

Search for Improved Public Service Delivery in Tanzania: Is the Policy-Implementation Dichotomy an Elixir?

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Abstract

New Public Management (NPM) presupposes that if public service delivery were to be improved, policy-making should be separated from policy implementation. Although attempts to distinguish policy-making from implementation can be traced back to the classical writings of Woodrow Wilson and Frank J. Goodnow, among others, advocacy for the distinction appears to have rejuvenated as one of the defining elements of contemporary public management reforms under the aegis of the NPM discourse. Using the agencification and public-private partnership (PPP) models, embedded in the NPM, as well as the policy-making process based on the Tanzanian experience, we explore the feasibility of the policy-implementation dichotomy and its implications on service delivery in Tanzania. We argue that such a dichotomy is more pronounced in theory than in practice. While the policy-implementation dichotomy is desirable for the sake of enhancing efficiency, effectiveness and accountability at the practical level, it nevertheless remains more of a wishful thinking. Drawing on the Tanzanian policy-making experience, we find policy-making to be a highly interactive process such that the demarcation between the precise role of bureaucrats and politicians is blurred.

Key words: Public Service Delivery, Policy-Implementation Dichotomy, and Accountability

Introduction

Beginning in the late 19th century, the absence of a clear separation between policy-making and implementation started to be viewed as a hurdle for efficient and effective public service delivery. To deal with this problem, Woodrow Wilson and Frank Good now spearheaded a scholarly movement for the separation of the two domains. Thus, the genesis of the policy-implementation dichotomy and its underlying logic owes to Woodrow Wilson's (1887) classical work. In his article, Wilson recognized the complex nature of government activity and called for a systematic study of how government business was being administered (Henry, 2007; Shafritz & Hyde, 2008; Dwivedi & William, 2011). Although Wilson did not concern himself specifically with the relationship between the political and administrative spheres, he is credited for setting the path that has had an enduring impact on the development of public administration both in terms of theory and practice (Henry, 2007).

However, it was not until 1900 that the urge for a distinction between policy-making and policy implementation became more pronounced following Goodnow's (1900) work. In Goodnow's view, "politics has to do with policies or expressions of the state will", whereas administration concerns itself "with the execution of that will" (Shafritz & Hyde, 2008:29). This attempt to distinguish the political functions from the administrative ones is what later came to be referred to as the politics-administration dichotomy (Peters & Pierre, 2003; Henry, 2007; Shafritz

& Hyde, 2008). The politics-administration dichotomy emphasizes the role differentiation between members of the political wing and those of the administrative machinery of government (UN, 1998). While echoing Goodnow's view, for example, Kelman, cited in Maynard-Moody and Herbert (1989) argued: "elected officials (politicians) should remain the primary source of policy ideas and choices with administrators, in theory, responsible for translating these ideas and choices into practice" (p.137). Kelman's cautionary use of the phrase "in theory" appears to emphasize the ideal roles of politicians and technocrats to be policy-making and implementation respectively. Practically, however, the role of administrators in the policy process may (and quite often it does) extend beyond the confines of implementation. The dichotomization of politics-administration is also implied in Hughes' distinction of administration from management. According to Hughes, public administration as an activity is primarily concerned with the execution of "policies derived from others" – notably politicians (Hughes, 2003:6, emphasis added).

We use a qualitative approach to show that despite attempts to maintain a policy-implementation dichotomy as an elixir for inefficient and ineffective service delivery, as embedded in the New Public Management (NPM) thinking, there are instances that suggest that the context in which such separation is implemented significantly determines success or failure. The article is mainly based on documentary sources. It is informed by a review of the literature including journal articles, books, government reports and newspaper reports. It is divided into six sections. Section two provides the conceptual framework within which an understanding of the term policy and the thrust of NPM are offered. Section three reviews the literature with particular focus on the divide among scholars about the separation or non-separation of policy from implementation. In so doing it highlights the circumstances in favour of either case. Section four presents the implications of the NPM movement for service delivery in Tanzania with particular reference to agencification and PPP models and their application. We also invoke the policy-making process in Tanzania in the fifth section to demonstrate how bureaucrats, who are regarded as policy implementers, tend to influence policy at both the formulation and implementation stages. The final section offers some concluding remarks.

Conceptual Framework

A Policy defined

A policy may be described as a general principle or rule to guide decisions and achieve a rational outcome(s). Such a description may be adequate for ordinary usage. However, in the context of public administration and public policy, a more informative definition is needed to properly put our discussion into a clearer picture. Anderson (2006) defines policy as a relatively stable, purposive course of action followed by an actor or a set of actors in dealing with a problem or matter of concern. This definition too does not distinguish decisions and actions undertaken in a private sphere from those undertaken in a public realm. Our conception of a policy in this article is one that focuses on public policy. A public policy is understood as a purposive course of action designed to guide the decisions and actions of government in solving problems of a public nature. A problem may be regarded as a 'public problem' only when a significant number of people are involved; to the extent that many people in society are affected by that problem and hence warranting the expenditure of public resources in addressing it (Dye, 1981).

In the public arena, the policy would ideally be a means for citizens to hold public institutions accountable for their actions concerning issues of public interest. However, this is not always the case as the policy processes are often quite complex. On the one hand, policy-making is seen as an objective logical process by policy-makers who are expected to act rationally and dispassionately in the quest for solving problems facing society. These, in our context, may include social and economic services to the citizenry.

On the other hand, ideas for policies may originate from individuals, communities, parents, organizations, public or private institutions and other interest groups such as Trade Unions, Chambers of Industry, Commerce or Professional Associations, Farmers Organizations, development partners and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). These ideas are then worked up to become policies. But in the narrow distinction of policy-making from implementation, only politicians are regarded as the source of public policies (Kelman, 1987). It is from this perspective of attempted distinction that we now turn to the NPM advocates.

The New Public Management

Despite being challenged by many modern scholars of public policy and administration as “a fictitious dichotomy” (Peters & Pierre, 2003:3), the emergence of the NPM movement in the 1980s appears to have resuscitated the notion that policy and implementation are distinct spheres. The NPM movement that started in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom and later spread to other countries generally aimed at improving ways of organizing government business, managing public service delivery and redefining the role of the state in line with market-oriented efficient, effective and responsive systems (Larbi, 1999; Hughes, 2003). Hood (1991), who coined the term ‘new public management’, summarizes the main thrust of NPM into seven precepts as shown in Appendix 1. Meanwhile, the ensuing discussion examines the arguments for or against the policy-implementation separation.

Arguments for or against Policy-Implementation Separation

There are contending views regarding the policy-implementation dichotomy. Some argue that if service delivery were to be improved, policy-making must be separated from implementation (Major, 1989; Mather, 1989). To illustrate this position Mather’s argument, for example, is particularly relevant: “This contract model separates the political process of determination of objectives and specification of services from their delivery, removing conflict of interest, which occurs when those specifying a service are also its deliverers” (Mather, 1989 quoted in Stewart, 1996:33).

Yet others are skeptical about this position arguing that while the separation can lead to improvement of service delivery, oblivion of the context may lead to problems if the policy-implementation dogma is taken to be the universal panacea for problems related to service delivery (Stewart, 1996). To be sure, Stewart argues, “the separation of policy-making and implementation will not prove the elixir that will resolve many of the problems of public management... It should be seen as one approach rather than the sole approach” to managing public services (Stewart, 1996:40). This means that improvement of service delivery cannot be guided by just ‘one best way’ across the board. Hence, the appropriate approach is one that is context-driven.

The diverse species of collective action and/or rational choice theory assume, at root, that individuals are largely self-interested and seek to maximize net benefits (personal benefits minus personal costs). Niskanen's assertion that public servants are budget-maximizers was a particularly powerful statement of the case (Niskanen, 1973). Because public servants can form an alliance with politicians to the extent that budget expansion is conceived as a victory for both, bureaucrats and politicians can collaboratively hide the costs and benefits of the services that they produce. Peters (1987) shares this view. In advancing this position, he adapted the "Village Life" model of Helco and Wildavsky in his explanation of how politicians and bureaucrats may collude in the policy-making process. According to the model, bureaucrats at the higher echelons and politicians are conceived as relatively sharing values and goals, hence they coalesce to defend the status quo against 'intruders'. Similarly, Dunleavy (1991) has pursued this argument in his bureau-shaping model. He argues that senior officials are really interested in maximizing just the direct running costs of the agency and the funds available for contracting suppliers, and have less interest in maximizing the programme budget encompassing resources passed on to other bodies for them to spend. Thus, it might be in the interests of these officials, the argument runs, to relinquish direct management of some activities as this releases them from responsibilities while allowing them to continue to increase the budgets that matter to them personally.

It is clear from the preceding discussion that bureaucrats are perceived to use their monopoly of information on the costs and consequences of service provision to protect their own interests rather than to provide better services. This agency problem in Niskanen's (1973) view can be resolved by ensuring that service delivery is always separated from the policy-making as this would help to break up the self-serving bureaucracy. By contrast, Dunleavy (1991) is skeptical about a mere separation of the policy-making from implementation. He cautions that even when this separation is made possible, the self-seeking motives could still prevail on the part of the senior officials who see more glory and less hard work in a policy advice role with less operational responsibilities. The thesis in both cases is that since public bodies are particularly prone to capture by the incumbent officials, distinguishing between what the agency should do (policy) and how it will do it (implementation) is a key strategy for reducing this risk. The foregoing discussion recognizes that there is a possibility for politicians and bureaucrats to collude in the policy process for purely private motives. When this is the case, accountability to the citizens will likely suffer. In order to avoid or at least minimize this risk of 'capture', it is imperative, the proposal goes, to adopt a role differentiation strategy.

The capture argument presupposes that separation of policy-making from implementation tasks will reduce the risk that policy is being made to justify the preferences of favoured groups, which, in this case, might be the existing service providers. Perfunctorily examined, the policy-implementation separation appears to have a strong justification in that it seeks to counteract self-interests. In reality, however, the choice might be between the devil and the deep blue sea, meaning that the fear of capture by providers might be providing an excuse only to conceal a more pernicious capture by others. Given the fact that there is no shortcut to checking the quality of policy before implementation begins, there are chances of a policy drifting from the purpose for which it was intended during the course of implementation. Analysts have argued that this time lag provides room for the policy providers to push through

policies that fit in with their ideological or business aspirations (Stewart, 1996). Boston (1995) suggests that this may be one reason why, even at the zenith of managerialist obsession in New Zealand during the early 1990s, policy advice was contracted out less in practice than might have been expected. Stewart (1996) proposes certain conditions under which separation of policy from implementation can be made possible or otherwise. It is to an exploration of these conditions that the ensuing discussion turns.

Conditions for policy-implementation dichotomy

The conditions for a dichotomous policy-implementation depend on various factors. In Stewart's (1996) view, for such dichotomy to happen there has got to be a clear specification of the policy to be executed. This is simply meant to offer an elaborate guide for implementation. There are several approaches to this end, including the use of well-specified service contracts through competitive tendering and a framework of agreements. Accordingly, Stewart makes the following eight assumptions if policy-implementation separation is to prevail: (i) policy is specified in advance of action; (ii) policy is specified in sufficient details such that it anticipates all the eventualities, but this too, no matter how desirable it may be, remains unrealistic as policies can never be specified to cover all uncertainties; (iii) policy is specified in ways that can be assumed to apply for a given period of time; (iv) policy is specified in terms that can be monitored to ensure effective implementation; (v) issues of policy are not raised by the process of implementation, however, in practice policy reviews are not uncommon and they tend to be informed by implementation experiences; (vi) the making of policy does not require advice from those engaged in implementation, again this assumption is far divorced from practice; (vii) a clear demarcation exists between policy-making and implementation so that accountability can be ensured; and finally, (viii) the implementation of a particular policy activity in its operation and its impact can be separated from other activities (Stewart, 1996:36).

It is clear from the foregoing that Stewart recognizes that there are certain areas of service delivery in which the policy-implementation separation does not work. Invoking Kettl's (1993) work on the varying nature of service contracts in the government of the United States of America, he argues: "the reality is that these assumptions will hold to a greater or less extent for different services" (Stewart, 1996:36). Experience shows that contracting out such services as gardening and landscaping, catering services, license processing, street cleaning and garbage collection, and the like, may not only be relatively easier but also, in some categories of service, produce expected results than, for example, contracting out railway services and electricity generation and supply (Kettl, 1993). In Tanzania, for example, the delivery of such services as garbage collection, collection of parking fees, cleanliness in streets and government offices, public schools, hospitals, universities, and agencies have largely been contracted out to private companies since the 1990s (Nkya, 2004; Njunwa, 2007).

On the contrary, attempts to apply public private partnership (PPP) arrangement in managing the Tanzania Railway Corporation (TRC), which is a state-owned corporation, for example, have proven difficult. To be sure, in October 2007 the government of Tanzania entered into a PPP agreement with the Rites Company of India that allowed the privatization of TRC with a majority of 51 per cent shares going to Rites leaving the government with 49 per

cent of the shares. This privatization led to a change of name from TRC to Tanzania Railway Limited (TRL). The move to privatize TRC was meant to, inter alia, allow the government more space to deal with policy issues, leaving the day-to-day management to TRL. Contrary to expectations, TRL could not deliver what it promised and her contract had eventually to be terminated. *This Day* newspaper reports that after the takeover by the RITES, TRL's performance actually became worse than before the privatization exercise. For instance, in 2008 it reviewed its performance targets from an estimated one million tonnes of cargo to be carried in that year to 650,000 tonnes. However, by the end of 2008 TRL had managed to carry only 450,000 tonnes of freight compared to 600,000 tonnes transported by her predecessor, TRC, in 2006 (*This Day* newspaper, Thursday 5, 2009).

From the foregoing discussion it may be argued that the nature of PPP in such areas as garbage collection, cleanliness of streets and other public offices, and fees collection, etc. seems to be different from PPP in railway services, for example. While the organization and delivery of the former is relatively less complex with notable success, probably due to less capital investment required, the latter has proven far difficult to handle. Therefore the assumption that 'one-size-fits-all,' often celebrated by NPM, tends to disregard these unique situations hence being unable to resolve inefficiency and ineffectiveness that the policy-implementation dichotomy seeks to address.

Implications of the NPM for Service Delivery in Tanzania

The NPM movement has had significant implications for service delivery in Tanzania. Illuminating the influence of NPM in the management of public affairs, Hughes notes: "The tasks involved in the public sector are now considered more managerial, requiring someone to take responsibility for the achievement of results, instead of being regarded as administrative with public servants merely following instructions" (Hughes, 2003:2). In order to ensure that public sector managers were more effective in achieving results a number of measures were proposed under the aegis of NPM. These included the creation of Executive Agencies (EAs), the adoption of the Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) in service delivery, among others. In the next section, each of these approaches will be discussed to ascertain their impact in service delivery in Tanzania.

Agencification in Tanzania

The concept of 'agencification' (some call it 'distributed governance') is one of the defining features of the NPM and possibly its most frequently adopted and far-reaching policy proposal (Moynihan, 2006). Agencification is simply a term used to denote the tendency among governments to create EAs. These EAs, according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), are "arm's-length agencies contracted out of the (government) department, which are given managerial autonomy and flexibility in budgeting and human resources management" (OECD, 2005 cited in Lee & Moon, 2010:431). There is much controversy over the definition of agencies but a consensus has emerged that an 'agency' in terms of agencification concerns an organization that (i) is structurally disaggregated from the government and (ii) operates under more business-like conditions than the government bureaucracy (Talbot & Pollit, 2000). Agencies can, for example, have a different financial

system and personnel policies, although the degrees of financial, personnel, and management autonomy vary per (type of) organization (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2004). NPM reformers saw these EAs as a good elixir for the inefficient service delivery (ibid).

There are diverse models of the agencification process. The OECD proposes three basic criteria that commonly characterize the NPM version of agencies (OECD, 2002):

- i. Structural disaggregation and/ or creation of tasks-specific organizations;
- ii. Performance contracting, some form of performance targets setting, monitoring and reporting;
- iii. Deregulations of control over personnel, finance and other management matters.

Despite the wide adoption of the agencification model in both developed and developing countries, evidence reveals the mixture of both success and failures. For one to better understand the issue of executive agencies in Tanzania, the knowledge of the impact that the NPM movement has had on public administration worldwide is important. The argument that rule-based bureaucratic controls and regulation stifle efficient and effective performance in public service delivery is mainly rooted from the NPM movement that swept across nations.

The United Republic of Tanzania (URT) is one of the countries that implement NPM-based reforms in line with the doctrine that policy-making should be separated from implementation. One of the features of the Tanzanian public sector reforms is the formation of EAs. These EAs were envisaged to be relatively small and autonomous government units with the resources and power they need to deliver goods and services in the most efficient and effective manner. Section 4(2) of the Executive Agencies Act No .30 of 1997 is illustrative: “in the performance of its functions, an Executive Agency shall observe the following principles:

- (i) To provide its services to its customers and the public in the most efficient and effective manner
- (ii) To manage its affairs in a business-like and cost-effective manner and in accordance with modern management practices and techniques and, in particular, to apply to its operations the best standards of financial management and accounting
- (iii) To ensure that its operations are designed to provide the best services to its customers and to maintain a high degree of responsiveness to their needs (URT, 1997).

This development was expected to enhance customer-oriented service provision and facilitate a performance-centered culture in the government with increased autonomy for agencies in terms of flexibility in resource use. That is to say, less hierarchical and political influence on their daily operations was expected, hence allowing them more managerial freedoms.

The pace at which these EAs are formed is relatively high. For example, between 1999 and 2001 alone, 12 agencies had been established (Ngowi, 2008). By December 2004, 20 EAs had been formed in Tanzania (URT, 2005). This number had increased to 29 by June 2009 (URT, 2009). Whether or not the objectives for which EAs were established have been met is a question that has received mixed responses. A study done by the government of Tanzania in 2005 covering 20 EAs, for example, evaluated the performance of EAs since their inception in 1999 to 2004. The study indicates that some EAs registered quantitative

improvements. For instance, revenue collection trends significantly improved; levels of service delivery increased; staff became more professional and better educated as compared to previous trends. It concluded, however, that there was no evidence of improvement in the quality and/or effectiveness of service delivery (URT, 2005). This may be attributed to the government's (the principal) inability to monitor the performance of these EAs and reluctance to grant them autonomy. In his speech, Tanzania's Prime Minister Mizengo P. Pinda, once noted that the monitoring of EAs by parent and central ministries was weak, in part, due to an unclear accountability and performance framework (URT, 2009). A related issue germane to EAs is the degree of their autonomy and control from the government. The question that is often raised is: how can autonomy and control be balanced?

While, on the one hand, the government is expected to grant more autonomy to the EAs to allow the managers (the agent) to manage (i.e. keeping its hands off), it retains the oversight role of ensuring that the latter perform to expectations (i.e. keeping its eyes on). Striking a balance between the two has often proven difficult, at least, at the level of practice resulting into further subversion of the agencies' independence. It must be noted that history provides us with mixed messages about setting up new organizations to evade general problems of governance in the public sector. First, it is very difficult for any public organization to be completely insulated from relations with other public organizations. Except when agencies are entirely the clients of donors, they will depend on ministries of finance and other central organizations for some services or approvals. Second, it is certainly difficult to create a lasting performance culture in the agencies, at least for a short time, in the midst of a non-performing government. Third, if corruption or patronage is pervasive in government, then setting up a new agency may not resolve the problems of inefficiency and ineffectiveness. Whenever power is redistributed, as it is when a new organization is created, certain quarters' interests are being affected, and they will react and may probably attempt to halt the change being introduced. This can be seen at two levels, namely: administrative autonomy and financial resources.

In the former case we draw on recent developments in Tanzania to illustrate the relationship between EAs and their parent ministries, a subject to which the next paragraph will shortly turn. As regards the question of resources, it is worth noting that autonomy goes with resources. If there are no adequate resources there can hardly be autonomy. Suffice it to remind ourselves of the old adage: the one who pays the piper calls the tune. Since most of the agencies still depend on the central government and donors for their budgets, a talk of autonomy, while desirable, in practice remains more rhetoric than real.

Moreover, it was not until recently that the permanent secretaries of the parent ministries were sitting on the boards of these agencies. While this was ideally meant to ensure effective oversight of these agencies by the principal, it ended up seriously undermining the autonomy of the former. Some decisions had to be approved first by the central government before their implementation. In the same vein, the agencies are sometimes subjected to expenditures typical of boondoggle through controversial orders by respective ministries. The infamous David Jairo's saga is illustrative. On 18 July 2011, during the Tanzanian parliamentary session in Dodoma, it was alleged that Mr. David Jairo, the then Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Energy and Minerals had directed over 20 agencies and/or institutions under his ministry

to contribute a total of TSh. 1billion. Each agency was expected to contribute TSh.50 million towards what was described as “finalization of preparations and tabling of the ministry’s 2011/12 budget in Parliament in Dodoma”. Among the agencies that were directed to remit the money to that effect were the Tanzania Electricity Supply Company (TANESCO), Tanzania Petroleum Development Corporation (TPDC) and State Mining Corporation (STAMICO), Energy and Water Utilities Regulatory Authority (EWURA), Rural Energy Agency (REA), among others. Following the revelations, the parliament formed a Select Committee to investigate the matter. According to the findings of the parliamentary probe committee, the whole exercise was not only illegal and full of corrupt practices but it also created unnecessary financial burden for the contributing agencies (Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania, 2011). Worth emphasizing here is that the Jairo saga illustrates the extent to which safeguards to ensure autonomy and independence of agencies are lacking. It only helped to uncover the practices within the government that still undermine the executive agencies’ autonomy.

Similarly, the creation of EAs without adequate safeguards may not necessarily lead to improved quality of services on a sustainable basis. The Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA), for example, was set up in 1996 in order, inter alia, to insulate the tax administration regime from the direct political interference by the Ministry of Finance in its day-to-day operations. These reforms went hand-in-hand with significant increases in salaries of tax officials “without parallel increases for the rest of the public sector” (Fjeldstad, 2003:169). It was believed that this would lead to improved performance in revenue collection in Tanzania. It is noted that by 2005 the average EA employees received a salary 57 per cent higher than their public service counterparts (URT, 2005).

However, after the initial successes, the rate of revenue collection fell and there was evidence that bribery and internal rent-seeking rose again. This implies that although good pay is important for motivational purposes, one must be cognizant of the fact that man is complex to the extent that higher salaries alone may not be the elixir of inefficiency. A multidimensional approach is necessary. To be sure, Fjeldstad asserts: “the assumption that higher salaries would boost productivity over time was most likely also exaggerated” (Fjeldstad, 2003:171). He further reasons that for many workers, higher salaries may simply have resulted in larger obligations to family networks and perhaps even a net loss for the staff concerned, leading to greater incentives to augment income by rent-seeking.

Moreover, the concept of an executive agency, which separates executive functions from the policy-making role, is not clear to Tanzania’s bureaucrats. The determination of the services transformed into agencies is still influenced by power game within the government bureaucracies. The so-called ‘powerful ministries’ that officially supervise the agencies, continue to exercise enormous control over them. For example, it was envisaged that the executive agencies would draw out their schemes of service and decide on their salary scales. To-date, most of the agencies have not been able to adequately raise their own funds, hence their budgets and plans are still under the ministries votes. The implication is that the central government remains the main source of their salaries. Accordingly, the choice of an executive officer of these agencies is still done at the pleasure of either a permanent secretary or the president, and this erodes their autonomy. It was moreover expected that, with agencification of programmes, agencies would perform their own recruitment and selection. However, the

employment of these agencies' staff is still guided by the Public Service Act under a centralized system that allows the Recruitment Secretariat, an organ of the central government, to do the recruitment.

Public-Private Partnership

Another manifestation of the attempt to separate policy-making from implementation revolves around the concept of Public-Private-Partnership (PPP). This is premised on the notion that creating synergies between the public and private sectors would improve the delivery of public services, making service delivery more economical and at the same time qualitatively better. There are several forms of PPP. The underlying argument is that policy-making and service delivery are distinct tasks and that each benefits from the additional attention it receives if it is not competing for management time with the other (Stewart, 1996). What this means is that service providers should concentrate on efficient production and delivery of quality services, whereas policy-makers concentrate on setting and monitoring the standards of those services (Pollitt, Birchall, & Putman, 1998).

In Tanzania the most common partnership models have been contracting out and outsourcing. It is common knowledge that most government departments at both the central and local governments levels provide services through private companies under contractual relations whereby the former sets the standards of, and pays for, the services and the latter produces and delivers the services. This typically illustrates, at least in practice, the separation of the policy-making from implementation. However, such a separation may not only be difficult to find but it may also result into problems mainly arising from either vested interests of politicians and businessmen who may be operating behind the scene or inability of the service provider to deliver the service. We invoke two examples from Tanzania to illustrate this point.

First, we use the partnership between the government of Tanzania and a South African-based Net Group Solutions Company (NGS) to demonstrate an instance of questionable performance. In December 2001 the government of Tanzania signed a contract with the NGS to manage the state-owned electric company TANESCO. Unhappy with the government's decision to award the NGS a management contract, TANESCO workers pledged to oppose the new management on grounds that TANESCO was a sensitive public institution upon which the country's economy depended, thus, it could not be managed by a small company like NGS (Matiku, Mbwambo & Kimene, 2011). However, the government, convinced that the new management would turn around the performance of TANESCO, used its notorious anti-riot police wing, the Field Force Unit (FFU), to contain the workers' resistance. In May 2002 NGS took over the management of TANESCO. In 2006 the government through the Minister of Energy and Minerals declined to renew NGS' management contract on what was apparently described as drastic declining of "both financial and technical performance" (Matiku, et al, 2011:201).

Second, in 2006 the government in its effort to deal with power blackouts that appeared to be chronic in the country at the time, contracted a USA-based Richmond Development Corporation (RDC) to deliver gas turbines (100MW). RDC promised to deliver the power

equipment within 150 days ending in October 2006 (Matiku, et al, p. 201). However, the deadline passed with RDC unable to honour its promise; turning into a scandal. In November 2007 a parliamentary select committee was constituted to investigate the manner in which RDC won the contract to supply power to TANESCO and whether or not it actually had the capacity to deliver. It was revealed that RDC was ‘a pocket company’ because it had allegedly not been registered in USA as it claimed. Following this revelation and the recommendations of the parliamentary probe committee, two senior cabinet ministers including the then Prime Minister, resigned in February 2008. The resignation of these ministers was prompted by allegations that they had a stake in the RDC which dubiously gave the company an advantage despite lacking the capacity to actually deliver the service (Mateng’e, 2012). Sansa (2010) describes such practices as *predatory alliances and solidarity*. He asserts:

This is characterized by the deepening convergence of the political, public service and economic elite into networks of informal personal connections of private accumulation that take place within and outside the state apparatus. The mutual dependencies are organized through negotiation logic, guided by the principle of mutual protection against corruption fighters and defending interests based on informal connections, patronage considerations and infiltration of these groups’ interests into the policy process (p. 174).

For an easy understanding of the rhetoric of the policy-implementation dichotomy, the following section discusses the policy-making process in Tanzania.

The Policy-making Process in Tanzania

In the context of the governance model, public policies are seen as a product of collaborative effort between the government and non-governmental organizations as well as the private sector that partner together to formulate and implement policies (Adger & Jordan, 2009). Viewed this way, ideas for policies may originate from multiple actors who are defined as stakeholders. These may include individuals, communities, parents, business groups and organizations, public or private institutions, and professional associations, just to name a few.

It is, however, important to stress that bureaucrats do the drafting of the policy documents. It is at this stage that the policy content is significantly shaped by these bureaucrats. More often than not, the drafting is done in a language that may not be easily accessible to the general public, or the stakeholders may not have been given enough time to digest and consult those that they represent before giving their views. A good example is the Constitutional Review Bill that was passed by the Tanzanian Parliament in November 2011. Earlier, in April 2011, the government sent the bill to parliament for deliberation and approval. This decision was challenged by opposition parties, activists, and the general public on account that the bill was written in English, and hence limited ordinary people’s participation in its initial deliberations. The majority of Tanzanians are fluent in Swahili, which is a national language. Heeding to the public outcry parliament rejected the bill so as to allow members of the public to provide more inputs. The government translated the bill into Swahili language and gathered stakeholders’ views before sending it back to parliament for the second time (Tarimo, 2011). A further limitation of this approach is that there is no way of ascertaining that stakeholders’

views have actually been incorporated in the final document, or if they have been incorporated, that actions will match the policy.

At the national level there are macro or grand policies that cut across various sectors, sector policies as well as sub-sector policies. Examples of macro policies may include the Tanzania National Development Vision 2025, the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (NSGRP), the Five-Year Development Plan, to name but a few. These provide the overall framework for the formulation and implementation of other (sector) policies (Mattee, 2007). Cross-cutting policies, on the other hand, are those that involve multiple ministries or sectors. To be sure, the National Land Policy, the National Environmental Policy, and National Health Policy are just a few examples of cross-cutting policies. Although many actors are involved in the formulation of these policies, such organs as the President's Office, the Vice President's Office, the Prime Minister's Office, ministries and departments play a central role in the process (URT, 1997).

Sector ministries, in contrast, are responsible for the formulation as well as monitoring the implementation of both sector policies and sub-sector policies (Mattee, 2007). In so doing, multiple actors are involved at various stages. These actors range from teams of technical people within and outside government to representatives of various stakeholders. At the initial stages of the policy formulation process, for instance, the ministerial task forces under the supervision of the Policy and Planning Divisions are often formed to work out the details of policy proposals. These task forces are made up of technical people drawn from various institutions and organizations including local government authorities, research and training institutions or think tanks, NGOs, as well as the private sector and farmers' organizations (ESRF, 2004). It is worth noting that a department within a sector Ministry may also formulate a sub-sector policy within the ambit of a sector policy on a given issue should a need arise. Such sub-sector policies may include the Crops policy, the National Food Security Policy, and the Livestock Policy. The formulation of sub-sector policies follows the same procedures as sector policies (Mattee, 2007).

Once the policy paper has been considered at the ministerial level, sector and sub-sector levels, it is sent to another higher level of technical team namely, the Cabinet Secretariat composed of technocrats and operates in a form of committees. Before the policy paper is transmitted to the Inter – Ministerial Technical Committee (IMTC) the respective Cabinet Secretariat Committee examines the extent of stakeholders' involvement, the economic, social, financial and legal implications of the policy paper as well as its feasibility. Having passed this level, the policy paper is forwarded to the IMTC, which comprises all Permanent Secretaries from all government ministries (URT, 1997). The Chief Secretary, who is also the Head of the Civil Service, chairs the IMTC sessions (ESRF, 2004). Based on the recommendations of the IMTC, the respective minister presents the policy paper to the Cabinet for further consideration and final approval.

What the Tanzanian policy-making model implies is that the policy-making process involves multiple actors but with some room for bureaucrats to mould the policy content given their technical know-how and incumbency leverages. Once the policies have been approved, bureaucrats interpret the policies, offer advice, implement and report to their principals. This

ability to interpret policies, indeed, allows them to exercise significant influence over policy during implementation. Lipsky (1980) elucidates how bureaucrats mould policy in the course of its implementation. He argues that policy implementers should not be regarded as simply ‘cogs in the process’ but rather ones with substantial ability to shape policy outcomes. Arguably, because of the role that they play in the policy process it could be said that technocrats actually make policies not simply at the level of implementation but also at the very formulation stage. This is especially true for a country like Tanzania where, despite efforts to decentralize service delivery to lower tiers of government, the central government is still directly involved in policy implementation as we have shown earlier in our discussion of railway and electricity services. The foregoing provides us with important insights that reiterate the view that although there has been a desire, at least among NPM reformers, to revive and maintain the policy-implementation dichotomy, unless such desire matches the context it remains unfeasible.

Conclusion

It is now in order to conclude that although the policy-implementation dichotomy continues to dominate the debates about how best to organize the public sector in a way that ensures accountability in the delivery of public services, it remains rhetoric. This debate has roots in the works of classical scholars in the field of public administration including Woodrow Wilson, Frank J. Goodnow and Leonard White, among others. Central to these scholars was the attempt to reverse the spoil system in the American political system in which political patronage took preeminence over meritocracy in the administration of the civil service, thus affecting the effective functioning of the latter. But later, a generation of scholars offered an antithesis to the debate noting that any attempt to separate policy-making from implementation was bound to fail. Their argument is anchored on the premise that the interactive nature of the policy-making and implementation activities makes it too impractical to treat the two as clearly distinct “beasts in a nation’s social zoo” (Henry, 2007). To this group belong such scholars as Michael Lipsky, B. Guy Peters and Jon Pierre, Lindblom (1980), among others.

It was not until the emergence, on the scene, of the NPM movement that the policy-implementation separation resurfaced in the public management discourse. Through a review of the literature we have briefly examined the contending views regarding the applicability of the policy-implementation dichotomy. In so doing, the article has borrowed examples from Tanzania, particularly in the areas of agencification, public-private synergies and policy-making process, to argue that much as there are concerns about accountability in the delivery of public services, a clear separation between policy and implementation remains elusive.

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Appendix 1: A summary of the NPM doctrines

S/N	DOCTRINE	MEANING	TYPICAL JUSTIFICATION
1	'Hands-on professional management' in the public sector	Active, visible, discretionary control of organizations from named persons at the top, 'free to manage'	Accountability requires clear assignment of responsibility for action, not diffusion of power
2	Explicit standards and measures of performance	Definition of goals, targets, indicators of success, preferably expressed in quantitative terms, especially for professional services	Accountability requires clear statement of goals; efficiency requires 'hard look' at objectives
3	Greater emphasis on output controls	Resource allocation and rewards linked to measured performance; breakup of centralized bureaucracy-wide personnel management	Need to stress results rather than procedures
4	Shift to disaggregation of units in the public sector	Break up of formerly 'monolithic' units, unbundling of U-form management systems into corporatized units around products, operating on decentralized 'one-line' budget and dealing with one another on an 'arms-length' basis	Need to create 'manageable' units, separate provision and production interests, gain efficiency advantages of use of contract or franchise arrangements inside as well as outside the public sector
5	Shift to greater competition in public sector	Move to term contracts and public tendering procedures	Rivalry as the key to lower costs and better standards
6	Stress on private-sector styles of management practice	Move away from military-style 'public service ethic,' greater flexibility in hiring and rewards; greater use of PR techniques	Need to use 'proven' private sector management tools in the public sector
7	Stress on greater discipline and parsimony in resource use	Cutting direct costs, raising labour discipline, resisting union demands, limiting 'compliance costs' to business	Need to check resource demands of public sector and 'do more with less'

Source: Hood (1991:4-5)