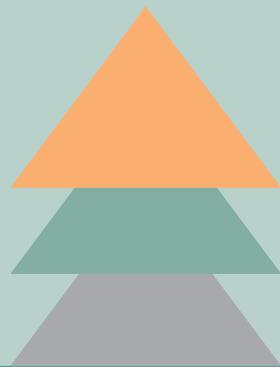


Religions and Development Research Programme

Religion and Public Management Literature Review

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Working Paper 1 - 2007



Religions and Development

Research Programme

The Religions and Development Research Programme Consortium is an international research partnership that is exploring the relationships between several major world religions, development in low-income countries and poverty reduction. The programme is comprised of a series of comparative research projects that are addressing the following questions:

- How do religious values and beliefs drive the actions and interactions of individuals and faith-based organisations?
- How do religious values and beliefs and religious organisations influence the relationships between states and societies?
- In what ways do faith communities interact with development actors and what are the outcomes with respect to the achievement of development goals?

The research aims to provide knowledge and tools to enable dialogue between development partners and contribute to the achievement of development goals. We believe that our role as researchers is not to make judgements about the truth or desirability of particular values or beliefs, nor is it to urge a greater or lesser role for religion in achieving development objectives. Instead, our aim is to produce systematic and reliable knowledge and better understanding of the social world.

The research focuses on four countries (India, Pakistan, Nigeria and Tanzania), enabling the research team to study most of the major world religions: Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism and African traditional belief systems. The research projects will compare two or more of the focus countries, regions within the countries, different religious traditions and selected development activities and policies.

The consortium consists of six research partner organisations, each of which is working with other researchers in the four focus countries:

- University of Birmingham, UK: International Development Department, Department of Theology and Religion, Centre for West African Studies, Centre for the Study of Global Ethics, Department of Political Science and International Relations
- University of Bath, UK: Centre for Development Studies
- Indian Institute of Dalit Studies, New Delhi.
- Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research, Ibadan.
- University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
- Pakistan

In addition to the research partners, links have been forged with non-academic and non-government bodies, including Islamic Relief.

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1 Introduction

This paper reviews literature that is concerned with the role of religion in public administration and management¹. It is part of a series of disciplinary literature reviews under the Religions and Development Research Programme.

The paper is structured as follows: section two first provides some conceptual clarifications and then goes on to examine and compare the key features of the traditional/bureaucratic model and the new public management (NPM) model, as well as the theoretical frameworks and values that underpin them. The third section assesses the extent to which the mainstream literature in public administration/management considers aspects of values and beliefs and the role of religion with respect to these. This section also reviews literature that discusses the influence of culture on public administration and development. While the relationship between religion and culture is complex and contested, in this review we adopt a social science perspective that considers religion to be part of a broader cultural phenomenon. Section four reviews the few studies that have directly addressed the role of religion in public administration/management. Section five identifies research gaps.

¹ A wide range of possible sources was scanned for the purpose of this literature review. Available sources found to contain relevant material are drawn on in the paper. Additional references are included in a separate bibliography.

2 Public management and religion: concepts, models and values

Over the past three decades, the term ‘public administration’ has been gradually replaced by ‘public management’, marking a shift from traditional, rule-driven public administration to new, market-based approaches to public sector management. ‘Public’ (as opposed to private) management refers to how the public sector is organised and governed to perform its roles. The public sector refers to that section of society for which responsibilities fall under the direct jurisdiction of the state. This includes the civil service, state-owned or public enterprises, the military, the police, education, national and sub-national levels of government and non-departmental public bodies, whose personal emoluments, operational guidelines and financial resources are voted for by Parliament (or its equivalent in other regime types) (Larbi and Sandy, 2004). However, the distinction between public and private is increasingly blurred, with formal and informal partnerships and arrangements between the two sectors, in terms of both activities and personnel.

Public administration/management is underpinned by ethos and values, which may vary from one context to another. Ethos is used here to refer to the sum of ideals, which define the overall culture in the public service, whereas values are the individual principles or standards that guide judgement about what is good and proper e.g. fairness, honesty and merit (OECD, 1996; Chapman, 1993). Together, ethos and values shape the ethics or moral standards in public service, i.e. the rules that translate characteristic ideals into everyday practice. Changes in societal values may lead to changes in public management and *vice versa*.

2.1 Public administration/management models: bureaucracy vs. NPM

Until the 1980s, the Weberian bureaucratic model was the dominant model for organising public administration systems around the world and was the model inherited by ex-colonies in Africa and Asia. In discussing the time and space dimension of NPM, Felts and Jos (2000) note that the bureaucratic model aimed at replacing forms of organisation that were rooted in charismatic and traditional authority, in order for the hierarchical, impersonal and rule-governed character of bureaucracy to provide maximum efficiency for both private and public organisations. This was deemed necessary in the context of capitalism and the creation of a consumer society. The underlying argument was that bureaucracy was uniform and predictable enough to enable capitalism to flourish, as achieved through a focus on rules, hierarchy and routine. Bureaucrats would operationalise policy and translate government objectives into action. In undertaking their duties, officials would be guided

by their professional commitment to the public interest and by the command structure of bureaucracy, as well as by the bureaucratic ethic of neutrality, impersonality and fairness, without regard to the personal preferences of post-holders (Du Gay, 2000; Weber, 1996[1930]; see also Anderson, 2004). Weber locates the distinctiveness of the bureaucrat in his [sic] recognition that “it is his duty and even his honor” to carry out directives as if they corresponded to his innermost conviction thereby demonstrating that “his sense of duty stands above his personal preference” (quoted in Felts and Jos, 2000, p. 4).

From the above, it is apparent that the key values underpinning the bureaucratic models include neutrality, professionalism, and a sense of duty, impersonality, fairness and equity. These values and adherence to rules provided the predictability required for capitalism to flourish. In *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Weber argues that capitalism required a disciplined workforce and regularised investment of capital, driven by the motivation to increase wealth as a goal in itself, rather than to satisfy material needs. As will be discussed later in this paper, the underlying moral values of capital accumulation were associated with Protestantism, whereby the highest moral obligation is for the individual to do the best s/he can in earthly affairs (1996 [1930]; see also Lawton, 1998).

By the late 1970s and through the 1980s, the bureaucratic model came under pressure just as the welfare state in most western countries ran into crisis and gave way to neo-liberal economic policies and reforms. As Batley and Larbi (2004, p. 39) note, “both the state and the public administration that served it were seen as monopoly providers of services and fundamentally inefficient, and regardless of their customers.” Bureaucracy was now seen as wasteful, cumbersome and inefficient. New public management was seen as the alternative model to fix the problems of old public administration and this marked a shift in values. NPM focuses on management over policy and emphasises competition over monopoly; results or outcomes over procedural rules; and ‘freedom to manage’ over control by hierarchy. In sum, new capitalist demands for flexibility and responsiveness have overtaken the old capitalist demand for predictability (Felts and Jos, 2000; Bevir et al., 2003). However, the ethic of new public management, as of the old public administration, can be said to be grounded in liberal-capitalist attitudes broadly based in Protestantism; indeed, NPM brings the individualist orientation of the Protestant ethic into the management of the state itself.

Whilst the above sources discuss values in the context of traditional public administration and the new public management, a few studies have looked at ethics and values in public service in general. These include a comparative research project undertaken between 1999 and 2001 involving selected African countries (Gabon, Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa and Uganda). Using a survey methodology, interviews and document analysis, this project aimed at finding out the current policy, practice and legislation relating to public service ethics. The stated core values of each of the countries included accountability, public service and efficiency, with no clear mention of religious values (see UNPAN website). This, however, does not imply that religion has no influence on public service values and ethics.

Having reviewed the values underpinning public administration and management, the next section will review what literature is available on the interactions between religion and public management. To what extent has the public administration and management literature addressed the issue of religious faith and its impact?

3 Religion in the mainstream public management literature

The existing public management literature relevant to the subject of this research may be categorised broadly into three. First are the mainstream works on public administration/management that have only indirectly addressed the issue of religious faith and public management by references to ‘values’ (which may or may not be influenced by religious considerations). The majority of these focus mainly on western countries, but there is an emerging literature on developing countries. The second category consists of works that have addressed religion as part of a broader discussion about the influence and relevance of culture and context to development management and public sector reform in general (cf. Curtis, 2004; Caiden and Sundaram, 2004). Within this second category a few works have looked at specific developing countries (e.g. Aluko and Adesopo, 2004, on Nigeria). The third category of work consists of authors who have specifically looked at religious faith and public management from both a comparative (across traditions) perspective (cf. Weber, 1996[1930]) and from the perspective of individual religious traditions. This section of the paper will briefly review the mainstream literature in public management, whilst section four looks at the third category.

3.1 The mainstream public management literature and religion

The mainstream public administration/management literature has not directly addressed the issue of religion in public management. Flynn (2002) and Hughes (2003), for example, only mention in passing the shift from traditional public administration to new public management as a matter of changing values.

Felts and Jos (2000) and Du Gay (2000) discuss the values that underpin traditional bureaucracy. The former show how these values have altered under pressure of NPM reforms, just as bureaucracy replaced forms of organisation and values rooted in charismatic and traditional authority to provide the administrative framework for capitalism and the creation of a consumer society. Like Weber, they liken the bureaucrat’s sense of duty to follow rules and principles to the fervour of a devout believer. What is not clear is whether and how this sense of duty is inspired by religious faith or belief.

Bevir et al. (2003), and other articles in the same special issue of the journal *Public Administration*, go beyond values to emphasise the role of (non-religious) traditions, beliefs and narratives in public sector reform. Thus, they adopt a sociological institutional perspective in understanding reforms. The case studies used are from OECD countries and adopt similar approaches. Based mainly on existing

literature; review of official documents, historical records and actor-centred sources of beliefs and actions; as well as elite interviews; they focus on beliefs, traditions, dilemmas and narratives to explore changes in public administration and governance. They use path dependency and the role of individual agency (the beliefs and actions of elites) as frameworks to explore why government systems get to where they are now. In a critique of the positivist approach, Bevir et al. (2003) argue that in order to explain people's actions we must understand their beliefs and desires, which cannot be ascertained by observing allegedly objective social facts about them. Whilst rational choice theory attempts to explain individual action, it tends to reduce motivation to self-interest or utility maximisation, ignoring the possibility that actors are motivated by a more diverse set of beliefs and desires.

In a recent issue of the journal *Public Administration and Development*, Collins and Kakabadse (2006) argue that there is a need to develop the spiritual aspect of religion and its role in the work place. Based on a pilot of faith-based discussion groups among business executives and professionals in the USA and UK, the aim is to “develop more meaningful work orientation through rediscovery of higher purpose and its relevance to restoration of ethical business and public service values, as well as better integration of personal and social domains” (2006, p. 113). In the same volume, Lips-Wiersma (2006) examines the role of spiritual retreats, with a case study in a higher education organisation. She found that such retreats provided employees with a structured reflection time and enabled them to, *inter alia*, prioritise deeper values and re-assess the balance between different roles and priorities. There was also an organisational benefit in terms of employees becoming more proactive in taking steps to align their work and values and enhancing loyalty to the organisation.

3.2 Public management, development and culture

In the context of developing countries, a number of works have acknowledged the importance of institutions and cultural context, although they do not address the cultural or religious specificities of countries (cf. Batley and Larbi, 2004; Batley, 1999; Larbi, 1999; McCourt, 2002; Manning, 2001). These sources attempt to provide explanations for the poor performance of public services and the disappointing results of reforms. Reforms are considered to often be externally driven and underpinned by sets of values different from the society where the reform idea is to be implemented. As Curtis (2004) has noted, in most donor circles, there is an emphasis on shared ideas and values

with partner countries, but it is often the values of the donor that are imposed on those of the recipient, with minimal consent.

Taking the issue of culture further, and in the context of Africa, Dia's (1996) work for the World Bank is worth noting. Based on research in the early 1990s, this study showed that the problems of capacity building in Africa relate to a crisis of institutional rather than technical capacity and that this is fundamentally due to disconnection between indigenous, informal institutions and formal institutions transplanted from the outside. There is a disconnection between cultural values and practices, on the one hand, and externally inspired institutions, on the other. Institutional reconciliation was identified as the key to resolving the crisis. Externally imposed systems that do not relate to societal values or cultural practices lack legitimacy and local ownership, making enforcement difficult. Informal institutions, he suggests, have high levels of legitimacy and accountability because they capture people's commitment and dedication, though they may also harbour dysfunctional practices. This point is reinforced by Hellsten and Larbi (2006), who note the disconnection between societal values and the values of formal public institutions, which sometimes lead to groups striving for the private rather than the public good. According to Dia (1996), convergence of both systems, taking what works best in each, is essential. In this connection, Jreisat (2005) calls for comparative analysis in public administration and management research in order to move away from ethnocentric study of public administration, adding that sources of ethical guidance should not rely exclusively on local cultural context. Apart from enabling the development of better theory and practice, such comparative studies can also improve the definition and verification of cultural influences on public administration, examine specific administrative strategies across boundaries and explore how organisational culture is related to national culture.

Writing on the legacy of NPM in developing countries, Manning (2001) argues that NPM reforms are useful for capable and motivated governments and where they are driven by public expectations. Like Manning (2001), Caiden and Sundaram (2004) emphasise that the motivation of actors involved in reform is essential for success. However, the source of reformers' motivation is not clear, whether it is altruistic public interest or self-interest. They go on to argue that reform must allow for different combinations of history, culture, politics, economics, sociology, ideology and values in each country, but do not discuss in any significant depth the issue of culture.

Two works that discuss cultural influences on public management are Munene et al. (2000) and Aluko and Adesopo (2004). The former is a comparative study of western European and African managers and shows that African managers behave in ways consistent with their cultural profile. Munene et al found that African managers stress formal rules and reliance on superiors for decision-making, whereas western managers stress self-reliance and consultation with subordinates. They go on to relate culture to managerial decision-making and the impact of this on development. In an earlier study by the authors, African managers were found to rely more heavily on formal rules and their superiors, and less on their own experiences and their subordinates than western European managers. The results suggest that in African societies with hierarchical values, leadership is more important for success than in western Europe. Although this study does not address religious values, it does indicate that different cultural values exist between sub-Saharan African and western European countries and that these values impact on the way that middle managers conduct their work. It also suggests that different cultural values warrant different policy approaches to management and reform that are culturally meaningful. The implication, and a possible hypothesis for the RaD research, is that religious values may affect the actions of administrators in similar ways, and that administrative reform policies should work with, or at least take into account, local religious values if they are to be successful.

Aluko and Adesopo (2004) take a critical look at the working of the Weberian bureaucratic model in Nigeria. They argue that the Weberian features of bureaucracies do not exist in every society, and that bureaucracies are products of their socio-cultural environments. Four historical conditions gave rise to bureaucracy:

- A money economy allows discipline to be enforced;
- Capitalism precipitates the emergence of formal and complex organisations to ensure government success;
- The Protestant ethic, which emphasised hard work and other individual values, gave rise to capitalism, and capitalism gave rise to bureaucracy;
- Large size: bureaucracy is the inevitable product of very large organisations.

They address the issue of culture in relation to bureaucracy and argue that bureaucracies are the products of the settings where they originated. For example, Weber's bureaucracy is a product of the Protestant ethic and North European tradition. The Nigerian bureaucracy is inefficient and ineffective, characterised by corruption, patronage based on nepotism or ethnicity, elitism, lack of discipline and failure to apply specialised knowledge to execute tasks. These are all factors that relate to some aspect of Nigerian culture, e.g. duty to hear and respond to the counsel of elders rather than to directly discipline transgressions. Bureaucracy, they suggest, is culture-specific and Weberian bureaucracy is an entirely ethno-centric model. It is westernised, prescriptive and does not conform to the realities that exist in Nigeria; it does not take account of cultural influences on ethics and behaviour. Nigerian society is based on a collective tradition, rather than the individual tradition that underpins bureaucracy. Social relationships are important in Nigerian society, as are horizontal channels of communication and face-to-face interactions, which are omitted in bureaucracy's focus on formal, vertical relationships. They suggest that models must be reformed in order to be integrated into Nigerian society.

In contrast to the above views, Lewis (2005) argues that professionalism is a source of norms or values that does not draw on a long-standing moral or cultural tradition. She suggests that public servants across the globe share values or norms associated with their roles. Five core ethical values are derived from the role of public servant as the temporary stewards of public authority. These are accountability, impartiality, justice and fairness, beneficence, and non-maleficence (not doing harm). She suggests that all of these are unobjectionable in different cultural, political and economic contexts. However, professionalism and role are not the only factors driving ethical norms in the public service. In addressing what good conduct is and how to foster it, Lewis identifies six major sources of ethical norms in public service: universals; cultural/social; rational; emotion and/or needs based; religion; professionalism and role. Ethical decision-making is, therefore, multi-dimensional and variable across time and context. The inference of her argument is that professional norms have an ethical force that is separate from their contextual environment, including religious influence. The influence of all of these factors suggests that *inconsistent* decision-making is more likely than *consistent* decision-making.

Most of the above sources do not directly address the issue of religious faith and its potential relevance in public management reforms because this was not their primary focus or objective. Even Lewis gives little attention to the influence of religion on the ethics of the public sector, although it is one of her six major sources of ethical values. In seeking institutional explanations for why reforms succeed or fail, research also needs to pay attention to religious belief systems and values, and how these influence motivations and incentives for decisions on reforms. The next section reviews the few studies that have directly examined the relationship between faith/religion and public management.

4 Literature focusing on religion in public management

The literature that does directly address the role of religion in public management may be grouped into two. Most of this literature focuses on the contribution of specific faiths to perspectives on public management: Judaism (Yanow, n.d.) Christianity (Weber, 1996[1930]; Jacobsen, 2000) and Islam (Al-Buraey, 1985; Henderson, 2005). A few look at more than one faith (e.g. Weber, 1996; Lowery, 2005; Bevir et al. 2003; Henderson 2005).

Weber's seminal work on bureaucracy is the first (and perhaps the only) serious attempt to address the subject of the role of religious faith in public administration/management and economic change. In his book *the Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1996[1930]), Weber argues that capitalism is not the pursuit of wealth *per se*, but a particular western phenomenon associated with the "rational organisation of formally free labour" (1996[1930], p. xi). This desire for wealth, combined surprisingly with a frugal, rather than lavish, lifestyle, is informed by moral values. These moral values are associated with Protestantism, whereby the highest moral obligation is to do the best one can in earthly affairs. This, he argues, is distinctively different from Catholic values, which urge the faithful to transcend the mundane aspects of existence. The roots of this moral background were present in Luther's teachings and developed further in Calvinism, Methodism, Pietism and the Baptist movement. Calvinist teaching held that only some people could be saved from damnation. According to Weber, this gave rise to a feeling of "unprecedented inner loneliness" (1996[1930]p. xiii), which allowed the capitalist spirit to be born. Success in an earthly 'calling' (i.e. achievement of wealth) was taken as a sign that the individual was saved. This persistent wealth accumulation was only morally sanctioned as long as it was combined with hard work and a modest lifestyle.

Weber's other works included studies on how several other world religions had different ways of rationalising culture. In his study of Hinduism, he concluded that the concept of *karma*, whereby conduct informs the individual's reincarnation in the next life, leads to an emphasis on escaping worldly concerns, rather than mastering them as in Protestantism. He argues that this asceticism actually curtailed the blooming trade and manufacturing industries in India in the period around 400 BCE. Confucianism was equally unable to give rise to a capitalist ethic, as it valued the harmonisation of the individual with the environment, rather than radical changes to the latter.

Modernisation theorists in the 1950s and 1960s sought to identify faith-based groups in developing countries which were thought to have the same orientation as Puritan Protestants towards individualism, hard work, austerity and postponed gratification, and variously identified Sikhs, Parsis and Jains in India, reformist Muslims in Indonesia, and Jehovah's Witnesses in Zambia (Long, 1977).

4.1 Recent literature referring principally to Christianity

A more recent work that directly addresses the issue of religion in public management is Lowery (2005). It primarily focuses on the reflection of two American administrators and how their religious beliefs had a direct influence on their professional work. Despite the fact that the field of public administration has paid little attention to religion, Lowery argues that religious values flourish in the larger culture and, therefore, in the lives of administrators. He argues that the literature is almost entirely silent with respect to religion and spirituality in public administration, and this rejection has arguably prevented the use of the wisdom and values of religion.

Using the 'life story method', the two subjects studied by Lowery revealed a strong connection between their religious beliefs and their professional lives. The first man, a strong Christian (Lutheran) saw his professional life as a calling – making the most of what God has given you, being dutiful in service 'do justly, and love mercy and walk humbly with your god' etc. The second, a Catholic, who started his career in a seminary, also thought that his faith brought strong values to his work; the idea of service was central to his worldview and motivated his life, including his work. Both understood their work in terms of vocation.

In the discussion that follows, Lowery suggests that public administrators can engage in self-reflexivity, and that moral reasoning prompted in this way can be very coherent. Although a deep connection between religion and public administration was revealed by these two men, this is an area that has been ignored in the literature. The issues are whether religion can continue to be ignored and how religion can be accounted for in normative frameworks of public administration. Admittedly, this work is limited to America and to a very small sample size of two; nevertheless, it provides a basis for studying public administrators and managers in other countries with larger samples.

Warrington (personal communication, 10/10/05) notes that while religious influence on public management is not immediately apparent, three avenues could be explored. The first is faith-based patterns of *organisation*: for example, in most European countries, public bureaucracies developed out of the proto-bureaucracies dominated by clerics in the middle ages: the very word 'clerk' is a sign of this. Notions of hierarchy, regularity, due process, adjudication, checks and balances, record-keeping etc., are at least partly derived from ecclesiastical institutions. The second influence of religion, particularly Catholicism, on public management is discernible in certain *patterns of leadership* including hierarchy, councils and perceptions of authority. "One interesting angle of this is the effect of belief and of faith-derived sanctions (such as Catholic confession, interdiction and excommunication) on ethical standards" (Warrington 2005). Finally, and perhaps most visibly, faith-based organisations - clerical and lay - pioneered service delivery mechanisms that have been dressed up in the finery of contemporary public management theory: public-private partnerships for hospitals; the care of the elderly, orphans and others in distress; the separation of regulation from service delivery; and housing and small-enterprise co-operatives. "The better organised the Church hierarchy, the greater the likelihood that there will be burden-sharing and innovation in service delivery as between state and faith-based groups" (Warrington 2005).

We found only one paper that explored empirically the effect of religion on service delivery. Reinikka and Svensson (2004) compared the quality and efficiency of religious providers of dispensaries compared with similar for-profit and government services. Compared with for-profit services, religious providers hired qualified workers more cheaply and were more likely to provide pro-poor services and to charge lower prices, with similar quality of care. Both provided better services than their government counterparts. They also found that government financial aid to religious organisations was more likely to lead to more laboratory testing and lower prices than in the case of for-profit and government providers. The database on which this study was based included Catholic, Protestant and Muslim organisations, which were undifferentiated in the Reinikka and Svensson study.

Other works have only touched on the issue of religion in public administration and management. These include Kilpatrick (1999) and Jacobsen (2000). Kilpatrick, for example, suggests that love and spirituality are now considered desirable characteristics for leaders. A belief that work can help meet spiritual needs is also important. A guiding principle for the workplace is embodied in the Golden Rule

– a variant of which exists in many religions – ‘treat others as you would like to be treated’. Jacobsen, from a Christian mystical perspective, directly challenges public administration, arguing that its orientation to rationality and control diminish the spiritual life and moral capacity of the public servant. Du Gay (2000) challenges this view that the bureaucratic ethic is amoral, arguing that it is indeed an ethic of rationalism, fairness, non-patronage and citizenship. Generally, the modern Christian tradition has been to respect the separation of the spheres of Church and state.

4.2 Literature referring to Islam

The largest recent literature offering a faith-based perspective on public management is rooted in Islam. What follows is an illustrative rather than a complete review. Much of this literature is essentially ideological, in the sense that it articulates the values and principles of Islam and how these should (or, in principle, do) affect public managers. A good example is Kalantari (2005), who argues that public administration throughout the Middle East is failing because it does not represent the cultural values of the people it ought to serve and has not done so since the early caliphate. The result is that people perceive public management to be corrupt, oppressive and self-serving. Kalantari argues that the organisational culture of administration should embody the cultural values that determine the public’s expectations of public institutions. He identifies core Islamic values as: equality between all in the eyes of Allah (distinctions deriving only from good conduct); fairness over self-interest; justice and kindness; righteousness and true conviction; and self-control (most ills are seen as emanating from ‘carnal desires and personal lust’ that impair judgement and cause corruption). There should, he asserts, be no separation of politics from administration. The legitimacy of Muslim leaders comes from Allah: since humanity represents Allah in administering the earth, leaders must be good Muslims, and people have a duty to follow their leaders. A key principle is *tawhid* – oneness – the unity and connectedness of all things. In principle, Islamic politics is both authoritative (authority from the Qur’an) and consensual (consent from the community of believers - *Ummah*).

Kalantari and a number of other writers go on to associate these principles and values with approaches to public administration. Among them there are dual and somewhat contradictory themes, highlighting both the distinctiveness of Islamic administration but also sometimes its similarity with Western administration. The more critical text is by Henderson (2005), who analyses the impact of the Islamic revolution on Iranian administration. Certain changes were achieved. For example, in 1982 the

Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Ministry was established, with every recruit taking tests in the Qur'an and training from the Ulema (religious leaders/scholars), and also the development of a martyrs' foundation within the administration to support the families of those who die for Islam. Each agency of government is overseen by religious representatives and the council of guardians exercise ultimate control of government under the Ayatollah. However, under that authority, the broad framework of public administration remains largely untouched in its ministerial structure and bureaucratic form. Moreover, recognisably new public management reforms have taken place: privatisation and contracting-out.

Al-Buraey (1985) indicates, like Kalantari, that there are core unchanging values and principles of Islamic public administration which can be found in the Qur'an, Sunnah (the way of the prophet) and Fiqh (understanding in matters of religious law): probity, piety, justice, equality, social equity and leadership that is democratic, in the sense that it should be based on consultation. However, the means, methods and techniques of administration are flexible and subject to development. Some writers suggest an affinity between Islamic principles and 'Weberian' bureaucratic administration, even though the motivating values are different. Kalantari (2005) emphasises hierarchy, decentralisation, a clear division of labour and specialisation as key features of Islamic bureaucratic administration. Likewise, Beekun and Badawi (1999) present the moral basis of Islamic leadership as centred on serving God, but indicate five alternative bases of the power of leaders, which are reminiscent of Weber's alternative sources of authority: bestowed legitimacy (= 'traditional'); control of rewards; coercive control over sanctions; the power of expertise; and charismatic power. Perhaps the form of authority that is 'missing' against the Weberian set of alternatives is legal-rational.

Some other writers see a link between Islamic values and the new public management (NPM). Al-Buraey (1985) attributes the 'failure' of western administration to its respect for material over moral values. He rejects classic public administration's distinction between politics and administration, claiming, in that respect, only an affinity with NPM (though most would argue that this distinction is made clearer under NPM). Kamri and Mokhtar (2004) reflect on the Malaysian government's initiatives to instil Islamic values in its civil service, rejecting western materialism and emphasising the values that guide Islamic management: religion, trust, discipline, dedication, professionalism and a moderate and accountable personality. These values are seen as underlying government programmes to instil

Islamic values and a work ethic among administrators, as well as reforms that are reminiscent of any current civil service reform, such as a code of ethics and total quality management. Also referring to the Malaysian example, Triantafillou (2002) describes how the 1982 campaign for a clean, efficient and trustworthy civil service sought to transform the inherited British tradition of public administration with reforms, including those already mentioned, as well as quality control circles, clients' charters and the encouragement of the public to participate and express their demands. The argument that Islamic principles can be advanced through the new public management is shared by Abbas (2005) in relation to Pakistan.

These texts claim some forms of administration that are distinctive to Islam (e.g. a particular form of consultative leadership), but mainly seem to claim a special moral/religious purpose that should inspire forms of public administration that are otherwise largely recognisable in the western tradition.

4.3 Literature referring to Judaism

Much less than in the case of the Islamic literature, there is a suggestion that a different set of religiously inspired values pervades Israeli public administration. Yanow (no date) argues that there is not, as is often claimed, a common set of 'Judaeo-Christian' values. Judaism is more a practice than a religion 'as understood in America', and is informed by the Talmud (teaching-learning), Jewish law (halaka) and ritual. Decision-making is communal, consensus-based, and consultative rather than functioning on the basis of chains of command. There is no indication whether this is a description of real or idealised practice.

Geva-May and Kfir (2000) describe the parallel systems of public administrative practice that Israel inherited: the regular public administration built on a British professional civil service tradition, and the national Jewish agencies that provided support to Jews fleeing Europe, based on political activism and nationalism. This has created in-built problems that the modern civil service is trying to overcome, but there is no suggestion that the differences are based on religious faith. Galnoor et al (1998) also describe the Israeli inheritance, indicating that ministries associated with religious parties are most inclined to patronage, but without analysing whether religion is the cause. Does it reveal a different set of values in religious parties? Is patronage more acceptable to religious than secular parties? Is a secular civil service unable to execute the policy choices of religious parties? Or is it merely a function

of the fact that these parties are small and wanted more control? In any case, Galnoor et al. describe how this was the difficult base for the introduction of reforms in the 1990s. These reforms, based partly on French experience, were designed mainly to professionalise and depoliticise the civil service.

Snir and Harpaz (2002) research the 'meaning of work' for public and private sector workers, expecting the former to be more driven by public service motives and less by financial rewards. This paper represents one of the few examples of empirical research to compare values in practice. They argue that across both sets of workers there is a work ethic in Judaism that is similar to that in Calvinism.

4.4 Literature referring to religion in East Asian public management

There is a literature that seeks to explain East Asian success in terms of culture and its religious underpinnings.

Ranis (1989) emphasises certain cultural characteristics, at least partly lodged in Confucianism and Shintoism, that have made for an orientation to entrepreneurialism, and confidence in government combined with restraints on state domination. These include secularism (here understood as an orientation to success in this world); egalitarianism (an orientation to equality of opportunity and education but not of outcomes); nationalism (based on a long sense of homogeneity); a perception that citizens have obligations as well as rights; and that governments merit confidence.

Fry (1982) looks to Japanese management practices for a solution to the then American problem of bureaucratic apathy, rigidity and inflexibility and finds it sourced in Buddhist concepts of 'mindfulness', devotion to selflessness, self-restraint, tranquillity and analytic thinking. It is interesting to consider how twenty-four years later, these would hardly be considered to be the solution to problems of bureaucratic rigidity. Indeed, Hori (2004) writes from an entirely opposite perspective about how Japan needs to adopt the values of self-reliance, individualism and competitiveness and move towards an 'Anglo-Saxon' model of public management. The writer suggests that Japanese values, particularly as expressed in Shintoism, may facilitate this transition because they are adaptable and open to the development of hybrid approaches, whereas Christianity and Islam are more static and fixed in religious texts.

5 Research gaps and methodologies

A wider survey of the literature (see Additional References) in search of material that was directly relevant to this topic revealed the following main themes of ‘nearly relevant’ writing:

- Religion and politics, but not religion and public management;
- Cultural/social factors in implementing aid/public administration reforms, usually not including religion;
- Islamic and (to a lesser extent) other religious models and experiences of public management, often explored by adherents of a particular faith.

Except for the last theme, relatively little pertains directly to our topic. Of the literature that is directly relevant to the topic and that is described in part 4 of this paper, much is at the level of advocacy of an ideological perspective rather than critical academic writing. Much tends to defend a perspective and set of values that are taken to underlie public management rather than being based on empirical research. Authors often defend the faith base of forms of public administration or management that are little different from ‘western’ forms. There appears to be no analysis that could begin to match Weber’s analysis of the match between values, economic mode and forms of public administration.

The literature that has been identified may go some way to explaining the ideal motives of public officials and citizens within apparently similar administrative forms. Most of it stays at this ideological level. What the literature rarely does is to look at the real practice of public officials and citizens, to explain:

- In what ways and how far behaviour is influenced by religion;
- And how religion may affect the institutional environment and the outcomes of administrative arrangements that in themselves seem not to differ structurally from those existing elsewhere.

There is a need for empirical research in this field, especially research that moves beyond the generics of ‘culture’ to more specific aspects of faith-based values and religion, and that can engage with the religious literature without having to support a particular religious doctrine. The empirical research would seek to describe, analyse and explain behaviour.

Research gaps exist in every aspect of this topic. Even in the areas with a relatively large amount of existing literature, results need to be corroborated, a great deal more can be investigated, and topics can be approached with greater academic rigour, a sounder methodology and a more critical eye. Some topics for future research are:

a) Understanding faith-based and secular values, and their influence on public service norms and ethics in practice:

- Critical and objective analysis of values relevant to public management as expressed in religious texts;
- Comparison between values informed by different religious traditions. How far are values that affect public management distinctive or universal? How far are values uniform within religious traditions?
- Exploration and comparison of values underlying religiously motivated public management ethics (e.g. in Pakistan or Northern Nigeria) and western ethical values of NPM or bureaucracy;
- Examination of whether there is a logical association ('elective affinity') between specific religious traditions and particular forms of public administration (e.g. in general terms, with the bureaucratic or new managerial approach);
- Empirical research into religion as a source of values for cultural and administrative norms, i.e. 'norms in practice' (which may explain not only 'positive' but also 'negative' behaviour, e.g. corruption and inefficiency);
- Empirical research into religion as a source of values for personal conduct in public management, i.e. 'norms in practice' (which may explain not only 'positive' but also 'negative' behaviour, e.g. corruption and inefficiency).

b) Understanding the influence of religious values on the *functioning* of public administration and administrative reforms:

The concern is with the process of public administration and its reform, rather than with outcomes. In general terms, the need is for empirical research exploring whether and how religious values influence actual (rather than historical, idealised or theorised) functioning of public management in ostensibly secular and religious states. The following issues are more specific:

- Ethnographic or autobiographical studies of the influence of faith-based values held privately on the conduct and performance of public servants;
- Comparative research on the roles of faith and religion in the private belief systems of public servants, in public management systems, and in reforms in both ostensibly secular and religious states;
- Examination of whether there is a logical association ('elective affinity') between specific religious traditions and particular forms of public administration (e.g. in general terms, with the bureaucratic or new managerial approach), as in the proposal under the first heading but considering practice rather than principles;

- Exploration within particular public services of the extent to which religiously motivated codes of conduct are adhered to relative to secular ones, or are considered to matter to public management employees;
- Examination of attempts to construct and implement specific religiously based reforms (e.g. in regard to financial management, the introduction of ethical codes, human resource management, forms of leadership and training). Comparison with the implementation of similar reform efforts in a secular environment;
- Comparative research to explore the implementation and success of similar (e.g. NPM) reforms in countries holding different majority religious values;
- Comparison of the goals and operational practices (e.g. treatment of clients) of service delivery agencies in secular and religious environments (or comparing between FBO and secular organisations). Such research may be based on comparative case studies within countries.

c) Understanding the effect of religiously based values and practices on the *outcomes or effects* of public administration:

The concern is with the effects on efficiency, allocation and distribution, and the satisfaction of citizens. In general terms, the need is for empirical research that explores the effect of faith and religion on the outcomes of public management systems in ostensibly secular and religious states. More specific spheres for research are the following:

- Assessment of methodological approaches to measuring the effectiveness of religious models of public administration;
- Exploration of whether and how religiously based administration (and FBOs) aims to achieve different effects, and how far citizens/recipients perceive this;
- Comparative research between different administrative models – e.g. what is the effect of Islamic versus secular administration in terms of, for example, public satisfaction, responsiveness, inclusiveness, efficiency?

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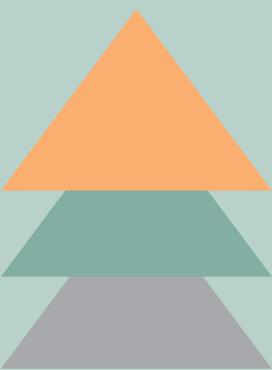
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