS); and (4) privatization as occurred with the Petroleum Authority of Thailand into the PTT Public Company Limited, the Airports Authority of Thailand into the Airports of Thailand Public Company Limited, the Telephone Organization of Thailand into the TOT Public Company Limited, the Communications Authority of Thailand into the CAT Telecom Public Company Limited, and the establishment of Thailand Post Company Limited.

This aspect of Thai bureaucracy development parallels the viewpoint of Hauque (2007) who pointed out there had been an increase in the autonomy and flexibility in human resource management and financial management through the setup of autonomous public organizations, adherence to objectives and performance standards, and privatization. Borins (1995, as cited in Borins, 2002) stated that the NPM approach emphasizes measuring and performance targets. The study of Painter (2006) and of Mongkol (2012) noted that the project of public administration reform under Thaksin Shinawatra's administration clearly adopted the NPM concept by focusing on the application of IT. Songklin (2008) considered that the trend of reform with the NPM approach arose in Chuan Leekpai's government (1997–2000), particularly the Bureaucracy Reform Plan 1999 and was most explicit in the regime of Thaksin Shinawatra.

#### *Good Governance*

The paradigm of Good Governance (GG) was initiated in the post Black May incident in 1992 and it was included in the 8th National Economic and Social Development Plan (1997–2001), including the setting up of public hearings through the regulations of the Prime Minister's Office in the matter of public opinion by means of the 1996 Public Hearing Act, accessing state information through the formulation of the Official Information Act 1997, and the initiation of GG according to the Prime Minister's Office's regulations on Good Governance 1999. More importantly, the GG concept was distinctly used as the fundamental principle of the 1997 Constitution in terms of the certification of political participation rights, citizenship rights, human rights, and the check on the state's exercise of power. The significant characteristics of GG are detailed as: 1) establishing an institute for checks and balances between executive politicians and top civil servants, 2) supporting

people's political participation, and 3) focusing on decentralization. According to the findings, it is consistent with the opinion of Mutebi (2009) and Pengsuwan (2005) that Thailand is one of the countries with alertness and a focus on the GG approach, especially in terms of transparency and responsibility in line with the 1997 Constitution. It turned out in the inception of independent regulatory agencies for the purpose of checks and balances of executive power through organizations such as the Constitutional Court, the Administrative Court, the Human Rights Commission, the State Audit Commission, the Ombudsman, the Election Commission, and the National Anti-Corruption Commission. Bowornwathana and Poochareon (2010) stated that the 1997 Constitution decreased the power of the executive (cabinet) and of civil servants and at the same time it indirectly enhanced people's power in monitoring through the new GG institution or independent regulatory agencies. Brewer (2003) pointed out that Thailand's 1997 Constitution indicated the transforming tendency of the paradigm of the national political system to be consistent with good governance elements for the aspects of responsibility, predictability, transparency, and participation.

In summary, the paradigms of public administration with relevance to Thai bureaucracy development comprise Development Administration (DA), New Public Management (NPM), and Good Governance (GG). This observation is consistent with the study by Cheung and Scott (2003) which pointed out that there are three paradigms of public sector reform in Asia; 1) building state capacity, 2) New Public Management (NPM), and 3) social networking.

#### **Discussion**

The overall impacts of Thai bureaucratic development over the five-decade period can be described as follows.

#### *Dependency on the Influence of International Organizations and Foreign Governments*

The development of the Thai public sector by importing concepts and management tools was mostly influenced by international organizations (IOs) involved in country development in the early 1950s in accordance with the Development Administration concept and in the 1997 Economic Crisis it was dominated by the IMF's concept of privatization of state enterprises under the conditions of financial aid delivery to Thailand. International organization's influence on policy making is in the form of researching with reporting to the Thai government. Then the government is urged to follow the model solutions as determined in the report. In other words, IOs and foreign governments provide funding with conditions which require the Thai government to comply with what is written in the proposal for the utilization of that fund. It can be seen, for example, from the World Bank working group that visited to study Thailand's economy during 1957–1958 and released the report "A Public Development Program for Thailand". Another example is the 1997 economic crisis with acceptance of financial aid from the IMF and the privatization measures as stated in the letter of intent (LOI).



### *Importing and Copying Innovative Management Tools from Abroad*

Some management tools in Thailand have been derived from overseas. For example, the Thailand International Public Sector Standard Management System and Outcomes (PS.O) was modified from the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), while the Public Sector Management Quality Award (PMQA) was developed from the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA). Other management tools are: the Thailand Quality Award (TQA), Knowledge Management (KM), Risk Management, Change Management, Best Practices, and Bench-Marking. The copying of management tools utilized in Thailand's bureaucratic development placed less attention on consistency between the actual problems of Thai bureaucracy and the organizational cultural context. Unsurprisingly, those tools were popular with the Thai public sector only for a short period of time. In the end, those tools became less popular and were considered as historical tools awaiting new invented tools by IO to colorize the trend of public administration. Therefore, the inconsistency of the real problems of Thai bureaucracy and the difference of organizational culture between the Thai and developed nations' public sectors, such as in the personal relations of patronage and dependency, pay more attention to respect and loyalty than to the merit system, with a large hierarchy and centralization leading to nepotism, the destruction of professionalism and the merit system, and eventually resulting in corruption (Bowornwathana, 2011; Brewer, 2003; Jingjit & Fotaki, 2011; Mutebi & Sivaraks, 2007; Rigg, 1991; Samudavanija, 1998 as cited in Painter, 2006). Furthermore, the application of management tools with a lack of participation from the operational mechanism such as frontline staff as well as the top-down approach were significant causes leading to the failure of Thailand's bureaucratic development in the past.

### *The Confusion of New Public Management and Good Governance*

The practice of the GG approach through the Royal Decree on Good Governance was the main legislation covering public sector reform after 2002. However, its principle content emphasized management tools compatible with NPM such as results-based management, learning organization, performance agreement, and personal bonuses. The interesting question is why the name and content of this law are so different? The authors investigate two different issues.

### *The difference between the principle and concept of New Public Management and Good Governance*

The aim and approach of New Public Management and Good Governance differ. The aim of New Public Management is set on effectiveness, efficiency, and economy. The main indicator is the private sector with fundamental theory in the form of New Institutional Economics, Public Choice Theory, and Business Management (Ormond, 2003 as cited in Haque, 2007). The other indicator is the management tools including downsizing, outsourcing, contracting out, autonomy and flexibility, "agencyfication" through the establishment of autonomous public organizations with emphasis on results

through performance standards, privatization, deregulation, and public service (Hauque, 2007). In contrast, the Good Governance approach targets equity and equality (Chakrabarty & Chand, 2012). Good Governance's indicators are composed of civil society and nongovernment organization (Farazmand, 2004) that their analytical approach is the transformation from a single agency to an organizational network and it emphasizes cooperation rather than competition both at the internal and inter-agency levels (Fattore et al., 2012). The implication is that the public sector and civil society are modeled with accountability, participation, a legal framework, and transparency or openness regarding information of rules and regulations, and the government's decision-making (ADB, 1999 as cited in Brewer, 2003). Farazmand (2004) depicted the difference of these two approaches as follows.

The idea of New Public Management is to avoid arguments though equity, fairness, and accountability. Apart from that, the New Public Management is based on a marketing concept by adopting the techniques of business into public sector agencies. Some of the criticized issues such as efficiency, accountability, quality, and fairness become the major context in the Good Governance concept. This viewpoint is consistent with the perspective of Haque (1998, 1999, as cited in Bowornwathana, 2000) that the reform of the public service by adhering to the marketing concept sees the deterioration of the public sector's confidence in the public service which is the weak point in its legitimacy. Market values such as productivity, cost-effectiveness, competition, and profit influence the government which undermines the focus on accountability, neutrality, demand responsiveness, morality, equity, and fairness.

### *The underlying reason/hidden agenda of Thai public sector with preference for New Public Management to Good Governance*

The public sector of Thailand during Chuan Leekpai's government (1997–2000) announced the Prime Minister's Office's regulation of Good Governance Framework 1999 with emphasis on good governance of bureaucracy. Good Governance consisted of six elements, namely, rule of law, morality, transparency, participation, responsibility, and worthiness. Later, during Thaksin Shinawatra's administration (2001–2006), it focused on New Public Management by terminating the aforementioned regulation and issuing the Royal Decree on the Regulations and Procedures of Good Governance 2003 with emphasis on result-based management (RBM), four-yearly and annual action plans, a performance agreement, and incentive allocation. Bowornwathana (2008) considered that this royal decree focused on improvements in efficiency but paid less attention to responsibility, transparency, and corruption. The author has gathered information and analyzed the reason why the executive branch of Thailand prefers New Public Management to Good Governance as stated below.

1. The head of government, especially in the Thaksin era (2001–2006) followed the New Public Management concept as a result of experience in business success prior to turning to politics and this had a strong influence on the adoption of the business concept to the public sector. For example, the CEO

Governor Scheme was created based on the prime minister's experience as a company's CEO (Bowornwathana, 2004).

2. Good Governance principles emphasizing responsibility, transparency, small-scale central government whose responsibility and transparency are suited to a checks and balances approach by independent regulatory agencies such as the National Anti-Corruption Commission, the Ombudsman, the Senate, and the Administrative Court. The Good Governance principle with emphasis on participation and transparency generated concerns for the executive branch who tried to object to the tangible application of the Good Governance concept (Bowornwathana & Poocharoen, 2010).

3. The principle of Good Governance contains the context empowering civil society and NGOs as a network for public service and interest in negotiation with government, which required the public sector, including executive politicians and civil servants, to delegate authority to the local administrative agencies and other non-state sectors. Thai bureaucracy, which is familiar with centralization and the top-down approach, needs to adjust its administrative approach to openness, creating an atmosphere and conditions which support participation from other sectors in the form of an organizational network and people's participation in public service and welfare under the support of state agencies. More importantly, government agencies and authorities need to be ready for the checks by independent regulatory agencies and civil society according to the responsibility and transparency elements. Therefore, the principle of Good Governance which is incompatible with the operation plan of Thai public agencies together with the worry of undermining their authority and interest indicates there is less support than for the New Public Management concept. Samudavanija (1998, as cited in Painter, 2006) explained that the norm of Thai bureaucracy which focuses on the interpersonal patronage system and dependency, emphasizing respect and loyalty rather than a merit system, results in nepotism and corruption in the end. Consistent with academic opinion, it was stated that there are two main problems in the Thai bureaucracy: 1) high hierarchy and centralization and 2) patron-client relationship (Brewer, 2003; Jingit & Fotaki, 2010; Rigg, 1991). That relationship leads to nepotism, the ruin of professionalism and the merit system and causes bureaucratic inefficiency and eventually results in corruption (Bowornwathana, 2011; Mutebi & Sivaraks, 2007). Not surprisingly, the failure of counter-corruption which is at the heart of Good Governance is unable to be utilized under Thai bureaucracy. As Komin (1990) stated, a grateful relationship orientation is the cause of the unsuccessful operation of anti-corruption. Mutebi (2009) further explained that Thai government has low responsibility in dealing with administrative corruption and state capture

which is considered a significant obstacle in anti-corruption in Thai society.

To summarize, those aforementioned four reasons help explain the claims that the Thai public sector puts more emphasis on public management than on the good governance principle through tangible evidence such as the Royal Decree on Regulations and Procedures of Good Governance 2003 known as Good Governance. However, the context in that law adhered to the New Public Management approach. Some government authorities were aware that Royal Decree 2003 is the law supporting the Good Governance principle. The name of the law is similar to the Prime Minister Office's Regulation on Good Governance 1999 which has already been terminated.

#### *Centralized Thai Bureaucratic Development Through the Bureaucracy Development Commission*

1. Paradigms of Thai public administration and the development of Thai bureaucracy have features not different from western public administration (Table 1).

From Table 1, the process of the conceptual implication of public administration and the development of Thai bureaucracy has been facing the problems of centralization, the patronage system, nepotism, and corruption.

2. Through almost 50 years of bureaucratic development through the Central Commission (1959–2006), the structural component of the Commission had been confined within three specific actors—political executives, central agencies, and experts. The confinement of actors in the structure of the Commission who focused on policy-making and implementation was the aspect of centralization of a small individual group of people. For example, the Public Sector Reform Commission in General Chavalit Yongchaiyudh's era consisted of 1) political executives, 2) seven central agencies, and 3) experts. The Public Sector Reform Commission in Chuan Leekpai's government (1997–2000) comprised 1) political executives, 2) seven central agencies, and 3) experts while the Public Sector Development Commission, a successor of the Public Sector Reform Commission, in Thaksin Shinawatra's regime (2001–2006) was composed of 1) political executives, 2) a delegation of the Decentralization Commission, 3) experts, and 4) the Office of the Public Sector Development Commission.

The bureaucratic development of Thailand has only lightly focused on the role of line agencies (ministries, agencies, departments) and civil society even though those two groups are the major actors in the development. The line agencies, including 20 ministries and more than 140 departments, are the mechanism in policy implementation while the people as the public service's users are supposed to be the principle objective/main target of the bureaucratic development.

**Table 1**

Paradigm characteristics of Thai public administration and development of Thai bureaucracy

	DA	NPM	GG
Actors	Government	Government and Private	Civil Society and Non-Government
Approach	Building Institution	Government as Regulator Private as Operator	Partnership to service-Checks and balances
Tools	5-Year plan	Public Autonomous Organization	Independence Regulatory Organization
	Training	Privatization	
	Institution of Public Administration	Performance Agreement	
	Graduate	Pay for Performance	

However, Thailand's bureaucratic development in the five-decade range has rarely involved those two groups of actors. Boworanwathana and Poocharoen (2005) explained that the public sector reform was still centralized to the prime minister's authority and made the related central agencies players who influenced the reform, while the line ministries had only slight participation.

The bureaucratic development concentration into central agencies was probably influenced by the Thai public sector's organizational culture that possesses a centralization aspect. Brewer (2003) and Rigg (1991) stated that Thai bureaucracy has a level of hierarchy and centralization while Hagensick (1970) further explained that the development of the Thai bureaucratic structure was determined by centralized agencies under the Prime Minister's Office and the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Commission. Samudavanija (1998) confirmed Thailand's centralization within central agencies as since 1961, the Bureau of the Budget and Office of National Economic and Social Development Commission have become the major organizations with the function of controlling other public sector agencies in adherence with the framework of the development plan and budgeting. In summary, bureaucratic development through a central commission from the past to the present indicates the centralized aspect of Thailand's bureaucracy.

The main problem of Thai bureaucratic development has been the centralization of the decision-making process to the central commission (central agencies) of bureaucracy development throughout a 50-year period. Such a problem contrasts with the original NPM model. McCort (2002) hints that the limitations of NPM applied in developing countries are centralization of the central agency and the barrenness of localization because the central agency is worried about the loss of power from the top-down command. It is in accord with the study of Mongkol (2012) that identified Thai government agencies have applied NPM but only partly such as regarding professionalism but significantly there has been a lack of reform of the public culture and values, especially with regard to centralization and corruption. Bowornwathana (2001, 2011) stated a policy of reforming governance cannot mate with the historical traditions of the Thai bureaucracy with the latter having retaliated and resisted because of the ethos of the Thai bureaucracy which has been strongly inherited over generations—authoritative rule, centralization, and bulk government.

## Conclusion and Recommendation

Thailand's bureaucratic development over the past five decades in connection with the public administration concept consists of three paradigms, namely, Development Administration, New Public Management, and Good Governance. The major obstacle to Thai bureaucratic development in general is the importing and copying of management tools from foreign countries, based on the distinction of problems, conditions, and organizational culture. It can be seen from centralization into central agencies, how the bureaucrats exert influence on the political executive's decision. The Thai public sector should proceed with

implementing a bureaucratic development approach by: 1) learning from failures or past mistakes; 2) reducing the dependence on innovative administrative tools from overseas. Instead, return to paying attention to studying existing problems and obstacles with emphasis on participation from line agencies and people; and 3) building public awareness on bureaucratic development and not being confined to central agencies only.

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