IMPLEMENTING NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT IN A DEVELOPING COUNTRY: THE CASE OF THAILAND

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Abstract

This thesis is about the impact of the New Public Management (NPM) paradigm on public sector reform in Thailand. The main objective of the thesis is to explore the question of whether Thai public sector reform belongs to the NPM paradigm, especially whether the intentions and contents of policy documents are actually realised in the implementation process. The study commences by reviewing the transformation of public administration to NPM and how this has affected developing countries. In theory, the traditional model of public administration, namely bureaucracy, has been considered as dysfunctional, no longer able to cope with changing circumstances and the new environment. NPM was introduced during the 1980s and 1990s in some rich countries in order to replace the traditional model of public administration. However, there are doubts about the appropriateness of NPM for the public sector in developing countries.

The thesis is specifically concerned with Thailand and as a first step delineates the history of public administration and its reform in Thailand including current policies. This includes the introduction of NPM. The remainder of the thesis is comprised of a case study of one ministry in Thailand. Much of the data was collected from semi-structured interviews with officials in the ministry and government agencies responsible for reform.

The case study focused on four dimensions of reform: organisational restructure and redesign of internal authority, public culture and values reform, workforce reduction, and internal NPM reform initiatives. The findings were mixed. Some NPM style initiatives such as restructuring of roles and functions were accomplished. However, some areas of NPM have either been partially implemented (downsizing) or not introduced at all (greater competition in public sector). It was also found that some reform initiatives, such as public culture and values reform, fell outside of the NPM paradigm. The research concluded that the NPM paradigm had made limited progress in the Thai public sector.
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### LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- **ADB**: Asian Development Bank
- **APO**: Autonomous Public Organisation
- **CSC**: Civil Service Commission
- **CSMPC**: Civil Service Manpower Committee
- **ESU**: Efficiency Service Unit
- **FACT**: Foundation for the Clean and Transparent Thai
- **GAO**: The US General Accounting Office
- **GCS**: Government Counter Service
- **GDP**: Gross Domestic Product
- **GG**: Good Governance
- **GO**: Government Organisation
- **IFI**: International Financial Institution
- **IMF**: International Monetary Fund
- **ISO**: International Organisation for Standardisation
- **KPI**: Key Performance Indicator
- **MDGs**: Millennium Development Goals
- **MP**: Member of Parliament
- **NESDB**: National Economic Social Development Bureau
- **NGO**: Non-Governmental Organisation
- **NPKC**: National Peace Keeping Council
- **NPM**: New Public Management
- **OCSC**: Office of the Civil Service Commission
- **OECD**: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
- **OPDC**: Office of the Public Sector Development Commission
- **PSO**: Public Service Standard Management and Outcomes
- **RBM**: Results Based Management
- **SAC**: Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre
- **SE**: State Enterprise
- **SES**: Senior Executive Service
- **TDRI**: Thailand Development Research Institute
- **UNDP**: United Nations Development Programme
Chapter 1

Introduction

Overview

For more than half a century, public administration reform has been an important task for the governments of both developed and developing countries. The latter have long and diverse experiences with the reformation of the public sector and frequently seek technical assistance in this field in order to improve the process of national development (UNDP, 2004). The Thai government, for example, has attempted to solve the problems relating to bureaucracy and bureaucratic inefficiency for many decades (Malee, 2003a). The attempts for public sector reform in developing countries started as early as the 19th century. However, because of the highly bureaucratic form and highly centralised administration of the governmental organisations in those countries, including Thailand, these reform efforts have often been unsuccessful. Nevertheless, crisis can often be a catalyst for radical reform. For Thailand, this came in the form of the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis. It has adversely affected the country, resulting in widespread poverty and many other economic problems. The number of people living below the poverty line increased from 6.8 million in 1996 to 9.8 million in 1999 (World Bank, 2005). Grindle and Thomas (1991:92) note that in some cases, the perception of a crisis situation may provide an opportunity to introduce significant changes in public policies. The Asian Financial Crisis offered the opportunity for the Thai government to introduce broad-based public sector reforms in order to increase the competence of the government in managing economic affairs to improve service delivery and to introduce greater efficiency into public sector management.

The reform plan proposed for the Thai public sector aimed to introduce a results-based model that is in line with the concepts of the New Public Management (NPM) (OCSC, 2002). The ideas behind NPM originated in certain Western countries from economic theories such as transaction cost theory and public choice theory, and from private sector management techniques (Hood, 1991). In relation to the Thai public sector, the old public
administrative traditions have been built round social esteem, hierarchical organisational structure and high levels of centralisation (UNDP, 2005b). By contrast, the NPM approach aims to overthrow these features of bureaucracy and replace them with structures, processes and orientations which value results that are achieved with economy and which are those that have proved successful in the private sector (Borins, 2000; Osborne and Gaebler, 1992).

**The Thai Public Administration Reform Context**

Public administration in Thailand was first reformed in 1448 during the reign of King Boromtrailokanart of the Ayuthaya kingdom in order to suit the increasing complexity and demands of the people and the state. After this first reform, the administrative system of the Thai public sector remained much the same until the nineteenth century when western countries tried to exert influence over the country. The Western colonisation of surrounding territories was a major catalyst for the reformation of the administrative system in the reign of King Rama V in 1868. However, the absolute monarchy was overthrown, and replaced by the constitutional monarchy in 1932. Administrative authority was transferred from the king to the military and the civilian bureaucracy leading to a characterisation of the Thai state as a bureaucratic polity. The first cracks in the bureaucratic polity occurred in the late 1970s as Thailand moved toward democratic rule, with the first general election being held in 1977. However, the deeply entrenched authority of the bureaucracy has only gradually been eroded until the post-financial crisis reform which seemed to usher in a new era of Thai public sector management. Successive Thai governments have battled against bureaucracy and bureaucratic inefficiency for more than half a century. Several largely unsuccessful attempts to reform the Thai public sector have been made since the 1950s (Malee, 2003b). But it was not until Thailand was hit by the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis that the government was offered the opportunity to introduce a radical public sector management reform program, which stood a chance of being successful.

During 1998-2000, in response to the Asian Financial Crisis, the Thai cabinet approved the management reform plan proposed by the Office of Civil Service Commission (OCSC) to transform public administration in Thailand employing a results-based model.
The government also claimed that the model was in line with the concepts of the New Public Management. The government introduced and started implementing a master plan, which focuses on five areas: roles and functions, budget, personnel, law and culture (OCSC, 2001b). In 2001, Thaksin Shinawatra was elected Prime Minister. His government has not only followed the public sector reform agenda from the former government, but has given added emphasis to the implementation of the NPM approach in the public sector. The government moreover has brought into use information technology and encouraged citizens to participate in government activities.

The Public Sector Management Reform Project

The public sector reform master plan was endorsed by the cabinet of the Chuan Leekpai’s government on 11 May 1999. The ensuring public sector management reform project covers five aspects of public sector management. The first aspect is Revision of Roles, Functions and Management of the Public Sector. This aspect involves reviewing the role and functions of the public sector by clarifying its objectives and those of each agency, thereby ensuring that unnecessary functions are abolished, and that functions best suited to the private sector are removed from the public sector. The restructured activities also focus on reducing problems in bureaucracy such as hierarchical organisation. The second aspect is Budget, Finance and Procurement Management Reform. There is a clear shift from a traditional line-item budget system to a system that focuses on outputs and outcomes. Such a change is supported by the development of performance indicators, accrual accounting system, and internationally recognised financial and procurement systems. The third aspect is Personnel Management Reform. The major focus of this reform is the downsizing of the public workforce. It has been undertaken to promote flexibility, appropriate recruitment and efficiency in resource utilisation. For instance, criteria have been developed to ensure that there are competent, suitable and motivated individuals in each position in the bureaucracy. Moreover, the compensation system is to be based on competency and performance, rather than on the seniority system. The fourth aspect is Legal Reform. The objective is to make laws easier to understand and implement. Laws should be amended in the way that best responds to the rapidly changing environment to ensure the appropriateness of those laws. For example, actions are currently being taken to promote the development of the National Legal Plan. The
The final aspect deals with the reformation of cultural and public values. This involves public opinion surveys on corruption in government. A corruption database was mandated to improve understanding on the causes of corruption leading to effective, preventive and combative measures and policies (OCSC, 2002). The government also initiated a program aimed at improved governance practices and principles across the government known as the ‘regulation of the Office of the Prime Minister on Good Governance’.

The election of early 2001 brought to power the Thai Rak Thai party led by Thaksin Shinawatra. In 2002, the Public Administration Act was passed. The Public Sector Development Commission was established in order to advise the cabinet on all aspects of public sector reform, achieve consensus on public sector development, and monitor and report on progress. The commission is supported by the Office of the Public Sector Development Commission (OPDC). In 2003 a strategic plan for the next steps in public sector development was approved by the Thaksin government. It consists of seven strategies, namely: streamline and redesign work processes; restructure public organisations; revamp financial and budgetary systems; redesign the human resource management system and compensation schemes; inculcate a new mindset; work culture and values; modernise government operations, and encourage public participation (OPDC, 2003).

Scope of the Thesis

This thesis explores the reform of the public sector in Thailand, focusing on the NPM model. Many writers have proposed that developing countries need to perform remedial actions in order to improve the performance of their bureaucracies (Hughes, 2003; Ferlie and Steane, 2002; Turner and Hulme, 1997). As a result, in some cases, the NPM concepts have been implemented in developing countries in order to replace the traditional public administration paradigm that underpins their bureaucracies (Hughes, 2003; Minogue, 2001; Turner and Hulme, 1997). Advocates of the NPM reform model encourage government to concentrate on output rather than procedures. In addition, such proponents of the NPM approach place emphasis on results rather than process (Hughes, 2003). However, there is much debate regarding the efficacy of the NPM concepts and methods in developing countries. Some commentators argue that the NPM is not helpful
for developing countries because of problems such as hierarchical bureaucracies, corruption, and low administrative capacity (Manning, 2001; Polidano, 1999). There is concern among these commentators and developing countries governments about the appropriateness of NPM reforms for poorer countries outside the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The reform environment among OECD countries is very different from those encountered in developing countries. Christensen and Laegreid (1998) also argue that the situation is further complicated by NPM not being an integrated and consistent theory because it consists of a number of loose doctrines and ideas which can even be in opposition to one another. For example, Kaboolian (1998) believes that public managers are given more discretion with NPM while Barberis (1998) argues that NPM ideas attempt to limit the discretion of public servants.

In relation to Thailand, the thesis investigates what elements of NPM are being introduced in the Thai public sector and whether there is any opposition, since there are scholars such as Siffin (1975), Reeve (1975), Dhiravegin (1978), and Rangsiyogrit (2003), who posit that the Thai bureaucratic system is likely to constrain the NPM approach because of strongly embedded norms and patterns of behaviour that favour such organisational features as process, hierarchy, centralisation, seniority and corruption.

**Objectives and Significance of the Study**

This thesis aims to explore the impact of NPM on the public sector reforms in Thailand. This involves investigating the government’s claim to be adopting reforms derived from NPM. Moreover, the thesis aims to evaluate the degree to which the declared Thai public sector reforms have actually been implemented. The thesis uses an analytical framework derived from the literature on convergence and diffusion. This facilitates investigation of the factors which are both promoting and impeding NPM reforms in Thailand. The thesis also adopts a case study approach by examining the implementation of public sector reform in one ministry, the Ministry of Culture. Four dimensions of reform implementation in the ministry are described and analysed. This case study approach provides an in-depth understanding of the reform implementation process in the Thai public sector.
In relation to the four reform dimensions, the first three dimensions are major aspects of the reform master plan of the Thai public sector, and are claimed to be parts of the NPM approach. In particular, the first dimension concerns the organisational restructuring and redesign of internal authority. The second dimension concerns efforts to increase transparency and accountability, and to minimise corruption. The third dimension is personnel management reform concentrating on attempts at workforce reduction, or ‘downsizing’. The final dimension involves various reforms which are not in the reform master plan, but are claimed by government to be representative of NPM.

The central question posed in the thesis is what types of public sector reforms are being introduced by the Thai government? This gives rise to subsequent research questions:

- Do the Thai public sector reforms belong to the NPM paradigm?
- Which specific reforms have links with the NPM paradigm, and which don’t?
- How are the reforms being implemented?
- How far are the reforms in Thailand leading to convergence with models of public administration found in the original NPM countries?
- Are the reforms that belong to the NPM paradigm perceived as being as effective for public administration in Thailand?
- What are the forces, actors and institutions which facilitate and obstruct convergence towards an international model of NPM?

The answers to all the questions will indicate the nature of public sector management reform in Thailand, where it came from, whether it is being carried out successfully and whether some reforms are more easily accomplished than others. In pursuing these questions the study adds to the understanding of implementing public administration reform in Thailand and contributes to wider debates on the diffusion and adoption of NPM both in Thailand and in other parts of the developing world.
Research Methods

A range of research methods has been employed in this thesis. These included both primary and secondary data collection and their subsequent analysis. The secondary data sources included academic books, journals and databases; articles in magazines and newspapers; and publications, reports and unpublished data from government organisations. Secondary data sources were investigated and utilised in both Australia and Thailand. In Australia, secondary data was mainly obtained from the libraries of the University of Canberra, the Australian National University, and the National Library of Australia. In Thailand, the information was obtained from various academic institutions such as Chulalongkorn University and the National Institute of Development Administration, the Office of Civil Service Commission (OCSC), the Office of the Public Sector Development Commission (OPDC), the Office of Prime Minister, and the Ministry of Culture.

Primary data were obtained from field work carried out in Thailand between January 2004 and March 2005. Most of this field research was conducted at the Ministry of Culture, Thailand since the ministry is one of the Thai government agencies that has implemented the public sector reform plan and was the case study selected for this thesis. Moreover, it is a new ministry that was established in 2002, in accordance with the Act on the Reformation of Ministries and Departments. It now serves as one of the 20 core ministries of the country according to the public sector reform project of the government. Additional field research was conducted at the OCSC and the OPDC because these two public organisations play very important roles in designing policies, and monitoring their implementation in the public sector reform project. Moreover, the OPDC and the OCSC are the principal sources of information on the Thai public sector reform.

In-depth interviews with participants drawn from senior, middle and junior levels of public servants in the Ministry of Culture were conducted to develop a full understanding of the implementation of the public sector management reform in the Thai public sector. Additional in-depth interviews were undertaken with public sector reform specialists, and public sector policy analysts in central government agencies responsible for reform. The case study approach was applied to four different dimensions of the reform within the
public sector reform master plan and public sector reform strategic plan introduced by the previous governments. These four dimensions consist of (1) organisational restructuring and work processes re-designing (2) public culture and values reform (3) downsizing, and (4) various other NPM reform initiatives. Full details of the case study research methodology are provided in Chapter 5.

Structure of the Thesis

The thesis consists of eleven chapters. Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the Thai public sector reform and its context, which sets out the objectives, research questions, research methods and the structure of the thesis. Chapter 2 reviews theoretical literature of NPM convergence and examines the traditional model of public administration in developing countries before delineating the paradigm of NPM and its applications in developing countries. The chapter critically examines whether the NPM model is appropriate, and whether it contributes to enhanced efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector in developing countries. Criticisms of NPM in developing countries are examined to facilitate understanding.

Chapter 3 focuses on the development and reform of public administration in Thailand up to the Asian Financial Crisis 1997. The chapter commences with a brief country background of Thailand before describing the development and reform of political and public administration. This historical approach divided reform into three major periods, namely the consolidation of the absolute monarchy (1276-1932), the establishment of the bureaucratic polity (1932-1973), and the bureaucratic polity under threat (1973-1996). This information is used to contextualise the current public sector management reform in Thailand.

Chapter 4 describes public sector reform and current policies from 1997 to the present. The chapter provides brief information on the Asian Financial Crisis and the new constitution since they are considered as the major impetuses for public sector reform in Thailand in 1997 and since. The chapter also looks at the structure of the Thai government which consists of the executive, the legislature, House of Representatives, senate, the judiciary, and the public service. Information on the structure of the Thai
government helps to develop an understanding of the Thai public administration system which is necessary to comprehend contemporary of public sector reform in Thailand.

Chapter 5 consists of two significant sections. The first section sets out and explains the methodological approach adopted in the thesis. This first section also aims to explain why the case has been selected, and also discusses why the case study approach is a are valuable research method and is used in this thesis. In addition, sources of data and data collection methods are described. The second section provides general information about the case study agency, the Ministry of Culture, such as its historical background, staffing data, organisational structure, functions, tasks and budget.

Chapter 6, 7, 8, and 9 examine the four dimensions of the case study conducted at the Ministry of Culture. Each chapter focuses on one of the dimensions: organisational restructure and redesign of internal authority (Chapter 6); public culture and values reform (Chapter 7); workforce reduction (Chapter 8); and internal NPM reform initiatives in the Ministry of Culture (Chapter 9).

Chapter 10 provides an analysis of the case study. It investigates whether or not the Thai public sector reforms belong to the NPM paradigm, and examines how the reforms are being implemented. In addition, problems and obstacles of the reforms are also examined. Finally, Chapter 11 provides a summary, and concluding notes about public sector reforms in Thailand, in the light of the findings of the thesis.
Chapter 2

From Public Administration to New Public Management

Introduction

This chapter reviews the theoretical literature concerning public administration and its reform in developing countries paying particular attention to contextual and conceptual matters relating to the central research question of whether the policy transfer of NPM to Thailand has resulted in convergence towards an international model of NPM. The chapter commences with a brief discussion of a variety of definitions of public administration presented by various scholars. It then discusses the traditional model of public administration, namely the bureaucratic model and its critiques. The model dominated public administration thinking during at least the first half of the twentieth century and supports the view that bureaucracy was the best organisational method for providing public services (Ostrom, 1989). However, in the 1970s and 1980s, the inadequacies of the traditional model became apparent. Hierarchical structures and other elements of bureaucracy were no longer thought to be the best organisational arrangements for public administration Public institutions were believed to be more effective when they were decentralised, had flatter structures and focused on results rather than processes (Hughes, 2003; Williams and Elmore, 1976).

The chapter next discusses the reform of public administration and the implementation of a new managerial approach. The new approach, namely New Public Management (NPM) emerged to replace the traditional model during the 1980s and 1990s in response to the inadequacies of the traditional model (Hughes, 2003). Reforms aimed at improving the quality of public services, saving public expenditure, increasing the efficiency of governmental operations, and making policy implementation more effective (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2000). Although many countries in the developing world have not fully embraced NPM, public administration reform is still of interest and some NPM reforms have been introduced. This leads to the question of whether there is convergence towards one globally accepted model of public administration—NPM. The chapter concludes with
a discussion of ‘policy transfer’ and ‘convergence’, two concepts which will be used later in the thesis to analyse the Thai case.

**Defining Public Administration**

Public administration has been conceptualised as decision-making, project planning, formulation of objectives and goals, establishment and review of organisations, direction and supervision of employees and the exercise of controls and other functions performed by government executives and supervisors (MacRae and Pitt, 1980). It is often associated with the development and well-being of society, and good public administration will lead to a strong state. Public administration may also be considered the action part of a government, whereby it is used as a tool to implement and achieve the government’s policies.

Despite different definitions of the roles that public administration plays in society, many scholars agree that public administration is centrally concerned with management of government (see Levine, Peters and Thompson cited in Stillman II, 2000:2). Others such as, Dubnick, Barbara and Romzek, and Denhardt (cited in Stillman II, 2000:2) conceptualise the practice of public administration to include the government’s efforts to manage public policies and programs.

Scholars also argue that public administration involves not only the technical matters of governmental management but also the political and legal aspects of it. Gordon and Milakovich (cited in Stillman II, 2000, p.3), for example, define public administration as all processes, organisations, and individuals associated with the implementation of laws and other rules adopted or issued by legislatures, executives and the courts. Similarly, public administration may include the use of managerial, political and legal theories and processes to fulfil legislative, executive, and judicial governmental mandates for the provision of regulatory and service functions for the society (see Rosenbloom and Goldman cited in Stillman II, 2000, p.3). Public administration therefore plays a major role in setting and determining the policies of the government, apart from its role in the process of designing strategies for implementation of those policies (Huque, 2001). MacRae and Pitt (1980) conclude that public administration should be oriented to
achieving the purposes of society and monitored by elected politicians. Lane (1993) also emphasises that the tasks of public institutions are executed by administrators, but are to be decided by politicians.

What is to be concluded from the different definitions of public administration above is that public administration is set in a political context, can be regarded as including the management of public programs and is concerned with the activities of the executive agencies of government. Furthermore, public administration can be studied in countries which vary considerably in their political regimes and levels of development. Utilising the framework of an efficient and effective system of public administration, studies about rich countries focus on the processes of attaining and maintaining a good quality of life for the citizens. These studies are set in a context of provisions for enjoying freedom and individual rights under a democratic system while taking advantage of government regulations to ensure equity and justice. The studies also help to explain the provision of adequate services in an efficient and effective manner whilst ensuring the quality of those services.

In contrast, public administration in developing countries operates in a very different context. It is often observed that the type of public organisation found in developing countries is typically based on the bureaucratic model of public administration although actual practice varies, often quite considerably, from the ideal type (Turner and Hulme, 1997; Wallis, 1990). Furthermore, developing countries encounter a variety of problems such as low productivity, weak economy, unstable or only partially democratic political systems. Many developing countries are also seen to suffer from inefficient and ineffective public administration. Therefore, studies of the systems of public administration in these countries describe the state of this administration with an emphasis on identifying the cause and the effects of weakness and dysfunctions (Huque, 2001).
Bureaucracy as the Traditional Model of Public Administration

The term ‘bureaucracy’ can be conceptualised in a variety of ways. For example, Lane (1987) lists ten different usages of the term, while Turner and Hulme (1997) acknowledge four leading meanings of bureaucracy. However, the most common definition of bureaucracy is as a form of organisation. The major point of reference is the work of Max Weber and his ‘ideal-type’ construct of bureaucracy. Weber noted a particular form of organisation based on rational authority emerging in Europe in the 19th century. Weber believed that customary organisation was being replaced by a new system called bureaucracy, and posited that it derived from the rise of rational legal authority in the governance of societal affairs (Rainey, 2003). He saw it as being characterised by a clearly defined division of labour, an impersonal authority structure, a hierarchy of offices, dependence on formal rules, employment based on merit, the availability of a career and the distinct separation of members’ organisational and personal lives (Turner and Hulme, 1997).

Based on Weber’s concept, each characteristic of bureaucracy may be explained in detail as follows. First, ‘the regular activities required for the purposes of the organisation are distributed in a fixed way as official duties’ (Gerth and Mills, 1948: 196). The division of labour involves specialised experts in each position, and this makes them responsible for and capable of the effective performance of their duties (Blau and Meyer, 1971). Second, officials conduct their offices with formalistic impersonality, or as Blau and Meyer (1971: 20) put it:

For rational standards to govern operations without interference from personal considerations, a detached approach must prevail within the organisation and especially toward clients. If an official develops strong feelings about some subordinates or clients, he can hardly help letting those feelings influence his official decisions.

This impartiality encourages efficiency, as it involves the exclusion of personal considerations from business is a prerequisite. Impersonal detachment leads to equitable treatment of all persons and thus equal justice in administration (Blau and Meyer, 1971; Gerth and Mills, 1948).
Third, the organisation of offices follows the principle of hierarchy. Stillman (2000) contended that the hierarchical order of bureaucracy separated superiors from subordinates. Higher positions control and supervise lower positions. This means each lower office is under the control and supervised by a higher office. Every official in the administrative hierarchy is accountable to his/her superiors. In addition, Carlisle (1971:38) further contends that:

The hierarchy is not based solely on authority, but it is also, at least implicitly, considered to be based on knowledge. Authority is concentrated at the top because the executives in these positions are considered to be the most knowledgeable. The lower levels of the hierarchy are delegated less authority as a result of their more limited knowledge.

Fourth, bureaucracy was based on formal written rules which are known and accepted by members of the organisation. Based on Weber’s concepts, Wallis (1989) noted that the actions of the employees within the organisation are controlled by a set of rules and administrative structures. Regular activities which are required to maintain organisational structures are distributed in a fixed way as official duties (Barber, 1984). Explicit rules and regulations determine the responsibility of members of the organisation and the relationships among them (Blau and Meyer, 1971).

Fifth, employment and a system of promotion in the bureaucratic organisation are merit-based, aimed at preventing arbitrary dismissal and ensuring that expertise is distributed to promote organisational efficiency. Blau and Meyer (1971) noted that there is a system of promotions according to both seniority and achievement. The system should encourage the development of loyalty to the organisation.

Sixth, Weber (Gerth and Mills, 1948) contends that ‘in principle, the modern organisation of the civil service separates the bureau from the private domicile of the official and, in general, bureaucracy segregates official activity as something distinct from the sphere of private life’. In other words, there is a distinction between working life and private life.

Furthermore, Weber conceptualised that the successful and continuing operation of bureaucracy is based upon written documents (Hughes, 2003; Wallis, 1989). Wallis explains this as follows:
The keeping of records by means of files has historically been the main way in which decisions and processes have been made available for administrators to trace precedents and to check the facts in a particular case (Wallis, 1989:3).

From Weber’s viewpoint, then, a hierarchical order, rule-based specifications of duties and procedures can promote precision, speed, clarity, consistency and reduction of costs for public organisation. Weber regarded bureaucracy as a form of organisation that provides efficiency and fair and equitable treatment for clients and employees (Rainey, 2003; Brown, Waterhouse and Flynn, 2003). Weber’s framework of bureaucracy defines a very clear public organisational model as he claimed that the closer an organisation approximated to his ideal-type, the more efficient it is likely to be (Beetham, 1996). In addition, Weber also claimed that the development of modern organisations in all areas of activity is essentially identical with the development and continuous increase of bureaucratic administration (Allinson, 1984). However, it needs to be considered that although most, if not all, developing countries tended to adopt a bureaucratic form of organisation, customary traditional administration such as chieftainship still played an important role. Thus, a pure bureaucratic type of organisation was never evident in practice and elements of the ideal type interrelated with those of tradition (Wallis, 1989). While organisations approximating to the bureaucratic model became the dominant modes of organisation in public and private sectors they did not completely replace pre-existing form of organisation and in the developing world often interrelated with them.

Even though Weber’s ideal-type of bureaucracy may have been the most important model for traditional public administration, it has been subject to a lot of scholarly criticism over the last fifty years. Critics comment that bureaucratic characteristics may turn out to be dysfunctional in public organisations (Hughes, 2003; Rainey, 2003). Thus, it has been suggested that bureaucratic public organisation can be too rigid, narrowly focused and preoccupied with structure and process, with a high level of centralisation, authoritarian leadership styles, and officials suffering from low morale (Flynn, 2002; Bozeman, 2000; Caiden, 1991 and Kiggundu, 1989).

Moreover, according to Merton (1952) Weber seemed to have overemphasised the formal elements of bureaucracy, and this leads to trained incapacity; a rigidity of approach which makes it difficult to adapt it in different contexts. Following Merton, Carlisle (1971) pointed out that the bureaucratic environment tends to reward workers for conforming to
rules and procedures rather than rewarding them for challenging current methods and processes, discovering new approaches, and personalising their work in terms of matching their skills to the requirements of the position. Carlisle (1971:39) further contends that:

A bureaucratic environment does not encourage workers to utilise their mental processes in problem solving, to improve current operations through innovation, or to achieve self-satisfaction in something more than the expenditure of routine and physical effort.

Bureaucratic organisations tend to develop rigidity rather than flexibility. They tend to have complex rules and red tape, consisting of burdensome administrative rules and requirement (Rainey 2003). Hughes (2003) also contends that a rigid and hierarchical structure can lead to suffocation of creativity and innovation, while Merton (1968) agrees that a too rigid adherence to rules can lead to unanticipated consequences such as a decrease in efficiency.

According to Merton (1952), bureaucracies are prone to goal displacement. This involves orientation to the goals of the organisation being supplanted by a focus on process and the implementation of rules. He provided the example of a ministry of agriculture that may focus on time and resource management towards enforcement of farming regulation, but it may forget its basic goal which is to aid farmers. He went on to argue that the advantages of bureaucracy may be less than Weber’s analysis suggests. In support of Merton’s goal displacement, Hughes (2003:36) contends:

Behavioural theories of organisations illustrate that what really happens in bureaucracies is considerably different from what the rational/legal authority model predicts. The bureaucratic organisation adopts fixed operating procedures but, in consequence, the achievement of results may become less important than maintaining the processes and rules.

Schaffer (1989) shared Merton’s scepticism about bureaucratic efficiency and suggested that bureaucracy is not an effective mode of organisation for successful development administration:

So, with the development agenda in mind, the following points can be made about the costs of bureaucracy. The bureaucratic model is not really an efficiency or output model. The emphasis is on repetition and reiteration rather than on innovation. Inevitable tensions of administration are solved by personality bureaucratisation and institutionalisation. The prime concern is not
To make matters worse, the word ‘bureaucracy’ today is claimed to be a synonym for inefficiency (Behn, 1998). For instance, Kiggundu (1989) argued that in Kenya public organisation lacked management skills and talent, engaging in too much paper-work and red tape. Another example is provided by UNDP (2004) which observed that in the Solomon Islands, the Pacific’s first failed state, bureaucracy had no capacity to deliver services since it suffered from a combination of problems such as inter-ethnic conflict, the state’s inability to maintain the rule of law, corruption and also state bankruptcy.

Despite criticism, Weber’s concept of bureaucracy has remained a favoured organisational form or ideal in many countries, especially in developing countries. However, bureaucracies within public sectors in many developing countries have been beset with problems, which have adversely affected their performance. Turner and Halligan (1999) point out that in some areas of East and Southeast Asia, bureaucracies are working improperly:

Many of the region’s bureaucracies are characterised by bureaupathologies or dysfunctions, practices that hinder the accomplishment of formal organisational goals. They are expressed in excessive aloofness, ritualistic attachment to routines and procedures, resistance to change, and petty insistence upon the rights of authority and status (Turner and Halligan, 1999:133).

The level of bureaucratic dysfunctions varies from country to country. Turner and Halligan (1999) observe that each state may have a different pattern of organisation since certain features of bureaucracy may be integrated into each state’s public sector agencies to a greater or lesser degree.

**Public Administration Reform**

Since it is widely perceived that the traditional model of public administration does not seem to work and is not able to meet or anticipate rapidly changing demands for public services (Batley and Larbi, 2004), developing countries need to reform their public administration to make it efficient and effective, and to provide value for money (UNDP, 2005c; Haque, 2004; Turner and Hulme, 1997; Heady, 1996). However, public administration reform is actually not a new phenomenon; indeed, developing countries
have had a long experience with it. While there may be domestic imperatives for reform, it is often pushed by International Financial Institutions (IFIs), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and bilateral aid agencies.

UNDP (2005c: 3) defines public administration reform as related to:

a government-initiated process to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, responsiveness, transparency and accountability of specific components of the public sector. Public administration reform can be comprehensive and include process changes in areas such as organisational structures, decentralisation, personnel management, public finance, results-based management, and regulatory reforms. It can also refer to targeted reforms such as the revision of civil service statutes.

Public administration reform in developing countries can be ascribed to many factors. First, governments in developing countries recognise that only efficient and effective public administrative systems provide valuable support for economic development:

An established public administration has been vital to economic development. The enormous economic success of the East Asian New Industrial Countries is not simply the triumph of the market but is also the result of strong state institutions considered the main instruments of effective governance (UNDP, 2005c:5).

Second, public administration reform is seen to contribute to sustainable human development. UNDP’s annual, Human Development Report conceptualises sustainable human development as:

pro-people, pro-jobs, and pro-nature. It gives the highest priority to poverty reduction, productive employment, social integration, and environmental regeneration. It brings human numbers into balance with the coping capacities of societies and the carrying capacities of nature (UNDP,1994:4).

Sustainable human development places people at the centre of development and advocates protection of the life opportunities of not only future but also present generations, respecting the natural systems on which all life depends (UNDP, 1994: 12). Thus, improved administrative systems such as decentralisation of decision making and more transparency in the administrative process can lead to improvement in service delivery, and ultimately in development indicators such as in education and health. In addition, “the focus on sustainable human development is linked to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for development, especially the primary goal—the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger” (UNDP, 2005c:5). Third, administrative
systems need to be improved due to the weakness of the existing systems. For instance, in Papua New Guinea the government has attempted to reform its public administration due to the incapability of the bureaucracy to function at the required levels, while the post-conflict situations of Afghanistan and Cambodia has made it necessary for both states to rebuild their bureaucracies as a result of the aftermath of war (UNDP, 2005c). Fourth, if public administration is to be responsive, accountable, transparent and in line with the demands of democratisation, then public administration reform is crucial. Lastly, a new development paradigm which is good governance has been introduced, and it has had important implications for the role of the public administration.

**Governance and Good Governance**

Public administration reform has been given an additional boost with the promotion of good governance, which is a part of the agenda of IFIs, UNDP, and bilateral donors. Good governance is regarded as reform that creates greater political and social accountability contributing to the realisation of more efficient and effective government. In addition, many developing countries develop their own notions of good governance, which has given impetus to public administration reform (Huque, 2001).

Governance (as opposed to “good” governance), on the other hand, can be defined as the rule of the rulers, typically within a given set of rules. It can be concluded that governance is a process by which authority is conferred on rulers and by which the rules are made, enforced and modified by those rulers (World Bank, 2005). Thus, understanding governance requires identification of the rulers and the rules, as well as the various processes by which they are selected, defined, and linked with the society in general. The World Bank (2005) defines governance as ‘the traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised through its economic, political, and social institutions’. A complementary view is provided by UNDP (1997) which sees governance as consisting of three elements which are economic, political, and administrative. UNDP further contends that economic governance includes decision-making processes that affect a country’s economic activities, that political governance is the process of decision-making to formulate policy, and that administrative governance is the system of policy implementation. From these definitions, it can be seen that
governance is the exercise of economic, political, and administrative authority to manage a country’s affairs at all levels. It comprises ‘mechanisms, processes, and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations, and mediate their differences’ (UNDP, 2005a).

Progress in development administration will be enhanced by improved governance, while public administration reform is invariably identified as a major initiative to achieve good governance. Often, with the support of IFIs such as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) together with bilateral assistance, developing countries have introduced programs of good governance that are in line with national development strategies and poverty reduction programs.

‘Good governance’ is expanded by considering the meaning of ‘poor governance’. Ray (1999) and UNDP (2005a) noted that poor governance is defined to include the government’s failure to provide good and efficient public services; failure to manage the fiscal and the budget problems of the country; and failure to prevent bureaucratic and political corruption. Good governance ensures that people at all levels in society have the right to participate in the decision making process. Moreover, political, social and economic priorities are based upon broad consensus in society. The role of public administration in good governance is spelled out by Boonmi (2002:31) who contends that:

Good governance means a form of public administration that is good and efficient in every aspect, and at every level. This ethical administration can be realised only when we believe that people, bureaucrats and the government are partners in determining the fate of the country. However, partnership is no guarantee of good governance. Good governance also refers to the rules and regulations that make the country’s administration transparent, accountable, efficient and just. Good governance is an interactive relationship between the state, the society, the private sector and the general public.

Good governance, according to IFIs such as ADB (2005) and World Bank (2005), consists of four major characteristics: participation, accountability, transparency, and predictability, while according to Minogue, Polidano and Hulme (1998), it has three components which are legitimacy, competency, and respect for law and protection of human rights. To have better understanding on good governance, each characteristic provided by ADB (2005) and the World Bank (2005) will be reviewed in detail below.
The first characteristic, participation, encourages citizens to exercise control on government through activities such as democratic elections (Phongpaichit, 2001). Participation also implies that government structures should be flexible in order to provide citizens the opportunity to improve the design and implementation of public programs and projects. In addition, Phongpaichit (2001) points out that citizens should be able to exert their influence and power to shape their social, political and administrative structures. The second characteristic—accountability—concerns the public officials’ responsibility to account for the government’s actions. The third element—transparency—refers to the availability of information to the general public and clarity in government rules, regulations, and decisions. It can be strengthened through the citizens’ right to information with a degree of legal enforceability. Transparency in government decision-making and public policy implementation reduces uncertainty and can help inhibit corruption among public officials. The final element—predictability—requires that government be able to regulate itself via laws, regulations and policies, which encompass well-defined rights and duties, mechanisms for their enforcement, and impartial settlement of disputes. Predictability is about fair and consistent application of these laws and implementation of government policies.

The components of good governance proposed by Minogue, Polidano and Hulme (1998), complement those mentioned above. To begin with, legitimacy implies that a system of government may operate only through the consent of the citizens who may give or withhold that consent. Minogue, Polidano and Hulme (1998:5) provide an example: ‘Legitimacy is seen in the British policy document as most likely to be guaranteed by pluralist, multiarty democracy’.

The second element concerns accountability. It involves mechanisms which ensure that public officials and political leaders are held responsible for their actions and their use of public resources. The third element, involves, competence, government being competent in making and executing appropriate public policies and delivering citizens public services in an efficient and effective manner. Finally, it must be added that good governance involves respect for the law and the protection of human rights. Developing countries may have country-specific variations in the meaning attached to good government. These derive from their governments, non-profit organisations (NGOs), civil society, and their particular situations, but they tend to involve the basic elements of good
governance which are found in the more general definitions of multilateral agencies such as the World Bank, UNDP, and ADB. All of these definitions stress the importance of public administration and require public administration reform to achieve the desired conditions of governance.

**The New Public Management Reform Model**

New Public Management (NPM), a new managerial approach, was introduced to replace the traditional model of public administration during the 1980s and 1990s in a group of Anglo-Celtic countries including United Kingdom, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia. The subsequent adoption of NPM by an increasing number of countries world-wide has been described as ‘one of the most striking international trends in public administration’ (Hood, 1991:3). Moving away from the organising principles of traditional bureaucracy, NPM looks to market principles and management techniques drawn from the private sector.

NPM originated from a combination of two different streams of ideas (Hood, 1991). One stream derives from the new institutional economics such as public choice theory, transaction cost theory and principal-agent theory while the other stream drives from management theory such as performance management. Hood (1991: 6) noted that ‘the new institutional economics movement helped to generate a set of administrative reform doctrines built on ideas of contestability, user choice, transparency and close concentration on incentive structures’. The central idea of public choice theory is that because human behaviour is dominated by self interest, government officials strive to maximise their organisational budgets, and politicians maximise their votes (Buchanan, 1984; Tullock, 1970; Downs, 1967). In order to address this problem, public choice theorists argue that societies should look to markets rather than state provision to meet their needs. In support of this argument, Crook (1997:19) observes that:

> What matters is to know whether, in practice, imperfect markets work better than imperfect governments. The lessons of history—in the Soviet empire, in China, in Africa, in Latin America, in Europe and the United States—suggest that when it is possible to leave the allocation of resources to the market, the results are nearly always better.
The most enduring characterisation of NPM is that of Hood (1991). From observations of changes in public administration in the UK and other similarly oriented countries he drew up a list of seven key elements:

1. Hands-on professional management in the public sector
2. Explicit standards and measures of performance
3. Greater emphasis on output controls
4. Shift to disaggregating of units in the public sector
5. Shift to greater competition in public sector
6. Stress on private sector styles of management practice
7. Stress on greater discipline and parsimony in resource use

These seven key elements of Hood can be described as follows. Firstly, public managers have more autonomy to manage financial and personnel resources with accountability. Secondly, the government focuses on measuring performance through the establishment of goals, target and indicators which can be quantitatively measured. Thirdly, control over output is increased, with an emphasis on the results achieved rather than process involved. Resource allocation and reward are also linked to measured performance. Fourthly, there will be purchaser and provider distinctions through the separation of functions into a quasi-market form. The purchaser and the provider distinctions can be within the government or between the government and the private sectors. The purchaser is the party who decides what will be produced and the provider is the party who delivers The agreed outputs and outcomes. This fourth element is explained by OECD (1998:40):

In effect, governments are distinguishing between the role of the state as a purchaser and as a provider. Increasingly, it is becoming recognised that as a purchaser, the state could at least potentially continue to fulfill its present responsibilities without necessarily directly providing all the services for which it is presently responsible. Indeed, the state’s principal responsibilities are typically better defined by decision about what assistance should be made available, for whom and how much.

Fifthly, the government emphasises competition among public agencies through tendering processes, and this could help to lower costs and to increase standards. Moreover, contracting out is increasingly adopted as a management tool, especially where a complete market solution or outright privatisation cannot be employed. It is also regarded as a market-type mechanism used to foster competition between private and voluntary sector organisations for the provision of services (Savas, 2000). Sixthly, private sector management techniques and practices such as performance agreement system are implemented in the public sector in order to increase management’s ability to hire, fire,
and reward public servants. Finally, economies in resource utilisation and cost-cutting such as downsizing programs are emphasised by the government in order to reduce or be more efficient with its expenditure. It is claimed by academic commentators such as Doyle, Claydon and Buchanan (2000) that outcomes of the shift to these seven key elements of NPM should be increased accountability, greater transparency and improved efficiency in the public sector.

Apart from Hood, other scholars have been trying to make sense of NPM. Putting together various perspectives, Batley and Larbi (2004) argue that NPM ideas can be categorised into two main strands. The first strand of ideas emphasises managerial improvement and restructuring which includes decentralisation, disaggregation, and downsizing. In this strand, Holmes and Shand (1995:555) described NPM as ‘a good managerial approach’, contending that a good managerial approach is result-oriented (efficiency, effectiveness, and service quality). NPM is intended to improve the quality of public services, save public expenditure, improve the efficiency of governmental operations, and make policy implementation more effective (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2000; Laffin and Painter, 1995). In a similar vein, Minogue (2001) noted that NPM has brought benefits of cost efficiency and service effectiveness to public management as well as improving efficiency and obtaining value for money by focusing on performance management and auditing. Other observers also believe that NPM encourages government to concentrate on the efficient production of quality services (Manning, 2001). Furthermore, NPM replaces highly centralised hierarchical organisation structures with decentralised management because NPM involves restructuring and reducing the size of the public sector including reorganising and slimming down central civil services Minogue (2001).

The other strand of NPM ideas emphasises markets and competition which include contracting out and adopting private sector styles of management practice. In this second strand, NPM can be defined as a set of particular management approaches and techniques which are mainly borrowed from the private sector and applied in the public sector. It is also perceived as an ideology based on belief in the efficacy of markets and competition, and business-like management ideas and practices (Ferlie et al., 1996). This coincides with the pre-NPM observations of Peters and Waterman (1982), who applauded the replacement of public services by private ones, and the creation of an entrepreneurial and
user-oriented culture within public organisations. More recently, Pollitt (2000), Christensen and Laegreid (2001) note that NPM involves the use of market or market-like mechanisms for the delivery of public services (including privatisation, contracting out, and the development of internal markets). Lane (1999), Ferlie and Steane (2002) contend that NPM has been evident in contracting out, a variant of the purchaser-provider type of relationship. To illustrate the point, government services can be provided by contract as Davis explains (1997:26):

In many countries contracting is moving beyond provision of limited goods or services within governments to embrace the overall design and approach of public services. Governments increasingly appear as a transparent universe of subcontractors, organised around statements of goals and strategic plans, concerned not with some nebulous public good but with meeting performance indicators set out in an agency agreement. Contracting can replace traditional bureaucratic hierarchy and command with networks of providers loosely clustered around government funding agencies, delivering services once the exclusive domain of the state.

**New Public Management Criticisms**

While ideas about NPM have spread internationally and many countries have introduced reforms associated with it, a number of criticisms have been levelled at it. Before examining these criticisms it is important to emphasise that NPM is not a definitive set of measures. Some observers believe that it is best to perceive NPM as a menu from which choices can be made (Manning 2001; Turner 2002). The menu is long as can be seen from the discussion in the previous section, and different countries make contrasting choices leading to variation in the form of NPM found in particular countries.

The first criticism of NPM involves a paradox of centralisation through decentralisation. To illustrate the point, Kaboolian (1998), Khademian, (1998), and Maor (1999) point out that giving public managers more authority to manage programs may result in concentrating decisions making in them. Thus, NPM may lead to centralised decision making by public managers, rather than encouraging decentralisation in public organisations as it claims.

The second criticism concerns applying private sector management techniques to the public sector. While NPM has encouraged the use of private sector management techniques, there may be risk associated with adopting some private sector practices
(Brown, Waterhouse and Flynn, 2003). Many academic commentators such as Pollitt (1990), Armstrong (1998), and Rainey (2003) argue that most areas of public service and administration have distinct political, ethical, constitutional, and social dimensions, and these factors make the public sector different from the private sector. A complementary view is provided by Savoie (2002) and Singh (2003), who argues that NPM is basically flawed because private sector management practices are rarely adopted into government operations. For them, NPM is inappropriate for the public sector as it has more complex objectives, more intricate accountabilities, and a more turbulent political environment than the private sector. Moreover, the relationship between public sector managers and political leaders is of a different order to any relationships in the private sector. In support of the above mentioned argument, Painter (1997) contends that there is danger in using private business models in the public sector because of the contextual differences. He explains this as follows:

There are, it is true, some area of the public service where lessons from the private sector could bring improvements as has happened in the past, and there is a limited range of activities and processes where ‘management principles’ (if they can be said to exist at all) might have generic application (Painter, 1997:41).

Additionally, Cheung and Lee (1995:10) noted that NPM ideas have limitations in terms of using private techniques for the public sector. They argue that in the public sector there is not the same degree of freedom as there is in the private sector. They provide an example of Hong Kong where private companies lay off staff in times of recession and restructuring while in the public sector, the government gives careful consideration to staff morale issues (Cheung and Lee, 1995:10).

Thirdly, general criticism of NPM involves ethical issues. It is argued by Hughes (2003:68) that:

Perhaps the new managerialism [NPM] offers greater transparency so that unethical or corrupt behaviour can be detected more easily; the greater stress on measurable performance may impose its own kind of behavioural standard. Perhaps managers can be inculcated with the ethical standards common in the old model.
Even though NPM provides transparency for the public sector, it can nonetheless lead to corrupt practices (Barberis, 1998). Doig (1997) argues along the same line that in rich countries, NPM can undermine ethical standards and lead to corruption. To illustrate the point, Minogue (2001) also noted that increased managerial autonomy has brought blurred accountability and higher risk for public managers to become corrupt, while Ormond and Loffler (2006) contend that increased freedom of management within public sector organisations allows more opportunities for unethical behaviour. Another ethical issue about NPM involves contracts. Hughes (2003) points out that contracts are supposed to offer improvement in accountability; however, contracts with government are often kept secret for reasons such as commercial research. Thus, there is no transparency in terms of practice.

**Observations and Criticism of NPM in Developing Countries**

NPM is controversial enough within Western countries in terms of the benefits it allegedly brings. Applying these principles to developing countries may encounter additional layers of complexity (Hughes and Teicher, 2004). While NPM ideas have been introduced in developing countries, some scholars point out that there are constraints, and NPM may be inappropriate (Manning, 2001; Minogue, 2001; Polidano, 1999). Most criticisms are, however, based on a prior reasoning about what items in the NPM menu seem to be appropriate for the developing countries, rather than on any empirical assessment of what has worked (Polidano, 1999). Since the NPM reform model originated in a small group of rich countries, the model may not be directly transferred from them to poorer non-Western countries because of contrasting environmental features such as political culture and practice (Minogue, 2001). UNDP (2004) points out that some items of NPM are not useful for developing countries since NPM ideas have derived from a few countries of the OECD. The ideas have been designed and implemented to suit the conditions in those countries rather than in developing countries.

Eight specific criticisms of NPM can be identified in the literature. Firstly, Polidano (1999) argues that the NPM does not suit developing countries since governments in these countries may lack the necessary expertise and have unreliable information
systems. Polidano (1999), Caiden and Sundaram (2004:376) noted along the same line that:

Developing countries have lacked the resources and managerial capacity to adopt rather sophisticated NPM reforms, although countries like India have supported the reorientation of government role and menu of options for providing various functions and services, often extending beyond the original vision of NPM.

Thus, it can be said that a state’s capacity is a precondition for successful implementation of NPM in developing countries (Monteiro, 2002; Bale and Dale, 1998).

Secondly, while the NPM principle of decentralisation has diffused from rich countries into developing countries, governments in developing countries often retain centralised decision making. Leading public managers still have authority to make all decision within their organisation. This centralised decision making can generate its own pressure for arbitrary action and corruption (World Bank, 1997). A supporting view is provided by Polidano (2001) who claims that public administration in developing countries is afflicted by corruption and nepotism, and that such practices may hinder NPM implementation. NPM may not be useful for public sectors in developing countries that have been greatly affected by corruption (Bale and Dale, 1998).

Thirdly, it is claimed by various scholars such as Batley and Larbi (2004) that NPM is based on applying market principles into public policy and management. However, Hughes (2003) argues that developing country governments often have only little experience in the operation of markets. Basic infrastructure of management in developing countries is also not developed enough to support market-oriented reforms (Sarker, 2006). Moreover, there are various factors which are required before the market can be effective. Hughes (2003:232) goes on to explain this as follows:

Markets are ineffective without the rule of law, for example, to ensure compliance with contracts. Yet it could be argued that many people in the developing world are natural traders with a history of commerce lasting for many centuries and that these instincts were stifled during the period of command economies. But, until capital markets develop or domestic entrepreneurs arise, a market economy may mean greater domination by foreigners and foreign corporations.
Fourthly, Hughes (2003) argues that it is difficult for the government in developing
countries to move to contractual arrangements for the delivery of service because the
necessary laws and the enforcement of contract are not well established. To illustrate the
point, the World Bank argues that NPM must be carefully introduced (1997:97):

> If informal norms have long deviated significantly from formal ones (with
regard to personnel practices, for example), simply introducing new formal rules
will not change much. Where specialised skills are in short supply, performance
contracts and other output based contracts for complex services may absorb a
large share of scarce bureaucratic capacity to specify and enforce them.

It seems difficult for developing countries to move away from the bureaucratic system.
Hughes (2003) points out that this old model of organisation allows favouritism and
patronage.

Fifthly, as mentioned earlier, an aspect of NPM that useful for one developing country
might not be useful for other developing countries. Turner and Hulme (1997:240) have
explained this when writing about efforts to impose standardised reform package in the
1990s:

> Whatever the reasons—naivety, historical and environmental blindness, or
ideology a powerful international lobby is promoting a ‘one size fits all’
approach to public sector reform in spite of the evidence accumulated from
organisational and management theory and from empirical study that the
outcomes of planned changes in organisations are conditioned by many
contingent factors, especially those in the organisation’s environment. In some
contexts, the NPM may yield its promised benefits, but in others the possibility
of it contributing to reduced performance, and even political instability must be
recognised.

Therefore, Bowornwathana (2001) claims that when developing countries borrow an
NPM technique from rich countries, they must understand the details of the borrowing,
consider if it is appropriate to circumstances in their countries, and make decision
accordingly.

Sixthly, another explanation for the inappropriateness of NPM involves public
expectations of government in developing countries. Manning (2001) indicates that
public expectations of government in those countries are different from those found in
OECD countries. He contends that ‘public expectations of service quality from
government in many developing countries are justifiably low, with the consequences that
citizens are unlikely to feel that complaints are worth the effort’ (Manning, 2001:302). It is difficult for developing countries to succeed in implementing NPM unless citizens in developing countries are motivated to complain about their local service.

Seventhly, Schick (1998) criticises the introduction of performance-based mechanisms of accountability by pointing to the existence of a sharp dichotomy between the formal and informal rules of the game in developing countries, and the predominance of the informal realm which is non-bureaucratic. He argues that the rules which actually guide people’s behaviour may be different from those which are written down. Therefore, contractual mechanisms of accountability may have little impact since they are in the formal realm. A classic example of informality subverting contractual mechanisms in Ghana is provided by Christiansen (1998). The country attempted to improve the performance of its state-owned enterprises through contracts which proved ineffectual, owing, among other things, to the political connections of managers.

Finally, the NPM commitment to privatisation may be difficult to manage in developing countries because those countries may not have the administrative capacity to undertake this complex task successfully (World Bank, 1995). Moreover, there are circumstances in which privatisation will inevitably mean foreign ownership or ownership by one particular ethnic group which may cause a risk of societal cohesion (Hughes, 2003). An example of failures in privatisation is provided by the World Bank (1995:244) as follows:

Guinea privatised 158 public enterprises between 1985 and 1992, but this change proceeded without a clear programme or legal framework; procedures for competitive bidding and accounting were not made clear; assets were often sold for much less than their value; and successful bidders were offered terms which sometimes included monopoly licenses and the like.

In developing countries, Manning (2001) noted that rather than a single option, NPM provides a menu of choices. NPM is compared to a menu of techniques, and developing countries are experimenting with some items on the NPM menu (Batley and Larbi, 2004; Caiden and Sundaram, 2004; Turner, 2002; Polidano, 1999; Manning, 2001). However, NPM has not yet become the only public management paradigm in developing countries since the organising principles of bureaucracy have not been substantially replaced by the market-based principles of NPM. Manning (2001) emphasises that most government functions in developing countries are still executed by vertically integrated bureaucracies.
In relation to developing countries in Southeast Asia, Turner (2002) provides degrees of NPM adoption in order to demonstrate divergence and a variety of NPM initiatives within a particular region. Turner utilises the metaphor of three contrasting diners faced with a menu of NPM dishes to characterise the countries in Southeast Asia. He identifies an enthusiastic diner, a cautious diner, and one unfamiliar with the menu. Singapore and Malaysia are classified as enthusiastic diners since they have long term experience in producing public bureaucracies capable of learning and adapting from success elsewhere; while Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia are linked to cautious diners because decentralisation and privatisation are evident in these states but only minor changes have occurred within the central agencies and performance regimes are little developed. These states are willing to experiment with only a few selected items from the NPM menu. The final category of the diner who is unfamiliar with the menu consists of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. These states have not built capacity and systemic processes to initiate NPM and are reluctant to experiment although all have public administration reform programs. From these degrees of adoption, a similar metaphor sees NPM as ‘a shopping basket’ and developing countries as the shoppers. Each country may choose different items from the basket for different reasons (Pollitt, 1995). Implementation in various developing countries shows that these countries may build on national and local circumstances, taking into account the organisational diversity within their countries. Thus, a certain reform concept might work in one policy sector but not necessarily in another, due to difference of organisational structures and cultures (Ormond and Loffler, 2006).

**New Public Management in Developing Countries: Transfer and Convergence**

As we have just seen, NPM is not confined to the originating countries, but it is a global phenomenon and has also been disseminated to other OECD and developing countries. Hughes and Teicher (2004) contend that it is possible for developing countries to adopt managerial alternatives to the traditional model of public administration. In a similar vein, Osborne and Gaebler (1992) contend that convergence on a new way of organising public tasks is happening because the traditional model of public administration lacks efficiency under contemporary conditions. Therefore, governments all over the world are moving towards a new public management style. In addition, Kettl (2000:1) points out...
that ‘the movement has been striking because of the number of nations that have taken up the reform agenda in such a short time and because of how similar their basic strategies have been’. However, not all academic scholars agree with Kettl, Osborne and Gaebler. Scholars such as Flynn (1996), Strehl (1996) and Jones (1993) note that NPM is still far from universal and that there is only a partial convergence. Manning (2001) and Turner (2002) claim that while NPM has not been fully embraced by the majority of developing countries, it has alerted them to various initiatives which can be used in their reform programs. This thesis is concerned with examining the question of whether Thailand is converging towards the NPM model through its public administration reforms. To facilitate this exploration and analysis of this phenomenon it is necessary to define and discuss two important concepts, ‘policy transfer’ and ‘convergence’. The rest of this section is devoted to this task.

Common (1998:56) defines policy transfer as ‘refers to the process by which actors borrow programs and policies from one setting to develop programs and policies within another’ while Dolowitz and Marsh (1998) conceptualise that policy transfer generally comes in three forms: voluntary transfer, coercive transfer, and a mix between voluntary and coercive transfer, or the middle ground. They contend that voluntary transfer implies that agents of change desire change and resort to policies to satisfy these desires. They take actions to adopt the policies found in other countries which they think will be appropriate for their own territories.

In contrast, coercive transfer occurs when agents of change are forced into action, when external imperatives force a government to adopt a policy derived from elsewhere (Dolowitz and Marsh, 1998). Coercive transfer can occur in developing countries when international organisations, particularly IFIs such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) apply conditions to their loans (Dolowitz and Marsh, 1998). The loan is made only if the recipient government adopts policies prescribed by these international organizations. For instance, Thailand was coerced by the IMF during the Asian Financial Crisis to implement social and economic policies as preconditions for any form of financial assistance (Phongpaichit and Baker, 2000). In some cases, coercive transfer can lead to inappropriate administration because the policy which has been formulated by the policy originator may not suit the
context of countries which are forced to implement it due to political and societal differences.

Besides the two types of transfer mentioned above, Dolowitz and Marsh (1998) note that there are some situations in which policy transfer can be driven by a combination of voluntary and coercive forces. They refer to this as the middle ground. There are several imperatives which drive this kind of policy transfer. For example, policy transfer may be triggered when key domestic and international actors within the policy making process perceive a country’s economy to be falling behind its primary competitors and these actors seek ways of catching up lost ground. Dolowitz and Marsh (1998) use Zambia as an example. The country decided to implement an aggressive privatisation programme which IFIs recommended in order to restore their competitive position in relation to other countries. A second situation which leads to the middle ground of policy transfer is the emergence of an international consensus. To illustrate this point, Dolowitz and Marsh (1998) contend that actors can be pushed toward policy transfer if they believe that this action can make their countries recognised and acceptable internationally; for example, in agreeing to World Trade Organisation rules and regulations. The final catalyst for middle ground policy transfer is when actors in a recipient country feel that they have to engage in transfer as a result of the actions of external actors or events.

The degree of policy transfer can be divided into four different types: copying, emulating, mixtures, and inspiration. Common (1998) observes that each developing country may have different degrees of transfer both in general and in relation to specific fields depending upon its circumstances. But to be successful policy transfer is dependent upon the recipient political system possessing the political, bureaucratic, and economic resource to implement the policy (Dolowitz and Marsh, 1998). Domestic opposition to transfer may dilute the degree of transfer. Heald (1992) also comments that differences in political culture, levels of economic development, country size, and bureaucratic capabilities will determine which reforms are feasible and appropriate for each country.

If developing countries such as Thailand are engaged in the policy transfer of NPM then it is reasonable to assume that there will be convergence to a new common model of public administration. However, the term ‘convergence’ is broad and vague and needs to be more clearly defined if it is to be of use in analyzing policy transfer.
Thus, in order to have a better understanding of whether there is a global convergence towards a particular NPM model, Pollitt (2002) has divided convergence into four stages: 1) discursive convergence, 2) decisional convergence, 3) practice convergence and 4) results convergence. He contends that in the first stage, many people are talking and writing about the same concept of NPM while in the second stage, governments decide to adopt a particular organisational form or technique. If governments then begin to work in more similar ways, this means that they are in the third stage called practice convergence. Finally countries which can be identified as in the results convergence stage are in a situation where reforms produce both intended and unintended effects so that the outputs and outcomes of their governments’ activities begin to converge. Their modes of public administration begin to look similar.

Powell and DiMaggio (1991) have also written from a ‘new institutionalist’ perspective on the convergence of organisational forms and their propositions can also be related to NPM in developing countries. They (1991 use the term ‘institutional isomorphism’ to indicate institutions becoming more alike although operating in different jurisdictions. They identify three reasons why such institution isomorphism takes place. Firstly, a developing country which adopts a particular organisational form because of pressure or instructions to do so from other countries to which it is subordinate, exemplifies ‘coercive isomorphism’. Secondly, a developing country could be seen as engaging in ‘mimetic isomorphism’ when that country is uncertain how to deal with new pressures, and elects to imitate innovations from richer countries which are seen to be successful in their policy innovations. Thirdly, ‘normative isomorphism’ occurs when a developing country is operating in a field that is heavily influenced by the norms set by some external body.

Pollitt (2001, p933) incorporates ‘institutional isomorphism’ in his efforts to produce a ‘more subtle conceptualisation of convergence’. He acknowledges that there is ‘a considerable academic literature debunking the idea that there is an international convergence towards the New Public Management’ but also notes that some academics have identified international copying of management ideas (Pollitt 2001, p933). To facilitate the examination of the idea of convergence he suggests a four-step approach. Firstly, he argues against the notion of global and or functional necessity. Governments do not have to ‘do NPM’ (Pollitt 2001, p936). Secondly, he introduces Powell and DiMaggio’s concept of institutional isomorphism to argue that ‘the replication of
rhetoric, forms and practices across the world may have more to do with government fashions, symbolism and the propagation of norms than with the grim dictates of the global economy or the functional necessity for increased efficiency (Pollitt 2001, p.934). Thirdly, he raises the possibility that the ‘talk’ about NPM may not equate with the actions taken by governments to introduce NPM reforms. We should not make the mistake of assuming that organisational statements and decisions agree with organisational actions (Brunsson 1989, p231). Finally, Pollitt (2001, p941) focuses on the question of who benefited from the propagation of the convergence story’. This analytical frame provides the critical questions which enable us to make judgment on empirical cases, such as Thailand, about whether there has been convergence towards a particular model of public administration. For this thesis, the question is whether Thailand is converging towards a NPM model of public administration.

Conclusion

This chapter examines the question of whether there has been a global transformation of public administration from the bureaucratic model into New Public Management. The chapter commences by defining various meanings of public administration, and provides a brief overview of the ideal-type of bureaucracy, identified by Weber and its application. Various critiques and problems of bureaucracy have been discussed. In particular, some have criticised bureaucracy with a view that it is a form of organisation that is no longer appropriate for the current situation in the public sector as it constrains the attainment of greater efficiency and effectiveness in public sector management.

The second part of the chapter provides a review of public administration reform which is claimed by its designers and implementers to improve the performance of the public sector. However, empirical evidence reveals that public administration reform takes different forms in different countries. However, many developing countries appear to use NPM as a reference for public administration reform. Whether there is convergence towards a common model requires testing against the experience of different countries, in this case Thailand.
There is certainly pressure from the promotion of good governance and major international organisations such as the World Bank and United Nations for developing countries to improve their public sector management but whether this necessarily involves replacing the traditional public administration when you have some free time with NPM is a matter for demonstration (Turner and Hulme, 1997). While the NPM approach has been established in some OECD countries, and disseminated to the rest of the world, it appears that many developing countries have usually only selected some items from the NPM menu. We shall see in the following chapters whether Thailand conforms to this generalisation or whether it has adopted the full range of NPM reforms and is converging towards a global model of public administration. The conceptual tools of policy transfer and convergence introduced in this chapter will help to order and analyse the information presented in the case study of NPM-style reforms in Thailand.
Chapter 3

The Development and Reform of Public Administration in Thailand

Introduction

This chapter reviews the development of public sector management and its reform in Thailand. It is divided into two major sections. The first section provides a brief background of Thailand in terms of its geography, population, and religion, in order to contextualise the following section on Thai public sector management. The second section describes the development and reform of public administration in Thailand, dividing the process according to three major historical periods of Thailand. The first sub-section focuses on the consolidation of the absolute monarchy and the form of public administration commencing in the Sukhothai period, roughly from the late 13th century, and continuing to the beginning of the Ratanakosin period (1782-1932). The second sub-section discusses public administration from 1932 to 1973, when the bureaucratic polity was established and consolidated. The third sub-section examines the bureaucratic polity under threat between 1973 and 1996. During these periods, there have been changes, disruptions, and continuities of public administration which will be major concerns of this chapter and which have relevance for the current attempts to reform public sector management in Thailand, the major concern of this thesis.

Brief Historical Background of Thailand

Thailand is the only country in Southeast Asia that did not become a European colony. The population lives mainly in the fertile, rice-growing areas of the central, north eastern and northern regions, and the country’s economy is based on agriculture. However, there has been substantial industrialisation which has entailed a considerable increase in the urban population. Located mainly in the capital area (i.e. Bangkok), the urban residents now make up 18 percent of the total population. In addition, Theravada Buddhism is the official religion of Thailand, and it is the religion of more than 90 per cent of people. The
remaining 10 percent are Christian, Muslim, and Hindu, since the government permits religious diversity and freedom (Terwiel, 1991). The Thai government is organised as a constitutional monarchy. The king has little direct power under the Constitution but remains a potent symbol of national identity and unity (Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, 2003). Additionally, the king can issue Royal Decrees provided that they do not contravene existing laws, declare martial law, and declare war with the approval of two thirds of the National Assembly. He also plays an important role in conferring nominations upon officials to fill senior state positions (Asian Development Bank, 1999).

In 2004, Thailand’s population amounted to 62.4 million, with a growth rate of about 0.7 per annum. Spanning over 513,115 sq. km, the country is divided into 76 provinces with Bangkok as the capital. More than 85 percent of the people speak standard Thai and share common cultural values. This relatively homogeneous population includes the central Thai (36 percent of the population), Thai-Lao (32 percent), northern Thai (8 percent), and southern Thai (8 percent) (World Bank, 2005).

**Economic Overview**

Until recently, the Thai economy has been based on agriculture, mostly subsistence farming for household consumption with little commercial or export orientation. However, from the 1960s onwards, Thailand moved into industrial manufacturing to reduce imports and subsequently into export-oriented industrialisation.

The average annual growth rate in the 1980s was 9.6 percent and in the 1990s slowed down to 2.2 percent (World Bank, 2005). During the 1990s, Thailand encountered many problems such as large deficits in the current account, exchange rate mismanagement and political instability. These problems contributed to the Asian Financial Crisis in mid-1997. Following the crisis, Thailand implemented substantial reforms in its financial sector, strengthening corporate governance, reforming lending practices, and boosting incentives for increasing competition. The resilience of the Thai economy facilitated a quick recovery. After contracting more than 10 percent in 1998, Thailand's economy grew at a rate of more than 4 percent in both 1999 and 2000, and grew by 1.8 percent in 2001 despite a global slowdown. The country's recent economic growth has contributed to a drop in poverty levels, as between 1999 and 2000 poverty rates fell by 2 percent.
Nearly a million people have bounced back out of poverty following the country's economic recovery (World Bank, 2005).

Because of Thailand’s well developed infrastructure, free-enterprise economy, and openness to foreign investments, it has quickly recovered from the crisis and was one of East Asia's best performers during 2002-2004. According to the World Bank (2005), Thailand is a middle income country, but it has seen high rates of economic growth over a long period despite the Asian Financial Crisis. Increased consumption and investment spending together with strong export growth pushed GDP growth up to 6.9 percent in 2003 and 6.1 percent in 2004, despite a sluggish global economy. However a popular expansionist expenditure policy of the government, including major support of village economic development, has raised concerns about fiscal discipline and the health of financial institutions (World Fact Book, 2004).

At the beginning of 2006, the World Bank (2006b) reported that GDP growth would be around 5 percent during this year on the back of stronger export growth. Growth in private consumption and in private investment will be slow as the economy adjusts to higher oil prices and a tightening of monetary policy. Public investment growth will also slow down because of delays in large infrastructure investments program. However, higher growth in world trade volume forecast for 2006 will strengthen export growth, even as imports slow in line with total investment trends (World Bank, 2006b).

**Political and Public Sector Development**

**The Consolidation of Absolute Monarchy**

Historically, the beginning of the Thai political system can be traced back to the Sukhothai period (1276-1349). Although there was no formal administrative structure during this period, it can be said that the basic administrative principle of the Sukhothai kingdom was that of a father-child relationship, with the king as the father and the citizens as his children. A patriarchal monarchy was the form of political organisation in the kingdom. However, administration on this basis was appropriate only for a state with a small population, and became impractical when the kingdom and its population
expanded. The father-child relationship, thus, had to shift toward a more complex relationship based on hierarchical authority. The people in the Sukhothai kingdom were divided into two classes. The first class was called the ruling class. This class consisted of the king and members of the royal family. The other class was called the ruled class, consisting of commoners and slaves (Dhiravegin, 1992). It can be said that centralisation of decision-making and cultural norms, such as patron-client relationship, were first embedded in the Thai public administration during this period.

After the Sukhothai kingdom collapsed, Ayuthaya was established as a new kingdom. This new kingdom has a long history since it existed for over four centuries (1350-1767), and witnessed a long and complicated development of political, social, economic and ideological systems. The most important political institution of the Ayuthaya kingdom remained the monarchy. The king had absolute power and was the owner of all the land in the kingdom. The royal family, acting as the focus of government, maintained political control over the political elites through patrimonial means.

During the reign of King Boromtrailokanart (1448-1488), public administration of Ayuthaya was reformed due to population growth and the increasing volume of public infrastructure which made it necessary for the structures and functions of an emerging bureaucracy to become institutionalised. To illustrate the point, Siffin (1975:17) contends that:

The bureaucracy had a dual significance—functional and social. It was hardly a great, dynamic, productive machine, but it did perform functions essential to the continuation of the kingdom. In addition to doing certain kinds of work, the bureaucracy served as the framework of the strata of society between the king and the peasantry. It was the basic instrument for providing continuing social order and coherence.

The bureaucracy of the Ayuthaya kingdom included an elaborate system of specialised royal staff, divided into organisations for territorial control, revenue production and retention, diplomacy, warfare, defence, and religious apparatus. Siffin (1975) observed that explicit hierarchicalism was the most notable characteristic of the bureaucracy. The structure of Ayuthaya’s government was divided into two main departments: Defence and Interior. In particular, under the Interior, there were four small divisions, known as Metropolitan, Royal Household, Finance, and Agriculture (Office of Civil Service Commission, 1993). Rangsiyogrit (2003) regards the reform in the Boromtrailokanart
regime as a major change, or the first reform in the history of Thai public administration. The arrangements deriving from this reform remained in use until the reign of King Rama IV in the mid-nineteenth century (Dhiravegin, 1992).

Public administration of the Ayuthaya kingdom was highly centralised. Decision-making, for example, was made by the king and members of the royal family. However, the central administration lacked the capacity to directly control the provinces and tributary states. This was left to appointed rulers whom the king could trust—usually members of the royal family or nobility (Terwiel, 1991). However, in some cases, these families might harbour ambitions to occupy the throne and would form alliances to overthrow the monarch, with rewards being promised to those joining the new alliances. These rewards included high bureaucratic positions that provided opportunity to reap some personal benefits, such as taxes. During this period, the obvious problem of the bureaucracy under absolute monarchy was power struggle within and around the bureaucracy. The various factions of the royal and aristocratic families struggled for high position in the bureaucracy. In 1767, the king was weak and frail and Ayuthaya was invaded by Burmese troops, resulting ultimately in the fall of the kingdom.

In the 1767, King Taksin liberated the Thai from the Burmese and consolidated his power, legitimised himself and rebuilt the Thai polity based on the Ayuthaya model. It was known as the Thonburi kingdom (1767-1782). The government and public administration in the Thonburi period was similar to that of the Ayuthaya period. The administrative system remained under the monarch’s control, and the bureaucratic system was also transplanted from the Ayuthaya kingdom. Therefore, problems stemming from reliance on the patron-client system re-emerged. The fortunes of the clients depended on the fortune of the patron. Therefore, rivalry among the clients of varying factions could lead to a situation where the clients tried to encourage their patron to assert himself in the power hierarchy. This led to conflicts and the struggle would culminate in the use of violent means (Dhiravegin, 1992).

King Taksin was assassinated at war and in 1782, the Chakkri dynasty was established. Both the monarchical institution and the administrative system were inherited from the Ayuthaya, and Thonburi kingdoms. In the nineteenth century, some changes in the bureaucratic system did occur. In order to protect the country against the colonisation and
imperialism of western countries new functions were occasionally added, along with organisations to perform them. Moreover, in the nineteenth century, Thailand was bombarded with a profusion of Western forces and influences (Siffin, 1975; Reeve, 1975; and Dhiravegin, 1992). Siffin (1975:43) contends that:

Western impact led to a deliberate, systematic effort to replace the traditional Thai bureaucracy with administrative mechanisms committed to the pursuit and attainment of explicit organisational goals, goals deemed essential to national survival.

Thailand’s relations with the outside world began to change when King Rama III engaged in extensive trade, and with this came new ideas in business and financial administration. For instance, in 1840, a taxation system was introduced into Thailand by an English ambassador, an event indicative of Thailand’s increased interaction with the West and its willingness to experiment with foreign institutions. Moreover, Thailand opened the country to foreign trade under pressure from the West, thus wiping out the royal commercial monopolies (Terwiel, 1991). In 1851, Britain encouraged King Rama IV to open Thailand to the West by accepting a drastic revision of treaty relations. King Rama IV also managed to cope for the time with the ominous expansionist drive of France into Thai vassal territory. Western-style institutions were transferred to Thailand, and this led to the reformation of the administrative system in the reign of King Rama V (Chulalongkorn), who is generally regarded as the founder of the modern Thai public service. He believed that reform helped avoid domination by Western colonial powers because it sent out the message that Thailand was a modern and civilised society (Rajchagool, 1994). In the 1870s, modern administrative and bureaucratic practices were introduced into the Thai public sector. The administrative reform involved a variety of elements (Siffin, 1975; Reeve, 1975) as follows:

1. Fiscal reform: the Revenues Development Office was established. It was the beginning of a change which slowly gathered force. Meanwhile, dependence upon tax-farmers was somewhat reduced, and the revenues actually received by the King appear to have gradually increased.
2. Personnel administration: pensions were granted by the King to high-ranking officials upon retirement.
3. Communications: European technicians were used in the effort to develop communications facilities.
4. Maps and surveys: the Bangkok-Moulmein survey was established in 1882, and a general map of Siam (Thailand) was published in 1897.

5. Railways: a tram line was constructed in Bangkok in 1889, and railway construction was begun in 1891.

6. Foreign affairs: the Department of Foreign Affairs was established in 1885, and it was the initial effort to establish a modern ministry of foreign affairs.

7. Education: the Department of Public Instruction was established in 1887 with a commitment to the systematic development of a public educational system.

In relation to structural reform, twelve ministries were established. The functions, character and management of these ministries were based on Western patterns. The aim of the structural reform was to create a comprehensive set of performance-oriented administrative organisations. Siffin (1975:61) further explains that:

They would devise and administer laws to capture the respect of the Western nations and thus enable the abolition of extraterritoriality. They would develop resources and collect revenues to finance the modernisation of the kingdom. And they would link the nation’s farthest outposts into a coherent network of government in which the king’s writ would run.

However, King Rama V paid a lot of attention to the Ministry of Interior since it was critical that this ministry extend Bangkok’s authority to the furthest reaches of Siam’s newly formed border areas that were previously not under the direct control of Bangkok. Siffin (1975:61) noted of the Ministry of Interior that:

It was to be the ministry of domestic government, the trunk upon which other modernised civil governmental functions would depend if they were to exist outside the capital area. It was the critical ministry, too, because its task was not merely to build a modern system of purposive administration, but to supplant the most deeply rooted traditional administrative institutions of the kingdom.

King Rama V claimed that if the administration could not be modified and developed into a modern system, the country would be in danger and could even lose its independence and freedom. Therefore, to protect the country by developing the administration of the provinces was most important strategy to demonstrate the integrity of Thai territory, the control of the state and rule through model administrative institutions. The Ministry of Interior was of the utmost importance in establishing the centralisation of political and administrative powers and control of the provincial administration (Rajchagool, 1994).
In 1910, King Rama VI ascended to the throne. The king intended to introduce a parliament and a constitution, but he believed that citizens were not yet ready because they lacked knowledge and understanding of democratic systems of government. Therefore, in order to educate citizens about the democratic system, he experimented with a democratic form of government and process by creating a miniature city called Dusitthani. King Rama VI also demonstrated his liberal leanings by allowing public opinions to be voiced and heard (Terwiel, 1991).

In 1925, King Rama VII ascended to the throne and attempted to prepare a constitution to which would replace absolute monarchy with a parliamentary system (Rajchagool, 1994). However, the royal council, a group of people who served as an advisory council for the king, did not agree with him, arguing that the citizens of the country still lacked experience of democracy and that the Dusitthani city was only a toy conceived by the king. Thus, the country should wait until the majority of the people were educated and politically socialised into democratic ways. During the reign of King Rama VII, a major problem of the bureaucratic system was personnel recruitment. There was a shortage of public servants qualified to work for the central administration. There were not enough candidates with the appropriate qualifications for the available positions. The problem came from a combination of the growing size of the state and the increasing complexity of its operations, coupled with an underdeveloped educational system which failed to produce adequate numbers of suitably qualified graduates. As a result, the Thai government decided to introduce the first Civil Service Act in 1928, which addressed the recruitment and promotion of government officers, the resolution of issues of law, and regulations governing the procedures in personnel administration (Adulyapichet, 1991:32). This Act introduced the merit system, and led to the establishment of the Civil Service Commission (CSC) in 1933 (OCSC, 1993).

To conclude, during the regimes of Sukhothai, Ayuthaya, Thonburi, and the first era of Ratanakosin, the Thai polity was under absolute monarchy. The monarchy consolidated its control through the skilful use of patronage and delegation of powers (Cariño, 1992). The king normally appointed members of the royal family and aristocrats to high positions, while bureaucrats acted as royal servants to serve the king. High positions in the bureaucracy were monopolised by men of the royal family and aristocrats. In addition, the king had absolute power to control the country by appointing, promoting, and
dismissing all bureaucrats according to ancient laws and tradition. During the later years of the nineteenth century in response to external threats the monarchy introduced modern bureaucratic institutions. These grew in size and number as the complexity of government increased but the principle of hierarchy and the practices of patronage, established centuries earlier, remained embedded in the new institutions.

The Establishment of the Bureaucratic Polity (1932-1973)

When King Rama VII ascended to the throne in 1925, there was demand for a change from the traditional political system into a democratic form of government. After a bloodless coup in 1932, perpetrated by a small group of Western educated military and civilian officials calling themselves the ‘People’s Party’, King Rama VII was forced to abandon the absolute monarchy and accept a constitutional monarchy. The coup leaders were successful in consolidating their power by requesting some members of the royal family to leave the country while installing democratic institutions. New laws and orders were promulgated to reform the structure of the state. In particular, these new laws were aimed at eliminating the power of the king by transferring authority to a new leader who was the commander of the army. In 1933, Colonel Phraya Phahol was appointed the new Prime Minister by the military leader (Nuechterlein, 1965). Riggs (1966) noted that Thailand subsequently oscillated between army and civilian leadership for over forty years.

Dhiravegin (1992) argues that the new democratic institutions in Thailand were weak since freedom of speech and of the press were limited. Indeed Thailand was not governed by the democratic form as it was claimed earlier by the People’s Party. The stated democratic intentions of the coup leaders were rapidly placed into abeyance as an authoritarian style of government was established. Thus, the Thai political system in this period started with a military dictatorship. With the exception of short periods of civilian government from 1932 to 1933, 1944 to 1947 and 1947 to 1948, the Thai political scene was dominated by the military (Siroros 1999; Dhiravegin, 1992 and Nuechterlein, 1965). The military held high government positions such as that of Prime Minister, and other top ministerial positions. However, the military needed the cooperation of civil servants to carry out its policies and to administer the state and society.
During this period, political power and political decision were exclusively in the hands of bureaucratic elites (Suriyamongkol and Guyot, 1986; Girling, 1981; Riggs, 1966). Riggs coined the term ‘bureaucratic polity’ as a way to describe this period. Suriyamongkol and Guyot (1986:4) provide the significant characteristics of the bureaucratic polity as follows:

1) a functionally specialised state apparatus that is immune to control or direction by extra bureaucratic force, and
2) a style of politics that plays across the shifting lines of personal factions rather than through such social structures as formal organisations, classes, or interest groups.

Additionally, Cariño (1992) contends that the Thai cabinet had never been without a civilian bureaucrat. Samudavanija (1987) and Bunbongkarn, (1987) noted that in this period, there were more civilian government officials than military men in the cabinet. For instance, during 1932-1958, different cabinets had 100 civilian officials as against 84 military officials (Riggs, 1966: 317). There were more civilian government officials that military men in the prime minister position even though their tenure was much shorter, with some of them working as representatives for the army (Samudavanija, 1987; Bunbongkarn, 1987). In addition, in this period the cabinets were self-recruiting, coming from the armed forces, the police and the civil administration. According to Riggs, the bureaucratic polity could not impose a tight system of centralised control, as it was run to suit the interests of state officials, and was characteristically a struggle among bureaucratic cliques of ‘strong men’ for the personal benefits and influence gained from holding a government office. Bowornwathana (1997a:2) contends that:

The struggle of power was a struggle for high positions in the military among factions of the bureaucratic elite. To be the supreme commander of the armed forces was the best assurance for becoming Prime Minister. To be a core member of the supreme commander's faction was the best assurance for being appointed minister and/or Member of Parliament. Within the bureaucracy, bureaucratic elites became the patrons of various cliques and factions.

For four decades up to 1973, the shift from absolute monarchy to constitutional monarchy did not encourage the government to be accountable to the people. The change was only transferring patronage from the monarchy to the military-civilian leadership (Nakata, 1987). The extra-bureaucratic groups such as business, media, political parties, non government organisations, citizen groups, and scholars played little part in political processes. There were occasional short-lived civilian governments, but there were quickly
overthrown by military coup d’etat and declarations of martial law, announcing the resumption of military government (Nuechterlein, 1965).

Since the move to constitutional monarchy introduced notable changes in the Thai public sector, notably its expansion, specialisation of institutions and their growing complexity, the control of the state over all the population increased as bureaucracy penetrated deep into society. However practices such as the centralisation of the political system, hierarchical structure of bureaucracy, and patron-client relationships were further embedded in Thai public administration.

The Bureaucratic Polity under Threat (1973-1996)

The bureaucratic polity was threatened in 1973 when a mass uprising led by students overthrew the military government. A number of authors such as Girling (1981), Phongpaichit and Baker (1998), and Bowornwathana (1997) note that the uprising marked the beginning of the end for the legitimacy of military rule and coups as a mode of changing government, and a major step toward democracy. In 1977, a constitution was promulgated, and a democratic election was held to choose the government. It is not unreasonable to claim that the bureaucratic polity was gradually transforming into a democratic polity. Nevertheless, Sioros (1999) argues that during 1976-1988, Thailand was not fully transformed to a democratic polity. It was rather transformed to a semi-democratic regime. In a similar vein, Dhiravegin (1992:209) has written that:

> What is to be noted here is that the new constitution laid down the foundation for what was popularly to be known as ‘half way democracy’. It is dubbed “half way” because it is a system in which the old elements, i.e. the civil and military bureaucrats, and the new emerging social forces both have had to be accommodated. The new social forces were accommodated by a process of election while the old elements, by the procedures of the ‘halfway democracy’.

Even though the military still had authority, and was a major force in the state, civil society became more influential at the same time (Bunbongkarn, 1998). In this period, the senate was appointed, and its members included both military and bureaucrats, and elected officials. Some ministries were given to politicians as patronage rewards for supporting the government at that time, but control over key economic policy-making agencies as well as budgetary decisions remained under the bureaucracy’s technocrats. In addition, The Thai bureaucracy expanded rapidly from the 1960s to the early 1980s as
can be seen by a rapid increase in the number of personnel. By the early 1980s, almost half of all graduates were employed by the public sector, and civil servants’ pay amounted to nearly 40 percent of government revenue (Sussangkarn and Puntasen, 1997). Statistics show that there were approximately 80,000 government officials at the time of the revolution in 1932, but by 1965 their numbers had risen to about 250,000, while in 1980 the figure was more than one million (OCSC, 1993).

After the period of semi-democracy, in 1991, General Chatchai Chunhawan, an elected politician, became Prime Minister with strong support from provincial politicians. After 1991, Thailand witnessed a fully-fledged but short-lived parliamentary democracy for which there was a growing public demand, especially among the urban middle class. Chatchai was the first elected Member of Parliament to be a Prime Minister since 1976. His party, Chart Thai (Thai Nation) had strong links with industrialists while their coalition partner the Democrats had close relations with financiers. A total of 33 of the 45 cabinet ministers who served Chatchai had a background in business. Private sector influence during the Chatchai period was prominent. However, the Chatchai regime was blamed for the widespread presence of “money politics” (vote-buying) and corruption as political leaders exploited economic prosperity for personal gain. Many multi-billion Baht public works projects were adopted without careful scrutiny, and it was widely believed that bribes, corruption and irregularities were involved (Malee, 2003a). This led the media to dub Chatchai’s administration the ‘buffet cabinet’. Corruption allegations undermined the popularity and legitimacy of the government.

As corruption was pervasive during Chatchai’s administration, this gave the military the justification to overthrow Chatchai. In March 1991, another military coup, abrogated the constitution, dismissed Chatchai’s elected government, and established the temporary National Peace Keeping Council (NPKC) as the supreme ‘guardian’ of the country. In addition, the NPKC also claimed they were protecting the monarchy from a group of disaffected officers. It was caused by Chatchai’s intervention in internal military affairs. The coup leaders also dissolved parliament and replaced it with an appointed ‘National Legislative Council’, whose members mainly comprised current and retired civil servants, and military officers.
In the same year, the NPKC gave Anand Panyarachun, a technocrat, considerable power, although not a completely free hand, to form an interim government. He was a diplomat and later Permanent Secretary of foreign affairs. Anand became Prime Minister with the support of the military and bureaucracy. He appointed his cabinet mainly from civilian bureaucrats, but ensured that some strategic posts such as minister of the interior and minister of defence were allocated to the NPKC’s leaders. However, most military leaders who were members of the NPKC declined offers of ministerial posts in the hope of avoiding the allegation that they had staged the coup for their own benefit.

Anand initiated reforms in major economic areas emphasising economic liberalisation, competition, deregulation, transparency, and decentralisation (Samudavanija, 1993). In addition, this government attempted to reform the public sector through debureaucratisation, deregulation, liberalisation and privatisation. (Siroros, 1999; OCSC, 1993:2). In his policy statements announced to the National Legislative Assembly in April 1991, he declared that the government needed to improve public administration and amend laws to provide more efficient and effective service to facilitate the objectives of the National Economic Social Development Plan (OCSC, 1993). As a result, he instructed the Civil Service Commission (CSC) to make plans and recommendations for administrative reform. The CSC recommended some significant measures to improve the civil service system and public personnel management, in particular, restrictions on the numbers of staff in public organisations. Only some parts of his reform program were implemented because Anand’s regime did not last long enough to complete the planned reforms.

At the end of military rule in 1992, an election was held and a civilian government was returned. Chuan Leekpai, leader of the Democratic Party, became Prime Minister with the support of his coalition government. Bowornwathana (1997:5-8) defines Thai coalition government as follows:

Coalition governments are alliances of two or more political parties that pool their legislative seats to form majority coalition government. Under a multi-party parliamentary system, Thai governments are coalitions of political parties. The political party with the most number of elected MPs forms the coalition government. Its leader becomes the Prime Minister. The new political heads of the bureaucrats in the government agencies are senior members of the coalition parties, usually members of parliament, who fill the ministerial quotas of their respective political parties. A few technocrats may be allowed to assume certain
technical ministries such as Finance; however, they do so within the quotas of the political parties that nominated them.

One of Chuan’s main concerns was controlling the CSC himself to ensure that the bureaucracy would carry out his government’s policies (Malee, 2003a). Immediately on taking office he gained control over policies affecting human resource management within the civil service. As he subsequently explained in his speech to the annual meeting of Civil Service Administration on 21 January 1993:

I have agreed to be chairman of the Civil Service Commission and devote my time to attend its meetings once a month because I wish to see government policy achieve its intended consequences. Although politicians, for the most part, determine and announce policies, it is civil servants who are the government’s means to achieve them. They [civil servants] are leaders and the most important coordinators of policy implementation. I therefore give importance to both civil servants and the civil service system (Malee, 2003a:128).

In relation to public sector reform, the Chuan government focused on personnel management reform as a way to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of public servants. However, public sector reform during the Chuan government was not accomplished due to resistance from bureaucrats who were reluctant to relinquish their power and influence especially as threatened by the decentralisation program of the government. In other words, public servants did not support the government policy because they did not want to lose their authority.

Chuan dissolved the parliament in May, 1995 in response to a scandal about land rights reform, and the Thai Nation Party won the largest number of parliamentary seats in the subsequent election, installing its leader, Banharn Silpa-archa as Prime Minister. In July 1995, Banharn announced in parliament that his government would undertake comprehensive civil service reform:

First, the government will modernise the central, regional and local administrations by means of restructuring ministries, departments and government offices. We will increase public sector efficiency by downsizing the Civil Service, improving bureaucratic processes and eliminating duplication in jurisdictions and responsibilities. Secondly, the government will decentralise power to local people and encourage them to participate in solving local problems. Thirdly, this government will introduce local elections at all levels, and lay down steps and procedures to decentralise administrative power to local administrations. The government aims to distribute income to local areas. Lastly, bureaucratic corruption will be eliminated, and anti-corruption personnel will be trained to increase their capacity to perform their duties effectively (Malee, 2003a:156).
His government began to study restructuring the public sector and setting up a personnel management reform master plan. However, the Banharn government held office for a little more than one year. Evidently the Chuan, Chatchai, Anand, and Banharn governments each attempted to reform the public sector, but failed to make significant headway because the term of each government administration was too short to see through the implementation of their intentions. The short tenures of governments plus their desire to produce their own polices for public administration reform also meant that there was a lack of continuity in policies on public administration reform.

The 1996 election was won by the New Aspiration Party, a former coalition partner in the outgoing government and its leader. General Chavalit Yongchaiyudh, a former Deputy Prime Minister in Banharn’s government, became Prime Minister in November. In relation to public administration reform, the party proposed a manifesto, entitled The New Aspiration for Civil Service Reform. Published in booklet form and distributed among politicians and senior bureaucrats, it outlined Chavalit’s ideas and placed particular emphasis on the need to improve the performance and efficiency of the civil service.

Civil service reform is one of the most significant conditions for the development success of the country. Most past research and studies point to the same direction confirming that it was not a lack of natural resources that prevented the country from achieving a higher degree of developmental success, but the lack of good and efficient public administration. Without reforming the civil service, which is the mechanism for implementing government policy, political reform that aims to enhance the country’s development success, to protect the right of citizenry, to increase the quality of people’s lives and to raise our country’s competitiveness internationally cannot be achieved (Malee, 2003a:173).

The Chavalit government conceptualised the government as a facilitator or enabler whose role was to stimulate the reform in order to help the country to improve its international competitiveness and thus promote economic development. However, Chavalit’s government performed very poorly in economic management. His government continued to manage a foreign exchange system which effectively pegged the Baht to the US dollar. In mid 1997, the peg was broken and the Baht weakened rapidly. It can be concluded that political instability, exchange rate mismanagement, inadequate regulation of financial institutions and large deficits in the current account contributed to Thailand’s financial

During the period of the bureaucratic polity under threat, it has been observed by Bowornwathana (1997) that the political system had become more democratic. Democratic elections became the norm with Prime Minister and cabinet members being selected from the popularly elected members. The majority of cabinet positions during governments of Chatchai, Chuan, Banharn and Chavalit were occupied by politicians with business backgrounds, not bureaucratic elites. Bowornwathana (1997) concludes that the process of democratisation in Thailand started to erode the traditional power of military and bureaucratic elites. Elected politicians were replacing bureaucratic elites. The politicians became the new patrons who worked together with bureaucrats. There were, however, some continued practices which were inherited from both the absolute monarchy and the bureaucratic polity periods. The bureaucratic system was still a very hierarchical structure and was highly centralised. Sanudavanija (1987) noted that even though some structures of Thai public administration had been changed over time, there was continuity in cultural norms and values such as patron-clients practices. These norms were strongly embedded into the Thai public sector. It is observed by Painter (2006:29) that ‘bureaucratic norms gave priority to personal relations of patronage and dependency, with deference and loyalty being more important than merit, resulting in nepotism and corruption’. Moreover, people in society retained the attitude that they had no power and authority to control the country’s bureaucrats. In the view of people, government of the country was the responsibility of public servants and the government.

Having reviewed the development of public administration and its reform in Thailand through a focus on three major historical periods, it can be considered that Thai public administration is a traditional bureaucracy since many of its characteristics are along the lines of Weber’s ideal-type of bureaucracy, reviewed in Chapter 2 (Gerth and Mills, 1948). To illustrate the point, Thai public administration was seen as highly centralised, with an authoritarian leadership style and hierarchical. However, bureaucratic efficiency was hampered by the presence of features such as patron-client relationships. This version of bureaucracy has been judged to be dysfunctional with adverse consequences for performance (Hughes, 2003; Rainey, 2003) Recognition of this by policy-makers in
the 1990s but especially after the Asian Financial Crisis led to the increased importance of public administration reform and its definition.

**Conclusion**

The chapter has provided a history of the Thai public sector, and the development of public administration reform in Thailand from the Sukhothai period up until the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997. The chapter looks at changes and continuities in Thai public administration in three different periods: absolute monarchy period, bureaucratic polity period, and bureaucratic polity under threat. It is pointed out that there have been some changes such as public administrative structure, and realignment of power and administrative control. However, some continuation of traditional practices such as an emphasis on hierarchy and centralisation of decision-making remain in the Thai bureaucracy. Moreover some cultural norms such as those which support patron-client relations were still ingrained in the bureaucracy. The chapter showed that there have been many attempts to reform the Thai public sector, but that little was accomplished due to obstacles such as bureaucratic resistance to public service reform. However, the recognition that public administration reform was necessary for national development had grown among elected officials, business and other interest group. Frequent changes of government had thwarted successive reform plans but the Asian Financial Crisis seemed to offer the opportunity for a concerted effort to address the shortcomings of the Thai bureaucracy.
Chapter 4

Public Administration Reform Post 1997

Introduction

This chapter aims to review the current public administration reform in Thailand in the aftermath of the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997. The chapter firstly provides brief information about the financial crisis and its impact on the Thai public administration reform, and also examines the new constitution of 1997 since both the financial crisis and the new constitution can be seen as impetuses for reinvigorated public administration reform in Thailand. Secondly, in order to contextualise the reform program, the current structure of the Thai government is also provided. Thirdly, the public sector reform agenda, and current policies of the government regarding the public administration reform are delineated paying particular attention to the claim that the NPM approach has been introduced into the Thai public sector.

The Asian Financial Crisis and Thai Public Administration Reform

Public administration reform in Thailand has been typically incremental and has seen only partial implementation. There has not been a strong impulse for far-reaching change. This conforms to a policy situation of non-crisis as identified by Grindle and Thomas (1991:88) that under non-crisis conditions, change is often incremental, with considerable scope for trial and error or scaling up if initial efforts provide positive results.

In 1997, Thailand was severely affected by crisis thus altering the context of policy making. The Asian Financial Crisis acted as a catalyst for more comprehensive changes in public administration. The crisis led to a plunge in exchange rates. Moreover, there was substantial capital outflow and a severe stress on financial institutions especially the chaos caused by non-performing loans. The crisis also resulted in a 4 percent rise in unemployment, a 3 percent decline in exports, a nearly total depletion of international reserves, and an 8 percent drop in the GDP (Thammavit, 1998). One critical problem for
Thailand was the difficulty faced by the public sector in managing and adjusting to the changed situation. The economic crisis therefore provided an opportunity for the Thai government to reform the public sector as policy space was opened up to allow more radical and far-reaching policy changes to promote the sustainable development of the economy and society (Grindle and Thomas, 1991). Grindle and Thomas (1991:73) observe that a crisis is an opportunity for state elites to define new strategies for addressing major problems of development and to take an active role in putting together supportive coalitions for reform.

Although, the idea of public sector reform is not new—Thailand has had a national committee on public sector reform for over twenty years—the Asian Financial Crisis provided the opportunity for a concerted reform effort (Vejjajiva, 1999). The Asian Financial Crisis can be considered as a strong impulse for far-reaching public sector reform in Thailand.

**The New Constitution of 1997**

Besides the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997, the constitution of 1997 was another major catalyst for reform of the Thai public sector. It provided substantive provisions for the protection of human rights and dignity, together with encouragement of participative governance and the monitoring of public service authority (OCSC, 1999a). Several unique features of the new constitution set it apart from its predecessors including; firstly, strengthening the rule of law and human rights; secondly, enhancing accountability mechanisms and enforcing much stronger conflict of interest standards; and thirdly improving transparency, participation and decentralisation in government (Office of the Council of State, 2005; Asian Development Bank, 1999).

The new constitution was also expected to curtail abuses of power by elected politicians and government officials, and to create transparency and critical scrutiny. It was anticipated that the implementation of these constitutional provision would greatly enhance the performance of the Thai bureaucracy. The new constitution was approved by the National Assembly on 27 September 1997. It came into force on 11 October 1997.
The constitution of 1997 is an embodiment of the aspirations of the Thai people for a democratic system of government. McCargo (2002:9) noted that it has been heralded as a people’s constitution. The constitution highlights the main principles of governance, dealing with the form of the state, the structure of government, the separation of powers, and the protection of individual rights and liberty. The new constitution allows people to participate in and comment on governmental services, and also confirms that sovereign power belongs to the people, and they can legitimately use that power (Aphornsuvan, 2000a).

The constitution of 1997 allows citizens to gain more control over the public sector. Citizens have the rights to challenge the power of politicians and public servants. For example, citizens have the right to gain access to public information from state agencies. Further, the constitution introduced new accountability institutions such as the Office of the National Counter Corruption Commission and measures to improve transparency and accountability (The World Bank, 2000). Finally, the constitution directs government to decentralise, giving power to local populations to determine the direction of policy in matters that concern them directly.

In relation to public administration reform, the most pertinent provisions of the 1997 Constitution (National Assembly, 1997) are set out below:

Section 76. The State shall promote and encourage public participation in laying down policies, making decision on political issues, preparing economic, social and political development plans, and inspecting the exercise of State power at all levels.

Section 77. The State shall prepare a political development plan, moral and ethical standards of holders of political positions, Government officials, and other employees of the State in order to prevent corruption and create efficiency of the performance of duties.

Section 78. The State shall decentralise powers to localities for the purpose of independence and self-determination of local affairs, develop local economies, public utilities and facilities systems and information infrastructure in the locality thoroughly and equally throughout the country as well as develop into a large-sized local government organisation a province ready for such purpose, having regard to the will of the people in that province.

Section 79. The State shall promote and encourage public participation in the preservation, maintenance and balanced exploitation of natural resources and biological diversity and in the promotion, maintenance and protection of the quality of the environment in accordance with the development principle as well as the control and elimination of pollution affecting public health, sanitary conditions, welfare and quality of life.
These extracts from the constitution indicate a radical change in the relationship between state and society. Under the bureaucratic polity the state had little accountability to society and largely determined the terms of state control and the provision of service. The 1997 constitution sees power vested in and exercised by society with state officials being accountable for their actions. To attain these goals would require far-reaching public administrative reform.

**Structure of the Thai Government**

Thailand is a constitutional monarchy under which the king wields considerable moral authority and has a number of formal powers. He serves as the head of state, the upholder of religion, and the head of the armed forces. He can issue decrees that are not contrary to law, declare martial law, declare war with the approval of two thirds of the National Assembly, and conclude peace. The king also plays an important role in authorising nominated officials to take up senior state positions such as Prime Minister and ministers. In practice, the king exercises these powers only with the consent of the current political leadership (Asian Development Bank, 2001).

**The Executive: The Prime Minister and the Cabinet**

The new constitution has set the structure of the Thai government, which consists of Prime Minister, cabinet or Council of Ministers and Executive Departments. The Prime Minister, typically the leader of the largest party in the ruling coalition, is responsible for the day-to-day running of government (Asian Development Bank, 2001). The responsibilities and duties of the Prime Minister are set out in the constitution. The general duties are to administer the affairs of the state in the interests of the country and of the people. Other major duties and powers of the Prime Minister include serving as administrative head of the country, appointing various high level officials, including cabinet members, calling for referendums and general debates in the National Assembly when the government deems it is necessary for the administration of the state (Office of the Council of State, 2005; Aphornsuvan, 2000b).
Four to six Deputy Prime Ministers are responsible for specific areas of government policy. The Council of Ministers or cabinet manages state affairs, and under the new constitution its membership is reduced from 49 to 35. The Cabinet Secretariat under the Office of Prime Minister coordinates the work of the Council of Ministers. Cabinet committees coordinate major policies (Asian Development Bank, 2001). The cabinet is responsible for determining government policies and implementing those policies that have been legislated by the National Assembly. Furthermore, members of the cabinet coordinate the functions of various public agencies, laying down regulations for those agencies, and solving problems and conflicts within those agencies. The power of the cabinet comes from two sources: firstly, from the prescribed powers in the constitution, and secondly, from other organic laws and government regulations.

The administration of government policies is in the hands of the various executive ministries. The heads of the ministries; both elected and unelected officials, appointed by the Prime Minister, form a cabinet to determine government decisions. There are 20 ministries including the Office of Prime Minister. The Office of the Prime Minister is a central body which is largely concerned with formulating national policies, and supporting the Prime Minister. Some of its primary subdivisions are the Budget Bureau, the National Security Council, the Juridical Council, the National Economic and Social Development Board, the Board of Investment, the Civil Service Commission and several other organisations vital to the formulation of national policies. The other 19 ministries consist of the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Industry, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, Ministry of National Resources and Environment, Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, Ministry of Energy, and Ministry of Tourism and Sports. In addition, these ministries are divided into departments and offices according to functional areas of operation.

Smaller cabinet committees have been set up to help screen proposals from the various ministries before submission to the full cabinet. This process enables the government to ensure that no incompatible policies are made. The committees may also be assigned by the Prime Minister to thoroughly examine the merits of each project or policy for the
cabinet so that the latter will not have to attend to details before deciding on proposals, thus streamlining its work. Painter (2004) has described the Thai cabinet as a ‘highly formalised, legalistic rubber stamp for decisions taken’. However, in more strategic issues involving the allocation of resources, the cabinet also acts as arbitrator.

The Legislature

Thailand has a bicameral National Assembly consisting of the Senate (the upper house) and House of Representatives (the lower house). The National Assembly is empowered to enact new laws and approve emergency decrees, as well as to amend or repeal existing law. It can also control state administration by initiating a vote of no confidence against government ministers. It is empowered to approve certain critical elements of legislation, such as the budget and appropriations, and to oversee nominations to various state organisations. The Speaker of the House is also the President of the National Assembly. A bill may be introduced by a Member of Parliament (MP) provided that he or she has the signatures of 20 fellow MPs. Under the new constitution, these MPs need not come from the same political party. If the bill involves appropriation, it will be sent first to the Prime Minister for consideration. Ordinary bills are submitted to the Parliament President, who then sends them to appropriate committees for consideration. All bills go through a process of three readings. Afterwards, they are sent to the Senate, where they also go through three readings. The Senate has to act within a certain time limit (typically 60 to 90 days). If no action is taken, the bills are considered to be approved. In case of recommendations for change and disagreements, a joint committee composed of members from the two houses will be formed to look into the matters. After the bills have passed through the approved process, the Prime Minister will present them to the king for assent and promulgation (Office of the Council of State, 2005; Malee 2003a; Aphornsuvan, 2000c; Asian Development Bank, 1999).

Under the old constitution, the House of Representatives served as the popularly elected assembly with a membership of 393. Under the new constitution, the size of the House is increased to 500 representatives, out of which 100 are elected on a party list basis and 400 on a single constituency, first-past-the-post basis. Members of Parliament (MPs) must be 25 years old and possess at least a bachelor’s degree. Every province is entitled to at least one representative, and the more populated provinces have additional representatives
The House of Representatives is served by a secretariat, which consists of approximately 20 separate organisations. They include the National Assembly Library, the Research and Legislative Service Centre, the Legal Advisor to the House of Representatives, the Radio Broadcasting Station, and other units that facilitate the operation of parliament such as procurement and public relations. The legislature is relatively well-staffed, with over 1,100 employees under the supervision of the Legislative Bodies Officials Commission. In addition, individual members of parliament are entitled to a staff of five paid for at the public expense (Malee 2003a; Aphornsuvan, 2000c and Asian Development Bank, 1999).

The Senate plays the important role of checking and balancing by reviewing legislation that is advanced by the House of Representatives. As part of a compromise agreement between liberals and conservatives, this function is enhanced under the new constitution. Normally, the Senate is comprised of 200 members elected by people; they are qualified persons possessing knowledge and experience useful to the administration of the state. Membership is for six years from the date of appointment (Office of the Council of State, 2005).

The Judiciary: The Courts and Judicial Issues

The judiciary’s duties are to act as an arbiter in cases between legal parties in accordance with the laws so that peace and justice will be preserved. In addition, the judiciary acts on behalf of the state in maintaining justice in the country, and performs its duties in the name of the king. Independence and freedom from political domination are vital to the courts.

The Thai judiciary is made up of three tiers of courts: a Supreme Court, a Court of Appeal, and a series of lower courts usually referred to as Courts of First Instance. The Supreme Court is the final court of appeal in all criminal and civil cases. There are eight Courts of First Instance, whose jurisdiction is mixed. Some specialise in a particular field of law, such as bankruptcy or labour, whereas others deal with a wide range of matters.
within a particular geographic area (Aphornsuvan, 2000d; Asian Development Bank, 1999).

Other important legal institutions are the Ministry of Justice, the Council of State, the Law Reform Commission and the Attorney General’s Office. The Ministry of Justice is responsible for all matters pertaining to the courts, including the enforcement of judgments. The Ministry of Justice does not play a direct role in the appointment of judges, which is carried out by the Judicial Commission. The drafting of legislation and provision of legal advice to the government is the responsibility of the Council of State, while government litigation is handled by the Attorney General’s Office which is directly under the Prime Minister’s Office.

The Public Service

For Thailand, Malee (2003a) defines the ‘Public Service’ as specifically referring to both civilians and military bureaucracies characterised by a traditional organisational pattern of ministries and departments. The foundation of the modern Thai Civil Service system was laid down a century ago by King Chulalongkorn, Rama V. Modelled on the British and French civil services, the old ‘medieval bureaucracy’ was transformed into a professional civil service characterised by specialised ministries and departments where administrative powers were highly centralised, and hierarchies were complex. Civil servants served the king, a tradition that continues to today. Thai civil servants still regard themselves as servants and guardians of the state rather than of the government of the day (Malee, 2003a).

The public service plays an important role in carrying out governmental policies by providing basic functions for the government, ranging from economic planning and allocation of resources to development of infrastructure and delivery of services. Certain public agencies focus on policy formation and scrutiny, especially those responsible for economic policies and implementation like the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB), the Bank of Thailand, and the Bureau of Budget. Others, while having policy functions, are also responsible for delivering services to the Thai population.
Levels of Administration in the Civil Service

Thailand is a unitary state and the Thai administrative system, which is structured by legislation, is highly centralised. Most administrative powers are concentrated in central government. Central administration includes ministries, departments and other central coordinating agencies. Ministries are headed by ministers and deputy ministers who may or may not be politicians. The operations of ministries are overseen by appointed permanent secretaries or other senior bureaucrats with the same rank. Ministries are normally subdivided into departments, which are legal entities, whose powerful chiefs are ‘director generals’. While permanent secretaries have broad oversight responsibilities and normally co-ordinate departments, it is the director generals who are legally and constitutionally responsible for carrying out departmental mandates, exercising departmental jurisdiction and are accountable to their political masters, ministers, the cabinet and parliament. Both permanent secretaries and director generals are in the senior bureaucratic cadre, the Senior Executive Service (SES). Departments are normally further subdivided into divisions and sections headed by division managers and section heads who are middle management in bureaucratic rank. In short, the Thai Civil Service has strong departmentalism (Sarangnitorn, 1998).

Below the central level, the administrative system comprises two other levels: provincial and local. A province is comprised of districts and sub-districts and below them townships. Provinces are headed by provincial governors assisted by one or two deputy governors and an assistant governor. Provincial governors normally are appointed by the cabinet. Although governors are at the top of provincial administration, their roles deal mainly with coordinating various ministries and departments located in provincial areas. They do not have full and direct authority over the functional and personnel management of officials belonging to departments other than the Ministry of Interior. Districts and sub-districts are managed by district chief officers who are assisted by district officers. All provincial and district officers are appointed, and careers are centrally managed by the powerful Ministry of Interior (Sarangnitorn, 1998).

The third level of state administration is local administration. It consists of various levels of self-governing bodies including Provincial Administrative Organisations, municipalities, sanitary districts, and Sub-District Administrative Organisations.
Although these local administrations are elected, they rely heavily on the Department of Local Administration in the Ministry of Interior for finance since the revenue they can raise locally is small. Hence the Ministry of Interior retains its influence over the forms, structure and management of these local bodies.

Within these sub-national levels of administration power there is also central government presence. Line ministries have their own officials carrying out their responsibilities in provinces and at local level. These officials are outside the control of provincial governors. It has been alleged that the current problems of the public service stem from over-centralisation leading to poor coordination and functional overlap, particularly at the sub-national level, lagging productivity, antiquated work processes that allow for too much delay and discretion in implementing decision (Sarangnitorn, 1998).

Public Sector Reform during the Chuan Regime (1997 – 2000)

In late 1997, Chuan Leekpai became Prime Minister. In response to the Asian Financial Crisis, his coalition government aimed at improving the quality of civil servants’ work, with an emphasis on results, quality, honesty, public-mindedness; preventing and eliminating corruption and malfeasance in civil service and political circles by establishing a National Counter-Corruption Commission (Rangsiyogrit, 2003). Moreover Chuan’s government adjusted the administrative structures of government agencies to enhance preparedness and efficient cooperation among personnel as well as to expedite legislation to decentralise administrative authority to local communities. Furthermore, the government delineated the duties and responsibilities between the central authority and local administrative bodies, and increased the proportion of tax revenues allocated to local communities (Siroros, 1999).

This crisis-driven reform program reflected the belief that the crisis was caused in part by very serious weaknesses in the public sector. Thus, in 1998, the Prime Minister set up the Public Sector Reform Commission to implement the public sector reform plan. This commission was chaired by the Prime Minister, with a Deputy Prime Minister as Deputy Chairman. In 1999, the Civil Service Commission launched a public reform plan, aimed at reducing inefficiency and cutting the overall size of the Thai public sector. The plan
focused on creating a smaller more efficient public service. Moreover, in response to the Asian Financial Crisis, the government believed that it needed to implement fundamental reforms along the lines of New Public Management (NPM) which focused, among other things, on measurable outputs and outcomes, transparency and responsiveness to the needs of the public. These ideas were promoted by a combination of politicians, academics and bureaucrats. The government saw New Zealand as an ideal country, and has been trying to emulate their NPM model, although the policy transfer was only partial. The Thai cabinet approved a management reform plan proposed by the Commission to transform public administration in Thailand to a results-based model in line with NPM concepts. The government also introduced a Public Sector Reform Master Plan which attempted to reform five major areas consisting of roles and functions, budget, personnel, law and culture (OCSC, 2000).

The Public Sector Reform Master Plan 1999

The cabinet emphasised five dimensions in the public sector reform plan (Office of the Public Service Reform Committee, 2000).

1. Revision of the Role, Functions and Management of the Public Sector

Organisational structure reform was aimed to ensure that public sector organisations would become more responsive, flexible and efficient. The major actions that the government undertook were as follows. Firstly, public functions were re-grouped. An attempt was made to group the ministries and departments and rationalise their activities to be better aligned with the strategic goals of the government. Secondly, the Office of Civil Service Commission (OCSC) in cooperation with various ministries classified ministries into three groups: ministries concerned with economic matters, ministries concerned with social matters, and ministries concerned with administration, policy and monitoring. These actions aimed to restructure the entire bureaucratic apparatus by linking ministries or agencies with related roles and function. Thirdly, OCSC developed a standard for performance measurement in connection with results which was somewhat similar to the ISO system. This standard was known as the Thailand International Public Service Standard Management and Outcomes System (PSO). Fourthly, the OCSC had
already introduced an outcome-oriented management method known as Results Based Management (RBM), which was endorsed by the cabinet in 1999 (OCSC, 2001b).

2. Revision of the Personnel Management System

A human resource management system was also to be developed in accordance with the NPM approach, which assumes small and compact organisations with highly qualified, disciplined and accountable staff. A downsizing program was introduced into the public sector. In 1998, a policy providing for elimination of 80 percent of the positions vacated by retirement was passed. In 1999, this was supported by an early retirement policy for person with 25 years experience or over the age of 50. A Senior Executive Service (SES) was established with a separate human resource management system for senior officer with the aim of developing ethical, accountable, and qualified leaders. SES was created for positions at level 9 which is one step below director general (head of department), with the intention of extending SES to higher levels (OCSC, 2001b).

3. Revision of Law and Legal System

Measures were taken to make the processes and methods for drafting laws more supportive of effective public management. Laws and regulations must be updated through; firstly, improving the existing and currently enforced laws so they are easy to interpret, uncomplicated, and far-sighted enough to encompass NPM; secondly, revising and improving the procedures for enacting laws and regulations for greater speed and efficiency, and including up-to-date drafting and monitoring procedures that are of an international standard; and thirdly, surveying public opinion on rules and regulations that may affect them, especially those related to public contact with government agencies (OCSC, 2001b).

4. Reform of Public Service Culture and Values

To promote better ethics in the public sector, the OCSC designed a model curriculum to promote ethical standards and conducted three training courses based on that curriculum, in which 2,100 officials participated. The government initiated a program aimed at improving governance practices and principles across the government called the Regulation of the Office of the Prime Minister on Good Governance. Five core elements
of good governance were identified, including the rule of law, integrity, transparency, accountability and value for money. Moreover, the OCSC established the Ethics Promotion Information Centre in September 1999 as a resource centre for study, research, and recommendation on ethical policies for the civil service with activities to be undertaken through networking with all ministries. The OCSC also developed a set of ethical practices for all government officials. There were five practices which were: upholding and supporting ethical actions, conducting oneself with integrity and accountability, being transparent, maintaining impartiality, and focusing on achieving results. These five practices for government officials were identified through an opinion survey of central and provincial government officials as well as a public forum attended by representatives from government officials, experts, academics, press and media, and the general public organised on 21 July 2000. Fifthly, the OCSC has conducted the Clean, Open, and Transparent Thai plan. This plan aimed at raising public awareness and consciousness among all segments of Thai society. For example, the OCSC has encouraged people to provide their comments to government. Moreover, each government agency has been required to make its annual report available to the public (OCSC, 2001b).

5. Finance and Budget Reform

In 1998, the cabinet confirmed that the budget processes were to be reformed in a manner that supported a performance-based approach moving from input control to outputs and other features that promoted better performance in public agencies. The government aimed to develop a decentralised budget system in pilot agencies to strengthen their budget management, and a reporting system which compares performance to plans. The Bureau of the Budget and the Department of Comptroller General are to allow flexibility of financial management within these departments. However, the authority is to be based on the standards of monetary control and the reporting system of the department’s performance. The conditions will be specified in a contract of resource allocation between the departments and the Budget Bureau (OCSC, 2001b).
Public Sector Reform during the Thaksin Regime

On 6 January 2001, the first general election under the 1997 Constitution, known as the People’s Constitution, was held. The Thai Rak Thai (Thais Love Thais) Party, established in 1999 by Dr. Thaksin Shinawatra, a police officer turned business tycoon, received an overwhelming victory, with a total of 248 seats in the parliament. On 9 February 2001, Dr. Thaksin was appointed by His Majesty the King as Thailand’s 23rd Prime Minister. He led a coalition government comprised of his Thai Rak Thai Party, the Chart Thai Party and the New Aspiration Party.

Even though the Thai public sector had undergone incremental reforms by previous governments, Thaksin’s newly-formed government intensified those reforms since his government claimed that it was necessary for the Thai public sector to move towards NPM in order to improve efficiency and increase performance. Moreover, Thaksin’s government chose the NPM concept because it was seen to be the cutting edge of reform paradigms, as it was used in leading democratic capitalist countries such as the United States of America, United Kingdom and Australia. Continuation of public sector reform under the Thaksin government was explicitly far from the reforms of the Chuan government. The champions of the reform were mostly the newer members of parliament.

The government then announced to the parliament policies for the reform of structures, processes, the philosophy and operations of government administration, including major initiatives in areas of public administration, decentralisation to local government, budget reform, and policies to eradicate corruption. The government also indicated its intention to encourage local people in the community, civil society and private organisations to participate in local administration.

Although the government publicly announced reform policies to improve the efficiency and performance of the public sector, there were other reasons for introducing NPM which were left behind the scenes. For example, Thaksin’s government tried to get the bureaucracy under control, as well as control over the public (M. Prasert, personal communication, 4 Feb, 2007). Moreover, NPM could also help Thaksin to centralise his authority (P. Nartnisa, personal communication, 15 Jan, 2007). Painter (2006) noted that
‘Radical NPM style administrative reform in the late twentieth century occurred most often in states where the bureaucracy was clearly subservient to the political executives’. NPM ideas were being implemented in the Thai public sector in order to redistribute the bureaucratic power in favour of the political executives, especially the prime minister and his political circle (Painter, 2006). To illustrate the point, one obvious interpretation would be that Thaksin tried to by-pass government bureaucracy in maintaining personal contact with the masses especially in rural areas who had voted him into office. This strategy enhanced his popularity and contributed to his project of gaining ascendancy over the bureaucratic arms of government. Moreover, Thaksin increased his power by directly connecting with voters via the media, particularly through his weekly radio program ‘Prime Minister Talks to the People’ (R. Veera, personal communication, 19 Feb, 2007).

The First Step of the Public Sector Reform in the Current Government

In mid-2001, the OCSC proposed a Public Sector Management Reform Plan to the Public Sector Reform Committee, the main objective being restructuring of roles and functions of government. Following this, three high level workshops were held involving the Prime Minister, senior ministers, officials and invited experts so as to develop the new government’s reform plans. These workshops developed plans for comprehensive restructuring of the roles and functions of ministries, reform of management methods to promote greater achievement of results, decentralisation and local government administrative reform, a new budget system to support policy goals and better performance, compensation changes, clarification of the distinction between professional civil servants and political advisers and appointees, and improved administrative support for the cabinet and the Prime Minister (OCSC, 2001c).

The first concrete step, as a result of these initiatives, was a comprehensive restructuring of the whole of the central government administration. The number of ministries was increased from thirteen (including Office of the Prime Minister) to twenty (see Figure 4.1). Offices and departments in each ministry which had similar objectives were grouped together as clusters to help them to work together in each strategic area, eliminating overlaps and clarifying the functions of policy development, operations and national
security. These new arrangements were authorised by the Ministerial Restructuring Act in 2002 and were all implemented simultaneously in November that year.

**Figure 4.1: New Arrangement of Ministries**

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<td>13. Ministry of Public Health</td>
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<td>13. Ministry of Public Health</td>
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<td>14. Ministry of Science and Technology</td>
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<td>15. Ministry of Culture</td>
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<td>16. Ministry of Social Development and Human Security</td>
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<td>17. Ministry of National Resources and Environment</td>
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<td>18. Ministry of Information and Communication</td>
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<td>19. Ministry of Energy</td>
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<td>20. Ministry of Tourism and Sports</td>
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At the same time the Public Administration Act (year?) was passed. It authorised the formation of ‘clusters’ of departments within ministries. Each cluster would normally be headed by a deputy permanent secretary. The idea was to facilitate co-ordination in the pursuit of broader strategic objectives and to break down vertical silos. By 2003, eleven ministerial-level clusters had been formed, but the approach experienced some difficulties in clarifying responsibilities, duties and accountabilities in the cluster management (OPDC, 2003).

The Public Administration Act also required each minister to formulate policies and service delivery targets in accordance with cabinet policies. This arrangement was intended to be supported by the budget reform under which performance accountability documents (Public Service Agreements) will be developed for the policy objectives of ministers and for service delivery by the departments (Service Delivery Agreements).

The Public Administration Act also established the Public Sector Development Commission. This is appointed by the cabinet and consists of the Prime Minister or Deputy as chair, another minister as vice chair, one commissioner as a delegate of local government, a maximum of 10 commissioners appointed by the cabinet on the basis of expertise. There are three full time commissioners, 11 standing subcommittees and 12 ad hoc committees to address particular areas of work. The Public Sector Development Commission has no authority to make decisions about public sector reform policy. Its function is to advise the cabinet on all aspects of public sector reform, and to monitor and report on progress (OPDC, 2003).

The Commission is supported by the Office of the Public Sector Development Commission (OPDC) whose Secretary General is also a member of the Commission. The OPDC performs administrative and secretarial work in support of the Public Sector Development Commission relating to public sector development and other government duties covering study, research, monitoring and evaluation of ministry and department operations, dissemination of data and knowledge, organisation of training programs, reporting of data and results as well as recommending strategic plans and other actions. The OPDC aims to create cooperative networks with other organisations and institutions in Thailand at all levels, performing only necessary tasks. In addition, the Office will seek to collaborate with organisations and institutions both inside and outside the country to
achieve sustainable and continuous public sector development. The OPDC conducts its functions through eight groups internally: Monitoring and Evaluation, Dissemination and Public Participation, Public Sector Restructuring, Regional Administration Development, Legal Bureau, Office of Secretary General, Research and Development, Institute for Promotion of Good Governance (OPDC, 2003).

In a message to the civil service in April 2003, the Prime Minister indicated that the public sector development program would continue for many years. These changes in 2002 were about structures but he saw the next agenda as transforming the way business is done. He expressed an urgent need to improve services using technology and to raise public administration performance to international standards in accordance with the principles of ‘Good Governance’ and the frameworks to be developed by the OPDC.

**Public Sector Reform Strategic Plan 2003-2008**

In 2003, the cabinet approved a strategic plan for the next steps in public sector development over the period 2003-2008 (OPDC, 2003), which is based on implementing principles contained in the Royal Decree on Good Governance (see Appendix 1). Its objectives are better quality services, ‘right size bureaucracy’, increased capability and performance to international standards, and support for democratic governance. There are the seven strategies which are listed below:

1. **Streamline and redesign work processes**

In the past, Thai public administration has focused on inputs and work processes placing emphasis on adherence to rules and regulations. As a result of this emphasis, the government was seen to be taking too much time to complete each project. The new focus will be more on incorporating concepts of good governance into the work processes in response to the increasing demand for higher standards of service by the public. In order to effect this change, it is necessary for the government to firstly ensure systematic implementation of results-based management systems. Then it has to modernise the internal control systems of government agencies, while simultaneously encouraging open competition to reduce public monopoly. Finally, it will have to create a one-stop service approach to the provision of government services. In relation to this reform, reductions in
time taken for standard work processes are to be made in accordance with cabinet directives. In May of 2003, the cabinet approved a work process reduction scheme proposed by the Public Sector Reform Committee, aimed at reducing work process time by 30 – 50 percent before October 2003. By this target date, 49 percent of government agencies had successfully reduced their work process time by 30 – 50 percent in accordance with the Cabinet Resolution, and 29 percent had reduced their work process time by more than 50 percent (OPDC, 2003).

2. Restructure public organisations

In the past, Thai public management did not correspond to the complex nature of the new public management that required structures of organisations to be flexible and highly capable. Therefore, in order to create integration of all public service agencies, the government saw a need to improve intergovernmental coordination at all levels. Moreover, the government also recognised the importance of appropriate internal organisation of public agencies as well as emphasising cooperative networks. In relation to these aims, The Government Restructuring Bill of 2002 and the State Administration Bill of 2002 were submitted to the Parliament and agreed upon in principle on 10 April and 20 April 2002. Under these bills, a new government structure was proposed as mentioned earlier (OPDC, 2003).

3. Revamp financial and budgetary systems

Unfocused direction of resource allocation plans and principles was seen to slow the budgetary process and create unnecessary complexity. In addition to the revision of the budgetary procedures to follow the general principles of NPM by introducing private sector techniques, there was also seen to be a need for information systems to meet international standards. The overall aim was to give greater efficiency in resource utilisation. Measures were also proposed to facilitate government agencies to operate on a partially commercial basis. Alternative approaches to fee collection for services were to be analysed. The setting of monthly or quarterly expenditures, as well as balance sheets and financial reports were also to be examined, and finally government agencies were promised that they would be able to retain cost saving for future organisational development (OPDC, 2003).
4. Redesign the human resource management system and compensation schemes

The government believes that strict adherence to a standardised human resource management system that lacks appropriate evaluation, motivation and reward mechanisms inhibits the recruitment and retention of highly competent officials possessing the desired attitudes and behaviours. Removing ineffective public employees will open opportunities to bring in new talents from outside and enable competent younger people to move up the ladder more quickly. The government therefore aimed to revise the personnel and classification systems to promote the productivity of public employees, to increase effectiveness of the training centre, to develop mechanisms to maintain and preserve the merit system, and to have appropriate number of public employees. In relation to the redesign of the human resource management and compensation system, the OCSC implemented reform initiatives by revising the position classifications in the civil service. Moreover, alongside the SES system there was to be a ‘special track’ which will create performance-based employment on contract to cover initially perhaps 25 percent of the top positions in central and provincial government administration. This arrangement will involve four-year employment contracts with a portion of total remuneration allocated for performance on an annual basis. There will be competition for positions and no age-based seniority preference. Discussion of the proposal indicates that this system could go down to level 8 (two levels below director general) and that there will be lateral entry at that level. A young executive program is also under consideration (which is somewhat similar to the French system). It would be examination-based, and successful graduates would enter the service at the level of deputy director general. Incentives are being created both at the organisational and individual levels to encourage government bodies to improve their services for the benefit of the public (OPDC, 2003).

5. Inculcate a new mindset, work culture and values:

Corruption and unethical practices, which prevail in the Thai public sector, are significant problems which hinder NPM style reforms. Transforming mindsets and creating a new organisational culture and norms cannot be achieved through orders and education alone. Thus, the government proposed to link learning from experience with an emphasis on the learner at the centre of the learning process. This, it hopes will bring about a significant
change in attitude. In pursuing the objective of inculcating a new work culture, the government has taken several initiatives: establishing a self-learning model for senior executives, creating an environment favourable to the learning process of the target group, and assisting each government agency in developing statements for creativity, values, merits and ethical standards. In relation to the culture and values reform, a Sub-Committee on Promoting a Shift in Mindset and Values has been set up to take on the responsibility of instilling in public personnel the motivation and desire to work for the benefit of the people. The sub-committee has promoted this by ensuring that the public sector development groups at all levels set the achievement as a key performance indicator in evaluating the organisation’s performance (OPDC, 2003).

6. Modernise government operations

The government believes that fostering an environment that induces and welcomes continuous change for greater efficiency and effectiveness can be accomplished by employing modern management tools and techniques. E-Government, operating in the best interest of the public, will better respond to the rising expectations and more sophisticated demands of the public. The government intends to facilitate the implementation of e-Government by revising laws and regulations that currently prevent the implementation of e-Government practices, and linking it to the Prime Minister’s Operation Centre and Ministerial Operation Centre. In relation to the modernisation of government operations, a Sub-commission on e-Government has been set up to promote the use of information and communications technology throughout the public service. Public sector reform policy promotes the use of technologically advanced tools in government agencies. The government envisages the incorporation of more and improved information technology in its operations as one key to providing better services to the public and to improve its own service functions. Many government agencies have introduced remote access services to their customers, for example, business registration services, electronic data interchange in customs services, and income tax return filing services (OPDC, 2003).
7. **Encourage public participation**

The government judges the old traditions and work methods of the patronage system are incompatible with changes in the political climate and the intent of the Thai Constitution. Thus, in order to open the public sector to greater democratisation, the government aims: to conduct public surveys to gauge public opinion and obtain feedback from citizens, to provide opportunities for citizen volunteers to work with public employees, and lastly to ensure accountability and transparency of operations by providing information via the website (OPDC, 2003).

**Conclusion**

The chapter provides information regarding public sector reform in Thailand since the Asian Financial Crisis hit the country in 1997 and also set out the structure of government in the country. A combination of the Asian Financial Crisis and the new constitution in 1997 provided the impetus for far-reaching public administration reform as compared to incremental and often ineffectual public administration reform before that time. The Asian Financial Crisis demanded an urgent and radical response and provided an opportunity for the Thai government to define new strategies in order to reform the public sector. Provision in the new 1997 constitution relating to the public sector and governance gave additional impetus to public administration reform. The chapter also reviews the structure of the Thai government in order to illustrate how the government is organised so that the context of reform can be better understood. The chapter also sets out the public sector reform master plan introduced by the Chuan’s government and the continuation of far-reaching public sector reform by Thaksin’s government, a new public sector reform strategic plan for 2003-2008. This sets the stage for examination of the implementation of the reforms in a ministry of the Thai government.
Chapter 5

Methodology and Background of the Case Study

Introduction

This chapter aims to provide the research methodology used in the thesis and the background of the case study. The chapter consists of two sections. The first section sets out and explains the methodological approach adopted in the thesis. It explains why the case has been selected, and also discusses why instrumental case studies are valuable and are used in this thesis. In addition, sources of data and data collection methods are described. The second section provides general information about the Ministry of Culture, the case study ministry, such as its history and staffing data. Also delineated in this section are the Ministry of Culture’s structure, functions, tasks and budget.

Choosing the Case

The case study enables the researcher to look in detail at the implementation of the recent Thai public sector reforms. By focusing on the way the reforms have been implemented in one ministry, the Ministry of Culture, the researcher is able to gain a deeper understanding of the reform processes, especially whether they belong to the NPM paradigm, whether they are really effective, and whether implementation actually follows the prescriptions of the government’s reform agencies and policies.

This case study focuses on the Ministry of Culture as one case study, but consists of four component dimensions. Each dimension represents one aspect of the overall reform package and is dealt with separately for the Ministry of Culture. The researcher has not attempted to cover all aspects of reform in the case study, but has focused on four critical areas because each of these is considered as a major reform of the Thai public sector, and is claimed by the government as being related to NPM. The first three dimensions are related to organisational restructure and redesign of internal authority, public service culture and values reform, and workforce reduction, while the fourth dimension involves
various other reform initiatives which have been implemented in the ministry. These other reforms are not considered major strategic reform plans of the government, but the Ministry of Culture claims they are related to the NPM reform thrust of the government.

Research Design

The instrumental case study will be the predominant research method used in this thesis. Definitions of the case study are provided quite similarly by various scholars. A typical definition from a dictionary of sociological terms describes a case study as:

a method of studying social phenomena through the analysis of an individual case. The case may be a person, a group, an episode, a process, a community, a society, or any other unit of social life. All data relevant to the case are gathered, and all available data are organised in terms of the case. The case study method gives a unitary character to the data being studied by interrelating a variety of facts to a single case. It also provides an opportunity for the intensive analysis of many specific details that are often overlooked with the other methods (Theodorson and Theodorson, 1969:38).

Another complementary definition of the case study is provided by Creswell (2003) who notes that a case study is an exploration of a bound system or a case over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context.

Some authors differentiate between types of case study. For example, Stake (1995) identifies three different types: the intrinsic case study, the instrumental case study, and the collective case study. The intrinsic case study is undertaken when a researcher wants better understanding of a particular case. The instrumental case study is a particular case which is examined to provide insight into an issue or refinement of theory while the collective case study is the methodology of the instrumental study extended to several cases in order to learn more about the phenomenon, population or general condition. With reference to this thesis, the instrumental case study methodology has been adopted by the researcher because the thesis aims to study public sector reform implementation within one organisation, the Ministry of Culture. This organisation is thus treated as a particular case.
The case study method is valuable for this thesis because it has various inherent strengths. Guba and Lincoln (1989) noted that the case study helps researchers to provide detailed analysis which can be called ‘thick description’. This is vital for exploring complex themes or theoretical issues because the case study can potentially explore a wide array of scenarios and situations that are relevant to theoretical discussions.

Another endorsement of the appropriateness of using the case study method is provided by Yin (2003) who notes that this methodology is widely used as a research strategy especially in public administration research because:

as a research endeavor, the case study contributes uniquely to our knowledge of individual, organisational, social, and political phenomena. Not surprisingly, the case study has been a common research strategy in psychology, sociology and political science (Yin, 2003:2)

In relation to possible disadvantages of the case study, some academic commentators such as Guba and Lincoln (1989) raise the question of how researchers can generalise from a single case study. To answer this question, Yin (2003:10) contends that:

Case studies, like experiments, are generalisable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes. In this sense, the case study, like the experiment, does not represent a sample, and in doing a case study, your goal will be to expand and generalise theories (analytic generalisation) and not to enumerate frequencies (statistical generalisation).

This argument applies to this case study of Thai public sector reform. The objective is not to reach some statistical generalisation but to test a theory in a particular instance so that theory can be questioned, confirmed or modified.

A supporting view is provided by Stake (1995) who claims that the case study has no intention to generalise. It is rather to understand the case in its complexity and its entirety, as well as in its context. However, the case study can sometimes produce generalisable results as Punch (2005:154) has argued:

There are two main ways that a case study can produce generalisable results. Both depend on the purpose of the case study, and especially on the way its data are analysed. The first is by conceptualising, the second is by developing propositions. In both instances, the findings from a case study can be put forward as being potentially applicable to other cases.
In short, the instrumental case study method is employed in this thesis in order to examine the implementation of reforms in the Thai public sector and whether these actions conform to the NPM paradigm being promoted by the Thai government and its reform agencies. The ‘thick description’ of a case study, the Ministry of Culture, will facilitate analytic generalisation concerning the relationship between stated intentions and empirical reality in the Thai public service.

In relation to this thesis, the case study chapters are researched and written from an explicitly thematic perspective. The themes which have been adopted are those prescribed by the Government of Thailand for its public administration reform program. Each of the case study chapters is based on one of the government-prescribed themes and each theme involves a number of reform activities.

Data

The historical data and contemporary data used in this case study consist mainly of archival materials from the Thai civil service, Thai newspaper reports and interviews with key personnel. The semi-structured interview questions are listed in Appendixes 2 and 3. Archival materials are an important source of information because they consist of many official documents such as minutes of meetings of relevant reform committees, reform proposals, cabinet submissions, internal memos, reports, and research papers. They reveal the development of government thinking on public sector reform and give insight into the rationale and politics behind particular actions (Malee, 2003a). Some archival materials were sourced outside of government, notably in newspapers. In addition, the databases of several newspapers were searched for reports on civil service reform issues. Such newspaper reports not only provide a chronology of events but also present critical perspectives. Interviews with key personnel were essential valuable complements to the archival material and comprise the core of the case study. The interviews record the perceptions of civil servants on the reforms being implemented in their organisations. In this thesis the key personnel are defined as those closely involved with or having stake in each reform dimension. The interviewees comprise two groups. The first group of interviewees is responsible for implementing the reforms, and it consists of officials in various positions in the Ministry of Culture. The second group of interviewees is
responsible for initiating, transmitting and monitoring the reforms. These respondents are officials working in the Office of Civil Service Commission (OCSC) and in the Office of Public Development Commission (OPDC).

The first group of interviewees consists of different levels of officials classified in this study as senior level, middle level, and junior level. The senior level officials are particularly important for the case study because they are highly educated and knowledgeable in terms of the public sector management reforms. They are well trained by the government in the matter of reform because they have attended a number of seminars and workshops regarding the reform. Moreover, they have directly received the management reform plans and policies from the government, the OCSC and the OPDC. They are responsible for interpreting government guidelines and transforming them into implementation plans. They are the directors of reform within the ministry. The middle level consists of officials who have worked as government officials for around ten years or more, and thus have substantial experience working in the public sector. Their views are interesting because they might provide opinions which are different from senior officials’ views. Lower level officials are also important for the case study. Some of them were recently recruited to the public sector, and many of them have been working in the public sector for less than five years. By examining views from the three different levels of officials, the researcher can provide a cross-section of the Ministry of Culture to expose any systemic differences of opinion between the different levels.

The second group of participants are officials who work for the OCSC and the OPDC. This second group is important to the case study because they act as policy makers and policy planners. While they do not formally make policy decisions, they are extremely influential in determining the content and orientation of public sector reform. They are also responsible for monitoring the reform implementation. Most of the second group are senior and middle level officials of the OCSC and the OPDC who are either advisors for public sector reform or human resource management analysts. It can be anticipated that the respondents in the second group may have different views from the first group since the second group created the reform policies. Thus, their views will most likely exhibit strong support for the public sector reform. The researcher decided to interview the key members of the OCSC and the OPDC because they play a major role in planning the reform and in monitoring the policy implementation. They provide the guidelines and
model which, when implemented, should facilitate the transformation of Thai public administration.

The Ministry of Culture has been chosen as a case study for this thesis. It is one of the new ministries which was established in October 2002 as a result of the Act on the Reformation of Ministries and Departments. Many departments of the ministry come from the Ministry of Education, while other departments have been newly established. The Ministry of Culture has an appropriate size for study (not too big), and the structure of the ministry is relatively simple. In addition, the researcher had good access to information in this ministry because of his good relationship with some of its senior officials. Such ease of access greatly facilitated the research, and made it both easier and more productive than if the researcher had been unknown to senior personnel. Finally, since all governmental policies must be strictly implemented by every government agency alike, the management reform implementation in the Ministry of Culture can be regarded as an example whose results may be replicated across other Thai government agencies. However, additional studies would be necessary to confirm this.

Regarding the participants in the case study, a total of 28 individuals from the Ministry of Culture and five individuals from the OCSC and the OPDC were interviewed after selection through purposive sampling. Semi-structured interviews were used because they encourage a wide-range of responses, producing ‘thick descriptions’, allowing exploration in depth and fuller discussion of the reform. Civil service experience of the researcher made him aware that in self-completing structured interview questionnaires civil servants tend to respond not as individuals but as representatives of their organisation, giving the organisation’s view even though they might personally disagree with it. Semi-structured interviews suffer much less from this problem as they put interviewees more at ease and enable them to talk at length and range widely across topics. This format has enabled the researcher to pursue issues in greater depth and bring out the ‘real’ issues and opinions rather than the ‘official’ ones. However, with the semi-structured interview it is important for the researcher to put the interviewees at ease so that they answer openly and confidently.
In order to encourage participation as well as honest and insightful responses on what may be sensitive issues, confidentiality was assured to the interviewees. The researcher promised not to reveal their personal information. In this way the researcher could obtain valuable information and opinions that might not otherwise have been revealed. Interviews were usually recorded but when anonymity was offered written notes were made by the author. A number of the key personnel interviewed are quoted anonymously.

While conducting fieldwork at the Ministry of Culture, the OCSC and the OPDC, the researcher spent considerable time working at those places. As a result, it can be said that the participant observation method was also employed in this thesis. The researcher played important roles of both participant and observer of the situation. Punch (2005:183) contends that:

> Participant observation methodology is prolonged immersion in the life of a group, community or organisation in order to discern people’s habits and thoughts as well as to decipher the social structure that binds them together.

The participant observation method provided a good opportunity for the researcher to interact with many officials who had first-hand experience of or had knowledge about the NPM and public sector management reform. Supplementary information was collected from them and used to both complement and verify material from archives and interviews, and is referred to as ‘personal communication’.
The Case Study: Ministry of Culture

Historical Overview

Thailand has a long history of rich cultural heritage in many aspects such as religion, language, art, handicraft, dancing, music and tradition. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Thai government realised the importance of this culture, and became involved in its promotion, maintenance and administration. Matters relating to the nation’s culture have since been under the care of governmental organisations (Ministry of Culture, 2003). A Division of Culture was first established by the government in 1942 in order to handle cultural affairs. It was expanded, and upgraded to be the National Culture Council in the same year. During the 1940s, responsibility of the government in the field of cultural affairs rapidly increased. Thus, in 1952, the government decided to establish the Ministry of Culture by upgrading the National Culture Council to this higher status. At that time, Field Marshal P. Pibulsongkram, the Prime Minister, served as the Minister of Culture. However, during the government of General Sarit Tanarat in 1957, economic development was the policy focus and cultural matters were largely disregarded. As a result, the Ministry of Culture was abolished in 1958, under the Act on the Reformation of Government Ministries and Departments. According to the Act, cultural matters were subsumed under the Ministry of Education because culture was judged to be an aspect of education. The government believed that it was not necessary to separate cultural affairs from educational affairs because they were closely related (Ministry of Culture, 2003). This view prevailed through successive Thai governments until the beginning of the 21st century.

On 2 October 2002 under Prime Minister Thaksin’s government, the Ministry of Culture was re-established in accordance with the Act on the Reformation of Ministries and Departments 2002. Several factors were considered as catalysts of the ministry’s re-establishment. Firstly, the government found that the Ministry of Education focused on educational matter and paid inadequate attention to cultural matters. Overriding concerns with the ministry’s urgent tasks to reform education had led to the relative neglect of cultural matters. Secondly, a number of social problems such as suicide, drug addiction, and undesirable culture change had been increasing. The government argued that
emphasis on aspects of traditional culture could be an antidote. Reinvigorated attention to cultural affairs would help to ameliorate the social problems in Thailand. Thirdly, the Ministry of Culture was re-established in order to fulfil the objectives of the Ninth National Economic and Social Development Plan (2002-2006) proposed by the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB). The plan identified the importance of maintaining culture as an integral part of national development and as one means of improving the quality of life (NESDB, 2005).

**Current Tasks**

The Ministry of Culture now serves as one of the twenty core ministries of the country according to the state agencies reform policy of the government. The Ministry of Culture looks after three major coordinating functions: culture, religion, and art (Ministry of Culture, 2003).

The first task of the Ministry of Culture involves cultural affairs. According to the ministry, culture with Thai identity that can be sustained and exist in harmony with the changing time does not only rely on the Ministry of Culture. It rather relies on every person in the entire nation, regardless of sex, age and social status. The Ministry of Culture depicts itself as a mirror that provides reflections to the people in the country of internal and external changes affecting culture. It also suggests how to cope with such changes. The ministry also aims to maintain, preserve, and hand over existing culture to the people and to incorporate it appropriately with new and foreign culture in ways that keeps Thai culture intact. To achieve this, requires cooperation from people in the society with the activities of the ministry. Moreover, the ministry is responsible for analysing the weak and strong points, benefits and disadvantages, opportunities and signs of danger relating to Thai culture. The ministry aims to enhance Thai culture with desirable characteristics, capable of supporting and encouraging sustainable national development (Ministry of Culture, 2003).

The second task of the Ministry of Culture concerns religious affairs, a task closely linked with the responsibility for culture. The government sees religion as the force holding the minds of people together. It plays a very important role in the promotion of positive cultural values towards a living based on morality and ethics. The Ministry of Culture has
a major role in the provision of counselling, advice and instruction to children and youth on the religious tenets and principles as set out in religious texts. This body of thought is to be applied for everyday use. The guiding idea is that should any difficulties occur in people’s lives, they would be able to draw on religious teachings to address these problems without having to hurt themselves, those close to them, or other people (Ministry of Culture, 2003).

The third task of the Ministry of Culture involves art affairs. The government sees art as a source of knowledge and a heritage handed down from predecessors. It is therefore obligatory for it to be preserved and maintained, ready to be passed on through generations. A wide range of responsibilities covering every type of art are duties of the ministry. Moreover, the ministry aims to promote the creation of contemporary art to add to the wealth of wisdom for future generations (Ministry of Culture, 2003).

Organisational Structure

The Ministry of Culture is divided into seven major structural components (see Figure 5.1) (Ministry of Culture, 2003):

1. **Office of the Minister**

   This office is responsible for coordinating between the Minister of Culture and the officials in the ministry. It deals with tasks such as the preparation of Cabinet submission for the Minister and the coordination of inter-ministerial policies. The Office of the Minister also has responsibility for supporting, and facilitating every task related to the Minister’s activities.

2. **Office of the Permanent Secretary**

   The office serves as the centre of administration in the ministry. Its tasks lie in developing strategies, putting the ministry’s policies into plans, allocating resources, and handling general administrative affairs of the Ministry, to facilitate the achievement of the goals of the ministry.
3. The Department of Religious Affairs

This department has the task of promoting religious affairs in the country by preserving, promoting, supporting and protecting matters relating to Buddhism and other officially approved religions. The department supports and develops knowledge that goes side by side with good values, and promotes good understanding and unity among upholders of all religions. It is also involved in enhancing the application of religious tenets for the upgrading of the quality of life that comes from the demonstration of good values among the Thai people.

4. The Department of the Fine Arts

This department is responsible for the protection, conservation, maintenance, improvement, promotion, creation, dissemination of information, organisation of study, research, development, and passing on of art and cultural heritage of the country in order to preserve national values and identity leading to the sustainable development of Thai society and national security.

5. Office of the National Culture Commission

The commission is entrusted with the task of promoting and preserving Thai culture through means such as research, rehabilitation, development, dissemination of information, and support to government agencies, non-government organisations and the public engaged in cultural works. The office also handles affairs relating to cultural exchange.

6. Office of the Contemporary Arts and Culture

This office has the task to promote, support and disseminate information to enhance the creative activities in contemporary art in order to enrich and develop Thai traditional knowledge and its application in society today.
7. **Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre (Autonomous Public Organisation).**

The Autonomous Public Organisation is a public sector arrangement established by *the Royal Act of Autonomous Public Organisation 1999* to be responsible for public services that the private sector does not have the ability to maintain such as educational services and activities of cultural significance. The Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre has the task of implementing activities in academic studies and research in anthropology, and providing technical services by acting as the agency of learning, and networking for information on anthropology in Thailand and Southeast Asia. The centre aims at creating innovative knowledge from its research and academic staff and acting as the leading organisation for providing academic knowledge on anthropology nationally and internationally.
Figure 5.1

Organisational Structure of the Minister of Culture

1. Central Administration Office
   - Personal Administrative Group
   - Permanent Secretary Administrative Group
   - Finance and Supply Group
   - Legal Group
2. External Relation Division
3. Inspection and Evaluation Division
4. Information and Communication Technology Centre
5. Policy and Strategy Office
   - Policy and Planning Group
   - Cultural Surveillance Group
   - Public Relations Group

1. Office of the Secretary
2. Office of Performing Arts
3. Office of Archaeology
4. Office of National Museums
5. Office of Literature and History
6. Office of Architecture and Traditional Fine Arts
7. National Archives
8. National Library of Thailand
9. Institute of Fine Arts Development

1. Office of the Secretary
2. Religious Services Division
3. Moral and Ethical Development Office

1. Office of the Secretary
2. Cultural Promotion Fund Division
3. Institute of Cultural Education
   - Cultural Research and Development Section
   - Thai Life Exhibition Promotion Section
   - The Supreme Artist Hall
   - Thailand Cultural Centre
4. Cultural Promotion and Dissemination Office

Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre (Autonomous Public Organisation)

1. General Administration Office
2. Research and Support Office
3. Information Office

Each of the seven organisations comprising the Ministry of Culture works independently under the authority of a Director-General. However, the seven organisations are not autonomous. The Director-General of each organisation has limited freedom to make decision. Every project from each organisation must be monitored and approved by the Permanent Secretary, and the Minister of Culture respectively. Thus, the organisational structure of the Ministry still could be considered as a hierarchical system.

These seven organisations are located in Bangkok and are considered as central area organisations of the Ministry of Culture. The Office of the Minister, the Office of the Permanent Secretary, and the Office of the Contemporary Arts and Culture, are housed in one ministry building. However, the Department of Religious Affairs, the Department of the Fine Arts, the Office of the National Culture Commission, and the Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre, are each located in different buildings.

Ministry of Culture Personnel

There are 5,094 officials working in the Ministry of Culture (See table 5.1). There are 3,064 of them (60.15 percent) working in various departments located in Bangkok, the capital city, and 2030 officials (39.85 percent) are working in offices of culture in provinces as shown in the Table 5.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Number of ministry officials</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Centre</td>
<td>3,064</td>
<td>60.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provinces</td>
<td>2,030</td>
<td>39.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,094</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of distribution of officials between departments, 50 percent (2,594 persons) are employed by the Department of the Fine Arts (see Table 5.2). This is by far the largest department in terms of staff numbers, and results from nine offices being aligned under the administration of the department. There are 221 officials (4.34 percent) in the Office of the National Culture Commission. Meanwhile, 120 officials (2.36 percent) are working in the Office of the Permanent Secretary. Seventy-three (1.44 percent), 56 (1.10 percent), and 37 (0.73 percent) officials are employed by the Religious Affairs Department, the Office of the Contemporary Art and Culture, and the Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre respectively. Only 8 officials (0.16 percent) work in the Office of the Minister.

Table 5.2: Distribution of Officials in the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work places</th>
<th>Number of Positions</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office of the Minister</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of the Permanent Secretary (Central office)</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>2.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other offices around the country (Provincial Area)</td>
<td>2,030</td>
<td>40.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Department of Religious Affairs</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Department of the Fine Arts</td>
<td>2,549</td>
<td>50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of the National Culture Commission</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>4.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of the Contemporary Arts and Culture</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre (Autonomous Public Organisation)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,094</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of the level of officials in the Ministry of Culture, figures were only available for persons working in the central area. However, it was known that no senior level official is assigned to work in the provincial offices. The senior official grades account for 2.88 percent of employees in the central offices of the seven departments. There are no senior level officials in provincial offices. The vast majority (81.69 percent) of the centrally located officials (2503 persons) are in the middle level of government (see Table 5.3). By contrast the junior level accounts for only 473 persons (15.44 percent) of central officials.

Table 5.3: The Number of Officials in the Ministry of Culture (Central Area) Classified by Position Level and Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Number of central ministry officials</th>
<th>Percentage of total number of central ministry officials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior (levels 9-11)</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>1.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle (levels 5-8)</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>890</td>
<td>29.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1,613</td>
<td>52.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior (levels 1-4)</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>4.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>11.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>3,064</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The majority of centrally located officials in the Ministry of Culture are female (2088 persons, 64.88 percent) while only 1076 persons (35.13 percent) are male. However, at the senior level where there are 88 persons, 51 of them (57.9 percent) are male. In contrast, at the middle level, the majority of officials are female (1613 persons, 64.44 percent of the middle level) while only 890 persons (35.56 percent) are male officials. Similarly, at the junior level, the overwhelming majority of officials are female (338 persons, 71.46 of the junior level) while there are only 135 persons (28.54 percent) who are male officials.
In terms of educational level, the Ministry of Culture’s officials are highly qualified. The overwhelming majority of them have graduated with bachelor degrees (see Table 5.4). There are 85.93 percent (2,633 persons) of ministry officials who hold bachelor degrees. There are 303 persons (9.88 percent) with masters’ degrees and 12 persons (0.39 percent) holding doctoral degrees. Only 3.79 percent (116 persons) record their highest educational qualification as either certificate or diploma levels.

Table 5.4: Educational Level of Officials in the Ministry of Culture (Central Area)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational level</th>
<th>Number of officials</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral degree</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master degree</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>9.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor degree</td>
<td>2,633</td>
<td>85.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate and/or diploma</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>3.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,064</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Budget**

The budget in the Ministry of Culture has risen each year since the organisation’s inception in 2003 (see Table 5.5). Every organisation in the Ministry of Culture is entirely funded from the government budget except the Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre which is an autonomous public organisation (APO). Besides being funded by the government budget, it also raises its own funds with support from public customers who receive services. These customers normally pay fees for services.

In 2003, the ministry received 1,683,007,000 baht from the government budget. In 2004, the budget of the ministry was 2,239,642,800 baht, a rise of 33.07 percent from 2003. In 2005, the ministry received 2,480,859,700 baht up 10.77 percent from 2004. The Department of the Fine Arts received the highest budget (1,273,244,100 baht, 51.32 percent) of the ministry’s seven component organisations in 2005 since it is the largest of
those organisations, consisting of nine different offices and departments and employing 83.19 percent of central staff whilst the Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre received the lowest budget (33,300,300 baht) as it is the smallest organisation and is able to raise some of its funds from fees. The Department of Fine Arts budget although far larger than others actually declined in 2004 and increased marginally in 2005. The government budget of The Department of the Fine Arts in 2005 was only 0.31 percent higher than in 2004 while the government budget of the Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre rose by 17.80 percent during the same period. The Department of Religious Affairs received 229,538,000 baht in 2005 which is a rise of 27.32 percent from 2004. The Office of the Permanent Secretary received 614,051,200 baht, an increase of 8.64 percent from 2004. The Office of the National Culture Commission was allocated 276,965,100 baht in 2005, a rise of 45.07 percent from 2004. The budget of the Office of the Contemporary Arts and Culture was also raised to 53,761,000 baht in 2005, 32.73 percent more than in 2004.
### Table 5.5: Budget of the Ministry of Culture: 2003-2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office of the Permanent Secretary</td>
<td>61,851,400</td>
<td>565,224,400</td>
<td>813.84</td>
<td>614,051,200</td>
<td>8.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Department of Religious Affairs</td>
<td>143,684,400</td>
<td>180,280,500</td>
<td>25.47</td>
<td>229,538,000</td>
<td>27.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Department of the Fine Arts</td>
<td>1,288,186,700</td>
<td>1,234,443,000</td>
<td>-4.17</td>
<td>1,273,244,100</td>
<td>0.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of the National Culture Commission</td>
<td>166,175,600</td>
<td>190,924,500</td>
<td>14.89</td>
<td>276,965,100</td>
<td>45.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of the Contemporary Arts and Culture</td>
<td>635,600</td>
<td>40,502,900</td>
<td>6,272</td>
<td>53,761,000</td>
<td>32.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre</td>
<td>22,473,300</td>
<td>28,267,500</td>
<td>25.78</td>
<td>33,300,300</td>
<td>17.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,683,007,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,239,642,800</strong></td>
<td><strong>33.07</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,480,859,700</strong></td>
<td><strong>10.77</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The majority of the government budget for the Ministry of Culture was spent on the salaries of officials and permanent employees (1,073,581,900 baht, 42.94 percent of total budget in 2005) (See Table 5.6). Only 14,456,000 (0.57 percent) baht was utilised to fund the salaries of temporary employees. A sum of 448,865,600 (17.95 percent) baht was
used for the ministry’s equipment while 84,175,000 (3.36 percent) baht was used to pay for the ministry’s infrastructure budget category which includes items such as water and electricity. A total of 432,406,900 baht (17.29 percent) was invested in property (both rents and purchases) and construction for the ministry while 380,061,300 baht (15.20 percent) was allocated to a budget category which is called ‘a number of activities’ and includes such things as outsourcing. Another 47,313,000 baht (1.89 percent) was allocated for the ministry’s miscellaneous category.
Table 5.6: Budget Allocation in the Ministry of Culture in 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Departments</th>
<th>Government officials’ and permanent employees’ salaries</th>
<th>Salaries of temporary employees</th>
<th>Ministry’s equipment</th>
<th>Ministry’s infrastructure</th>
<th>Ministry’s property and construction</th>
<th>Subsidising a number of activities</th>
<th>Ministry’s miscellaneous</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office of the Permanent Secretary</td>
<td>405,391,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>168,357,200</td>
<td>17,446,000</td>
<td>6,442,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>16,415,000</td>
<td>614,051,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Religious Affairs</td>
<td>19,270,000</td>
<td>676,800</td>
<td>21,707,200</td>
<td>1,544,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>177,495,000</td>
<td>8,845,000</td>
<td>229,538,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of the Fine Arts</td>
<td>586,229,000</td>
<td>13,503,200</td>
<td>168,348,200</td>
<td>48,272,000</td>
<td>412,872,700</td>
<td>31,966,000</td>
<td>12,053,000</td>
<td>1,273,244,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of the National Culture</td>
<td>50,521,900</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>68,108,000</td>
<td>15,943,000</td>
<td>12,092,200</td>
<td>128,300,000</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
<td>276,965,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission</td>
<td>12,170,000</td>
<td>276,000</td>
<td>22,345,000</td>
<td>970,000</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>9,000,000</td>
<td>8,000,000</td>
<td>53,761,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of the Contemporary</td>
<td>12,170,000</td>
<td>276,000</td>
<td>22,345,000</td>
<td>970,000</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>9,000,000</td>
<td>8,000,000</td>
<td>53,761,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts and Culture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthropology Centre</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,073,581,900</td>
<td>14,456,000</td>
<td>448,865,600</td>
<td>84,175,000</td>
<td>432,406,900</td>
<td>380,061,300</td>
<td>47,313,000</td>
<td>2,480,859,700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusion

The first section of this chapter describes and justifies the research methodology which is employed in the thesis. It identifies the appropriateness and value of the instrumental case study used for studying public sector reform in the Ministry of Culture. The chapter also identifies the research design, sources of data, and data collection methods. In order to have a good understanding of the context of the case study which is set out in the following chapters, the second section of this chapter has provided relevant background information on the Ministry of Culture.
Chapter 6

Organisational Restructure and Redesign of Internal Authority in the Ministry of Culture

Introduction

Organisational restructure was one of the major aspects of the reform master plan, established in 1999 by the Chuan Leekpai government. Its aims were to set clear directions for restructuring the roles, functions, and management approaches of public organisations in order to achieve the country’s goals of social and economic development as well as to increase the country’s capacity for competing in the global marketplace. This reform theme established by government was explicitly derived from NPM as a way of emulating the perceived successes of NPM in the originating countries. The policy theme was transferred to Thailand by leading government officials in the belief that it would make the Thai public improve its performance so that it was more like that found in the countries which had first developed NPM.

This initial reform has been implemented, but restructuring was continued by the Thaksin government. Thus, organisational restructure remains as one of the significant reforms set out in the Public Sector Reform Strategic Plan 2003-2005, approved by the government on 19 May 2003.

This chapter examines the implementation of these policies for organisational restructure in the Ministry of Culture. The chapter is divided into two sections which are the case study narrative and the interviews. The narrative section provides description of the government policy on organisational restructure and internal authority structure redesign. It also deals with the implementation of the policies within the Ministry of Culture. The interviews section of the chapter examines the perceptions of the reforms by participants working in the Ministry of Culture.
Case Study Narrative

Government Policy on Organisational Restructure and Internal Authority Structure Redesign.

As mentioned in Chapter 4, the primary reform goal of the current government is restructuring the roles and functions of government. The Government Restructuring Bill of 2002 and the State Administration Bill of 2002 were submitted to the Parliament and agreed upon in principle on 10 April and 20 April 2002. Under these bills, a new government structure was proposed, with the number of ministries increased from fourteen to twenty and organised under the cluster principle, where departments and offices in those ministries responsible for related tasks were grouped together in order to fulfil the objective of work consistency and promote results-based performance (OCSC, 2002).

Under the new framework, priority was given to ensuring that ministries, bureaus, and departments were structured and administered to provide, quick, flexible, and quality services responsive to the needs of the public. The significant changes to take place in the structure, roles and functions of the government bureaucracy prompted the development of public sector reform strategies that would:

- Analyse and redefine the roles, responsibilities, and structure of government commensurate with its actual and necessary functions to ensure flexibility and consistency in the decision-making process through increased transparency and accountability.
- Adopt strategically-based budgeting to facilitate budget allocation and government expenditures derived from taxes in response to public needs and develop an up-to-date, efficient and effective accounting system.
- Establish streamlined and effective work processes through a performance-based pay approach as well as a systematic mechanism to recruit more competent individuals into the civil service.
- Increase the effectiveness of the government mechanism to ensure a favourable comparison with similar organisations in other governments in terms of capital, operations, quality of service and customer satisfaction, and also to encourage public servants to uphold ethical standards and practices (OCSC, 2002).

Under the organisational restructuring plan, the government has identified four forms of public sector organisation. The first form of organisation is Government Organisation (GO) which is mainly comprised of ministries. Ministries have direct responsibility for government tasks aimed at protecting and developing the country. Every project of the Government Organisation aims at increasing public values, and not aiming at making profit for itself.

The second form of organisation is an Efficiency Service Unit (ESU). This organisation is a semi-autonomous organisation. An ESU is responsible for a particular project which supports government policy. It works under a Government Organisation and is mostly concerned with the provision of public services. For example, the Foundation for the Clean and Transparent Thai (FACT) is an ESU which works under the administration of the Office of Civil Service Commission (OCSC) (FACT, 2005).

The third form of organisation is the Autonomous Public Organisation (APO). This form of organisation was established by The Royal Act of Autonomous Public Organisation 1999 to be responsible for public services that the private sector does not have the ability to maintain such as educational services and activities of cultural significance. For instance, Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre is an APO within the Ministry of Culture. An APO has autonomy in administration but is monitored by a board of directors. The board of director is responsible to a Minister. In addition, the government has direct authority to increase or decrease an APO’s budget depending on its performance. However, an APO generally receives remuneration from the government and from providing services for its customers.

The fourth form of organisation is State Enterprise (SE). SEs are usually owned by the government, but in some cases, there can be joint ownership by the government and the private sector. In such cases the government is normally the major shareholder. SEs are supposed to be run like businesses, but in Thailand administrative systems of SEs are
often quite similar to those of government organisations. SEs provide services which are important for economic development such as electricity, water, and telecommunication. In addition SEs are not funded by the government but derive income from their customers (OCSC, 2002).

Concerning the GOs, the government has grouped twenty ministries into three clusters. The three clusters have been organised according to their fundamental responsibilities. The first cluster consists of ministries that have a responsibility for the stability of the state. Examples of ministries in this cluster are the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Justice. The second cluster consists of ministries that are responsible for development of the state. The Ministry of Culture is categorised in this cluster. The final cluster consists of ministries that are involved in urgent missions regarding changes in society. Ministries in this cluster should have dynamic characteristics in order to be flexible in implementing government policy. For instance, the epidemic of bird flu in 2004 required crisis management by the Ministry of Public Health. However, the third cluster has no fixed membership. Every ministry could be categorised under this cluster according to changing circumstances (OCSC, 2002).

As part of the internal organisational restructure, within each ministry, offices and departments which have similar objectives are combined together as clusters (see Figure 6.1). To illustrate the point, one ministry may consist of a number of departments and offices which are working independently. This government policy aims to combine those departments and offices. A number of them may be grouped into several clusters depending on their objectives and responsibility. This helps each cluster to focus on its similar objective, and also reduces functional overlap and repetition of tasks (OCSC, 2002).
Internal Authority Redesign

To complement the organisational restructuring, the government adopted a policy on redesigning internal authority within every ministry. The government proposed a new internal authority model which separated responsibilities in the ministry into two groups (See Figure 6.2). The first group focuses on strategies and policies, and the second group focuses on the implementation of those strategies and policies. The government contends that this new model will help to clarify roles within the ministry.

In relation to the strategies and policies group, the government considers the Office of the Permanent Secretary as the nerve centre of each ministry, working on the ministry’s strategic plans and policies. The first group mentioned above is managed by the Permanent Secretary, and is considered as a policy unit, while the second group is comprised of clusters which focus on implementing policies coming from the Office of the Permanent Secretary, and is considered as an implementation unit (Nitirat, 2002).
Figure 6.2: Structure of Internal Ministry Authority Proposed by the Government

Under the new structure, the Permanent Secretary plays an important role in strategic administration, while the role of the Deputy Permanent Secretary is concerned with managing his/her cluster. Director Generals of the various offices and departments within those clusters are under the authority of the Deputy Permanent Secretary.

Reform Implementation within the Ministry of Culture

This section describes and analyses how the general policies on the organisational restructure and the internal authority redesign have been implemented in the Ministry of Culture.

Organisation Restructure

The Ministry of Culture can be divided into two major sections. The first section consists of different departments, and offices which are in Bangkok, and are considered as the central office. The other section consists of Cultural Councils and Offices of Provincial Culture which work in other provinces around the country.

Central Area Structure and Administration

On 2 October 2002, The Royal Act of the Reformation of Ministries and Departments determined the Ministry of Culture to consist of government organisations as follow:

1. Office of the Minister
2. Office of the Permanent Secretary
3. Department of Religious Affairs
4. Department the Fine Arts
5. Office of the National Culture Commission
6. Office of the Contemporary Arts and Culture
7. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre (Autonomous Public Organisation)

There are three government organisations which have been directly transferred from the Ministry of Education to the Ministry of Culture. Those three organisations consist of the Department of Religious Affairs, the Department of the Fine Arts, and the Office of the National Culture Commission. In relation to the three transferred government organisations, all responsibilities, authorities, budgets, debts, public servants, and temporary employees were also automatically transferred from the Ministry of Education to the Ministry of Culture.
One Autonomous Public Organisation, Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre (SAC) was absorbed into the Ministry of Culture. Historically, the SAC was a non-profit academic institution that was initially established by Silapakorn University, Bangkok, in 1991. Originally, SAC’s institutional status was equivalent to a university department or faculty. In 1994, Silapakorn University decided to revise the institutional structure and status of the Centre in order to improve efficiency, flexibility, and raise the level of the Centre to that of equivalent international institutions. As a result, SAC became a non-govermental organisation beginning in 1996 with the goal of becoming Thailand's premier modern resource centre for the research and study of anthropology and related fields such as history, archaeology, art and culture. Finally in 2003, due to the Royal Act of the Reformation of Ministries and Departments, the SAC was transferred to be under to the Ministry of Culture’s administration (Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre, 2005).

Besides the three government organisations and one autonomous public organisation mentioned above, another three government organisations in the Ministry of Culture were the Office of the Minister, the Office of the Permanent Secretary, and the Office of the Contemporary Arts and Culture. As a result, it was necessary for the Ministry of Culture to recruit a number of additional officers to work for these new organisations (eight officials for the Office of the Minister, 150 for the Office of the Permanent Secretary, and 60 for the Office of the Contemporary Arts and Culture). However, the Ministry did not have any budget to employ new government officials. Furthermore, in relation to the public sector reform master plan, the government aimed at reducing the number of civil service positions across the public service. Therefore, the Ministry of Culture was unable to recruit new officials. Instead, officials from existing departments were redeployed, and a total of 184 government officials were transferred from the Department of Religious Affairs, the Department of the Fine Arts, and the Office of the National Culture Commission. Eight out of 184 government officials were allocated to the Office of the Minister. One hundred and twenty officials were allocated to the Office of the Permanent Secretary and the remaining 56 officials were allocated to the Office of the Contemporary Arts and Culture (Ministry of Culture, 2005).
Proposed Organisational Structure in the Ministry of Culture: Central Area

Government organisations in the central area focus on five roles. Policy making is considered as the first role. The central area organisations are responsible for proposing new policies about religion, art and culture, and setting up objectives and goals for religion, art and cultural development. The second role is protection. This involves creating security system for the protection of art and culture. The third role concerns maintaining Thai culture, and renovating and restoring national archaeological sites including items in museums. The fourth role of the central area organisations is disseminating Thai culture internationally, developing cultural materials for education, as well as using Thai culture to be of benefit to the economy. The final role is concerned with promoting Thai culture to the next generation (Office of the National Culture Commission, 2002).

After the Ministry of Culture was re-established in 2002, in order to implement the government policy on organisational restructure and internal authority redesign, the ministry proposed a reformed central organisational structure. The ministry’s structure firstly needed to be approved and certified by the OPDC, after which the cabinet would make a final decision on whether the new structure was appropriate or not.

In relation to the proposed structure, the ministry aimed to divide itself into three clusters with seven objectives (see Figure 6.3). The first cluster was the strategic planning and policy cluster. This cluster was set to be responsible for art and culture plans and polices. Moreover, it would also play a significant role in coordinating with public, private, and international organisations. The second cluster was the art cluster. This second cluster aimed at protecting, maintaining, renovating, and promoting Thai art including items in museums. The final cluster was the culture cluster. This cluster had duties relating to research and development, and to the protection and promotion of Thai culture, and Thai cultural exchange (Office of the National Culture Commission, 2002).
The Ministry of Culture proposed the clusters structure as a response to the government’s policy on organisational restructure across the public services. Moreover, the proposed clusters structure of the ministry was created by following the official’s guidelines on ministerial organisational restructure of the government.

The proposed clusters structure of the Ministry of Culture was submitted to the OPDC in mid-2004. However, the Public Sector Reform Committee of the OPDC disagreed with the proposed structure. The committee indicated that the ministerial organisational restructure was proposed for those ministries which had large size and complex organisation. In the case of the Ministry of Culture, the committee judged it to be a small ministry since it consisted of only seven organisations. As a result, it was deemed unnecessary for the Ministry of Culture to group its organisations into clusters because each of them already had distinct tasks. Thus, the structure of the Ministry of Culture in the central offices has remained the same as described in Chapter 5.

From this episode several observations can be made. It can be seen that the Ministry of Culture followed the government policy on the organisational restructure, especially on
ministerial organisational restructure. However, there was a communication problem between the government and the Ministry of Culture. It can be said there was ambiguity in the guidelines and instructions for the proposed ministerial organisational restructure. Not enough in-depth information was provided on what the twenty ministries should do, and what criteria for change those ministries should use. The guidelines only indicated that every ministry needed to follow the proposed restructure. The misunderstanding between government agencies led the Ministry of Culture to prepare an unnecessary restructuring plan.

**Provincial Area Administration**

*The Royal Act of the Reformation of Ministries and Departments* was enacted on 2 October 2003 by the government, announcing that all works, authorities, budgets, debt, government officials, permanent employees, and temporary employees who worked on religious and cultural affairs in the Provincial Offices of Education of the Ministry of Education must be transferred to the Ministry of Culture (Office of the National Culture Commission, 2002).

**Proposed Organisational Structure in the Ministry of Culture: Provincial Area**

The proposed provincial area structure of the Ministry of Culture was to comprise two levels (see Figure 6.4). On the first level were the Provincial Cultural Councils. These Councils were already established throughout the 76 provinces of Thailand, and were transferred from the Ministry of Education. The councils are responsible for cultural affairs and all members are government officials. Their duties would be to implement all cultural works and policies in their provinces. The second level is the Office of Provincial Culture. This office would be responsible for supporting the Provincial Cultural Councils by coordinating with the government organisations in the central area. Moreover, it would play an important role in monitoring policy implementation of the Provincial Cultural Councils.
Figure 6.4: Proposed Provincial Area Administrative Structure of the Ministry of Culture


Provincial Culture Councils would act as the representative of the Ministry of Culture, and would be authorised to be responsible for all cultural affairs in their provinces. Each Provincial Culture Council would be funded by the government budget of the Ministry of Culture. The amounts of funds would depend on the size of the province. After being funded by the government, the Provincial Culture Councils would have authority on financial expenditure within their provinces.

The proposed provincial area administrative structure was submitted to the OPDC at the same time as the proposed structure of clusters for the central area. Even though the Public Sector Reform Committee of the OPDC did not agree with the proposed clusters structure of the central area, it was satisfied with the provincial area administrative structure proposed by the Ministry of Culture. The proposed provincial administration of the Ministry of Culture was claimed to be a form of decentralisation since the central level encouraged the provincial level to make and implement policies for the province. The committee agreed that the offices of the Ministry of Culture in the provincial area would be autonomous with authority to make decisions on any particular issues. However, they would still monitored by the Office of Permanent Secretary in the central area. It can be seen that the structural arrangement for the management of culture, art and religion at the provincial level did not change from those operating when the Ministry of Education was responsible (Office of the National Culture Commission, 2002).
Internal Authority Redesign in the Ministry of Culture

Due to the rejection of the proposed cluster structure for the Ministry of Culture, the internal authority of the Ministry was therefore structured differently from government guidelines (see Figure 6.5). Firstly, a policy unit has not been separated from the implementation unit. The Ministry has identified that the Permanent Secretary has the authority to formulate strategies, but it has not identified clearly who has responsibility for implementation. Secondly, three Deputy Permanent Secretaries do not have functional areas of responsibility as in the proposed structure of ministries set out by the government. The Deputy Permanent Secretaries in the Ministry of Culture have no authority to control offices and departments. Thirdly, Director Generals are semi-autonomous. They have authority to manage their offices or departments including financial decisions. However, they are monitored by the Permanent Secretary. The Directors-General are expected to report directly to the Permanent Secretary without passing through the Deputy Permanent Secretaries.

In short, it can be concluded that the administrative structure of the Ministry of Culture in the central area is still a hierarchical organisation. Currently, the Permanent Secretary has overall authority which is exactly the same as before. Although a new ministry has been formed, its structure and authority patterns remain those that are traditionally associated with Thai bureaucracy.
Figure 6.5: Internal Authority Structure of the Ministry of Culture

Source: Office of the Permanent Secretary. (2004). *Internal Authority Structure in the Ministry of Culture.* Bangkok

**Interviews Section**

**Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials**

Information was gathered from 28 government officials, working in various departments, and offices within the Ministry of Culture. Respondents’ ages were between 24 and 59 years. Positions of respondents varied from level three to level eleven. In the Thai public sector, officials are classified into eleven position levels, the lowest being level one and the highest being level eleven. Officials who are graduates of secondary education up to certificate level (1-3 years of post secondary education) are normally appointed at level one or two. Officials who have graduated with bachelor degrees normally enter the public service at level three. Officials with masteral degrees normally start their positions at level four. Finally, official who have graduated with doctoral degrees normally start their positions at level five.
Fifteen respondents (53.57 percent) for the case study had finished bachelor degrees while eleven of them (39.28) had finished masteral degrees, and two respondents (7.14 percent) had doctoral degrees. The amount of years working as government officials ranged from 3 years to 30 years. Only three respondents (10.71 percent) had worked for the private sector before moving to the public sector and the remainder (25 respondents, 89.28 percent) had been working as government officials for their whole careers. The respondents were comprised of one Permanent Secretary, two Deputy of Permanent Secretaries, one Inspector-General, four Directors of various Offices, and 20 cultural public officers. These respondents were working at various levels, and were categorised into three groups (see Table 6.1). Even though the government had no standard criteria for breaking down these levels into groups of positions, it was generally accepted by most government officials that there were three levels which consisted of junior level, middle level, and senior level (executive level) in the Thai public sector. Classifying government officials into three levels was also appropriate because each level clearly represented differential experience of government officials regarding their work and varying degrees of public sector reform knowledge.

The first group consisted of eight officials (28.57 percent) who were in levels 1 to 4. Officials working in the first group were considered as junior level official. Some of them were recently recruited to the public sector, and many of them had been working in the public sector for less than five years. They were also poorly informed about public sector reform, and had received no training about the reform from the government. The second group consisted of fifteen officials (53.57 percent) who were in levels 5 to 8. Officials in the second group were considered as middle level officers. The middle level consists of officials who have higher levels of education than the junior officials. As a result, it is acknowledged that the different levels of education between the groups may provide different views on reform. The greater experience and more responsible positions occupied by the middle level officials as compared the junior level official were additional factors which could give rise to differential responses between the groups. The third group consisted of five officials (17.86 percent) who were in levels 9 to 11, and were considered as senior level officials. The senior level officials are particularly important for the case study because they are highly educated and knowledgeable about the public sector management reform. They are well informed on the government reforms because they have attended seminars and workshops on them. Moreover, they are the
recipients of the government’s management reform plans and policies as transmitted by the OCSC and the OPDC.

Table 6.1: Types and Levels of Ministry of Culture Officials Responding to the Interviews in the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Junior level</td>
<td>1 – 4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>28.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officials</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level</td>
<td>5 – 8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>53.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officials</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior level</td>
<td>9 – 11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officials</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first question concerned the perceptions of officials when they were informed by the government that they had to move to the Ministry of Culture. The responses gathered from 28 officials in the Ministry of Culture indicated that the majority of them (23 persons, 82.14 percent) were willing to move from their former government agencies to the Ministry of Culture (see Table 6.2). They indicated that the Ministry of Culture provided them an opportunity to get promoted because the Ministry had just been established and had many vacant positions. Three respondents (10.71 percent) gave neutral responses in the sense that they felt their move to the ministry and their works were there without any problems. However, two respondent (7.14 percent) had not wished to move, but were forced by the Royal Act of the Reformation of Ministries and Departments. They stated that they were happier and more comfortable with their former work places in the Ministry of Education rather than in the Ministry of Culture. Moreover, they did not want to change their job descriptions after moving to the new ministry because they were not sure if their new responsibility would be appropriate to their qualifications.
Table 6.2: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on Changing their Workplace

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The degrees of willingness to move to the Ministry of Culture</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Willing to move</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>82.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not wishing to move</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>28</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A second area of enquiry was whether there were different perceptions among officials on the driving forces which led to the creation of the Ministry of Culture. Twenty respondents (71.42 percent) in the Ministry of Culture believed that the most important factor driving the organisational restructure was the government policy which aimed to group government organisations with similar responsibilities and objectives into specific ministries (see Table 6.3). Twenty respondents (71.42 percent) stated that it was a requirement that every government agency had to follow the government policy. Twelve respondents (42.86 percent) indicated that cultural affairs were distinctive and needed separate identity from educational affairs in the Ministry of Education. They said that organisational restructure would help cultural affairs to gain better visibility and more autonomy in policy making and implementation. Five respondents (17.86 percent) thought that another pressure for the organisational restructure came from the public who believed that establishing the Ministry of Culture would help to address social problems because there would be a particular organisation focusing on cultural affairs. As a result, they were confident that education about religion and culture would be disseminated nationwide, and help individuals to be better persons. However, five respondents (17.86 percent) believed that restructuring public organisations by establishing new ministries would also help some politicians and government officials to get promoted by obtaining positions in the new ministry.
Table 6.3: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on Factors Driving the Organisational Restructure which Created the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Driving Forces of Organisational Restructure</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To follow the government policy</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>71.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To separate cultural from educational affair</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>42.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To reduce social problem</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be of benefit to some politicians and government officers</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: One respondent could have more than one answer

The third question enquired into officials’ feelings on job security. All respondents (100 percent) reported that they did not feel insecure due to the organisational restructure (see Table 6.4). They indicated that even though they had to change their workplaces, they were confident about their new jobs and positions because the Royal Act of the Reformation of Ministries and Departments determined that the government had transferred all personnel and their authority from their former workplaces to the Ministry of Culture. As a result, they were guaranteed by the Act that they would work at least in the same position as before moving to the new ministry. A statement from a Deputy of the Permanent Secretary emphasised the perceptions of the officials. He stated that:

“My position was in the level 10. Even though there was an organisational restructure by the government and I was ordered to move to a new government organisation, I was guaranteed by the government that my position would be the same no matter what my new responsibility was. It was impossible to decrease my level to a lower level”.
A question on government officials’ perceptions of the impact of the organisational restructure on them revealed that every level of officials (100 percent) agreed that they had got more work and greater responsibility than before (see Table 6.5). This applied especially to those who had assumed new positions and job descriptions as they needed to prepare for their new jobs. Five respondents (33.33 percent) in the middle level and two respondents (25 percent) in the junior level indicated that it was difficult for them to go to work because the Ministry of Culture was far from their residences. Three respondents (20 percent) in the middle level and two respondents (25 percent) in the junior level were uncomfortable working with new colleagues. The two officials said they had been transferred to new organisations in the ministry and added that they did not like the Ministry of Culture.

### Table 6.5: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on the Impact of the Organisational Restructure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impacts of Organisation Restructure</th>
<th>Senior (%)</th>
<th>Middle (%)</th>
<th>Junior (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More work and responsibility</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
<td>15 (100)</td>
<td>8 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation as a difficulty</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5 (33.33)</td>
<td>2 (25.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling uncomfortable working with new colleagues</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3 (20.00)</td>
<td>2 (25.00)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The next question asked about the officials’ perceptions on the appropriateness of the structure of the Ministry of Culture. Every level shared a broadly similar view on the structure of the Ministry of Culture with responses clustering in the adjacent ‘satisfied’ and ‘neutral’ categories (see Table 6.6). Three respondents (60 percent) in the senior level agreed that they were satisfied with the structure of the Ministry of Culture. They claimed that the ministry has been structured properly. The three senior respondents also further claimed that they made comments on and assisted in the structuring process. They remarked that each responsibility had been allocated to a proper position and person. Two of them (40 percent) had no particular feelings on the structure of the ministry, but were certainly not dissatisfied with it. Five respondents (33.33 percent) of the middle level’s fifteen respondents were also satisfied with the new structure. They indicated that the structure was good. The rest of the middle level (ten respondents, 66.67 percent) indicated that they had no opinion on the structure. Eight respondents in the junior level (100 percent) felt neutral about the ministry’s structure because they had no authority to make decisions on the structuring process. However, they felt that the structure was quite similar to the former structure when they were in the Ministry of Education. They said nothing had really changed except the name of the ministry and some of their supervisors. Interestingly, nobody was dissatisfied with the ministry’s structure.

Table 6.6: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on the Appropriateness of the Structure of the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Very satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Very dissatisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior level</td>
<td>3 (60.00)</td>
<td>2 (40.00)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5 (33.33)</td>
<td>10 (66.67)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The next topic of enquiry was whether responsibilities of officials and organisational components in the Ministry of Culture were clearly explained by each department and office (see Table 6.7). Since senior officials were involved in objective framing, all respondents in this category (five respondents, 100 percent) thought everyone in the Ministry understood his/her work objectives and mission. Furthermore, the senior officials believed responsibilities had also been clearly allocated. Seven respondents (46.47 percent) in the middle level knew and agreed with the objectives of his/her organisation. The seven respondents thought their responsibilities were well clarified while eight respondents (53.33 percent) felt neutral regarding the objectives of their organisations. All respondents in the junior level (eight respondents, 100 percent) also felt neutral because during the structuring process, they were not asked to contribute to the creation of the objectives of their organisations. Two of the respondents in the junior level further indicated that they were unfamiliar with the objectives of their organisations. There were no negative responses to this question.

Table 6.7: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on the Objectives of their Organisations in the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Very well clarified</th>
<th>Well clarified</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Poorly clarified</th>
<th>Very poorly clarified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7 (46.47)</td>
<td>8 (53.33)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Officials in the Ministry of Culture were also quizzed about their work-loads. The question asked if their work-loads had decreased after the organisational restructure of the government. Answers from the respondents appeared that work-loads of government officials in the Ministry of Culture had not decreased as it was predicted in the Public Sector Management Reform Master Plan (OCSC, 2000). All respondents (100 percent) across the three levels had exactly the same perception that their work-loads had not decreased since they moved into the Ministry of Culture (see Table 6.8). In contrast, they
believed that they had more work to do than before because there were not enough civil servants assigned to the Ministry of Culture due to the limited budget from the government. The respondents claimed that even though their organisations had been directly transferred from the Ministry of Education, some of the officials from these organisations had been allocated to new organisations in the Ministry of Culture. Those new organisations were not allowed to recruit new staff due to the government downsizing program which aimed to limit the number of civil servants. As a result, all respondents complained that after they moved to the Ministry of Culture, they had heavier work-loads than in the Ministry of Education.

Table 6.8: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on the Workloads in the Ministry of Culture as Compared to the Ministry of Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Work Decrease</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Work Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Public Sector Reform Strategic Plan 2003-2008 of the current government also aimed at decentralisation in the public sector. Thus, a question was asked on perceptions of the officials on whether there had been decentralisation in the Ministry of Culture. All respondents in all levels said that administrative authority of officials, such as financial decision making was very limited (see Table 6.9). Even though the government has tried to decentralise the internal authority structure by empowering Deputy Permanent Secretaries (see Figure 6.2), the Deputy Permanent Secretaries of the Ministry of Culture still did not have as much authority as the government intended. This was because the Ministry of Culture was not organised as a cluster system due to the rejection of Ministry of Culture proposals by the OPDC. The internal authority structure within the ministry remained hierarchical. All five respondents (100 percent) in the senior level agreed that their authority and decision-making was limited since the organisational form of the
Ministry of Culture was still hierarchical. A Deputy Permanent Secretary elaborated on this as follows:

“In 2002, I was assigned by the former Minister of Culture of the current government to be responsible for the cultural development program in Thailand. One important objective of the program was to establish cultural development centres around the country. As a result, the Ministry of Culture had decided to open libraries, and cultural development centres in several shopping centres in Thailand. However, in 2003 the cabinet at that time was changed and replaced by a new cabinet; the former Minister was replaced by a new Minister. Unfortunately, the new Minister did not agree with the cultural development program introduced by the former Minister; therefore, he decided to cancel the program during his managing period. From what I just reported, I would like to express that even though I was a senior government official, I basically did not have much authority in order to begin a new program or project which I believed would be useful for the country. In contrast, most senior government officials including me still depend upon the politicians”.

This suggests that senior public servants seek greater autonomy in decision-making perhaps harking back to the days of the bureaucratic polity model. Decision-making authority was still in hands of the cabinet. Eleven respondents (73.33 percent) in the middle level agreed with the senior level that their decision making had been limited while the rest of the respondents in this level (four persons, 26.67 percent) claimed that their decision making was very limited. A complementary view was provided by the junior level where all respondents (100 percent) who confirmed that their jobs were to implement the government policies rather than make decision. As a result, their duties were to receive orders from the higher level and to follow them. Moreover, they were not encouraged to make any decisions in their organisations.

**Table 6.9: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on Decentralisation in the Ministry of Culture**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Very Decentralised</th>
<th>Decentralised</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Centralised</th>
<th>Very Centralised</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11(73.33)</td>
<td>4 (26.67)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8 (100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The respondents were asked to provide their perceptions on problems of the organisational restructure in the Ministry of Culture. Various problems about the organisational restructure were pointed out by different levels of officials (see Table 6.10). All five respondents (100 percent) in the senior level and fifteen respondents (100 percent) in the middle level identified the same problem. They contended that many officials, especially those who were in the junior level, lacked knowledge and understanding of the public sector reform. According to the senior and middle level respondents, this led to some of the junior officials being reluctant to change because they preferred to work in the same places with the same supervisors, and holding the same responsibilities.

The senior level also added that some officials who were forced to transfer from the Ministry of Education to new organisations of the Ministry of Culture would encounter problems with their responsibilities because their education did not match their new job descriptions. Another important problem was the shortage of civil servants. Most of the respondents (100 percent) among three levels agreed that due to the establishment of three new organisations in the ministry, the number of officials transferred from the Ministry of Education was not sufficient. Therefore, they would have bigger work-loads in the new ministry.

A contradictory view was mentioned by junior level officials. Eight respondents (100 percent) in the junior level claimed that normally they did not have the chance to participate in public sector reform workshops organised by the OCSC and the OPDC. The respondents realised that the government had introduced the reform policy, but they did not know details of the reform. They also lacked knowledge about the organisational restructure. Only senior government officials were selected as the ministry’s representatives to attend reform workshops. The junior level officials knew that the government aimed to reform the whole public sector but they believed it ignored the importance of junior level officials. Only general information about the reform was passed to the junior level officials, not details or guidelines of the reform.
Table 6.10: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on Problems of the Organisational Restructure in the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Senior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of knowledge and understanding about public sector</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reform</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor match between education and job description</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortage of civil servants</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having no participation in public sector reform workshops</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The respondents were next asked whether they thought there were obstacles to the organisational restructure in the Ministry of Culture (see Table 6.11). The first obstacle was indicated by only the respondents in the senior level. All of them (five persons, 100 percent) identified ambiguity and miscommunication by the government on the proposed cluster structure as a major obstacle inhibiting the organisation restructure of the ministry. However, none of the respondent in the middle and junior levels indicated this obstacle because they did not know about the proposed cluster structure of the Ministry of Culture.

All five respondents in the senior level (100 percent), five respondents (33.33 percent) in the middle level, and three respondents (27.5 percent) in the junior level agreed that another obstacle to the organisational restructure of the ministry was the behaviour of officials. The respondents explained that some government officials who benefited from the reform would be willing to change whilst some of them who had no benefit would be unwilling to change. The respondents further explained that some officials who had not benefited from the reform, but were forced to transfer to the Ministry of Culture, were not happy with their work. A respondent in the middle level said that one female middle level official in her organisation was forced to move from the Ministry of Education. She was not happy with a new organisation and was not friendly to her colleagues. The respondent
indicated that this lady also did not want to work in a team. This caused problems in her workplace.

Ten respondents in the middle level (66.67 percent) and five respondents (62.5 percent) in the junior level indicated another obstacle. This was that the patron-client system still played an important role in the Thai public sector. Important positions in the ministry were perceived to be offered to officials who supported the current government and cabinet. Therefore, there was a perception among these respondents that only government officials who supported the government would be promoted to higher positions.

**Table 6.11: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on Obstacles Facing the Organisational Restructure in the Ministry of Culture**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Obstacle</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Senior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differential benefits to individuals</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from the reform</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing patron-client practices</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It may be too soon to evaluate whether the organisational restructure in the Ministry of Culture had a positive impact on organisational efficiency (see table 6.12). It is notable that there were contrasting views between the senior level officials and the junior level officials. All five respondents (100 percent) in the senior level claimed that the organisational restructure helped to improve efficiency of the ministry (see Table 6.12). In particular, they identified that each ‘action and responsibility’ of the ministry had been properly allocated to each department and office. Eleven persons (73.33 percent) in the middle level also agreed with the senior level. However, the rest of the middle level (four persons, 26.67) and all respondents (eight persons, 100 percent) in the junior level thought that the organisational restructure was not effective. The respondents believe that the reform did not change or improve anything as the government claimed because there were problems and obstacles as indicated in Table 6.10 and 6.11 which were embedded in the Thai public sector.
Table 6.12: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on Efficiency Improvement in the Ministry of Culture after the Organisational Restructure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Much improved efficiency</th>
<th>Improved efficiency</th>
<th>No change</th>
<th>Less efficiency</th>
<th>No efficiency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11 (73.33)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4 (26.67)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>8 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Perceptions of Officials in the Office of the Civil Service Commission (OCSC) and the Office of the Public Sector Development Commission (OPDC)

Five officials in the OCSC and OPDC were interviewed (see Table 6.13). They included the Director of the Institute for Good Governance Promotion, two Human Resource Management Policy Analysts working for the Bureau of Human Resource Research and Development, one Public Service Development Officer working for the Monitoring and Evaluation Group, and the Research Officer for Good Governance Promotion. The Director of the Institute for Good Governance Promotion was a senior level official while the rest of the respondents were middle level officials. Four out of five respondents had masteral degrees while one respondent held a doctoral degree. All respondents started working for the government immediately after finishing their degrees.
Table 6.13: Types and Levels of Officials Responding to the Interviews in the OCSC and the OPDC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director of the Institute for Good Governance Promotion</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resource Management Policy Analyst</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Service Development Officer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All respondents had similar views on the organisational restructuring in the Ministry of Culture. They indicated that the new structure of the Ministry of Culture had been set properly. Strategies and objectives of each department and office were clearly delineated. Only one major problem on the organisational restructure in the Ministry of Culture was pointed out by the respondents in the OPDC. They indicated that the ministry was not allowed to be structured according to the cluster system because the ministry was quite small and did not have the complex structure which necessitated the cluster system. Responsibilities in the ministry could be categorised without using the cluster system. Therefore, the OPDC had recommended that the ministry retain its original structure.

Overall, the respondents were satisfied with the organisational restructure in the Ministry of Culture. Three officials viewed the organisational restructure in the Ministry as good while two of them thought the structure of the ministry was fair. However, all five respondents believed that decision-making in the Ministry of Culture is still centralised. Junior level officials did not have authority to make decisions. Moreover, all five respondents indicated that there were various problems such as the shortage of civil servants and the lack of knowledge and understanding about public sector reform, prevailing in the Ministry of Culture. These problems might hinder the success of organisational restructure and internal authority redesign within the Ministry of Culture.
Additionally the respondents indicated that the OCSC and the OPDC played a significant role on setting up public sector management reform policies. These organisations designed the reform policies which were passed on to the cabinet. After they were submitted to the cabinet, and the cabinet approved, the policies were announced by the OCSC and the OPDC, and transferred to the government agencies, and the OCSC and the OPDC were not supposed to take any further actions. The policies were supposed to be implemented by the government agencies. From this point, the OCSC and the OPDC would only monitor those government agencies. They were not involved in the policy implementation process in each government agency across the Thai public service.
Chapter 7

Public Culture and Values Reform in the Ministry of Culture

Introduction

The management and working styles of government officials have an important bearing on the success of the public sector management reform. The Thai government claimed that in order to succeed with the Thai public sector reform, government officials should have a common goal and a firm, steady approach towards that goal. Moreover, an open mind for creative ideas and change, high morality and a sense of responsibility when carrying out their respective tasks were also deemed to be important. As a result, public culture and values have comprised another dimension of the Thai public sector reforms since the Public Sector Reform Master Plan was first endorsed by the Chuan Leekpai government on 11 May 1999. Public culture and values reform remained one of the major strategies being implemented by the current government of Thaksin Shinnawatra. It is debateable as to how far this reform theme can be identified as explicitly NPM. In Hood’s (1991) delineation of the principles of NPM there is no specific values item. However, concern with accountability does permeate NPM.

This chapter provides information on the reform of public culture and values in the Thai public sector by focusing on this reform’s implementation within the Ministry of Culture. The chapter has been divided into two major sections. The first section describes the government’s policy and implementation plan for public culture and values reform and then sets out how the ministry has implemented the reforms. The second section investigates the perceptions of officials working in different levels within the Ministry of Culture, the Office of Civil Service Commission (OCSC), and the Office of Public Development Commission (OPDC) on the public culture and values reform program. Comparison between the perceptions of different levels of officials is also provided.
Case Study Narrative

Government Policy and Implementation on the Public Culture and Values Reform

Although, public culture and values have comprised another dimension of the Thai public sector reforms, and was first endorsed by the Chuan Leekpai government in 1999, policies regarding public culture and values reform have actually been implemented since 1997 when the government of General Chavalit Yongchayuth assigned the Public Sector Reform Committee to design the Public Sector Reform Master Plan.

With support from governments since the Chavalit regime, the OCSC has successfully carried out a number of activities to promote ethical behaviour among government officials. In 1997, the development of new codes of ethics for all ministries, including training and promotion activities, were promoted by the OCSC and added to the existing service-wide Code of Professional Ethics for Civil Servants B.E. 1994. In particular, eleven pilot government agencies such as the Department of Land, the Department of Corrections, and the Department of Public Relations were supported in developing their own codes of professional and ethical standards. During 1997 and 1998, many studies and surveys about public culture and values reform were conducted by the OCSC. The OCSC designed a model curriculum to promote ethical standards and conducted three training courses based on that curriculum. These were attended by 2,100 officials in the senior and the middle levels around the country. After participating in those training courses, the participants were required to submit reports, showing their comprehension of the training courses to their supervisors. Most of the participants were selected to attend the courses by their own organisations (OCSC, 2001c). However, this model curriculum has not been implemented in government agencies, and details of the model curriculum have never been announced to the public.

At the beginning of 1999, a project called ‘Following in the Royal Footsteps’ was introduced by the OCSC, and was undertaken to instil in government officials a consciousness of adopting ethical practices, adhering to ethical behaviour, and conducting themselves in keeping with the examples set by His Majesty the King. The OCSC believed that the project would enhance a service orientation among public servants and a
determination to work for the public benefit and welfare of the society and the nation. The project was approved by the cabinet on 2 February 1999, and specified that every government agency was to train its officials in conformity with this policy. In order to implement the policy, the OCSC designed four learning modules in consultation with specialists in the service of His Majesty the King and from feedback of participants in seminars organised to develop ideas for the project. The learning modules comprised 1) following the Royal Footsteps: becoming an exemplary government official, 2) being a government official dedicated to serving the public, 3) creating a benevolent society, and 4) working together to create a strong nation (OCSC, 2001c). Although this project was announced to every government agency, there were no responses, and implementation did not occur.

In addition to the ‘Following in the Royal Footsteps’, the OCSC provided a number of values-based activities including training programs on becoming exemplary government officials for trainers in various government agencies and sets of training materials for distribution to government officials throughout the country. The materials consisted of videotapes, audio-visual aids and manuals to encourage the development of exemplary behaviour among officials. Using these materials, 203,577 officials were trained in 1999 and 100,000 officials were trained in 2000 (OCSC, 2001c). Participants were selected for training by their organisations.

In February 1999 when ‘the Following in the Royal Footsteps project’ was announced, the cabinet also approved a measure to develop a system that would ensure justice and protection for officials who provided information regarding malfeasance and corruption. The measure was aimed at encouraging civil servants to consider their duty to provide pertinent verbal or documentary information of benefit to government investigating committees, and to prevent corruption and create transparency in public agencies (OCSC, 2001c). However details of the measure were not announced to government agencies, and the OCSC gave no reason for the abandonment of this project.

On 11 May 1999, a proposal for a National Agenda on Good Governance submitted by the OCSC, was endorsed by the cabinet. It was then announced in the Royal Gazette on 10 August 1999 as the Regulation of the Office of the Prime Minister on Good Governance 1999. The regulation contained six key elements of good governance, aimed
at creating harmony, stability, and order among all sectors of society as well as promoting the sustainable development of the country. The six key elements consisted of the rule of law, integrity, transparency, participation, accountability, and value of money (OCSC, 2000).

In relation to the regulation on good governance in Thai society, during 1999-2000, various measures were initiated to achieve its goals as follows:

1. The OCSC in cooperation with the Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI) developed a manual on implementing the six key elements of good governance.
2. A conference on the theme ‘Promoting Good Governance’ was organised for the Thai public sector in December 1999.
3. On 27 April 2000, a conference was organised by the OCSC to report on the implementation of the Regulation of the Office of Prime Minister on Good Governance.
4. A seminar for the public on collaboration among the public sector, the business sector and the general public to promote good governance in Thai society was organised during 2000.
5. A policy on producing an evaluation report on the performance of government agencies was announced by the OCSC to every government agency.
6. Training courses for executive government officials were developed by the OCSC in order to promote awareness and understanding of the principles of good governance in government agencies.

In September 1999, the government agreed to establish an Ethics Promotion Information Centre as a resource centre for study, research, and recommendations on ethical policies for the civil service, with activities to be undertaken through networking with relevant organisations. Moreover, a set of ethical practices for officials was developed by the OCSC. Five practices for officials were identified through an opinion survey of central and provincial officials. There was also a public forum on 21 July 2000 attended by representatives from officials, experts, academics, press and media, and the general public. The five practices consisted of 1) upholding and supporting right actions, 2)
conducting oneself with integrity and accountability, 3) being transparent in one’s actions, 4) maintaining impartiality, and 5) focusing on achieving results (OCSC, 2001c).

The OCSC also cooperated with some international organisations such as the World Bank. The OCSC assigned leading academics to conduct research on state corruption. Several studies were undertaken and papers were also produced on topics such as ‘State Corruption from the Viewpoint and Experiences of the General Public’, ‘Corruption in the Public Sector from the Perspective of Government Officials’, and ‘The Business Environment and Views of Businessmen on Public Service Delivery’. The results of the studies revealed the causes and methods of corruption, and the findings were incorporated into an operational plan to improve rules and regulations to promote transparency and to encourage public action to safeguard against corruption (OCSC, 2001c).

In connection with the efforts to prevent corruption, the OCSC organised a seminar on ‘Strategies to Combat Corruption in Thailand’ on 28 August 2000. It was claimed by the government that this seminar synthesised the research studies mentioned above in order to recommend guidelines and safeguards to prevent corruption and to develop an operational plan to minimise corruption in Thailand (OCSC, 2001c).

In September 2000, the project, called ‘Moving Towards Transparency in Thai Society’ was announced by the OCSC and represented an effort to promote responsibility and cooperation among all segments of society towards the creation of transparency in public matters. The major thrust of the project was to instil in the Thai people a strong moral consciousness, integrity, honesty, and fairness as well as to safeguard against corruption and misconduct in Thai society and government (OCSC, 2001c). After being announced, there was no further progress on this project.

On 26 December 2000, the cabinet approved the OCSC’s proposal on the Clean and Transparent Thai Public Sector Project. This project required all government agencies to create a strategic plan regarding clean and transparent operation in their organisations. Moreover, on 1 January 2001 each government agency was told to establish a Clean and Transparent Centre in its organisation. This centre was to be responsible for creating a strategic plan and encouraging good public ethics within the organisation (see Figure 7.1). Moreover, the centre was to play important roles in developing work efficiency,
evaluating budget use, preventing corruption, as well as proposing punishment for corrupt officials (OCSC, 2004). Unlike some of the other initiatives to promote ethical behaviour and address corruption, the Clean and Transparent Thai project was implemented.

**Figure 7.1: Structure of the Clean and Transparent Centre within a Government Agency**


Complementing the Clean and Transparent Centre, in 2001, the OCSC organised workshops every month to promote clean and transparent government, and enforced a policy making officials participate in the workshops. Furthermore, the Foundation for the Clean and Transparent Thai (FACT) was established by the OCSC. The foundation proposed to cultivate the desirable morality and ethics in the thinking and behaviour of all Thai people, and urged them to be opposed to corruption, place public interests as the first priority, and support any organisation and individual who performed their duties diligently and transparently. The foundation’s objectives aimed at firstly creating a network of people to counter dishonesty and misconduct in Thai society. Secondly, the foundation also provided counseling, advice, and training, as well as initiating and distributing materials to increase the awareness of the general public about the seriousness of the corruption problem. Thirdly, the foundation provided research
programs and seminars relating to problems of dishonesty, misconduct and malfeasance in Thai society. Fourthly, the foundation cooperated with both domestic and foreign institutes and organisations that had similar objectives. Finally, the foundation undertook other activities for the public benefit and cooperated with charitable organisations. The foundation has largely relied on raising funds itself especially from people who support the activities of the foundation (OCSC, 2004).

During 2001-2002, the OCSC continued to be active in anti-corruption. One of its seminars for every level of officials, and the public focused on anti-corruption strategy in Thailand. This seminar pointed out four procedures in order to address corruption in Thailand. Firstly, the government encouraged Thai people, and private and public organisations to fight against corruption by coordinating activities and information between the public sector, the private sector, and people in society. Secondly, the government revealed its intention to create a system for evaluating performance of officials. Thirdly, both existing law and new law about governmental budget and procurement should be enforced. Fourthly, the government advised that it aimed to provide better education about ethics to the public.

In 2003, the cabinet agreed to establish the OPDC to be responsible for its public sector reform agenda instead of the OCSC. As a result, responsibility for public sector culture and values reform was transferred from the OCSC to the OPDC. On 9 May 2003, to complement the Public Sector Reform Strategic Plan, a workshop entitled ‘Paradigm Shift in the New Management and Public Sector Management’ was organised by the OPDC. The workshop aimed to gather views and recommendations from academics, specialists in public sector development, and ministry representatives. The workshop considered strategies and guidelines to develop adherence by public officials to a core set of values, grouped under the acronym ‘I AM READY’. The letters stood for integrity, activeness, morality, relevancy, efficiency, accountability, democracy, and yield the initiative was prepared by the OPDC. On 22 September 2003, the cabinet approved a strategy to change the culture and values management paradigm in the public sector. Three sub-strategies were identified: firstly, creating learning processes in the public sector; secondly, gathering suggestions to create an environment favourable to an effective learning process; and thirdly, public participation to spur changes in public sector culture and values paradigms. In order to follow this strategy, every government
agency was required to create its own list of public ethical standards together with an implementation plan. Organisations were also required to develop indicators for their officials. Relevant documentation was to be submitted to the OPDC (OPDC, 2004).

On 31 March 2004, the Clean and Transparent Centre of the OPDC was established. This centre was responsible for coordinating the Clean and Transparent Thai Public Sector Project. This centre was tasked with monitoring the Clean and Transparent Centres of each ministry and the public ethical standards created and implemented by them.

**Reform Implementation in the Ministry of Culture**

Reform implementation of public culture and values within the Ministry of Culture can be categorised into three actions. The first action involved participation in seminars and workshops provided by the government. The second action was the establishment of the Clean and Transparent Centre in the Ministry of Culture, and the third action was the creation of the five public ethical standards to be used in the ministry.

In relation to the first action, the Ministry of Culture followed the government policy by ensuring its officials participated in all the seminars and workshops mentioned earlier. Each department and office selected officials to participate. However, there were no criteria on how to select these officials. Sometimes they were volunteers, but in other cases they were selected by their supervisors. A number of training events on public ethics were organised within the Ministry of Culture. For instance, workshops about a clean and transparent public sector were held by the ministry, and every official was expected to attend. However, the outcomes of the seminars and workshops were intangible, and were difficult to evaluate because even though the government policy on public culture and values reform has been explained to all Ministry of Culture officials, ethical standards are only abstract nouns. The government had no methods to measure whether its officials were ethical people or that they improved their behaviour in line with the desired ethical practices. Moreover, the level of corruption in the ministry could not be identified. The seminars and workshops organised by the OCSC were only information lessons for the officials in the Ministry of Culture. There was nothing to guarantee that strategies announced at those events would be implemented by the ministry officials. In
addition, there was no follow-up work after the seminars and workshops to investigate the effects of the seminars, workshops and other initiatives.

The second action of the Ministry of Culture regarding the reform involved the establishment of the Clean and Transparent Centre in 2004. The centre was established in response to the government’s Clean and Transparent Thai Public Sector Project. Three ministry officials were assigned to work for the centre. All of them were cultural officers. This centre was responsible for monitoring every action in the ministry, and ensuring that every action, such as procurement and bidding was ethical. The Clean and Transparent Centre of the Ministry of Culture was monitored by the Clean and Transparent Centre of the OPDC.

On 17 August 2005, the third action of the ministry on public culture and values reform was implemented. The Ministry of Culture created five codes of public ethical standards together with indicators to measure the behaviour of ministry officials in relation to the codes. There was also an implementation plan. The first code focused on the honesty of officials and the provision of public services in the most effective, responsible and honest manner. The first code urged officials to generate as many benefits as possible for both people and the ministry. The indicator for evaluating the first code was the number of complaints from the public on the quality of services provided by the ministry. The code also included suggestions on methods that might be used to encourage government officials to follow the code. In particular, the methods involved rewarding officials who were the most responsible and honest by giving certificates as well as conducting contests about honesty in workplace.

The second code focused on morality, correct behaviour, and adherence to professional principles. It required officials to avoid practices which were against regulations, and to act in an ethical manner as should be expected according to the professional ethical code of the government. More importantly, this second code encouraged officials to be patient, not to accept bribes, and to recognise their own honour and dignity. Indicators for this code included the number of officials rewarded or punished by the government for their behaviour, the number of complaints from the public, and the level of public satisfaction among those served by ministry officials. To encourage government officials to behave in
the desired manner, the ministry conducted seminars dealing with how to work morally and how this could be rewarded.

The third code urged ministry officials to achieve their goals by encouraging public participation. This code also aimed to encourage the officials to respect multi-cultural opinions both in and outside of their workplaces. This code was accompanied by implementation guidelines that encouraged the officials to work as a team rather than as individuals, and to coordinate more with other organisations. The code also directed official to receive opinions and suggestions made by the public. The indicator for this code was the number of projects created by ministry officials working as teams. To promote this code, it was suggested that public opinion polls should be conducted regularly in order to better understand what people were thinking, how they evaluated the ministry’s work, and what they wanted the ministry to do in the future.

The fourth code focused on interaction with colleagues, officials in other ministries, and the public. The ministry officials had to work creatively as teams paying respect to each other’s opinions. Results of this code could be evaluated by the number of complaints made by people in relation to what they thought about the behaviour and performance of the officials. To encourage the ministry officials to follow this code, a call centre was established to enable people to phone in complaints to the ministry. In addition, there were certificates for the officials who worked in teams while a website called ‘the Clean and Transparent Centre’ was created for the public. The website contained information about the centre such as its mission, strategies, and reports and studies on accountability and transparency.

The fifth ethical code of the ministry focused on the concept of sufficiency economy. This has been defined by Thailand Development Research Institute as follows:

Sufficiency Economy is a philosophy that stresses the middle path as the overriding principle for appropriate conduct by the populace at all levels. This applies to conduct at the levels of the individual, family, and community, as well as to the choice of a balanced development strategy for the nation so as to modernise in line with the forces of globalisation while shielding against inevitable shocks and excesses that arise. "Sufficiency" means moderation and due consideration in all modes of conduct, as well as the need for sufficient protection from internal and external shocks. To achieve this, the application of knowledge with prudence is essential. In particular, great care is needed in the utilisation of untested theories and methodologies for planning and
implementation. At the same time, it is essential to strengthen the moral fibre of the nation so that everyone, particularly political and public officials, technocrats, businessmen and financiers, adheres first and foremost to the principles of honesty and integrity. In addition, a balanced approach combining patience, perseverance, diligence, wisdom and prudence is indispensable to cope appropriately with critical challenges arising from extensive and rapid socioeconomic, environmental, and cultural changes occurring as a result of globalisation (TDRI, 2005).

The fifth code attempted to motivate the ministry officials to follow Thai customs and values, and the Buddhist practices. This code aimed not only to persuade officials to act in the desired moral manner, but also aimed to set out how to be a role model for the public. Indicators for this code were the number of times officials participated in religious activities such as meditation, and the number of the complaints by people in the society regarding their dissatisfaction with the government officials. In addition, the ministry developed methods to encourage officials to act in accordance with the code. These included the establishment of a call centre, development of the campaign on organisational responsibility, and seminars promoting morality among officials.

**Interviews Section**

**Perceptions on Ministry of Culture Officials**

Information was gathered from the same group of Ministry of Culture officials as in the case study in the previous chapter (see Table 6.1). Twenty eight respondents working in different levels in the Ministry of Culture were interviewed. Details of the respondents were as in the earlier case study.

The first question asked about the perceptions of officials on factors driving public culture and values reform. All officials in the Ministry of Culture (28 respondents, 100 percent) believed that the most important factor driving public culture and values reform was the increasing perception of corruption in the public sector (see Table 7.1). The respondents indicated that most people in Thailand realised that corruption in the public sector was a major problem. Many research reports on corruption in the Thai public sector by academic institutions, and international organisations have identified this problem (TDRI, 2006; World Bank, 2006c). Interestingly, no official mentioned that
public culture and values reforms could be an initiative to improve performance in the Thai public sector.

Table 7.1: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on Factors Driving the Public Culture and Values Reform

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Driving Force of the Public Culture and Values Reform</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increasing corruption</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second question asked officials whether there had been changes in behaviour after the introduction of public culture and values reform. Interviewees did see big changes in their behaviour (see Table 7.2). All respondents in every level (28 respondents, 100 percent) indicated that they had to change their behaviour about budget matters. All respondents reported that they were accountable for all their actions, and could be checked and investigated by both the government and public. The officials especially in the senior level did, however, say that they needed to pay more attention to some of their actions especially those relating to the budget of the ministry. For example, in some cases the respondents had to run small projects in their organisations, and they needed to manage budgets. They were required to provide receipts for everything they purchased. However, some respondents in the middle and junior level stated that junior and middle level officials normally had no authority to make decisions on budgetary matters in the ministry. They were responsible for managing only small amounts of budget in some projects. Therefore, they had no opportunity to become corrupt. In contrast, most of the budget was managed by senior level officials. The junior and middle levels officials believed that there were some unethical actions at the senior level in the Ministry of Culture.
Table 7.2: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on Changes in their Behaviour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Changed</th>
<th>Unchanged</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior level</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior level</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In relation to seminars, workshops, and training courses organised by the OCSC, and the OPDC, the respondents were asked about their perceptions on the benefits of these initiatives for the public culture and values reform. The majority of the respondents among three levels (19 persons, 67.85 percent) felt neutral about the benefits of the seminars, workshops and training courses. They had no ideas whether those seminars, workshops and training courses helped to promote and develop codes of ethics within the Ministry of Culture or not (see Table 7.3). While three respondents (60 percent) in the senior level chose neutral, they did indicate that the seminars and workshops were not useful for some government officials who were ‘forced’ to participate in those seminars and workshops. Only two of the respondents (40 percent) in the senior level expressed the view that a number of seminar and workshops were of benefit for the government officials because they stimulated the officials to be accountable for their actions and responsibilities. Eight respondents (100 percent) in the junior level and eight respondents (53.37) in the middle level believed that the seminars and workshops were helpful. These respondents also indicated that they actually had no intention to attend those activities, but they had to participate because they were ordered to go by their supervisors.
Table 7.3: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on the Benefits of Seminars and Workshops on the Public Culture and Values Reform

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Very beneficial</th>
<th>Beneficial</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Not beneficial</th>
<th>Adverse Consequences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior level</td>
<td>2 (40.00)</td>
<td>3 (60.00)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7 (46.67)</td>
<td>8 (53.37)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The respondents were asked about their perceptions on the benefit of the Clean and Transparent Thai Public Sector Project. Their perceptions on this particular question were quite different among three levels (see Table 7.4). Five respondents (100 percent) in the senior level thought that the project was of benefit because it helped to combat corruption. They indicated that as the clean and transparent strategic plan was created by the ministry, so all its officials needed to follow the plan. They said this should help the ministry to combat corruption. Five respondents (33.33 percent) in the middle level also agreed with the view of the senior level. In contrast, ten respondents (66.67) in the middle level and all respondents (eight respondents, 100 percent) in the junior level believed that the project had brought no benefits. They said that the strategic plan and objectives of the project designed by the ministry, had no indicators to evaluate the results and so the benefit of the project could not be known. These respondents also concluded that the Ministry of Culture did not really implement the project.
Table 7.4: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on the Benefits of the Clean and Transparent Thai Public Sector Project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Very beneficial</th>
<th>Beneficial</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Not beneficial</th>
<th>Adverse Consequences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior level</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5 (33.33)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10 (66.67)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8 (100)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The next question focused on the perceptions of officials on the benefit deriving from the Clean and Transparent Centre of the Ministry of Culture. The perceptions of the government officials were quite similar (see Table 7.5). All respondents (100 percent) in the senior level agreed that the Clean and Transparent Centre was of benefit. They indicated that the centre helped to prevent corruption in the Ministry of Culture. The respondents explained that it was difficult for the officials who intended to be corrupt because the centre had responsibility for monitoring the actions of staff. Five respondents (33.33 percent) in the middle level agreed with the senior level and believed that the centre had helped to decrease corruption. However, the rest of the middle level officials (66.67 percent) and all respondents in the junior level (eight respondents, 100 percent) thought that the Clean and Transparent Centre was not beneficial because it did not really help to combat corruption. They thought that the establishment of the centre was one of the government policies which has been introduced by the OCSC in order to improve the image of the government.
Table 7.5: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on the Benefits of the Clean and Transparent Centre of the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Very beneficial</th>
<th>Beneficial</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Not beneficial</th>
<th>Adverse Consequences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior level</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5 (33.33)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10 (66.67)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8 (100)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In relation to the five public ethical standards created by the Ministry of Culture, the respondents were required to provide their perceptions in terms of their effectiveness (see Table 7.6). Two out of five respondents (40 percent) in the senior level indicated that the ethical standards were effective since they provided the basis for an implementation plan for the officials and also encouraged them to perform ethically within the ministry. The majority (60 percent) were undecided on this matter. They indicated that it was difficult to evaluate whether the five ethical standards were effective or not because the ministry had only created the standards that year (2005), and there had been insufficient time to judge whether or not they were effective. However, all respondents in the middle (100 percent) and junior (100 percent) levels agreed that the public ethical standards had not been effectively implemented. They indicated that the public ethical standards were necessarily created by the Ministry of Culture in order to follow the Public Sector Reform Strategic Plan of the government. The respondents also indicated that many officials did not know about the ethical standards because they did not participate in creating those standards, and presumably did not even know about them due to insufficient communication of them.
Table 7.6: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on the Effectiveness of the Five Public Ethical Standards of the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Very effective</th>
<th>Effective</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Ineffective</th>
<th>Very ineffective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior level</td>
<td>2 (40.00)</td>
<td>3 (60.00)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The next question asked for the respondents’ perceptions on the impact of public culture and values reform in the Ministry of Culture. The major impact of the reform on the officials was that they (28 respondents, 100 percent) needed to be more careful with budgetary matters of the Ministry of Culture (see Table 7.7). In every budgetary matter, such as in the budget on procurement and bidding there had to be accountability and transparency, otherwise the officials would be punished by the government. Even though junior officials normally did not have responsibility for budgetary matters, they sometimes had to manage small amounts of budget under the instructions of their supervisors.

Table 7.7: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on Impacts of the Public Culture and Values Reform in the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Strongly affected</th>
<th>Affected</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>unaffected</th>
<th>Strongly unaffected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior level</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level</td>
<td>15 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior level</td>
<td>8 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The next question asked about problems encountered during the implementation of the public culture and values reform in the Ministry of Culture. Various problems were pointed out by the respondents (see Table 7.8). The most significant problem provided by
the majority of the respondents involved the reform evaluation. All respondents (100 percent) in every level agreed that creating a policy and strategic plan about public culture and values reform was not difficult, but the Ministry of Culture did have difficulty in evaluating the outcomes of the reform because culture and values could not be measured by using quantitative data. Another problem mentioned by the respondents involved the Thai bureaucratic system. One respondent in the senior level (20 percent), twelve respondents in the middle level (80 percent), and four respondents (50 percent) in the junior level pointed out a similar view that the Thai bureaucracy was highly centralised. Lower level officials normally had to follow the higher level officials. Even though the government claimed that the Thai public sector reform aimed at decentralisation in the public sector, many respondents still believed that the Ministry of Culture had not been decentralised as it has been claimed. Junior level officials had no authority to make decisions. Politicians and senior level officials still had considerable authority which gave rise to the possibility for them to become corrupt. In addition, one of the respondents in the middle level provided an example of unethical practices. He stated that:

“I was assigned from the Ministry of Culture to be one member of a committee for procurement in a big project for the government. A big private company was hired to develop computer software for the project. After finishing the project, the computer software was a copyright of the government, and the government was able to copy and use it in every government agency. However, a politician in the cabinet and a group of senior level officials did not do so. They hired the same private company to develop the same computer software once again for other government agencies. They continued to use the national budget for the same project, and they personally got a lot of remuneration from the private company. Many government officials in the committee realised that even though this was not corruption, it was definitely an unethical practice. However, there was nothing done about it because this action was not against the law”.

From the example mentioned above, it can be seen there were some defects in the law. Moreover, absolute authority of politicians and senior level officials created opportunities for corrupt practices.

The respondents also indicated that the low salary of officials could be another problem for public culture and values reform. Seven respondents (46.67 percent) in the middle level and all eight respondents (100 percent) in the junior level identified that their salaries were lower than equivalent positions in the private sector. Therefore, the reform would be difficult to accomplish because low salary could lead officials to become corrupt.
Another problem involved the government allocating somewhat limited budgets for the Ministry of Culture. Five respondents in the middle level (33.33 percent) and two respondents (25 percent) in the junior level indicated that for some of the ministry’s projects, a tendering process was necessary to procure outside professional companies to execute those projects. As the Ministry of Culture’s funds were limited, the ministry could not hire the best companies. This created a predicament for the ministry, although for some of the more important projects the officials responsible felt it necessary to overspend in order to outsource the best company for the project and therefore achieve the best result. Nevertheless, after the government introduced public culture and values reform, officials were not able to overspend because of stricter budgetary monitoring, particularly from the newly formed Clean and Transparent Centre. As a result, the respondents concluded that the limited budgetary allocation for the Ministry of Culture adversely affected its achievements.

Table 7.8: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on Problems of the Public Culture and Values Reform in the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Senior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty of Evaluation</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centralisation in the Thai bureaucratic system</td>
<td>1 (20.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Salary of government officials</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited budget of the Ministry of Culture</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The next question further explored implementation of the public culture and values reform by seeking the perceptions of officials on obstacles which hindered the reform (see Table 7.9). One senior level official (20 percent), twelve middle level officials (80 percent), and four junior level officials (50 percent) identified that even though the government had tried to reform the public sector by introducing various methods such as rearranging the public organisational structure, and changing public culture and values,
there had been continuity in the cultural norms and values which have traditionally permeated the Thai bureaucracy. For instance, the patron-client system and centralised administration were still seen to prevail in the ministry. Moreover, seven middle level officials (43.33 percent) and eight junior level officials (100 percent) indicated that the officials in the Thai public sector were familiar with the traditional public administrative system. They were suspicious and often unwilling to change because they felt insecure when their organisations were undergoing reform.

Table 7.9: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on Obstacles to Public Culture and Values Reform in the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Obstacle</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultural norms and values embedded the Thai bureaucracy</td>
<td>Senior 1 (20.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Middle 12 (80.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Junior 4 (50.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwillingness to change due to the feelings of insecurity</td>
<td>- (NR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Middle 7 (43.33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Junior 8 (100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The respondents were also questioned on the benefits of public culture and values, and different perceptions were given by the respondents (see Table 7.10). Two of the respondents (40 percent) in the senior level thought that public culture and values reform helped to improve accountability and transparency in the Ministry of Culture. Another three (60 percent) thought that the reform helped to decrease and prevent corruption in the ministry. Five of the respondents (33.33 percent) in the middle level believed that the reform helped to improve accountability and transparency. Four of them (26.67 percent) thought that the reform helped to decrease and prevent corruption. The rest of the respondents in the middle level (six persons, 40 percent) provided a different perspective that the reform did not help to change culture and values in the ministry at all. This view was also provided by all eight respondents (100 percent) in the junior level who indicated that government initiatives such as workshops, seminars, training courses and establishment of the Clean and Transparent Centre did not really change the minds of government officials. They believed that unethical government officials, especially in the senior level, still engaged in corrupt practices. Interestingly, perceptions of the efficacy of
the reform declined with position, from positive views among senior-level staff to negative perceptions among the junior-level respondents.

Table 7.10: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on the Benefits of the Public Culture and Values Reform in the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefit</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Senior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve accountability and transparency</td>
<td>2 (40.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decrease and prevent corruption</td>
<td>3 (60.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No benefit</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of the respondents believed that public culture and values in the Ministry of Culture had not really been reformed (see Table 7.11). It appeared to the respondents that in order to reform public culture and value, the government organised workshops and seminars, and created new policies. However, the respondents indicated that those policies were not effective in combating corruption which originated from the norms and culture of the traditional Thai bureaucratic system. All respondents (eight respondents, 100 percent) in the junior level and eleven respondents (eleven persons, 73.33 percent) in the middle level thought that the reform was ineffective. The rest of the respondents in the middle level (four persons, 26.67), and two respondents (40 percents) in the senior level felt neutral. They indicated that the government reform policy on public culture and value demonstrated that the government had tried to improve accountability and transparency in the public sector. They were noncommittal about its effectiveness. Only three of the respondents (60 percent) in the senior level indicated that the reform was effective. They identified that it was a good start by the government in terms of combating corruption because it helped to stimulate government officials to perform ethically in their organisations.
Table 7.11: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on the Effectiveness of the Public Culture and Values Reform in the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Very effective</th>
<th>Effective</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Ineffective</th>
<th>Very ineffective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior Level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3 (60.00)</td>
<td>2 (40.00)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4 (26.67)</td>
<td>11 (73.33)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior Level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8 (100)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Perceptions of Officials in the Office of the Civil Service Commission (OCSC) and the Office of the Public Sector Development Commission (OPDC)

All five OCSC and OPDC officials who participated in the interviews were the same group of respondents as in the earlier case study. One respondent was a senior level official, and four respondents were middle level officials. Information about the respondents is provided in Table 6.13.

All of the respondents (five respondents, 100 percent) from the OCSC and the OPDC accepted that changing culture and values of the government officials in the Thai public sector was far-reaching and ambitious. They believed that this was the most difficult area of reform since it involved modifying the behaviour of the government officials, and prevailing behaviour patterns could not be changed immediately. Thai public sector history has been one of centralised administration. The officials observed that the centralised system has been entrenched even though there have been reforms in the Thai public sector. As a result, norms and culture established in the Thai administrative system have not been amenable to change especially within a short period of time. The officials admitted that it may take many years to reform existing behaviour, particularly unethical practices. The respondents indicated that the best way to reform public culture and values was by encouraging officials to perform ethically. The OCSC and the OPDC interviewees believed that workshops, seminars and training courses about behavioural reform would stimulate the government officials to behave more ethically and thus help to accomplish public culture and values reform.
The respondents also thought that the establishment of the Clean and Transparent Centre in the OPDC would help to monitor accountability and transparency within government agencies. In particular, the Clean and Transparent Centre in every ministry would be a representative of the OPDC and assist that organisation to monitor and investigate the actions of the ministry officials. The respondents believed that their work in the Clean and Transparent Centre at least helped to decrease corruption in government agencies. Moreover, the respondents noted that to facilitate public culture and values reform in the Thai public sector, a new and improved remuneration package for government officials was approved by the cabinet in 2004. The aim of this reform was to decrease the gap between salaries in the public sector and those in the private sector. The respondents hoped that increasing remuneration for the government officials would help to prevent corruption in the public sector.

All respondents agreed that the intended government policy on public culture and values reform was followed and implemented efficiently by the Ministry of Culture. Even though the outcome of the reform could not be measured at this stage, the central agency officials hoped that the ongoing policy implementation would help to gradually decrease corruption in the Thai public sector.
Chapter 8

Workforce Reduction in the Ministry of Culture

Introduction

Personnel management reform is another significant reform dimension of the Thai public sector reform which commenced implementation in 1999 during the Chuan Leekpai government. It has been continually implemented since then, and was set out in the Public Sector Reform Strategic Plan (2003-2005). This personnel management reform dimension contains various reforms such as the introduction of the senior executive service system (SES), improvement of the remuneration and benefit system for civil servants, and downsizing. In relation to the latter, Thailand has an oversized public sector which has been a strain on government budget. Salaries and other personnel expenses account for nearly 42 percent of government budgetary expenditure, and if allowed to increase they can eat into the investment budget reducing the resources available for new national development initiatives. As a result, the main thrust of personnel management reform policy in the Thai public sector is on workforce downsizing in government organisations. Furthermore, the downsizing program in the Thai public sector can be identified as part of the effort to import NPM and claimed by the Thai government as being a part of the NPM paradigm since it emphasised cost-cutting.

This chapter examines the downsizing programs implemented in the Thai public service during the former Chuan government and the current Thaksin government. The chapter is divided into two sections. The first section is a case study narrative which provides a description of the government reform policy on work force reduction, and then delineates the implementation of this reform in the Ministry of Culture. In the second section, the perceptions of officials in different levels in the Ministry of Culture, the OCSC, and the OPDC are provided in order to discover whether the reform policy of the government has been implemented successfully in the ministry.
Case Study Narrative

Government Policy on Civil Service Downsizing

The Thai government has tried to control the number of civil servants since 1980. However, the OCSC has reported that the number of civil servants in the Thai public sector increased from 812,507 persons in 1981 to 1,233,619 in 1997. This is an average increase of 2.5 percent each year. Even though investment budgets increased by under 10 percent, this was less than the annual increase of government budgetary expenditure that grew by 11.3 percent every year from 43,137 million baht in the fiscal year of 1981 to almost 300,000 million baht in the fiscal year of 1997 (OCSC, 2000).

Although many new streamlining and personnel cost-cutting measures were initiated in response to government budget constraints, the policy to control the size of the civil service and limit the employment of new staff continued. The Measure to Control the Growth of the Civil Service policy was created by Chuan’s second government in 1998 and aimed to stop replacing vacancies created by retirement:

It has been four years since the measure for controlling the size of the Civil Service was introduced in February 1994. The government has not been very successful in curbing the growth of the civil service. It has had limited success in delaying the recruitment of new staff and restricting the replacement of vacancies on retirement. However, as the government is facing fiscal and financial crisis, the government must be more careful about approving requests for manpower increases from line ministries and departments. Our ultimate aim is to reduce public personnel costs. Restricting the increase in government personnel alone will not be enough. The government must find ways to actually downsize the number of civil servants (CSMPC, personal communication, January 16, 1998).

The issue of controlling the size of the civil service was again set out as part of the government’s downsizing target announced in the Master Plan for Reforming the Civil Service in 1998. Realising that there were few signs of economic recovery and that the Asian Financial Crisis of 1997 would continue to have a serious impact on the government’s fiscal status for several years, on 23 April 1998, the cabinet endorsed a downsizing measure, namely an employment freeze, which had been used successfully in 1991-2, and would be reintroduced and enforced between the years of 1999 and 2001. No government agencies would be allowed to recruit new staff during these three years.
Exceptions were only to be granted to departments that were legally bound to admit their own scholarship students.

On 28 April 1998, to complement the recruitment freeze, the cabinet ruled that 80 percent of vacancies on retirement in ministries and departments would be compulsorily abolished. Only 20 percent of vacancies could be replaced. Furthermore, replacements at the new 20 percent level would not be automatic since the government would generate a pool of vacancies collected across all government departments and agencies, from which posts would be allocated according to the essential requirements of ministries and departments. If there were any vacancies left after the allocation process, those positions would be abolished.

The new measure to abolish 80 percent of vacancies created by retirement required the government to process manpower requests in a more careful and stricter manner. However, most government ministries and departments continued to request 20 percent of their vacancies to be refilled without justifying their real needs. This put the government in a difficult situation and led to the adoption of an uncompromising approach to processing requests for personnel increases. At its meeting on 11 August 1998, the cabinet emphasised that the government had tried to control the size of the civil service and reduce public personnel costs since 1982, but it had not been successful. Currently the country was facing an economic crisis and the government would only allow the minimum number of replacements possible (CSMPC, personal communication, August 11, 1998).

Like civil service reform, downsizing was high on the government agenda because of the economic crisis (reduced income and increased debt) and the consequent severe fiscal constraints imposed by the IMF rescue package. The central co-ordinating agencies, particularly the OCSC speedily produced action plans and the Measure to Reduce Public Personnel Expenditure. These called for the streamlining and downsizing of the civil service through a recruitment freeze and an early retirement scheme.
Introducing an Early Retirement Programme

An early retirement programme was introduced in 1999 and enabled the Thai government to make a considerable reduction in the number of government personnel. By the end of 1999, 20,000 persons (1.54 percent of total civil service) had voluntarily left the civil service with equitable retirement benefits and ‘golden handshakes’. Downsizing the civil service by encouraging government personnel to leave the service voluntarily was not a new idea for the OCSC. During Prime Minister Anand’s administration in 1991-2, the cabinet had also instructed that an early retirement programme should be devised as a means to remove excess personnel from the civil service.

The cabinet decision’s on 29 June 1999 to introduce an early retirement programme was underlined by the need to downsize the civil service effectively and to achieve the target of 20 percent personnel (government officials) reduction by 2001. The stated aim of the programme was to create a small but flexible and efficient civil service consistent with the Master Plan for Civil Service Reform. The programme would facilitate the reduction of public personnel costs in the long run although there would be outlay on compensation at the start. The program would contribute to meeting the terms for improving the civil service agreed with the IMF (OCSC, 1999). The voluntary early retirement programme devised by the OCSC was aimed at government personnel either aged 50 years and over, or those with 25 years of service or more. Since the programme aimed to downsize the civil service, replacement of positions created by vacancies and reinstatement of retired personnel were not allowed. However, the government reserved the right to authorise special requests for personnel recruitment to ensure there were no skill shortages in vital areas.

The qualifying participants for the Early Retirement Program were expected to receive benefits such as pensions and training from the government. Each recipient received two different payments. The first payment was the last month’s salary multiplied by seven. The second payment was the last month’s salary multiplied by years of service, and divided by fifty. This came in the form of a pension and was received monthly for life. In relation to the benefits, the government provided a number of training sessions regarding what to do after retiring from the public service. However, an important condition of the program was that the participants were not able to return to the public service.
The Early Retirement Program was first conducted by the Chuan government in June 1999, and then again in March 2000, and was completed by the end of that year. The OCSC reported that during the fiscal year 2000-2001, the reduction in the number of civil servants and permanent employees had been carried out effectively. The number of civil servant positions had been reduced by 29,627 and those of regular employees by 9,889 giving a total reduction of 39,516 positions by the end of the program (OCSC, 2001c). However, the election of early 2001 brought to power the Thai Rak Thai government into power under Dr. Thaksin Shinawatra. His government reintroduced the Early Retirement Program for the third time on 1 May 2001.

On 29 November 2003, the cabinet announced the Personnel Development and Administration Measures, and assigned the OCSC to be responsible for implementation (OCSC, n.d.). The measure was one of the initiatives in the personnel management reform which was a major reform dimension in the Public Sector Management Reform Strategic Plan 2003-2008. The Personnel Development and Administration Measures was comprised of three sub-measures although only two sub-measures were implemented at this time.

The first sub-measure was created to give financial support to civil servants who wanted to take up new jobs outside of the public sector. This sub-measure encouraged public servants to retire from the public sector and to begin new jobs outside of it. The second sub-measure was created to give financial support to public servants who were not happy with the public sector reform program of the government and wanted to resign voluntarily. Generally, the participants in the first and the second sub-measure had similar characteristics. They were at least 50 years of age or had at least 25 years experience of working in the public sector. Participants in the two sub-measures would receive two pensions from the government as explained earlier. The first and the second sub-measures can be considered successful since there were 51,878 officials around the country who participated. However, only 48,101 of the participants met the criteria for resignation as set out in the sub-measures. The OCSC reported that the government had to pay 7,636 million baht to implement the two sub-measures. However, the government estimated budget savings of at least 4,539 million baht each subsequent year (OCSC, 2003a).
On 30 March 2004, the third sub-measure of the Personnel Development and Administration Measures was considered and announced by the cabinet. The third sub-measure was not a voluntary scheme; rather it forced public servants to resign from their government organisations. The government aimed to remove 5 percent of the total number of officials from every government agency around the country. This sub-measure involved two evaluations (see Figure 8.1). Firstly, each government agency had to evaluate the performance of officials who worked in the organisation using evaluation standards created by each organisation. At this first stage, every official would be evaluated by their supervisors as part of the sub-measures. After that, the evaluation was passed on to the Deputy Director General and the Director General respectively (OCSC, 2003b).

Officials who were ranked in the bottom 5 percent would have two alternatives. One option was to voluntarily resign from the public sector, and receive compensation amounting to eight times their last month’s salary. Under the second option, they could remain working in their organisations but needed to be retrained by the government for a period of six month, after which they were transferred to a different office. They would then undergo a second evaluation by their new supervisors, the Deputy Director General and the Director General of their organisations. If they were still ranked in the bottom 5 percent of government officials in that organisation, they would be forced to resign from the public sector immediately, and they would not get compensation from the government. If they passed this evaluation they would be able to continue working in their organisations as normal until the next evaluation when they would be treated the same as all other employees (OCSC, 2003b).
Figure 8.1: The Proposed Third Sub-Measure Process

Source: Modified from S.Simanun, personal communication, April 12, 2004
Interestingly, even though the OCSC did provide instructions on how to implement the sub-measure, there was no training course for the evaluation process. Several months after the third sub-measure was announced to the public sector, the OCSC received a number of communications from government officials who were uncomfortable with the government policy. The OCSC noted that government officials around the country did not properly comprehend the process and rationale of the third sub-measure of the Personnel Development and Administration measures. Therefore, Sima Simanun, the Director-General of the OCSC felt obliged to elucidate the process and rationale of this sub-measure once again.

Sima indicated that this was the first time that there was to be performance evaluation of Thai government officials. In order to make the third sub-measure work, and to complement the other public sector reforms, it was necessary for civil servants to work efficiently. However, in reality there were some civil servants who were either lazy, unwilling to work, or who worked inefficiently. This was unfair for those who worked hard. Most civil servants perceived that working in the public sector was stable and secure. Once they were in the public sector no one would force them to resign. The government aimed to change those perceptions. Stability of employment was to be based on efficiency of work. The Director General of the OCSC reiterated that the third sub-measure would involve action against the bottom 5 percent of government officials who were deemed to be inefficient. The OCSC would consider the causes of inefficiency of each of these officials. The final decision on their fate would eventually be made by the OCSC (OCSC, personal communication, n.d.).

Despite this explanation about the measure from the Director-General of the OCSC, many officials were still dissatisfied with this government policy. They had no confidence in the method of evaluation. In order to create better comprehension, and understanding on the third sub-measure, Dr. Visanu Kruengam, the Deputy Prime Minister who was responsible for public sector reform in Thailand, made a statement to the effect that most officials did not fully understand the government policy on workforce reduction, and misperceived the intentions of the government on personnel management reform. He stated that the government intended to downsize the number of civil servants by removing only inefficient officials. The Deputy Prime Minister identified that there was a miscommunication problem between the government and its officials. The government
actually did not intend to remove 5 percent of officials in every government agency. He further contended that some government agencies might not have officials who worked inefficiently if everyone was performing their work well.

From the above statement of the Deputy Prime Minister, it can be seen that there was a communication problem between the government and civil servants over the interpretation and the implementation of the third sub-measure. The latter was vaguely introduced to the public sector because at the first stage it can be seen that the government aimed to reduce 5 percent of government officials in every government agency. However, only several months after announcing the measure there were civil servants who were not satisfied with the measure and the government policy on downsizing. Even though the government had provided information about the policy, and explained about the necessity and benefit of this measure, most government officials still wanted the government to abolish the measure because they felt insecure in their positions.

By the end of 2004, Thaksin had completed his four years term as Prime Minister, and the next election was to be held in January 2005. On the eve of the election, in December 2004, Thaksin and his cabinet decided to abolish the third sub-measure of the Personnel Development and Administration Measures. The government realised that votes from civil servants around the country were very important for the government to win the election of 2005. Therefore, the government did not want to antagonise its officials by implementing the third sub-measure as it promised to generate a great deal of ill-feeling towards the government among civil servants and could adversely affect votes for the government (Office of the Prime Minister, personnel communication, September 27, 2004; Klangtieng, 2004). At the beginning of 2005, the Thaksin government won the election and was returned to power. However, the third sub-measure was not reintroduced.

From this case narrative, it can be seen that the first and the second sub-measures seemed to be successful, but the third sub-measure totally failed. Although the government has focused on the NPM concept of cost cutting by introducing the downsizing program, especially in the third sub-measure, the program was not successful due to the miscommunication between the government and civil servants and feelings of insecurity generated by it among civil servants. Moreover, according the third sub-measure, it can
be seen that the government did not really focus, and implement the downsizing program as it was set out in the *Public Sector Reform Strategic Plan 2003-2008*. In contrast, the government appeared to be driven more by a concern to win the election. Thus, policies could be abandoned if they were judged to be unfavourable in terms of obtaining votes.

**Reform Implementation in the Ministry of Culture**

Since the Ministry of Culture is a new ministry, established in 2002 in accordance with the *Royal Act on Reformation of Government Ministries and Departments 2002*, the first government policy on personnel management reform implemented by the ministry, was the Personnel Development and Administration Measures. On 13 January 2004, the Ministry of Culture received an official letter from the OCSC which outlined the quota of government officials in the Ministry of Culture to which the first and second sub-measures of the Personnel Development and Administration Measures should be applied (see Table 8.1). The OCSC set out the quota for the Ministry of Culture by looking at the total number of officials in the ministry, and then estimating the number which could be removed without affecting the ministry’s work.

The quota for the Office of the Permanent Secretary was 43 persons. This number included both officials in the central area and provincial areas. The quota for the Department of Religious Affairs was four persons. The quota for the Department of the Fine Arts was 69 persons. Only one person was the quota for the Office of the National Culture Commission, as it also was for the Office of the Contemporary Arts and Culture. The OCSC did not give quotas of officials for both the Office of the Minister and the Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre, and no reason was given by the OCSC.

On 16 March 2004, the OCSC reported that there were 116 officials working in the Ministry of Culture eligible to participate in those two sub-measures. There were 42 officials from the Office of the Permanent Secretary, four from the Department of Religious Affairs, 68 from the Department of the Fine Arts, one from the Office of the National Culture Commission, and another one from the Office of the Contemporary Arts and Culture. These figures were slightly less than the original quotas prescribed by the OCSC.
Table 8.1: Quota of Officials in the Ministry of Culture for the First and Second Sub-Measures of the Personnel Development and Administration Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisations</th>
<th>Quota approved by the cabinet</th>
<th>Number of officials participating in the first and the second sub-measure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Office of the Permanent Secretary</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Religious Affairs Department</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Fine Arts Department</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Office of the National Culture Commission</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Office of the Contemporary Arts and Culture</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Personnel Development and Administration Measures, personal communication, n.d.

On 1 April 2004, the Ministry of Culture began implementing the third sub-measure of the Personnel Development and Administration Measures. Every official in the ministry was expected to be evaluated on his/her performance by their supervisors. Each government agency designed its own methods and question for performance evaluation. On 30 September 2004, the first evaluation was made, and every organisation in the Ministry of Culture identified the bottom 5 percent of officials who were evaluated as inefficient. After this first evaluation, one official immediately decided to resign.

At this point, it appeared that most of officials in the Ministry of Culture still perceived that the government aimed to reduce the number of staff in all ministries, including their own. This was despite the Director-General of the OCSC, and the Deputy Prime Minister confirming that the government did not intend to decrease the workforce by 5 percent.
The percentage of inefficient officials that might be removed could be varied depending upon their performance. However, statements by the Director-General of the OCSC, and the Deputy Prime Minister did not really clarify the picture for officials in the Ministry of Culture. Most of them believed that there was a possibility for them to be retrenched. Moreover, there was a large number of officials in the Ministry of Culture who perceived that the evaluation in their organisations was not fair because there was no set standard evaluation instrument from the OCSC. Details of these perceptions by officials in the Ministry of Culture are delineated in the following section.

Five percent of officials in the Ministry of Culture were expected to be evaluated for the second time during 1 October 2004 to 31 March 2005. However, the second evaluation was cancelled due to the government’s decision to abolish the third sub-measure at the end of 2004.

**Interviews Section**

**Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials**

The following perceptions were gathered from 28 officials who worked in different levels of the Ministry of Culture. Information and details of those government officials were provided in Table 6.1.

The first question focused on the driving forces of the downsizing program introduced by the government. Respondents were allowed to provide more than one answer. From the perceptions of the officials, there were two major factors driving the workforce reduction program (see Table 8.2). Twenty-one respondents (75 percent) identified reducing expenditure as the driving force from their point of view. They indicated that the government spent most of the budget on the salaries of government officials. In addition, the government also had to take care of those government officials’ families. For instance, the government had to pay for tuition fees for their offspring until they were 18 years of age. The government also had to pay for medical fees when those government officials or their families got sick. Therefore, the respondents identified that reducing the number of government officials helped the government to decrease its budget.
Meanwhile, fifteen respondents (53.57 percent) indicated that reducing the number of inefficient government officials was another factor which drove the downsizing program in the public sector. They explained that most government officials in the Thai public sector believed that working in the public sector as government officials normally guaranteed job security. Once they were in the public sector, no one was going to force them to resign unless they were willing to resign. As a result, there was a number of government officials who were lazy and worked inefficiently. The respondents also believed that many people outside the public sector thought that the Thai public sector was inefficient because of inefficient officials. This led the government to introduce the policy on workforce reduction.

Table 8.2: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on the Factors Driving the Downsizing Program in the Thai Public Sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Driving factors</th>
<th>Numbers of respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To decrease budget spending on salaries of government officials.</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To reduce the number of inefficient government officials</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>53.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: One respondent could have more than one answer.

The next question focused on feelings of job security for officials after the downsizing program was introduced (see Table 8.3). The respondents (five persons, 100 percent) in the senior level indicated that they had always felt secure in their positions because they believed that they had worked for the public sector for a long period, they had experience, and their abilities were necessary for the ministry. Therefore, they were confident that they would not be victims of the downsizing program and ejected from their organisations. Five respondents (33.33 percent) in the middle level provided similar answers to those in the senior level. However, ten respondents (66.67 percent) in the middle level and eight respondents (100 percent) in the junior level felt insecure in their
positions because they thought that the Ministry of Culture needed to oust the bottom 5 percent of all officials in the ministry on instructions from the OCSC.

Table 8.3: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on Job Security in the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feeling on Job Security</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Senior (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt secure on their positions</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt insecure on their positions</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After the downsizing program was initiated within the public sector, three sub-measures of the Personnel Development and Administration Measures were introduced in every government agency. The next question asked in the interviews had to do with the perceptions of officials in the Ministry of Culture on their level of satisfaction with the first and second sub-measures (see Table 8.4). All respondents (100 percent) in the senior level were satisfied with those two sub-measures. They indicated that the two programs provided an opportunity for qualified government officials who were interested in changing their career paths to resign from the public sector and receive compensation for participating in the programs. However, the respondents indicated that even though they qualified for the programs, they were not interested in participating because they still wanted to work for the public sector, and did not want to resign at that time. All respondents (15 persons, 100 percent) in the middle level and all respondents (8 persons, 100 percent) in the junior level felt neutral towards the two sub-measures since they were either unaware of the content of those two sub-measures or had not been interested in taking up the offer, they declined to provide a clear opinion of the matter. Those who were aware of the contents of the two sub-measures stated that they were introduced for officials who were 50 years of age or older with at least 25 years of service in the public sector only, which mainly involved officials in the senior level. Most of the respondents in the middle and junior level did not provide comments or pass an opinion on those two programs.
Table 8.4: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on Satisfaction with the First and the Second Sub-Measures of the Personnel Development and Administration Measures in the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Unsatisfied</th>
<th>Very unsatisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior level</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A question on the appropriateness and fairness of the first and the second sub-measures was also provided to the respondents (see Table 8.5). All five respondents (100 percent) in the senior level and three respondents (20 percent) in the middle level agreed that the programs were appropriate and fair for the government officials who participated. They indicated that the processes and compensation for participating in the programs were appropriate. However, the rest of the respondents (twelve persons, 80 percent in the middle level and eight persons, 100 percent in the junior level) thought that the processes and compensation for the two programs were neutral since they had insufficient knowledge to answer the question, did not qualify for the programs, or were not particularly interested in the two sub-measures.

Table 8.5: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on the Appropriateness and Fairness of the First and the Second Sub-Measures of the Personnel Development and Administration Measures in the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Very appropriate</th>
<th>Appropriate</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Inappropriate</th>
<th>Very inappropriate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3 (20)</td>
<td>12 (80)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ministry of Culture officials were also asked about their perceptions on the effectiveness of the First and Second Sub-Measures of Personnel Development and Administration in the Ministry of Culture (see Table 8.6). Five respondents (100 percent) in the senior level thought that the two sub-measures were carried out effectively because 116 officials in the Ministry of Culture participated in those two programs. The figure was very close to the quota of the Ministry of Culture which was 118 persons. The respondents indicated that the Ministry could reduce its budget significantly through the implementation of the two sub-measures. Ten respondents (66.67 percent) in the middle level and two respondents (25 percent) in the junior level agreed with those in the senior level, for the same reasons. Nevertheless, these respondents pointed out that while the programs were efficient in terms of decreasing the ministry’s budget, at the same time the ministry lost skilled and experienced officials. These respondents further started that many of the officials who participated in the two programs were experienced and skilled individuals who were bored working in the public sector. As a result, the ministry may now lack staff who have the required expertise. Only five respondents (33.33 percent) in the middle level and six respondents (75 percent) in the junior level felt neutral towards the effectiveness of the two programs. They said that they did not really know the details of the programs because they did not qualify for the programs.

Table 8.6: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on the Effectiveness of the First and Second Sub-Measures of the Personnel Development and Administration Measures in the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Very effective</th>
<th>Effective</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Ineffective</th>
<th>Very ineffective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10 (66.67)</td>
<td>5 (33.33)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 (25.00)</td>
<td>6 (75.00)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The next question asked the respondents to provide their perceptions on satisfaction with the third program which potentially involved removing the bottom 5 percent of the total number of officials from the Ministry of Culture (see Table 8.7). The different levels of seniority of the respondents provided quite different perceptions about their satisfaction with this sub-measure. All five respondents (100 percent) in the senior level were satisfied with the third sub-measure which aimed at reducing the number of inefficient officials. They stated that this program definitely helped to reduce the number of inefficient officials because after introducing this third sub-measure, officials in the Ministry of Culture became more enthusiastic about their performance. For example, they came to work early, and many of them often worked until late. Seven respondents (46.67 percent) in the middle level and three respondents (37.5 percent) in the junior level agreed with the respondents in the senior level. They indicated that government officials actively responded to the pressure of having their performance scrutinised. However, eight respondents (53.33 percent) in the middle level and five respondents (62.5 percent) in the junior level provided different perceptions. They indicated that they were not satisfied with the third sub-measure since they felt they had to compete with other government officials in their organisations in order to avoid being evaluated in the bottom 5 percent of officials in their organisations. These respondents stated that they did not believe in the evaluation system because it did not have an evaluation tool which applied across all government agencies.

Table 8.7: Level of Satisfaction of Ministry of Culture Officials with the Third Sub-Measure of the Personnel Development and Administration Measures in the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Unsatisfied</th>
<th>Very unsatisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7 (46.67)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8 (53.33)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3 (37.5)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5 (62.5)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Since the third sub-measure of the Personnel Development and Administration Measures directly affected officials in every level, they were asked to provide their perceptions on the appropriateness and fairness of the evaluation process for the program (see Table 8.8). All five respondents (100 percent) in the senior level agreed that the broad evaluation process of the program was fair and appropriate. They admitted that even though the performance evaluation methods and questions of each government agency were different, the Ministry of Culture had to follow the instructions proposed by the government. The respondents noted that the government did not dismiss inefficient government officials at the first evaluation. They were given two alternatives, either resigning or retraining follow by a second evaluation. For those who were willing to resign after the first evaluation, they received both payout and pension from the government.

In contrast, none of the middle and junior level officials felt that the evaluation process of the program was appropriate and fair. Seven respondents (46.67 percent) in the middle level and two respondents (25 percent) in the junior level indicated that the evaluation process was not appropriate while the rest of the middle level (eight persons, 53.33 percent) and the rest of the junior level (six persons, 75 percent) indicated that the evaluation process was very unfair and inappropriate. They described the third sub-measure as being aimed at reducing the number of officials in the middle and junior levels rather than those in the senior level because the senior level officials had the authority to evaluate their subordinates who were in the middle and junior levels and thus ensure that none of the 5 percent were in the senior level. It was also observed by some middle and junior level official that some senior level officials chose to help middle and junior level officials who supported them. Senior level officials could evaluate and label middle and junior level officials who they disliked as inefficient. To illustrate this point, one of middle level official provided an account of the situation she found herself in:

“I strongly believed that the evaluation process of the third sub-measure of the Personnel Development and Administration Measures was definitely unfair and inappropriate. In relation to the first evaluation of the organisation, I was in the bottom 5 percent of government officials who were evaluated as inefficient government officials. Honestly, I behaved as a good government official. I came to work early every day, and have never been absent unless I was sick. I worked hard, and was always responsible for all of my duties. However, some of my colleagues did not like me somehow. We had a bad relationship with each other. Unfortunately, those colleagues had a good relationship with my supervisor; therefore, the supervisor decided to rank me in the bottom 5 percent of
inefficient government officials because the supervisor perceived that every organisation needed to fill a 5 percent quota of inefficient government officials to the OCSC. My supervisor did not even give me a reason for why I was ranked in the bottom 5 percent. There was no standard for the evaluation. After the first evaluation, I was transferred to work in a new division within the organisation. I felt very discouraged, and I was also thinking of resigning from the public sector”.

From the above statement, it appears that officials who were supervisors in their organisations, had complete control over the evaluation of their subordinates. As the government did not provide a standard for evaluation, and there was no uniform evaluation instrument, this allowed supervisors to evaluate according to their own criteria. In addition, this situation demonstrated that the NPM principle of ‘letting the manager manage’ can generate problems in the context of the Thai public sector. In particular, empowerment of supervisors could allow them to engage in unethical practices as alleged in the above example.

Table 8.8: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on the Appropriateness and Fairness of the Third Sub-Measure of the Personnel Development and Administration Measures in the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Very appropriate</th>
<th>Appropriate</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Inappropriate</th>
<th>Very inappropriate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7 (46.67)</td>
<td>8 (53.33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 (25.00)</td>
<td>6 (75.00)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Besides seeking their viewpoints on appropriateness and fairness of the third sub-measure of the Personnel Development and Administration measures, the respondents were also questioned on their perceptions of the effectiveness of the third program. The perceptions of the respondents varied among the three levels (see Table 8.9). Five respondents (100 percent) in the senior level thought that the third sub-measure was efficient in terms of reducing the number of poor performers among civil servants. They indicated that most officials, especially those in the middle and junior levels, were more enthusiastic or diligent after the government introduced the program. Only three respondents (20
percent) in the middle level agreed with the perceptions of the senior level. The rest of the middle level respondents (twelve persons, 80 percent) and all eight respondents (100 percent) in the junior level indicated that the third program was not carried out efficiently because the government eventually scrapped the program due to the lack of clarity in the program description, and it led to the miscommunication problem between the government and its officials. Moreover, the respondents further indicated that the evaluation processes of the program were not transparent. People who had authority to evaluate were able to make unethical evaluations. In some cases, they allegedly gave special treatment for their favourite subordinates.

Table 8.9: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on the Effectiveness of the Third Sub-Measure of the Personnel Development and Administration Measures in the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Very Efficient</th>
<th>Efficient</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Inefficient</th>
<th>Very inefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3 (20.00)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12 (80.00)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After the government introduced the three sub-measures of the Personnel Development and Administration Measures to the public sector, the Ministry of Culture followed the policy by implementing those three sub-measures. As a consequence, the next question to officials in the Ministry of Culture asked for their perceptions of the impacts of the downsizing program in terms of job security in the Ministry of Culture (see Table 8.10). Five respondents (100 percent) in the senior level confirmed that the downsizing program did not affect them. They were not interested in participating in the first and second sub-measures since they still wanted to work in the public sector and did not want to change their career paths. Moreover, the respondents indicated that they worked hard and had performed efficiently in their positions. Only four of the interviewees (26.67 percent) in the middle level agreed and provided the same response as those in the senior level. The rest of the middle level respondents (eleven persons, 73.33 percent) and all respondents in
the junior level (eight persons, 100 percent) indicated that the downsizing program had made them feel very insecure in their positions, and they needed to be seen to be enthusiastic in their duties in order to show their supervisors that they performed efficiently.

Table 8.10: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on the Impacts of the Downsizing Program in the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Very secure</th>
<th>Secure</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Insecure</th>
<th>Very insecure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5(100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4 (26.67)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11 (73.33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8 (100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The next question concerned problems with implementing the downsizing program, especially the third sub-measure in the Ministry of Culture. Various problems were noted by different respondents in different levels (see Table 8.11). The most important problem pointed out by every respondent among the three levels was the ambiguity of the program to implement the third sub-measure. The respondents indicated that at the first stage of the program, it appeared that the government intended to reduce by 5 percent the number of its officials around the country, but after the OCSC received a large number of complaints from civil servants, the government changed its policy by not identifying any particular percentage of reduction. The respondents in the middle and junior level also further indicated that government policy on the third sub-measure made them feel very insecure in their positions.

The second problem concerned the evaluation process, and was pointed out by the respondents in the middle and junior levels only. None of the respondents in the senior level indicated this as a problem. Nine respondents (60 percent) in the middle level and all eight respondents (100 percent) in the junior level claimed that the evaluation process in the Ministry of Culture was not transparent. Furthermore, the evaluation could vary across the ministry. Supervisors not only had the authority to undertake the evaluation,
but also created the evaluation standards themselves. Therefore, each division had different standards. Respondents believed this was not fair for those who were being evaluated. Another problem was the poor behaviour of the officials in the Ministry of Culture, and was pointed out by the respondents in the senior level only. All of these respondents (100 percent) indicated that there was a large number of government officials in the middle and junior levels who were lazy and worked inefficiently. Thus, they tried to resist the government policy because they did not want to be evaluated by their supervisors as this might show up their poor performance.

Table 8.11: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on Problems of Implementing the Downsizing Program in the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Senior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ambiguity of the program</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation process</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behaviour of government officials in the Ministry of Culture</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Besides the various problems of the downsizing program examined earlier, there were several obstacles which were identified by respondents as leading to the failure of the third sub-measure of the downsizing program (see Table 8.12). Every respondent (28 persons, 100 percent) among the three levels believed that the most significant obstacle facing the downsizing program was the political factor. The third sub-measure of the downsizing program was abandoned because the government needed to ameliorate the worries and antipathy of significant number of government officials who felt threatened by the program. The government first claimed that reducing the number of inefficient government officials was a key public sector reform policy but went on to abolish the program without stating a proper reason. This was interpreted by the respondents as an indication that the government did not really intend to reform personnel management as it had earlier claimed. Another obstacle was favouritism in the Thai public sector. This was mentioned by twelve respondents (80 percent) in the middle level and all eight respondents (100 percent) in the junior level. However, none of the respondents in the
The respondents who identified favouritism as a reform obstacle believed that it was ubiquitous in the Thai public sector. Patrons always helped and supported their clients in the bureaucracy. Supervisors always helped their favourite subordinates. As a result, there were allegations that some officials who were evaluated as efficient were actually not so.

Table 8.12: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on Obstacles Encountered by the Downsizing Program in the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Obstacle</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Senior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The political factor</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favouritism in the Thai public sector</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Perceptions of Officials in the Office of Civil Service Commission (OCSC) and the Office of Public Service Development Commission (OPDC)

There were five officials working for the OCSC and the OPDC who participated in the interviews. All of them were the same group of respondents who were included in commenting on other dimensions of the case study. The respondents consisted of one senior level official and four middle level officials. Details of the respondents were provided in Table 6.13.

All five respondents provided similar perceptions of the downsizing program of the government. The respondent indicated that the downsizing program in the Thai public sector could be categorised into two types. The first type could be categorised as voluntary downsizing. This first downsizing was known as the early retirement program which was first initiated in 1999 and was continually implemented until 2001. Moreover, the voluntary downsizing also comprised two sub-measures of the Personnel Development and Administration Measures. The respondents identified that the voluntary downsizing program was efficiently implemented by every government agency including the Ministry of Culture. A report from the OCSC indicated that from 1999-2003 there
were 31,541 officials who retired from the public sector as per normal retirement, and 57,544 government officials who participated in the early retirement program (OCSC, 2001). In particular, the OCSC also reported that the Thai public sector could save 15,554 million baht from those retirements. However, the respondents indicated that even though the voluntary downsizing was beneficial for the Thai public sector budget, the public sector lost a number of skilled officials who took advantage of the early retirement program. Many of them worked efficiently for their organisations but decided to participate in the early retirement program for various reasons such as frustration with the public sector (OCSC, 2001). The respondents from the OCSC and the OPDC concluded that the voluntary downsizing was successful in terms of reducing the government budget expenditure, but at the cost of losing skilled personnel.

The respondents further indicated that the second downsizing program was the third sub-measure of the Personnel Development and Administration Measures, and it could be considered as coercive downsizing. They agreed that this coercive downsizing was unsuccessful because of several problems. The first problem was the ambiguity of the program. They acknowledged that officials in the Ministry of Culture did not quite understand details of the program correctly. The second problem involved the failure of the Thaksin government to follow through its declared intention to reduce the government workforce through coercive measures. The government seemed more concerned with its image rather than implementing its policies. To illustrate the point, the government did not want to dissatisfy its officials by implementing the third sub-measure as it promised to generate a great number of disputes between the government and civil servants. The third sub-measure was finally abolished, and inefficient officials remained working in their organisations.
Chapter 9

New Public Management Reform Initiatives in the Ministry of Culture

Introduction

In addition to the major reform dimensions of organisational restructure, public culture and values, and downsizing examined in the previous three chapters, the Thai government introduced other reforms into the public sector. Some of which were claimed to be derived from NPM. In particular, the Thai government brought in Results Based Management (RBM) which aims to emphasise outputs, outcomes and the government’s accountability to the public (OCSC, 2005a). Also linked to NPM was a Performance Agreement System which introduced and implemented in every government agency in order to improve the performance of public servants. The other reform initiatives in the Ministry of Culture were less clearly associated with NPM. Regarding public participation and giving voice to citizens, the Integrated Customer Solutions, such as one-stop service shops and government call centres, have also been employed by the public sector. This customer orientation could be identified with NPM but investment in information technology in order to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the Thai public service is a longstanding theme predating NPM’s arrival in Thailand.

Moreover, information technology has been developed and introduced by the government in order to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the Thai public service. In addition, a Mini-Modern Public Management Program (Electronic Learning) has also been introduced for officials who are interested in self-development, an initiative which is merely a modern variant of the traditional reform practice of training.

Normally, every government agency has had to follow government reform policies by introducing and implementing the policies within its organisation. However, there has been some flexibility regarding the manner in which each agency may implement these policies. This chapter examines the NPM-inspired initiatives listed above and examines
their implementation in the Ministry of Culture. This chapter comprises of two main sections, namely a case study narrative and interviews. In the first section, the case study narrative firstly focuses on description of the government policy on various NPM reform initiatives and then delineates the implementation of these reforms within the Ministry of Culture. In the second section, perceptions on reform initiatives of officials working at various levels in the Ministry of Culture, the OCSC, and the OPDC are examined in line with Hood’s (1991) NPM model.

**Case Study Narrative**

**Government Policy on NPM Reform Initiatives**

**Results Based Management (RBM)**

In the past, governmental management practices emphasised inputs, and resources for implementation such as officials’ salaries and expenditures. Moreover, the government paid much attention to procedures rather than results in each project and its normal operations. In 1998, the Public Sector Management Reform Plan was introduced in line with the NPM approach. This brought about a change of governmental management practices to a focus on fulfilment of goals rather than the careful observation of procedures (Lane, 1993). There was a shift in focus of management systems and management effort from inputs and processes to outputs and outcome. Moreover, there was accompanying movement towards more measurement of performance, manifesting itself in the appearance of batteries of performance indicators and standards (Pollitt, 2001). In NPM, performance management and evaluation are seen to help public officials and analysts assess achievements against key targets and to create results-based accountability mechanisms (Ospina, Grau and Zaltsman, 2004). In pursuing its commitment to the NPM paradigm, the Thai public sector introduced a Results Based Management (RBM) approach.

The United Nations (2004) defines RBM as a management strategy which ensures that processes, outputs and services of each project contribute to the achievement of clearly stated and expected accomplishments or objectives. It is focused on achieving results and
improving performance, integrating lessons learned into management decisions and monitoring of and reporting on performance. This can be seen as a continuing endorsement of RBM by UNDP which in four years earlier (UNDP, 2000) had contended that a RMB approach is oriented to improving management effectiveness and accountability by defining realistic expected results, monitoring progress toward the achievement of those expected results, integrating lesson learned into management decision and reporting on performance.

Results Based Management or Results-Oriented Management introduced into the Thai public sector claimed to be focused on the responsibility of the government towards its citizens. The approach requires the government to clarify its budgetary expenditure and provide some guidelines on efficient use of that budget. RBM encourages the government to establish clear missions and objectives for each project, as well as establishing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure their achievement. As a part of RBM, performance management was introduced into the Thai public sector (OCSC, 2006b) and is regarded as a particularly important part of the managerial reform programme as Hughes (2003: 157) notes that agencies in many parts of government are now expected to develop performance indicators, that is, some way of measuring the progress the organisation has made towards achieving declared objectives.

In the Thai application of this, the OPDC (2006b) contended that all the KPIs for the government should demonstrate five characteristics. They should be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely.

**Performance Agreements**

A performance agreement is considered as a major component of performance measurement, and aims at fostering a clear ‘line of sight’ between the performance of individual government officials and the achievement of organisational goals (GAO cited in O’Donnell and Turner, 2005: 618). The US General Accounting Office (GAO) contends that:
Performance agreements offer a range of advantages for public sector agencies that include reinforcing a focus on delivering results as part of day-to-day activities, promoting cooperation across the organisation and facilitating continuous improvements in program delivery (GAO cited in O’Donnell and Turner, 2005: 618).

Performance agreements can be considered as a useful tool to bring about a results and evaluation-oriented thinking and management in the public sector because it encourages all parties involved to specify performance goals. Performance agreements generally commence with the most senior management level, and are cascaded down through various levels of public servants. These agreements help to ensure that public servants’ performance targets are aligned with the objectives of their organisations (O’Donnell and Turner, 2005).

In relation to Thai public sector reform, the government has introduced a performance agreement system within all government agencies. The government claimed that the performance agreement is a mechanism to enforce administrative liability for each agency in terms of its decisions and actions. Top executives are forced to take full responsibility and work as professionals. This should increase the effectiveness, efficiency, quality of service, and transparency (OPDC, 2005b).

At the first stage of developing performance agreements, every ministry is expected to create its own evaluation form and KPIs in order to evaluate its performance. After that, each ministry is expected to forward the evaluation form as well as performance indicators to the OPDC for approval. The evaluation form and performance indicators of each ministry must be certified by the cabinet. The Prime Minister and the responsible minister sign the agreement. The Minister signs another agreement with the Permanent Secretary of the ministry relating to the latter’s goals. After that, other agreements will be signed by the Deputy Permanent Secretary, and Director Generals of each organisation within the ministry. When the agreements have been signed by those key persons, the performance of the remaining public servants is evaluated and monitored in every level of the ministry. Each performance agreement consists of two pages which describe names and information of key persons, the period of the agreement (normally one year), and details of the agreement. Every performance agreement uses the same standard form for all personnel in the ministry (Ministry of Culture, 2005b).
In order to evaluate its performance, each organisation in a ministry is expected to provide a quarterly self assessment report (SAR) to the OPDC which acts as the representative of the government for evaluating the performance of ministries and their component organisations. However, such to the discretion of internal evaluation of each ministry is insufficient. Thus, this task has to be outsourced to third party companies (OPDC, 2005b).

**Utilising Information and Communications Technology to Increase the Efficiency of the Public Sector**

By the late 1990s, rapid changes in technology started to affect governmental organisations. E-Government is becoming the preferred tool to provide seamless government service for customers and other government agencies. It is becoming the next wave of technology applications in the public sector as e-Business or e-Commerce in the private sector is maturing. In relation to the Thai public sector, Prime Minister Thaksin remarked that:

> I would like to see this government as a so called e-Government, a government that utilises electronic systems, utilise the internet mostly in order for rendering services to citizens more quickly and efficiently and which will lead to the amendment of some laws and regulations (Quoted from "PM Thaksin meets the folks" on-air FM 92.5, Dated June 16, 2001).

The public sector reform policy has promoted the use of high-tech tools in government agencies. The government has incorporated improved information technology into its operations, to provide better services to the public, improve service functions within each ministry, incorporate the service functions between ministries, train its employees and introduce new tools to support government goals. Many government agencies have introduced remote access services to their customers, for example, websites, business registration services, electronic data interchange in customs services, and income tax return filing services (OPDC, 2005a).

In 2000, ASEAN countries endorsed the e-ASEAN initiatives to promote the potential of information technology in order to strengthen their competitiveness in the world
economy. E-Government is one of the five key areas\(^1\) that ASEAN countries have committed to implement. On 3 July 2000, the cabinet considered the issue of e-ASEAN initiatives, and determined that Thailand should focus on the first e-ASEAN initiative to develop e-Thailand in order to facilitate the rapid development of IT infrastructure. The e-Government is an important element which the government believes will lead to promotion of good governance and at the same time will create transparency throughout the whole process of public services delivery. E-Government is also a part of the RBM approach since it helps to improve and enhance efficiency and effectiveness of public services (Ivergard, Hunt, and Rodsutti, 2003).

In 2001, the Thai government established various committees to align their e-Government practices with the ASEAN (1999) agreement which led to the e-ASEAN initiative. The main objectives of the project are higher quality service to the public, more efficiency and good governance in public sector management, and better coordination among governmental services. Thai ministries have now set up websites for public services. Inefficient administrative processes (red tape) have been reduced by e-Delivery of some services for individual citizens such as personal tax payments, and bill payments for utilities. There are also services that assist the business sector such as on-line search and company name registration, patent search, and e-Procurement. The public can also complain, comment or give feedback to ministries through on-line polls and web boards. All ministry websites are also designed for internal used by civil servants. They can avail themselves of various functions such as web mail, social web boards, complaint web boards or access to ministries’ intranet (Tubtimhin, 2002).

In relation to the e-Government in Thailand, the Chairman of the E-Government committee, Suvit Khunketti contended that:

> I think everyone has heard about the word e-government which actually is not a new word but a re-definition of the word for a clearer picture. In Thailand we have done a lot of things towards e-government for quite sometime, for instance, computer training for middle level officers, specifying minimum requirements of IT equipments for government agencies, conducting an IT Master Plan of ministries, departments and provinces, even with the ongoing initiative of conducting courses for IT vision of the future among the executives in the public sector etc., which are all leading to e-government development in Thailand as a

\(^1\) Five areas of e-ASEAN initiative are 1) the establishment of information infrastructure 2) the growth of e-commerce 3) the establishment of a free-trade area for products, services, and investments 4) the development of e-society and 5) the establishment of e-Government.
The OPDC plays important roles in promoting, supporting, and coordinating implementation of e-Government initiatives consistent with government policy. The OPDC has studied ways of establishing the overall framework of e-Government system development in accordance with the *State Administration Act (Volume 5) of 2002* and the *Royal Decree on Good Governance of 2003*. The OPDC also coordinated and supported government agencies during their implementation of both information technology and communications technology systems. These are intended to develop human resources, and to improve work processes for better quality services to the public and information sharing among organisations (OPDC, 2005a).

**Mini-Modern Public Management Program (E-Learning)**

The cabinet on 30 September 2003 approved the principles and descriptions of guidelines and incentive schemes to promote good governance (GG) and RBM. The OPDC then implemented a public relations program to disseminated criteria and guidelines for GG and RBM for every government agency. Furthermore, the OPDC established the Mini-Modern Public Management program through the electronic medium as a learning tool for individuals who are interested in self-development. Training skills and self-e-Learning have been provided via a self-study program for the development of public servants. The participants on the program can access new information such as lessons which potentially could increase the efficiency of their work practices and thus increase and improve their outputs. The project comprises ten subjects in practical management. The contents for each subject have been developed by experienced and well-known lecturers. Officials and interested persons can register for this program on line at http://www.mmpm4u.com (OCSC, 2005a).

The OPDC designed the content of the program in accordance with the public sector reform by emphasising the creation of materials for understanding the new public sector management reforms, administrative practices to increase work efficiency, and current public policy. The program consisted of ten modules which included an introduction to modern public management, public policy, strategic management and performance
management, organisational structure and behaviour, human capital management, process redesign and information technology, accounting and financial management, public law, intergovernmental relations, and current issues in Thai public policy management (OPDC, 2004). In addition, the OPDC has designed a website with the following features:

- Learners and instructors can get in touch at all times via email, web board and instant message (chat) for two hours a week.
- Instructors will assign exercises.
- The program is free of charge. The OPDC officially announced the project to the public on 30 July 2004. Interested persons (both public and private) could apply for the online courses at http://www.mmmp4u.com from 1 August 2003.

It was estimated that each module would take approximately one month to complete, and there was no formal assessment for the program. However, for participants who want to take their study further, the OPDC has invited academic institutions such as the Continuing Education Centre of Chulalongkorn University, the National Institute of Development Administration, and Thammasat University, to design a continuing education curriculum for graduates of the Mini-MPA. A certificate is given to a continuing education learner for participating in the program:

- Interested persons should submit their education records verified by the Mini-MPA program to apply for continuing study with an institute that has collaborated with the OPDC. The curriculum content is designed by the institute as a training course or a short course consistent with the Mini-NPM, as specified by the OPDC.
- Interested persons need to take classes at the institute as required in the curriculum, and pass the evaluation criteria.
- After passing the required assessment, the learner will receive a certificate from that institute.

Open Government and Public Participation

The Thai public service has been typically centralised, rule-driven and distant from the population it is supposed to serve. However, one strand of NPM looks to the participation of citizens as a way to guarantee or improve the delivery and quality of government services. For example, Manning (2001: 302) contends that:
Broad NPM programs could draw on public concern about the standards to be expected from the government in general — including, but not restricted to, concern about quality of local public services such as health or education. One of the ideas that powered NPM was not just that the consumer could be motivated to complain about a local service — they could also feel that it was worthwhile getting heated about a national service.

In relation to the Thai public sector, Sections 58, 59, 60, 76 and 79 of the 1997 Thai Constitution and Section 3/1 of the State Administration Act of 2002 (Volume 5) which comprise the Royal Decree on Good Governance (2003) place emphasis on transparency and accountability, and increased opportunities for the public to engage in policy formulation, to participate in the affairs of government, as well as to monitor its performance at all levels. An open government is new to Thai society, which is mainly used to centralised management and policy implementation exclusively conducted by state officials (OPDC, 2005a). To promote public participation, it was necessary that the government empower citizens to provide their feedback and consultation.

**NPM Reform Initiatives Implementation in the Ministry of Culture**

This section describes and analyses how general policies on NPM reform initiatives have been implemented in the Ministry of Culture. Moreover, this section uses Hood’s (1991) seven key elements of NPM as a framework to describe and analyse what reforms have or have not been taking place in the Ministry of Culture.

**Results Based Management in the Ministry of Culture**

In order to follow government policy on RBM, every project carried out by the Ministry of Culture has had to have clear missions, strategies for implementation, and KPIs.

The Mission of the Ministry of Culture: The Ministry of Culture serves as a core agency in providing the Thai people with an integration of good values, ethics, art and culture in order to support and strengthen individuals, communities, and societies who are in the process of learning and networking on aspects relating to culture at various levels such as local, regional, national and international (Ministry of Culture, 2006a).

The Ministry of Culture’s Strategies for Implementation:
1. Conservation of cultural heritage
2. Development of cultural potentiality and quality of life for the people
3. Cultural support for a peaceful society
4. Cultural support for sustainable development
Key performance indicators of the Ministry of Culture are as follow:
1. Level of success in implementing the ministry’s strategies
2. Level of customer (public) satisfaction
3. Level of success in implementing anti-corruption policies within the Ministry
4. Level of parsimony and ministry’s budgetary saving
5. Level of quality of information and communications technology
6. Level of time reduction in the implementation of each project in the Ministry

Note: Each organisation in the Ministry of Culture may have additional strategies and KPIs.

Performance Agreements in the Ministry of Culture

As mentioned earlier, a performance agreement system is one of the major elements of the RBM approach, and the Ministry of Culture has followed government policy on performance agreements by formulating its own strategies, vision, and mission for performance agreements. On 21 December 2004, the Prime Minister and the Minister for Culture agreed, and signed the performance agreement for the Ministry of Culture. On 21 March 2005, the Minister of Culture agreed, and signed another performance agreement with the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Culture. On 31 March 2005 the Permanent Secretary signed another performance agreement with the Director of each department. The process continued down through the different levels of the Ministry of Culture. Each agreement requests similar details. The names of key persons who sign the agreement, strategic plan and KPIs attached to the agreements, are different. Each performance agreement consist of two pages which include firstly names and positions of both the person who made the agreement and the person who certified the agreement, secondly the period of time the agreement will remain in force, and thirdly details of the agreement which consist of the strategic plan and KPIs of each organisation. However, performance agreements have been cascading down only from the Minister of Culture to Director Generals, not to all officials at all levels.
Utilising Information and Communications Technology to Increase Efficiency in the Ministry of Culture

Due to government policy on utilising information and communications technology within all government agencies, Information and Communication Technology Centres were established in every department and office within the Ministry of Culture as a reform initiative. These centres aimed to support development of the e-Government system consisting of five layers (OPDC, 2005a: 53):

- First layer: establishment of an appropriate telecom network among organisations within the Ministry of Culture.
- Second layer: set standards and channels to access the telecom network for related government agencies such as standards for sending data through the network.
- Third layer: development of an information system as a shared database among different government agencies within the Ministry of Culture. Examples of the shared database are information on individuals, and set security procedures for such an information system.
- Fourth layer: use of centrally applied programs to cross-transfer to other agencies and process information on a shared database.
- Fifth layer: improve the capacity of information integration among government agencies within the Ministry of Culture.

The Ministry of Culture claimed that utilising information and communications technology by establishing the Information and Communication Technology Centres within every organisation of the ministry, would help to increase efficiency within the Ministry of Culture since it aims to support the seven strategic plans for Thai Public Sector Development (see Chapter 4). Additionally, this reform initiative is oriented to improve the ministry’s efficiency by re-engineering work processes because information and communication systems would decrease paperwork, and therefore would decrease time taken in executing each project. This reform initiative has also modernised the ministry’s operations since it has incorporated information technology in its operations to provide better services to the public, improve its own service functions, train its employees and introduce new tools to achieve desired results. The Ministry of Culture has
introduced remote access services to their customers such as communicating with and receiving feedback from the public via the ministry’s website.

**Mini-Modern Public Management Program (E-Learning) in the Ministry of Culture**

In early 2004, the Ministry of Culture introduced the Mini-Modern Public Management Program organised by the OPDC for officials within the ministry. The program was provided for those who were interested in personal development. Information on the program was circulated to every organisation within the Ministry of Culture; however, interestingly the program was not widely advertised to staff in these organisations. Moreover, it appears that the Ministry of Culture did not really encouraged officials to apply and participate online in the program. There was a large number of government officials in the Ministry of Culture who did not know about the program because they did not read the program information when it was circulated. Since the program was not compulsory, and it did not link to any promotion criteria in the Ministry of Culture, there were no participants in the Ministry of Culture. The OPDC has reported that there were less than 300 people across the public and private sector who participated in the Mini-Modern Public Management Program (OPDC, personal communication, September 15, 2005).

**Public Participation in the Ministry of Culture**

The Ministry of Culture has encouraged citizens to participate in the ministry’s activities by sharing their ideas and opinions. There were two ways for the public to do this. Firstly, the ministry introduced the Call Centre of the Ministry of Culture. The role of the Call Centre was quite similar to the Government Counter Service (GCS)\(^2\). This Call Centre was established in 2004 and aimed to meet the needs of the public. The Call Centre has three major roles. The first role is to provide information regarding religion, arts, and culture, and all information regarding responsibilities and services of the various

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\(^2\) On 26 January 2005, the Government Counter Service (GCS) was established with the support of the OPDC and the cabinet in order to provide various public services through a government shop-front such as a taxation service, postal service, payment of electric bills, water bills, and other utilities. GCS is a one-stop government shop that provides services from a number of agencies. Moreover, at GCS people were able to provide their comments or feedback regarding public services. The GCSs are located in places such as shopping malls, airports, train stations, and subway stations. The GCSs are open every day from 7.30 am to 8.00 pm (OCSC, 2006a).
departments and offices of the ministry such as the Office of the Minister, the Office of
the Permanent Secretary, the Department of Religious Affairs, the Department of the Fine
Arts, the Office of the National Culture Commission, the Office of the Contemporary
Arts and Culture, and Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre. The second
major role of the Call Centre is to promote knowledge regarding religion, arts, and
culture. An automated information system was established to provide the public with
general information about the ministry and its services. Moreover, people were able to
request pamphlets and information booklets via the Call Centre. The third major role of
the Call Centre is to listen to the public’s opinion. People are able to complain, or provide
their ideas and opinions via the Call Centre (Ministry of Culture, 2006b).

People could also access the Ministry of Culture by browsing the ministry’s website.
Content on the ministry’s website consists of the background of the ministry, news of
performance agreements, government policies, a web board, web mail, ministerial
announcements, promotions, goods and services, cultural reports, research, and web links
to organisations within the Ministry of Culture. The website has also been updated
regularly by the webmaster. Furthermore, citizens can participate in the activities of the
ministry by submitting their comments, feedback and enquiries via the website. The
Ministry of Culture has assigned specially trained officials to provide solutions to the
various enquiries from the public. Selected comments and feedback on each particular
issue are passed on to officials who are responsible for that issue. Interestingly, each
organisation within the Ministry of Culture also has its own website which provides
particular information, news and details regarding the organisation.

Interviews Section

Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials

The following information was gathered from 28 officials who worked in various
departments and offices within the Ministry of Culture. They were the same group who
participated in the interviews on other reform dimensions. Information and details of the
government officials were provided in Table 6.1.
The first area of enquiry was whether the officials realised that the Thai public sector has been undergoing reform by implementing the New Public Management (NPM) ideas. All of the respondents in every level (28 persons, 100 percent) confirmed that they had heard from the government that NPM ideas had been introduced and implemented in the Thai public sector (see Table 9.1). Most of the respondents stated that the Thaksin government in particular had paid attention to Thai public sector reform, and that the government also had made an announcement that the reforms were being implemented in line with the NPM ideas. The respondents also believed that NPM ideas would be implemented in order to reform the Ministry of Culture

Table 9.1: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on the Implementation of NPM in the Thai Public Sector and the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Aware</th>
<th>No answer</th>
<th>Unaware</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior Level</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Level</td>
<td>15 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior Level</td>
<td>8 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>28</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second question enquired whether the officials understood what the NPM was (see Table 9.2). All five respondents (100 percent) in the senior level indicated that they roughly understood the NPM ideas. These respondents accepted that they did not have a full understanding of the NPM model, and they noted that they had never studied the NPM model. However, they stated that in their understanding, NPM concerned decentralisation, accountability of the government, outsourcing, downsizing, and output control. The respondents also believed that the decision to adopt NPM was because the NPM approach was seen by the government as the best way of improving public administration efficiency. Seven respondents (46.67 percent) in the middle level also provided the same information as the senior level, but eight respondents (53.33 percent) in the middle level and all eight respondents (100 percent) in the junior level indicated that they were aware that the government had introduced NPM ideas into the public sector, but did not understand what NPM was.
Table 9.2: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on their Understanding of NPM Ideas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Detailed understanding</th>
<th>Understand</th>
<th>No answer</th>
<th>Very basic understanding</th>
<th>No understanding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7 (46.67)</td>
<td>8 (53.33)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8 (100)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9.2 clearly demonstrates that none of the respondents had full or clear comprehension of the NPM model. Even though the OPDC tried to inform government officials about NPM by introducing the Mini-Modern Public Management Program, most of the respondents did not participate in the program as it was not compulsory (see Table 9.3). Moreover, the Ministry of Culture did not apply any pressure on its officials to undertake the program. All respondents in every level indicated that they did not participate in the Mini-Modern Public Management Program. Most of them accepted that they had not thought of participating in the program because they had already got workloads which kept them fully occupied. Therefore, they did not want to spend their free time studying on this program. In addition, the respondents noted that there were no incentives to participate in the program since there were no special promotional advantages attached. The respondents in the junior level further indicated that they did not even think that the program was useful for them because they were under direction from their supervisors, thus rendering it unnecessary for them to comprehend what NPM was.
Table 9.3: Numbers of Ministry of Culture Officials Participating in the Mini-Modern Public Management Program (e-Learning)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Participated</th>
<th>Not Participated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior Level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior Level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The fourth area of enquiry was whether the respondents could identify any NPM ideas which had been implemented in the Ministry of Culture (see Table 9.4). Only five senior level officials and seven officials in the middle level participated in this question because the rest of the government officials stated that they did not have an understanding of the NPM, and therefore felt they did not have the knowledge to answer this question. All respondents (twelve persons, 100 percent) linked the downsizing programs that had been implemented in the Ministry of Culture with NPM. All respondents in the senior and the middle level indicated that new computer software and information systems had been set up in the Ministry of Culture and probably derived from NPM ideas. They referred to an Information and Communication Technology Centre that was established within the ministry. Five respondents in the senior level and three respondents in the middle level (66.67 percent) indicated that outsourcing was another NPM idea which had been brought into the Ministry of Culture. Due to the lack of skilled government officials in particular areas such as advertising, the Ministry of Culture had to outsource to third parties to execute some projects such as promoting a cultural exhibition. Another NPM idea which has been used in the Ministry of Culture concerned output control. Five respondents in the senior level and four respondents in the middle level (75 percent) indicated that the Ministry of Culture had developed a focus on output since each project needed to have key performance indicators (KPIs). Moreover, they recognised that performance agreements had also been introduced into the Ministry of Culture.
Table 9.4: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on the NPM Ideas Initiated in the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NPM Characteristics</th>
<th>Number of Indicators</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Senior level</td>
<td>Middle level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downsizing</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outsourcing</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Output Control</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following areas of enquiry used Hood’s (1991) seven key elements of NPM, and whether or not each was perceived to have been implemented in the Ministry of Culture. The seven key elements include giving persons in senior positions more autonomy to manage their organisations, explicit standards and measures of performance, greater emphasis on output controls, shift to disaggregation of units in the public sector, shift to greater competition in the public sector, stress on private sector styles of management, and stress on greater discipline and parsimony in resource use.

The next question was whether senior government officers in the ministry acted as managers, and were allowed to be independent in terms of achieving the department’s KPIs (see Table 9.5). All five respondents (100 percent) in the senior level agreed that they were allowed to control their subordinates. They were also allowed to perform independently on the projects they were responsible for, and had authority to manage budgets which were allocated by the government. However, the respondents remarked that since the Thai political system was democratic, even though they were allowed to perform independently, senior level officials still had to obey the cabinet. Nine respondents (60 percent) in the middle level and three respondents (37.50 percent) in the junior level also agreed with the respondents in the senior level on this point. However, three respondents (20 percent) in the middle level and two respondents (25 percent) in the junior level provided a different perception. They indicated that senior level officials in the Ministry of Culture did not have full managerial authority. The respondents noted the budget authority of senior managers, but also pointed to their lack of control over human
resource management within the ministry. Three respondents (20 percent) in the middle level and three respondents in the junior level (37.5 percent) declined to answer this question.

Table 9.5: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on Authority and Management Responsibilities in the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Have much authority</th>
<th>Have authority</th>
<th>No answer</th>
<th>Little authority</th>
<th>No authority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>9 (60)</td>
<td>3 (20)</td>
<td>3 (20)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3 (37.5)</td>
<td>3 (37.5)</td>
<td>2 (25)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The next question asked whether the Ministry of Culture set explicit standards and measures of performance (see Table 9.6). All respondents (28 persons, 100 percent) among the three levels of respondents indicated that the Ministry of Culture had set explicit standards and KPIs for every project. There were no other answers.

Table 9.6: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on Setting Explicit Standards and Measures of Performance in the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Very explicit</th>
<th>Explicit</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Little explicit</th>
<th>Not explicit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The next question asked about the perceptions of government officials on the effectiveness of the performance agreements used in the Ministry of Culture (see Table 9.7). Respondents referred to the public performance agreement system as an example of setting explicit standards and measures of performance in the Ministry of Culture. According to the levels of respondents; however, the effectiveness of the performance agreement system was viewed differentially. All respondents in the senior level (five persons, 100 percent) believed that the performance agreements would guarantee the minister and the senior officials’ performances as well as assist them to focus better on their responsibilities. They also indicated that the objectives and strategies of the ministry were clearly identified in the agreements; therefore, everyone needed to accomplish the set goals in the agreements. The respondents in the middle and junior levels seemed to have no confidence in the performance agreements. Thirteen respondents (86.66 percent) in the middle level and six respondents (75 percent) in the junior level thought that the performance agreement did not really force the officials to focus on their responsibilities since the objectives, and strategies of the ministry were created and evaluated by the senior level officials. Thus, the latter would positively evaluate their organisation because they did not want to discredit themselves. No one was going to discredit their own organisation or performance. There were two respondents (13.33 percent) in the middle level, and another two respondents (25 percent) in the junior level who declined to answer because they had no firm opinions on this question.

Table 9.7: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on the Effectiveness of Performance Agreements of the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Very effective</th>
<th>Effective</th>
<th>No Answer</th>
<th>Not very effective</th>
<th>Ineffective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior level</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 (13.33)</td>
<td>13 (86.66)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 (25.00)</td>
<td>6 (75.00)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The next topic of enquiry was whether there was increased emphasis on output control in the Ministry of Culture (see Table 9.8). All five respondents (100 percent) in the senior level and eight respondents (53.33 percent) in the middle level indicated that since implementation of Results Based Management (RBM), the ministry’s focus on output control had greatly increased. The Ministry of Culture had established clear missions and objectives for each project as well as establishing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The remaining respondents (seven persons, 46.67 percent) in the middle level agreed that the Ministry of Culture focused on output control. However, they further indicated that they were not sure whether the RBM scheme of the Ministry had been successful as claimed by the government. Five respondents (62.5 percent) in the junior level also provided a similar viewpoint. They indicated that it seemed like the Ministry of Culture emphasised output control but provided no comment on the success of the RBM scheme. There were only three respondents (37.5 percent) in the junior level who declined to answer the question.

**Table 9.8: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on the Output Control of the Ministry of Culture**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Greatly focused</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>No answer</th>
<th>Less focus</th>
<th>Not focused</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior level</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level</td>
<td>8 (53.33)</td>
<td>7 (46.67)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5 (62.5)</td>
<td>3 (37.5)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The respondents were next asked to provide their perceptions on disaggregation of the Ministry of Culture and whether there were purchaser and provider distinctions through the separation of functions into quasi-market forms within the Ministry of Culture. The response to this enquiry was exactly the same for all interviewees (see Table 9.9), that there was no disaggregation in the ministry. The Ministry of Culture was not clearly separated, and there were no purchaser and provider distinctions even though the Ministry of Culture was separated into departments and other subdivisions. Therefore, it can be said that the Ministry has not become the quasi-market form.
Table 9.9: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on whether Disaggregation had Occurred in the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Much disaggregation</th>
<th>Some Disaggregation</th>
<th>No answer</th>
<th>Little disaggregation</th>
<th>No disaggregation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8 (100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The next question was whether the government encouraged competition among departments in the Ministry of Culture and with other government agencies in order to move to term contracts and public tendering procedures, and used such competition as the key to lower costs and better standards. This was another question on which all respondents provided the same answer (see Table 9.10). All respondents indicated that the government did not encourage competition among departments in the ministry as well as across other ministries. In addition, the respondents in the senior level identified that every government agency and department had the same goal, which was the prosperity of the country. Therefore, government agencies would work together with unity and harmony, and would not compete with each other.
Table 9.10: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on the Encouragement of Competition within the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Much encouragement</th>
<th>Encouragement</th>
<th>No answer</th>
<th>Little encouragement</th>
<th>No encouragement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8 (100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The next question sought perceptions on whether the Ministry of Culture had introduced private sector management techniques. Two respondents (13.33 percent) in the middle level and three respondents (37.50 percent) in the junior level indicated that they had no idea about this enquiry because they were not sure whether the ministry had introduced private sector techniques or not. The rest of the respondents in every level (100 percent in the senior level, 86.67 in the middle level, and 62.5 percent in the junior level) provided the same answer which was that for some reform initiatives which had been adopted in the Ministry of Culture, there was a possibility that they could be related to private sector techniques but they were unsure if this was the case. (see Table 9.11). The respondents referred to reform initiative such as performance agreement and contracting out. Most of them further observed that new information and communications technology had been introduced into the Ministry of Culture in order to increase the ministry’s efficiency. The Information and Communication Technology Centres were established in order to provide an information technology system for every department and office in the ministry. However, the respondents believed that such initiatives were not necessarily private sector management techniques. There was some uncertainty about what constituted a private sector management technique.
Table 9.11: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on whether Private Sector Techniques were being Used in the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Many private sector techniques</th>
<th>Some private sector techniques</th>
<th>No answer</th>
<th>Few private sector Techniques</th>
<th>No private sector techniques</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 (13.33)</td>
<td>13 (86.67)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3 (37.50)</td>
<td>5 (62.5)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The next question involved respondents’ perceptions on whether the Ministry of Culture emphasised greater discipline and parsimony in resource use. All 28 respondents across the three levels agreed that the ministry closely scrutinised resources utilisation and cost cutting (see Table 9.12). For example, the respondents indicated that the Ministry aimed to decrease the expenditure on electricity within the organisation by only turning on air conditioning between the hours of 8.30 am to 12.00 pm, and 1.00 pm to 4.30 pm. The air conditioning was turned off during the lunch break (12.00-1.00 pm) and after 4.30 pm, even though there were government officials who were working in the office during the time. The respondents also cited the downsizing program which decreased expenditure on salaries and other benefits for officials as an example of cost cutting.

Table 9.12: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on Resource Utilisation and Cost Cutting in the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Greatly concerned</th>
<th>Concerned</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Little concerned</th>
<th>Not concerned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior level</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level</td>
<td>15 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior level</td>
<td>8 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The next area of enquiry was whether the Ministry of Culture had developed greater concern with the efficient production of quality services. The majority of the respondents believed that the Ministry focused on the efficient production of quality services (see Table 9.13). All five respondents (100 percent) in the senior level, twelve respondents (80 percent) in the middle level, and six respondents (75 percent) in the junior level provided a similar perception indicating that the Ministry of Culture was highly focused on the production of its services. The respondents noted that the ministry had been trying to improve its efficiency and its services by reforming its organisation and introducing various new projects such as RBM, performance agreements, and a new information technology system. Three respondents (20 percent) in the middle level and two respondents (25 percent) in the junior level were less enthusiastic but still agreed that the Ministry of Culture was concerned with its efficiency and service quality. There were no negative responses from the respondents.

Table 9.13: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on the Ministry of Culture’s Concern with the Efficiency of Production of Quality Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Greatly focused</th>
<th>Focused</th>
<th>No answer</th>
<th>Little focused</th>
<th>No focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior level</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level</td>
<td>12 (80.00)</td>
<td>3 (20.00)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior level</td>
<td>6 (75.00)</td>
<td>2 (25.00)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The last area of enquiry focused on public participation within the Ministry of Culture. This enquiry showed that all respondents had similar perceptions about public participation (see Table 9.14). Twenty-eight respondents (100 percent) claimed that the Ministry of Culture paid substantial attention to the public and was interested in the public’s opinion. The respondents provided the example of the establishment of the Ministry’s Call Centre in order to answer the public’s questions regarding religion, arts, and culture as well as seeking public opinions and feedback. Furthermore, people could post questions and share their ideas on the ministry’s website. The respondents reported that some public opinions had been taken into consideration, and helped the ministry to
improve its services. For example, people provided comments that they should be able to access information of the ministry’s projects via the ministry’s websites. In response to the public’s comment, some information of the ministry such as details of the performance agreement were posted in the Ministry’s website and made available for downloading.

Table 9.14: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on Attention to Public Participation in the Ministry of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Greatly focused</th>
<th>Focused</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Little focused</th>
<th>Not focused</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior level</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level</td>
<td>15 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior level</td>
<td>8 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Perceptions of Officials in the Office of the Civil Service Commission (OCSC) and the Office of the Public Sector Development Commission (OPDC)

There were five officials working for the OCSC and the OPDC who participated in the interviews. All of them were in the same group of respondents who were included in the three dimensions of the case study examined in earlier chapters. The respondents consisted of one senior level official and four middle level officials. Details of the respondents were provided in Table 6.13.

All respondents provided similar viewpoints on the public sector management reform in the Ministry of Culture. The respondents indicated that senior officials had relative independence in regard to the projects that they were responsible for, and had the authority to manage budgets which were allocated from the government. However, they had no authority over the human resource management system since this was the responsibility of the OCSC. Explicit standards and measures of performance were set out by project managers working in the Ministry of Culture. Performance agreements had been signed by key persons such as the Minister of Culture, the Permanent Secretary, the
Deputy Permanent Secretary, and the Director Generals. The respondents also believed that the Ministry of Culture was concerned with output control since the ministry implemented the RBM. The respondents identified that RBM in the ministry has been implemented according to the OCSC’s requirements. Every project in the Ministry of Culture after the implementation of RBM provided clear missions, objectives, and KPIs with guidance from the OPDC. It was the responsibility of the OPDC to evaluate whether those missions, objectives, and KPIs were achieved.

The respondents further identified that the various units within the Ministry of Culture had not been disaggregated, and there were no purchaser and provider distinctions through the separation of functions into quasi-market forms. Moreover, there was no competition among departments and offices within the Ministry of Culture since the government did not encourage competition among government agencies. The government rather encouraged every government agency to support each other. Furthermore, the respondents indicated some management techniques, such as outsourcing and a performance agreement system had been adopted in the Ministry of Culture. Information technology systems had also been brought into use and further developed. However, the respondents indicated that these reform initiatives were not clearly seen as private sector management techniques because their implementation commenced prior to the emphasis on NPM. The respondents further recognised that cost-cutting through a downsizing program was another public sector reform which was implemented in the ministry. In addition, the respondents indicated that the Ministry of Culture encouraged the participation of the general public in ministry business. The public was able to make complaints, provide feedback, and share opinions via the call centre or the Ministry of Culture’s website.

Overall, the central agency respondents were satisfied with the NPM reform initiatives implemented in the Ministry of Culture. They concluded that the Ministry of Culture had been performing well so far since all policies from the OCSC and the OPDC had been properly followed. However the respondents further commented that government officials in the Ministry of Culture especially in the middle and the junior levels still lacked specific knowledge of the NPM model.
Chapter 10

Analysis of the Case Study

Introduction

Having presented four dimensions of reform in the case study of NPM implementation of the Ministry of Culture in Chapters 6-9, it is now time to turn to analysis of the material. The underlying question in this chapter is whether the Thai public sector reforms belong to the NPM paradigm. This basic question leads to several other areas of enquiry which will facilitate our understanding of the public administration reforms in the Ministry of Culture and even in the wider Thai public service. These supplementary lines of enquiry are accessed through the following questions. Which specific reforms have linked with the NPM paradigm? Are the reforms effective as claimed in the NPM model? Are there problems, obstacles, and factors which lead to implementation varying from the NPM model?

In order to analyse the case study, information and data from Chapters 6-9 are reviewed in relation to the NPM model. The chapter analyses firstly organisational restructure and redesign of internal authority, secondly public culture and values reform, thirdly workforce reduction, and fourthly internal reform initiatives in the Ministry of Culture.

Organisational Restructure and Redesign of Internal Authority

The first area of analysis involves organisational restructure and redesign of internal authority in the Ministry of Culture (Chapter 6). A major restructuring of roles and functions within the government was implemented in 2002, resulting in the number of ministries increasing from fourteen to twenty. The Ministry of Culture was one of the new ministries which were established. The proposed ministerial organisational structure of the Ministry of Culture was also submitted to the government in order to comply with government prescriptions on reform of the internal organisational structure and authority arrangements within ministries.
Even though the Ministry of Culture was established by transferring some organisations that managed religion, arts and culture from the Ministry of Education, the internal organisational and authority structures of these organisations remained the same. Similarly, the autonomous public organisation, Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre, did not alter its internal structure as a result of being added to the Ministry of Culture. The only difference from previous arrangements was that as the Ministry of Culture was new, it was necessary to establish the central administrative offices: the Office of the Minister and the Office of the Permanent Secretary. These are standard government-wide organisations found in every ministry. While the organisations of the ministry with functional specialisations in religion, arts and culture arrived intact at their new ministry, it was the intention of the Ministry of Culture to reform its internal organisational structure and internal authority by grouping organisations into several clusters according to their objectives and responsibilities. Such action was thought necessary by senior ministerial officials to conform to declared government policy. This internal organisational restructure would help each cluster to focus on its objectives, and would also help to reduce functional overlap and repetition of tasks. Nevertheless, the study has shown that there has been no internal restructure since the proposed ministerial organisational structure of the Ministry of Culture was rejected by the government as being unnecessary for the Ministry of Culture. The imported elements of the organisational structure remained the same as they had been in the Ministry of Education. In addition, the internal authority also remained unchanged. The authority of internal management remained in hands of the same people. Director Generals of each department were the only people who had the authority to manage and control their departments; however, they did not have the authority to manage all resources. Although they had the authority to manage the government-allocated budget for the ministry, they did not have the authority to manage all human resource affairs; for example, the recruitment and retrenchment of officials. The ministry was still required to follow strict quota guidelines provided by the Office of Civil Service Commission. In addition, promotion of senior level officials in the ministry was the responsibility of the OCSC.

In relation to the Ministry of Culture, it was found that three dimensions of organisational structure were of particular relevance. Firstly, the organisational structure in the Ministry of Culture has high level of differentiation, and in terms of the position levels, specialisations of positions, and the large number of departments, offices and sections.
Once again, this is a typically bureaucratic mode of operation. This leads to high complexity and is characteristic of a bureaucratic form of organisation (Robins and Barnwell, 1994). It was found that despite the structural reforms introduced by the government, high levels of differentiation still prevailed in the Ministry of Culture. Secondly, formalisation in the Ministry of Culture could be categorised as high. Even though not all rules, procedures, instructions, and communication are written, government officials normally have a minimum amount of discretion over what is to be done, when it is to be done, and how he or she should do it. There are clearly specified processes for getting work done. Interviews with staff revealed an unwillingness to step outside these established processes. Thus, the high levels of formalisation characteristic of the Thai bureaucratic polity were largely maintained in the structure of the Ministry of Culture. Thirdly, the Ministry of Culture’s organisational structure is perceived to be centralised by all of its officials (100 percent). Much of the decision-making authority still rests with the Permanent Secretary and Director Generals. The middle level and junior level officials have either very limited or no authority to make decisions. Such centralisation is a characteristic of the bureaucratic form of organisation and has been evident in Thai bureaucracy for more than 100 years. These three dimensions of organisational structure within the Ministry of Culture show the apparent continuity of the long-standing bureaucratic model. Some features date back centuries while all were evident in the bureaucratic polity. In this latest round of public sector reform the bureaucratic structure has simply been transferred from the Ministry of Education. The restructuring has simply rearranged the parts but largely left the structural dimensions of differentiation, formalisation and centralisation alone. The organisational form of the Ministry of Culture still seems to approximate most closely to the type known as ‘machine bureaucracy’ (Mintzberg, 1983). This is a form of organisation that is made up of high levels of differentiation, high levels of formalisation and high level of centralisation. This also approximates to the ideal type of bureaucracy set out by Weber (Gerth and Mills, 1948).

The perceptions of Ministry of Culture officials have formed the core of this thesis as they provide an insight into the way in which reforms are interpreted and implemented thus going beyond official reports from government and IFIs to give greater understanding of public administration reform. In relation to the Ministry of Culture, officials there generally held the view that being transferred from the Ministry of Education to the Ministry of Culture was a non-threatening reform. Data from the
interviews show that 82.14 percent of the officials were willing to move (see Table 6.1), and 100 percent had positive feeling towards the organisational restructure for the creation of the Ministry of Culture (see Table 6.4). There was no different viewpoint between levels.

There was widespread appreciation of reasons for the creation of the new ministry (see Table 6.3). For example, the majority of the respondents (71.42 percent) indicated that the Ministry of Culture was established because it was the government policy while 17.86 percent of the respondents thought that the new ministry would help to reduce social problems. However, another 17.86 percent of the respondents did believe that certain senior level officials had some self-interest from the creation of the Ministry of Culture. In large part, the restructure appeared to be well received across all levels because there was little change to internal structures in the ministry. However, all respondents felt that their work-loads had increased which suggests that there was an efficiency gain (see Table 6.5 and 6.8), but more likely this derived from less staff undertaking the work of more offices plus additional emphasis on correct procedures and accountability.

All senior and roughly half middle level officials believed that their organisations’ objectives were clearly specified and understood, but all junior and half the middle level were non-committal perhaps because they were uninvolved in objective framing and adopted the traditional bureaucratic orientation of focus on process in their functional areas (see Table 6.7). Once again the perceptions of officials show unanimity on the perpetuation of a centralised decision making structure (see Table 6.9). Differences in perceptions between levels were a matter of degree. All senior and almost three quarters of middle level officials believed that the Ministry of Culture was ‘centralised’ while roughly a quarter of middle and all junior level officials used ‘very centralised’ to describe the situation.

While respondents revealed general satisfaction with structural reform they could also identify problems and obstacles (see Table 6.10 and 6.11). Ministry of Culture officials’ perceptions contrasted in their views about problems with the organisational restructure of the Ministry of Culture. In the senior and middle levels, it was generally claimed that junior level officials lacked knowledge and understanding about public sector reform. Senior level officials also indicated that educational background of some officials who
were forced to move from the Ministry of Education to new organisations in the Ministry of Culture may not be suitable for their new job requirements. Junior level officials contended that they did not have the opportunity to participate in reform workshops since normally only senior level officials were selected as the ministry’s delegates to participate in those workshops. Moreover, all respondents in every level in the Ministry of Culture indicated that there were inadequate numbers of officials possibly due to the downsizing program implemented before the establishment of the Ministry of Culture. This situation has led government officials in the ministry to have heavier work-loads than before. Besides the problems mentioned above, the respondents also pointed out that differential benefits to individuals from the organisational restructure could be an obstacle for the reform of the Ministry of Culture because officials who could see no personal benefit from the move were probably not willing to move. In addition, more than 50 percent of officials in the middle and junior levels believed that patron-client relations remained prevalent in the Thai public sector. Senior level officials did not mention this longstanding structural element which could be another obstacle towards the organisational restructure of the Ministry of Culture. The reasons for this omission were unclear but could be related to differential perceptions of the nature of patronage or that those who benefited most from the relations were least likely to mention this existence.

The organisational restructure of course was one of the major reform dimensions. However, the responses of officials indicated disagreement on efficiency improvements in the Ministry of Culture after the organisational restructure (see Table 6.12). Senior and almost three quarters of middle level officials believed efficiency of the Ministry of Culture had improved. This response from senior level officials could be predicted since they would be unlikely to criticise the reform especially as they were the major implementers. A quarter of middle and all junior level officials were not so persuaded and thought the Ministry of Culture was now less efficient as its structure had not really changed. They did admit, however, that more work was being done by less staff. This would seem to indicate efficiency improvements but was perceived by these lower level officials as simply having to do more work.
Public Culture and Values Reform

The second area for analysis concerns the reform dimension of public culture and values (Chapter 7). The government has introduced many policies and implementation plans regarding this area of reform. For instance, codes of ethics have been developed by the OCSC, and the OPDC. Series of seminars and workshops have also been organised in order to stimulate and encourage government officials to perform their duties ethically. However, many projects designed by the government to advance public culture and values reform failed to reap the anticipated benefits; for example, the across-the-board model curriculum to promote ethical standards within all government agencies. Some projects were even abandoned. The government’s lack of monitoring the implementation process of these projects was significant in leading to these outcomes.

Good governance practice was introduced by the government when the National Agenda on Good Governance policy was endorsed by the cabinet, and was announced in the Royal Gazette as ‘the Regulation of the Office of the Prime Minister on Good Governance’. Furthermore, an Ethics Promotion Information Centre was established in order to study, research, and make recommendations on ethical policies for the civil service. One of its major duties was to establish a Clean and Transparent Centre in order to create ministry-specific strategic plans for the encouragement of public.

The Ministry of Culture followed the government policy on public culture and values reform by implementing various initiatives. In particular, selected government officials attended series of workshops, seminars, and training sessions organised by the OCSC and the OPDC. Moreover, the Clean and Transparent Centre of the Ministry of Culture was established for the promotion of ethical practices and prevention of corruption in the ministry. In addition, complementing the government’s public culture and values change paradigm, the Ministry of Culture has also created its own five ethical standards to guide official behaviour in the ministry.

The perceptions of Ministry of Culture officials provided additional insight into the implementation of public culture and values reforms and their impact. All Ministry of Culture respondents agreed that there was only one factor which drove the public culture
and values reform. This was government’s effort to reduce corruption (see Table 7.1). When reflecting on the changes in their behaviour, ministry staff generally shared very similar viewpoints (see Table 7.2). One hundred percent of officials in the Ministry of Culture indicated that their behaviour has been modified after the ministry implemented public culture and values reform. All respondents said that they needed to take more care in the performance of their duties, particularly in regards to budgetary matters. For every budgetary decision, such as those relating to the budget for procurement and tender bidding, staff had to be accountable and processes had to be transparent. Despite the maintenance of centralised authority structures, even the junior officials stated that they felt the impact of the public culture and values reforms as they affected financial procedures. Even though junior level officials normally did not have any responsibility regarding budget, they noted that they sometimes had to manage small amounts of allocated budget from their supervisors. In addition, every project in the ministry had to be endorsed by the appropriate people and subject to an investigation by the new Clean and Transparent Centre. Thus, responses to questions on the implementation of public culture and values reform revealed that there was widespread awareness—and considerably more than in previous years — that officials were being monitored.

The research probed the perennial organisational question of whether workshops, seminars and other forms of training were perceived to produce the desired result. Only the minority of the respondents (40 percent of senior level officials and 46.67 percent of middle level officials) indicated that participation in the public culture and values seminars, workshops, and training courses provided the necessary encouragement to perform their duties ethically. The majority of respondents (60 percent of senior level officials, 53.37 percent of middle level officials and 100 percent of junior level officials) felt neutral because they rarely had the opportunity to participate in those seminars and workshops (see Table 7.3). They indicated that those seminars, workshops and training courses were normally organised only for senior level officials, and not for junior level officials. Moreover, lower level respondents generally believed that senior level officials did not communicate the new information received in training initiatives to other levels of officials who did not have an opportunity to participate. Responses from senior level officials revealed that they did not feel that it was their responsibility to provide that information for the benefit of lower level officials, as interestingly it was not compulsory.
for senior level officials to do so, or even for all levels officials to participate in the seminars, workshops, and training sessions.

In order to follow the government policy on public culture and values reforms, the Clean and Transparent Thai Public Sector Project and the Clean and Transparent Centre were established within the Ministry of Culture. Perceptions of senior and junior level official were quite different on these reforms (see Table 7.5). All senior and 33.33 percent of middle level officials believed that the Clean and Transparent Centre was beneficial while in contrast all junior and 66.67 percent of middle level official believed that the centre was not beneficial and did not help to combat corruption in the Ministry of Culture. The latter group thought that this centre was established only for improving the image of the ministry. Differential perceptions between senior level officials and junior level officials were also evident regarding the effectiveness of the Five Public Ethical Standards of the Ministry of Culture (see Table 7.6). Forty percent of senior level officials believed the Five Public Ethical Standards were effective, but the rest of the senior level officials (60 percent) were undecided on this matter due to the difficulty of evaluating whether those standards were effective or not. All middle and junior level officials (100 percent) believed that the Five Public Ethical Standards of the Ministry of Culture did not help to improve levels of ethical work practices of officials in the ministry. They indicated that the public ethical standards were created by the Ministry of Culture in order to conform to the Public Sector Reform Strategic Plan of the government. Responses revealed that most government officials in the ministry realised what those standards were. However, the officials continued to perform their duties without explicit reference to the five public ethical standards either because their existing practices already followed the new standards or because the application of the new standards was not being monitored. Enquiries led to the discovery that a large number of officials in the Ministry of Culture did not even know about the ethical standards because they did not have a chance to participate in creating those standards and because there was perceived to be insufficient internal advertising, communication and training relating to them.

While the public culture and values reform has been implemented in the Ministry of Culture, the respondents identified problems and obstacles which hindered this implementation thereby reducing its effectiveness (see Table 7.8 and 7.9). All respondents in the three levels agreed that it would be difficult for the ministry to evaluate
whether the public culture and values reform was effective or not. The majority of the respondents (20 percent of senior level, 80 percent of middle level and 50 percent of junior level) saw centralisation in the Thai bureaucratic system as a problem. They believed that this resulted in increased opportunities for politicians and senior level officials to become corrupt. Only middle (46.67 percent) and junior level officials (53.37 percent) saw low salary of officials as a problem. They believed that this was a disincentive. The data also shows that 20 percent of senior level officials, 80 percent of middle level officials and 50 percent of junior level officials identified cultural norms and values embedded in the Thai bureaucracy as an obstacle. These norms and values supported traditional bureaucratic behaviours which involved a lack of accountability to the public and secrecy in the internal operations of governmental organisations. In this connection, 100 percent of junior and 43.33 percent of middle level officials identified senior level officials’ unwillingness to change possibly as being due to feelings among bureaucratic elites of insecurity as a result of less personal benefits, authority, and influence.

A final aspect of the perception of public culture and values reform in the Ministry of Culture related to the benefits of the reforms. There were some differences between the three levels of officials regarding the perception of the benefits (see Table 7.10). The majority of senior level officials (60 percent) and 33.33 percent middle level officials indicated that the reform helped to decrease and prevent corruption while 40 percent of senior level officials and 26.67 of middle level officials indicated that the reform helped to improve accountability and transparency. In contrast, all junior level officials and the rest of the middle level officials (40 percent) disagreed and saw the reform as no benefit.

**Workforce Reduction**

The third area of public administration reform involves workforce reduction or downsizing (Chapter 8). The Ministry of Culture reduced the number of its civil servants by participating in the three sub-measures of the Personnel Development and Administration Measures. The first sub-measure was created to attract civil servants who wanted to take up new jobs outside of the public sector. The second sub-measure was introduced to provide some financial support for public servants who were not happy with
the public sector reform program of the government and wanted to resign voluntarily. The third sub-measure was not a voluntary scheme; rather it forced public servants to resign from their government organisations. The government aimed to remove the bottom five percent of total officials from every government agency around the country using this coercive mode of downsizing.

The perceptions of Ministry of Culture officials set out in Chapter 8 build a ‘thick description’ and once again add to our understanding the implementation of this reform and the impact it has had. There were two different reasons which interviewees identified as driving the downsizing program in the Thai public sector (see Table 8.2). The majority of respondents (75 percent) believed that the government implemented the workforce reduction program because it aimed to decrease budget spending on salaries of government officials while 53.57 percent of the officials indicated that the government also aimed to reduce the number of inefficient government officials (see Table 8.2). When downsizing programs are introduced the question of job security inevitably arises. After the workforce reduction program was implemented in the Ministry of Culture, all officials (100 percent) in the senior level and roughly one third of middle level officials still felt secure on their positions. By contrast, all government officials (100 percent) in the junior and two thirds of middle level officials perceived the situation very differently. They spoke of insecurity, a reflection of the perception that middle and junior levels were the most vulnerable to job loss (see Table 8.3).

In relation to the first and the second sub-measure of Personnel Development and Administration in the Ministry of Culture, the majority of respondents (100 percent of middle level officials and 100 percent of junior level officials) appeared to have no comment on these two sub-measures since they were not qualified for the sub-measures as these two sub-measure only affected senior level officials who were older than 50 years and had 25 years of experience (see Table 8.4). However, all senior level officials (100 percent) were very satisfied with these two sub-measures. They also indicated that these two sub-measures were appropriate for the government officials who qualified (see Table 8.5). The senior respondents expressed the belief that the first and the second sub-measures were effective in terms of decreasing the government budget for government officials’ salaries (see Table 8.6).
Perceptions of Ministry of Culture officials differed on the third sub-measure of a bottom five percent reduction (see Table 8.7). All senior level officials (100 percent) were satisfied with the third sub-measure while the majority of the officials in the middle (53.33 percent) and the junior level (62.5 percent) were dissatisfied with the third sub-measure. All senior level officials (100 percent) indicated that the evaluation process of the third sub-measure was appropriate and fair while in contrast all officials (100 percent) in the middle and the junior level indicated that the evaluation process was inappropriate and unfair (see Table 8.8). The perceptions of the senior level officials were predictable because this sub-measure did not really affect them, and they comprised the group of people who conducted the evaluation. They were not going to rank themselves in the bottom five percent. This contrasted with the perceptions of the middle level and especially the junior level which were based on the view that it was them who were most vulnerable to being rated in the bottom five percent. They complemented this view with the observation that favouritism and patron-client ties could characterise the rating process. They were concerned that the evaluation process was not objective.

After introducing the Personnel Development and Administration Measures, there were problems and obstacles related to the implementation of the third sub-measure (see Table 8.11 and 8.12). Several problems of implementation and the design of the program were pointed out by the officials. All respondents throughout three levels indicated the problem of the ambiguity of the third sub-measure. Comprehension of the government policy regarding this third sub-measure was identified as a major problem. After a lot of opposition to this sub-measure, the government made changes on its policy by not identifying any particular percentage of reduction, thus the policy was still unclear to respondents in the Ministry of Culture. The officials in the middle (60 percent) and the junior level (100 percent) indicated that the evaluation process of the third sub-measure was fair only for senior level officials, but not for them because no set standards from the government and the senior levels officials were doing the evaluation rather than an independent third party. In addition, all respondents across three levels saw the political factor, which was the government’s decision on the abandonment of the third sub-measure, as a major obstacle to the implementation of this sub-measure. A concern of middle and junior level officials was favouritism by the senior level evaluations. Eighty percent of middle level officials and 100 percent of junior level official saw this favouritism as another obstacle to effective implementation. At this point, it can be seen
that this reform initiative had more diversity of opinion than other reform initiatives. Middle and junior level officials in the Ministry of Culture mirrored their counterparts in other ministries in their dislike of the sub-measure. It was this opposition and the political threat to the government’s election that led to the abandonment of the third sub-measure.

**Internal NPM Reform Initiatives**

The fourth area of enquiry involves a selection of explicitly NPM reforms initiatives implemented in the Ministry of Culture (Chapter 9). Various reforms such as the RBM scheme, information technology utilisation, and public participation have been introduced in the Ministry of Culture in addition to the major public sector management reforms outlined in the *Public Sector Reform Strategic Plan 2003-2008* of the government. In particular, as a complement to the desired RBM orientation of ministries, performance agreements were launched in the Ministry of Culture. The Information and Communication Technology Centre was also established in order to support and use information and communications technology as a tool for efficient administration. Moreover, the Ministry of Culture also encouraged public participation by introducing a Call Centre and a ministry website in order to provide important information for staff of the ministry, and to give information regarding religion, art, and culture to the public as well as to receive feedback from them.

When examining the perceptions of Ministry of Culture officials on this group of reforms, it was found that they all held the same basic viewpoint: that the Thai public sector has been reformed in line with NPM ideas (see Table 9.1). All respondents (100 percent) in the three levels of officials indicated that the current government had maintained a focus on Thai public sector reform. They were also aware that the government made an announcement that the reform would be implemented in line with the NPM ideas. However, this did not mean that the officials had in-depth understanding of NPM. More than half of all respondents accepted that they did not understand what NPM ideas consisted of (see Table 9.2). More than half of middle level officials (53.33) and all junior level officials (100 percent) revealed that they did not understand what NPM was. Only 46.67 percent of middle level officials and 100 percent of senior level officials indicated that they knew about NPM, but even then they admitted to having only very basic
understanding. Even though the government has made a concerted effort to provide information on NPM for government officials by organising the Mini-Modern Public Management program, all respondents in the Ministry of Culture were not interested in the program, and did not even think to participate in the program because it was not compulsory and saw no personal benefit from participation (see Table 9.3).

In order to understand whether the Thai public sector has been reformed in line with NPM ideas or not, the study in Chapter 9 provides officials’ perceptions on reforms in the Ministry of Culture compared to Hood’s (1991) NPM model. According to Hood (1991), the first key element involves increasing the freedom of the professional elite of public sector managers to manage (see Table 9.5). The majority of the respondents (100 percent of senior level officials, 60 percent of middle level officials and 37.50 percent) generally held the viewpoint that senior level officials had the authority to control their subordinates as they saw fit. Twenty percent of middle level officials and 25 percent of junior level officials thought that senior level officials in the Ministry of Culture did not have full managerial authority, especially the authority to manage human resources within their particular organisations because mostly this was still the responsibility of the OCSC.

The second key element in Hood’s (1991) NPM model involves setting explicit standards and measures of performance. There was no difference of opinion between officials on setting explicit standards and measures of performance in the Ministry of Culture (see Table 9.6). All respondents across the three levels of officials indicated that the Ministry of Culture has set explicit standards and KPIs for every project. Once again, perceptions from senior level officials were predictable since they would be unlikely to criticise the reform especially as they were the major implementers. They (100 percent of senior level officials) indicated that the performance agreements in the Ministry of Culture helped them to focus better on their responsibilities. However, in contrast to senior level officials’ perceptions, the majority of middle level and junior level officials argued that the performance agreements implemented did not really force government officials to focus on their responsibilities (see Table 9.7). The respondents in the middle (86.66 percent) and the junior level (75 percent) generally saw that the performance agreements had little effect of the quality and efficiency of their work. This may be due to the fact that objectives and strategies of the ministry were created, and evaluated by the senior
level officials, thus their evaluations of their ministry’s performance tended to favour them as they did not want to discredit their organisation and themselves.

The third key element of Hood’s (1991) NPM model involves greater emphasis on output control. The majority of the respondents identified that clear missions and objectives had become requirements for each project while Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were also established by the ministry (see Table 9.8). All senior, middle and more than half of junior level officials (62.5 percent) believed that the ministry’s focus on output control greatly increased since Results Based Management (RBM) has been implemented. Nevertheless, the respondents further indicated that they had no idea whether the RBM scheme of the ministry had been successful because the missions, objectives and KPIs of each project had been established by the Ministry of Culture. Respondents believed that if the standards had been set centrally, this would be a better guide to measuring performance.

The fourth key element of the NPM model of Hood (1991) concerns disaggregation of units in the public sector. Respondents’ viewpoints were similar on disaggregation in the Ministry of Culture (see Table 9.9). All respondents across three levels (100 percent) indicated that the Ministry of Culture had not been disaggregated since there were no purchaser and provider distinctions, there was no separation of functions, and the ministry has not become a quasi-market form. However, if we look more closely at the major reform, which is the creation of the Ministry of Culture, it can be seen that the Ministry of Culture was itself born out of disaggregation. All but one of its functional organisations were transferred from the Ministry of Education in order to explicitly separate cultural works and matters from educational matters.

The fifth key element of Hood’s (1991) NPM model involves the encouragement of competition within the public sector. Once again there was no difference of respondents’ perceptions on encouragement of competition within the Ministry of Culture (see Table 9.10). All respondents in the three levels indicated that the Thai government did not encourage competition among departments within ministries. Moreover, there was no competition with the other ministries as well. In addition, the respondents in the senior level identified that every government agency and department in the Thai public sector had the same goal, which was to promote the prosperity of the country. Therefore,
government agencies would work together with unity and harmony, and would not compete with each other.

The sixth key element of Hood’s (1991) NPM model involves an emphasis on private sector techniques being used in the public sector. The respondents generally held viewpoints that few private sector techniques had been adopted in the Ministry of Culture (see Table 9.11). All senior level officials, roughly three quarters of middle and junior level officials indicated that there were some reform initiatives, such as performance agreement system and outsourcing, implemented in the Ministry of Culture, but they were not sure whether these initiatives could be regarded as imported private sector techniques or not. In addition, the respondents in the senior level revealed that the use of information and communications technology become more widespread in the Ministry due to the establishment of Information and Communications Technology Centres.

The seventh key element of Hood’s (1991) NPM model concerns resource utilisation and cost-cutting in the public sector. The perceptions of officials show unanimity on resource utilisation and cost-cutting in the Ministry of Culture (see Table 9.12). All respondents (100 percent) in the three levels of officials agreed that the ministry greatly focused on resource utilisation and cost-cutting. They pointed to campaigns on electricity and water saving as well as three sub-measures of the downsizing program to demonstrate the concern with cost saving and resource utilisation.

Besides the seven key elements of Hood’s (1991) NPM model, the study also asked respondents about public participation in the Ministry of Culture. Interviewees agreed that public participation had become a focus of the Ministry of Culture (see Table 9.14). All respondents (100 percent) in the three levels acknowledged that attention was being paid to public participation in the Ministry of Culture. To illustrate the point, they mentioned the establishment of the ministry’s Call Centre which focuses on public participation since it is responsible for answering the public’s questions regarding religion, arts, and culture as well as seeking public opinion and feedback. Respondents also noted that members of the public could post questions and share their ideas on the ministry’s website.
NPM Convergence?

From the analysis of the case study, it can be said that the Thai government explicitly adopted a public administration reform program that was modelled on NPM. The rationale behind the program was that this would modernise Thai public administration and place it at the cutting edge of public administration. Thailand would be amongst the leaders. The performance of the public sector would improve and assist Thailand's national development strategy. It would also place the public bureaucracy more firmly under the control of political leadership. This should have led to convergence with the practices of public administration found in countries such as Australia, New Zealand and UK. Certainly there was 'discursive convergence' at least amongst a group of specialised policy advisers and some senior elected and appointed officials. In some instances, there was ‘decisional convergence’ in the Thai government since some concepts of NPM were translated into practice as governments decide to adopt a particular organisational form or technique. For instance, the Thai government placed stronger emphasis on measuring performance through the establishment of goals, target and indicators which can be quantitatively measured. The Thai government increased the focus on output control. This could be clearly seen in the RBM scheme which was implemented in various government agencies. Moreover, economies in resource utilisation and cost-cutting such as downsizing programs were emphasised by the government in order to reduce its expenditure.

While at first sight such explicitly NPM initiatives appear to indicate convergence towards a standard model of NPM as demonstrated by the originating countries such as the UK and Australia; however, closer consideration reveals this proposition to be far removed from reality. Firstly, while Hood (1991) and others may have delineated the basic characteristics of the emerging NPM paradigm they also recognised that this did not entail public administration systems that were exactly the same. Variations were clearly evident even among the originating countries. Shared principles were possibly being applied but their concrete manifestation in public administration practice were characterised by difference. Thus, while Thai officials were implementing NPM, which of several versions were they implementing?
Secondly and closely related to the first point, is the fact that NPM has generally been viewed as a long menu of items with consumers choosing the items which suit them and which they anyway adapt to fit with local circumstances. Thus, it was always likely that the Thai reformers would not choose exactly the same offerings from the menu as other NPM countries. Thirdly, even if similar items are chosen from the menu the story of implementation can be seen to vary between countries. This was especially the case for Thailand where the legacy of a centralised bureaucratic system of public administration created considerable obstacles for NPM acceptance. For example, while performance measurement may have been embraced by the Thai performers the degree to which it could be introduced was nowhere near to the degree possible in Australia and the UK.

In summary it can be seen that the convergence of Thai public administration practice with some universal NPM model simply did not happen. Indeed, it is doubtful that such a model even existed. There was some discursive convergence with other NPM countries largely among the group of reformers responsible for driving the NPM bandwagon in Thailand. However, the prospects for moving into higher levels of convergence or achieving isomorphism were always improbable.
Chapter 11

Summary and Concluding Notes

The objective of this study was to explore the impact of NPM on public administration reform in Thailand and to investigate whether the Thai public sector has actually been implementing the NPM ideas it espoused and if Thailand’s adoption of NPM is leading to a convergence with other countries where NPM originated.

The research focused on four dimensions of the reform as they were implemented in the Ministry of Culture. The first three dimensions were major initiatives of the government’s reform master plan for the Thai public sector. It was claimed by the central government reform agencies that these were derived from the NPM approach. The first of these dimensions concerned organisational restructuring and work processes re-design. The second dimension comprised efforts to increase transparency and accountability, and to reduce corruption. The third dimension involved personnel management reform concentrating on attempts at workforce reduction, or ‘downsizing’. The final dimension concerned various reform initiatives which were not in the reform master plan, but were implemented by the Ministry of Culture and were claimed to be NPM by the government.

This study sought the answers to six questions posed at the beginning of the thesis. Firstly, do the Thai public sector reforms belong to the NPM paradigm? Secondly, if they do, which specific reforms have links with the NPM paradigm? Thirdly, how are the reforms being implemented? Fourthly, to what extent are the reforms in Thailand leading to a convergence with models of public administration found in the original NPM countries? Fifthly, are the reforms that belong to the NPM paradigm perceived as being as effective for public administration in Thailand? Lastly, what are the forces, actors and institutions which facilitate and obstruct convergence towards an international model of NPM?

Before addressing those questions through the ‘thick description’ of a case study, it was necessary to provide context. The first task of contextualisation was to set the thesis in its disciplinary field. Thus, Chapter 2 involved defining public administration and
delineating the traditional model of bureaucracy, a model which was seen, later in the thesis, to have particular relevance to Thailand. Despite its popularity in developing countries the traditional model has been found to have many dysfunctions leading to problems of efficiency and effectiveness. Such problems have led to initiatives to reform public administration in order to improve the performance of government organisations in their roles as service deliverers and facilitators of national development (UNDP, 2005c; McCourt, 2001; Minogue, 2001a) It was further noted that the impetus to public administration reform in developing countries has been given a considerable boost in recent years through the growing popularity of the notion of good governance (ADB, 2005; UNDP, 1997; World Bank, 1992). While there are multiple aspects to this concept it was found that all definitions and application stress the importance of public administration reform as a means to promote public administration that is good and efficient in every aspect and every level (Boonmi, 2002: 31).

The review of public administration also identified the emergence of a new paradigm to replace the traditional model of bureaucracy. This paradigm has come to be known as new public management (NPM) and marks a shift from the organising principles of bureaucracy to those of the market. It was been characterised as ‘one of the most striking international trends in public administration’ (Hood, 1991:3). Originating in a group of Anglo-Celtic countries including Australia, New Zealand, Unite Kingdom, United States of America and Canada, NPM has been diffused and disseminated across the world and has entered the public administration reform programs of developing countries. Although there is a widely accepted set of principles which characterise NPM (eg. explicit standards and measure of performance) (Hood, 1991), it was found to be somewhat slippery concept that is perhaps best seen as a ‘menu’ of choices for reform (Turner, 2002; Manning, 2001). Despite a range of criticisms alleging the inappropriateness of NPM for developing countries, such as unfavourable environmental conditions, a combination of IFIs, bilateral donors and developing country governments have nevertheless, engaged in the policy transfer of NPM to developing countries, albeit with differing amounts of transfer.

The second aspect of context for the case study involved examination of the development of public administration and its reform in Thailand in Chapter 3. Starting with the earliest forms of public administration in Thailand, it was demonstrated how certain principles
and practices became embedded in bureaucracy until the present day. The importance of hierarchy, centralised decision making formalisation and patronage were among the practices which were handed down over generations despite considerable reform activity. It was demonstrated how external shocks deriving from expansionary European imperialist force led the monarchy in the late nineteenth century to institute far reaching public administration reforms to build a modern bureaucracy which helped to prevent foreign conquest. Reforms continued into the twentieth century especially after the coup which overthrew the absolute monarchy in 1932. However, it was demonstrated that the most significant development of this time was the emergence of the bureaucratic polity in which military and civilian bureaucrats were able to dominate state and society. While the bureaucratic polity came under challenge from economic development and democratisation in the last few decades of the twentieth century, the bureaucracy still retained considerable authority and was able to resist any radical reform proposal. Incremental reforms which did not threaten the structures and processes of Thai public administration were introduced. This means that change was slow and the traditional model of bureaucracy still best characterised Thai public administration.

The situation changed dramatically in 1997 when the Asian Financial Crisis hit Thailand and opened up the necessary policy space for radical public administration reform. Changes to the Thai Constitution in the same year gave added impetus to reform as they involved greater popular participation in governance, more government accountability and decentralisation. Chapter 4 reviewed the current public sector reform in Thailand in the aftermath of the Asian Economic Crisis in 1997, and revealed the importance of the Public Sector Reform Master Plan which was first introduced in 1998 while Chuan Leekpai was in power. The reform plan involved much more change than anything that had preceded it. It consisted of five major reform dimensions which were revision of the roles, functions and management of the public sector, revision of the personnel management system; revision of laws and the legal system; reform of public service culture and values; and reform of the financial and budgetary system. NPM had arrived in Thailand and radical reforms which were explicitly introduced as NPM were continued and intensified by the Thaksin regime when it took office in 2001. The Thaksin cabinet announced a new NPM-driven strategic plan for the next steps in public sector development over the period 2003-2008. This strategic plan is closely related to the Public Reform Master Plan. However, it expanded the scope of reform to include seven
dimensions which are streamlining and redesigning work processes; restructuring public organisations; revamping financial and budgetary systems; redesigning the human resource management system and compensation schemes; inculcating a new mindset, work culture and values; modernising government operations; and encouraging public participation. The inspiration for these dimensions of public administration reform was NPM. By employing reform measures associated with NPM the Thai government hoped to emulate the perceived success of similar reforms in the NPM—originating countries.

Having provided the context of the Thai public sector reform, Chapter 5 set out the methodological approach adopted in this thesis. The instrumental case study was the predominant research method used in this study. However, for data used in contextualising the case and for background to the case itself, historical and contemporary information was gathered from a range of sources. Archival materials from the Thai civil service were of the greatest importance, but these were supplemented with Thai newspaper reports and interviews with key personnel. Archival materials are an important source of information because they consist of many official documents such as minutes of meetings of relevant reform committees, reform proposals, cabinet submissions, internal memos, reports, and research papers. They reveal the development of government thinking on public sector reform and give insight into the rationale and politics behind particular actions. Some archival materials were sourced outside of government, notably in newspapers. In addition, the databases of several newspapers were searched for reports on civil service reform issues. Such newspaper reports not only provide a chronology of events but also present critical perspectives. The interviews, which form the core of the case study, record the perceptions of civil servants on the reforms being implemented in their organisations. Moreover, in this study the key personnel are defined as those closely involved with or having an ownership of each reform dimension. The interviewees comprise two groups. The first group of interviewees was responsible for implementing the reforms or being subject to them, and consisted of government officials in various positions in the Ministry of Culture, the organisation in which the case study was conducted. The second group of interviewees was responsible for initiating, transmitting and monitoring the reform, and these respondents were government officials working in the Office of Civil Service Commission (OCSC) and in the Office of Public Sector Development Commission (OPDC).
Chapter 5 also provided a brief background of the Ministry of Culture as a case study organisation. A historical overview, current tasks, organisational structure, personnel, and budget of the Ministry of Culture were outlined to provide the reader with ample knowledge and understanding of the organisation in which the case study interviews and archival research took place.

Summary and Discussion of Research Findings

Having established the context and history of public administration reform, the thesis moves on to the case study. The purpose of the case study is to acquire a deeper understanding of the reform by examining how it has actually been implemented in one organisation. This involves digging more deeply than the general statements and reports on public administration reform issued by the government, by extracting the views of those most affected, that is the staff of the Ministry of Culture. From their responses and the researcher’s observations, it is now possible to address the six questions posed at the beginning of the thesis and reiterated in the opening paragraph of this chapter.

Organisational Restructure and Redesign of Internal Authority in the Ministry of Culture

The Ministry of Culture was established as a result of a major organisational restructure of the government in 2002. However, the study in Chapter 6 provides evidence that internal management within the Ministry of Culture does not belong to the NPM paradigm since it contradicts the first key element of Hood’s NPM model (Hood, 1991), which contends that the government should be able to effectively manage its financial and personnel resources through an appropriate budgeting, accounting and reporting system. This involves decentralising authority to the senior officials in the various government organisations. The theory argues that these senior officials should have more autonomy to manage with accountability as they will be better equipped and situated to direct resources to achieve desired outputs and outcomes.

The study in Chapter 6 showed that the structural reforms enacted by central government and those proposed by the Ministry of Culture did not result in any greater
decentralisation of authority to the senior managers in the Ministry of Culture. Indeed the structural changes proposed by the Ministry of Culture and involving the clustering of organisations within the ministry were not permitted by the OPDC. This was somewhat paradoxical as the government policy initially required all ministries to have separate clusters within the organisations. However, the government rejected the proposed structure of the Ministry of Culture stating that as the organisational structure of Ministry of Culture was not complicated, it did not need to cluster its organisations. As a result, the internal administrative authority in the Ministry of Culture remained unchanged as a hierarchical structure typical of the bureaucratic form of organisation. Even though senior level officials had the authority to manage the government allocated budget as they had in the past, they were not fully autonomous in regards to the management of human resources in their departments since staffing recruitment quotas and promotion of senior level officials were decided by the OCSC.

Even though the first reform does not conform to the NPM paradigm, it can be categorised in the first stage of convergence, referred to as ‘the discursive convergence stage’ (Pollitt, 2002). This is because the Thai government were talking about giving public manager more autonomy to manage financial and personnel resources. However, only the conceptual agenda has converged. Senior managers in the Ministry of Culture still do not have the authority to manage personnel resources, and this reform is not really leading to convergence with models of public administration found in the original NPM countries.

Another point which confirms that internal management in the Ministry of Culture cannot be categorised as NPM is the alleged maintenance of patron-client practices which have been pervasive in the Thai public sector for more than a century. In relation to patron-client ties, some senior government officials were suspected of getting promoted without having their performance measured, through their close links with the appointing officials. This would contradict another element of Hood (1991)’s seven key elements of NPM, the one which indicates that the government should have explicit standards and measures of performance. However, in some cases, even though the Ministry of Culture has set out explicit standards and performance evaluations, it was alleged that they could still be overridden by patron-client practices which can survive in a system of
performance evaluation in which hierarchy and authority actually matter more than transparency and results.

In relation to the effectiveness of the first reform dimension, the study revealed that the major organisational restructure of the government which was creation of the Ministry of Culture has been effective and successful in its own right because it achieved the objectives set out by the government in terms of establishing new ministries as well as the restructuring of roles and functions of government. However, the redesign of internal authority has not been successful according to the tenets of NPM. In addition, according to the perceptions of Ministry of Culture officials, the study revealed that a perceived numerical short fall in the number of civil servants combined with a lack of knowledge about public sector reform were regarded as major problems of this reform initiative while differential benefits to individuals from the reform and continuity of the patron-client practice were obstacles to structural reforms in line with stated NPM ideal.

**Public Culture and Values Reform**

In Chapter 7, it was demonstrated that reforming public culture and values has been one significant dimension of the reform plan introduced by the government. The Ministry of Culture has followed government policy on the public culture and values reform by implementing various initiatives. In particular, selected government officials attended a series of workshops, seminars, and training sessions organised by the OCSC and the OPDC. Moreover, the Clean and Transparent Centre of the Ministry was also established in order to promote ethical practices, and to prevent corruption within the Ministry. In addition, the Ministry of Culture has also created and introduced its own five ethical standards to complement the public culture and values reforms introduced by the government.

The study demonstrated that public culture and values reform is not leading to convergence with models of public administration found in the original NPM countries since it is not an explicit part or a central concern of the NPM paradigm. However, a component of this reform, namely, transparency and accountability is a major concern of the NPM paradigm. Thus, public culture and values reform is an important initiative for countries dealing with public sector reform because corruption is a significant problem
which may hinder NPM style reforms in developing countries. Moreover, other problems identified by participants in the study could be seen to have links to public culture and values. These included the difficulty of performance evaluation, centralisation of authority in the bureaucratic system, low salaries as perceived by government officials, and accountability for budget expenditure. Obstacles to the implementation of these reforms were identified to include the cultural norms and values embedded in the Thai bureaucracy. It was shown how such perceptions could sometimes coalesce to produce unwillingness to change due to the feeling of insecurity.

From the study in Chapter 7, it can be concluded that although the establishment of a Clean and Transparent Centre as well as the introduction of the Ministry of Culture’s five ethical standards have been carried out, they have not brought about any significant change in the work practices of the various levels of government officials. According to many of the officials this was due to a lack of compulsory education on these reforms for all Ministry of Culture officials. Thus, this reform initiative has not met with success according to the perceptions of many officials in the Ministry of Culture. It can be said that public culture and values reform in the ministry is perhaps the most difficult reform to achieve since it has been observed that the obstacles to reform have included the reluctance of government officials to change, and cultural norms and values which are already embedded in the Thai public sector. Public culture and values reform in the Ministry of Culture and the Thai public sector is an ambitious, and may take a long period of time to be accomplished because it involves modifying prevailing behaviour patterns of public servants. These are not amenable to immediate change as may be the case with other reforms.

**Workforce Reduction**

From the study in Chapter 8, it is clear that the downsizing program in the Ministry of Culture is leading to convergence with models of public administration found in the countries where NPM originated. In relation to the four stages of convergence conceptualised by Pollitt (2002), this reform program can be categorised in ‘the practice convergence stage’, since the Thai government has decided to adopt downsizing as had been the case in the original NPM countries. The downsizing program of the Thai government can thus be categorised as a part of the NPM model. One of the seven key
elements of the NPM model provided by Hood (1991:4-5) contends that the government should stress greater discipline and parsimony in resource use. Resource utilisation should be more closely scrutinised, and an emphasis on cost-cutting put in place. Workforce reduction is one of the reform initiatives which emphasises decreasing government expenditure and focuses on doing more with less. This downsizing assumes that a smaller number of effective government officials can still produce the same or superior outputs and outcomes than a large number of less effective government officials. The study investigated the downsizing program, known as the Personal Development and Administration Measures. This important initiative consisted of three sub-measures and was introduced by the government in 2003. The first and second sub-measures of the Personnel Development and Administration Measures aimed at reducing the numbers government officials through a voluntary program. They targeted public servants who wanted to resign from the public sector because they either preferred to change their career paths or were dissatisfied with the public sector reform program. The third sub-measure of the program aimed at reducing the number of government officials who were evaluated as inefficient workers. Thus, it can be seen that the Thai government put an emphasis on cost-cutting by decreasing the number of government officials. The government did not try to reduce the functional coverage of its public administration organisations. Thus, it can be said that the government has been trying to do the same or even more with less.

In relation to the effectiveness of the reform, the study revealed that the first and the second sub-measures were effective and successful in terms of both the objectives of the government and in the perceptions of officials. It was quite easy for the Ministry of Culture, and other government agencies to implement the first and the second sub-measures because participation in these two sub-measures was voluntary. One hundred and sixteen officials in the Ministry of Culture willingly participated in these two sub-measures. Implementation of these reform initiatives were accomplished within the allocated time frame (2000-2001). However, the third sub-measure was not fully implemented due to political considerations. The study in Chapter 8 has shown that the Thai government withdrew from implementing the third sub-measure as it generated dissatisfaction and opposition among public servants and threatened to unseat the government. The government abandoned the third sub-measure as it felt it necessary to placate officials in order to gain votes in the coming election. The episode revealed how
political expediency can triumph over reforms ostensibly aimed at increasing efficiency in public administration. It can be concluded that the third sub-measure has been ineffective and unsuccessful in terms of satisfying the reform objectives of the government. The hostile perceptions of officials in the Ministry of Culture also showed how unpopular the reform was. It was therefore not surprising that high among officials’ perceptions on obstacles and problems affecting this reform was resistance of Ministry of Culture staff to the performance evaluation, especially as it was seen to encourage favouritism in the determination of job security and promotion.

**Internal NPM Reform Initiatives**

In Chapter 9, it was demonstrated that a variety of additional reforms had been introduced into the Ministry of Culture. These included performance agreements, information technology, and public participation. The study revealed that performance agreements have been drawn up and used to evaluate the work of key personnel cascading down to lower level staff in the Ministry of Culture. The Information and Communication Technology Centre was also established in order to support and use information and communications technology as a tool for the development of more efficient administration. Moreover, the Ministry of Culture also encouraged public participation by introducing a Call Centre and website in order to provide information and various services regarding religion, art, and culture, as well as to receive feedback and opinions from the public.

The study in chapter 9 demonstrated that the performance agreement system in the Thai public sector is leading to a convergence with models of public administration found in the original NPM countries. It can be categorised in ‘the practice convergence stage’ (Pollitt, 2002). It can also be categorised as an NPM reform initiative since it has been implemented in the Ministry of Culture in order to complement the Thai government’s Results Based Management (RBM) scheme. This reform can be seen as representative of Hood’s (1991) second element of NPM as it aimed at measuring performance. By contrast, the establishment of the Information and Communication Technology Centre is not leading to convergence with models of public administration found in the original NPM countries, as it cannot be regarded as an NPM reform initiative because upgrading information technology is not new. Such actions have been taken in the Thai public sector.
for many years and can be seen as representing the traditional incremental mode of reform aimed at achieving efficiency gains within a bureaucratic organisational structure. The study revealed that public participation—the third initiative in this group—is not an explicit part of Hood’s (1991) NPM model. However, as suggested by Manning (2001), reforms of this nature are very significant components of change initiatives for public sectors in developing countries. In relation to the effectiveness of these internal reform initiatives, the study revealed that technology and public participation were effective and successful in terms of satisfying both the objectives of the government, and the perceptions of officials. The performance agreement system was seen to be less effective in the perceptions of middle and junior level officials as they identified that senior level officials would always positively evaluate their organisation because they did not want to discredit themselves. They also worried that performance evaluation was a threat to the job security which has been a feature of Thai public administration for many years.

**Public Sector Reform in the Ministry of Culture Compared to Hood’s NPM Model**

Having just applied the research questions to the four major reform dimensions, it is now possible to judge whether the Ministry of Culture has been reformed in line with each dimension of Hood’s (1991) NPM model or not. The results of this evaluation are set out in Table 11.1 where three possible answers are evident: either ‘yes’ the reform belongs to the NPM paradigm or ‘no’ it does not, or, in some instances, a reform may contain elements of both ‘yes’ and ‘no’.
Table 11.1: Public Sector Reform in the Ministry of Culture Compared to Hood’s NPM Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NPM elements</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Yes / No</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Hands-on professionalism in the public sector</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Explicit standards and measures of performance</td>
<td>★</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Greater emphasis on output controls</td>
<td>★</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Shift to disaggregation of units in the public sector</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Shift to greater competition in public sector</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Stress on private sector styles of management practice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Stress on greater discipline and parsimony in resource use</td>
<td>★</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Firstly, internal management within the Ministry of Culture does not belong to the first element of Hood’s NPM model because senior level officials had the authority to manage the government allocated budget, but they lacked full authority to manage all human resource affairs as this was the responsibility of the government's specialist human resource agency, namely, the OCSC.

Secondly, the study shows that the Ministry of Culture has set explicit standards and KPIs for its projects. Thus, it can be considered that the ministry has reformed its organisations in line with the second element of Hood’s (1991) NPM model whether these KPIs are utilised in a manner consistent with the tenets of NPM remains to be seen.

Thirdly, since the Ministry of Culture increased the focus on output control, especially after implementing the RBM scheme, it can be concluded that the Ministry of Culture has reformed its component organisations in line with the third element of Hood’s (1991) NPM model.
Fourthly, it can be seen that the internal organisations of the Ministry of Culture are not disaggregated, and have no distinction between purchaser and provider, and cannot be categorised as in the fourth element of Hood’s (1991) NPM model. They retain the old functional demarcations characteristic of Thai bureaucracy over many years. However, if we look at the major reform initiative, we can see that the Ministry of Culture was disaggregated from the Ministry of Education. Cultural affairs were explicitly separated from educational affairs. Thus, the major reform, which is the establishment of the Ministry of Culture, could be categorised as NPM reform.

Fifthly, the study shows that there was no competition between departments within the Ministry of Culture, and with organisations in other ministries. Thus, at this stage, it can be concluded that the Ministry of Culture has not reformed its organisations in line with the fifth element of Hood’s (1991) NPM model.

Following Hood’s (1991) sixth element of NPM model, from the study it can be concluded that a few private sector techniques such as limited outsourcing and the performance agreement system have been implemented in the Ministry of Culture. However, the ministry is not fully engaged with private sector techniques and its staff does not perceive them to be a significant presence. For instance, only minor jobs such as cleaning, security and advertising have been outsourced, but there are no major projects which have been outsourced to a third party. Therefore, the Ministry of Culture may be categorised in between yes and no in terms of reforming in line with the sixth element of Hood’s (1991) NPM model.

Lastly, the study shows that the Ministry of Culture introduced a downsizing program within the ministry by implementing the Personnel Development and Administration Measures which consisted of three sub-measures. In terms of both the objectives of the government and the perceptions of government officials, the first and second sub-measures were implemented successfully, although the third sub-measure failed to be implemented. Nevertheless, it can be concluded that this reform initiative could be regarded as the seventh element of Hood’s (1991) NPM model as it was aimed at resource utilisation while maintaining or even doing more with less personnel, and hence less expenditure.
Evidently NPM ideas have diffused and disseminated within the Thai public sector, although the implementation of the NPM paradigm has only been partial, and therefore the extent of convergence of NPM reform ideas has also been partial. Some reforms such as hands-on professionalism in the public sector is categorised only in ‘the discursive convergence stage’ while some major reforms such as public culture and values reform are not leading to a convergence with models of public administration found in the original NPM countries. The Thai public sector reform can still be seen as incremental or sporadic reform, but it has moved beyond the traditional, reform practices to embrace a wider variety of reform initiatives, some of which have been explicitly drawn from the NPM paradigm. However, the recent Thai experience is not one involving the wholesale and uncritical import of all items from the NPM menu. The Thai public sector environment is quite different from the OECD countries where NPM originated. Factors such as cultural norms, centralisation, and corruption are embedded and prevalent in the Thai public sector. Therefore, it would be difficult if not impossible for the government to successfully transfer the entire NPM paradigm and its multiple initiatives into the Thai public sector. In addition, unless drastic measures are taken and some ‘across the board’ standards and evaluations introduced, full implementation of the NPM paradigm in the foreseeable future will not be achievable. It may not even be desirable for producing the type of public administration best suited to the conditions and conforming to the preferences of Thai society.
Appendix 1

Royal Decree on Good Governance

The Public Administration Act 2002 requires a Royal Decree that establishes principles and practices for the new directions in public administration. Known as the Royal Decree on Good Governance it requires that all public organisations perform on the basis of ‘good governance’ i.e. accountability, public participation, transparency, monitoring and evaluation of performance. It also requires that budget and personnel administration must take these into account.

The decree consists of ten chapters— each providing direction for the performance of government agencies in accordance with the over-arching principles. Below are the chapter headings:

1. Working for the benefit of the people
2. Creating results oriented administration
3. Developing effective public administration
4. Ensuring worthiness of government functions
5. Delayering the work processes
6. Abolishing unnecessary agencies and functions
7. Decentralising missions and resources to local administrative units.
8. Empowering decision making
9. Facilitating and responding to customer needs
10. Implementing good governance
Appendix 2

In-depth Interview Questions for Officials in the Ministry of Culture

Part One: Government Officials’ Personal Information

1. What is your educational level?
2. How long have you been working as a government official?
3. How long have you been working at the Ministry of Culture?
4. What is your position?
5. What is your position level?
6. What does your job involve? Please explain

Part Two: Perceptions of Ministry of Culture Officials on Public Sector Reform

First Dimension: Organisational Restructuring and Internal Authority Redesign in the Ministry of Culture

1. What are the factors that drive the organisational restructuring in the ministry?
2. What pressures (internal/external) were placed on the ministry to restructure?
3. How has the ministry been restructured?
4. How has the structure of the Ministry changed?
5. Were you willing to move to the ministry of Culture?
6. Do you have authority to make any decision?
7. Has the reform changed your perception of how secure your jobs are?
8. What impact has the reform had on a workplace level (Especially your level)?
9. Does the reform appear to be achieving its aims?
10. What are the problems of the organisational restructuring and internal authority redesign in the ministry?
11. What factors in the ministry may hinder the reform being introduced?
12. Will organisational restructuring help to improve efficiency of the ministry and how?
13. Has this reform been successful in terms of the government policy?
14. Has this reform been successful in your perceptions?

Second Dimension: Public Culture and Values Reform

1. What forms of accountability and transparency does the ministry have in place?
2. What are the factors that drive the cultural and public values reform in the ministry?
3. How have government officers’ behaviour changed after the government has introduced cultural and public values reform?
4. How is the Clean, Open and Transparent Thai Project being implemented in the ministry?
5. How has the ministry improved accountability and transparency?
6. How has the ministry introduced ethical approaches in order to minimise corruption?
7. Have the reforms changed your perception of how secure your jobs are?
8. Does the ministry have a reputation for honesty or corruption?
9. What impact has the reform had on a workplace level (especially your level)?
10. How will the Clean, Open and Transparent Thai Project affect government officers’ behaviour?
11. What are the problems of improving accountability and transparency in the ministry?
12. What are the problems of minimising corruption in the ministry?
13. What factors in the ministry may hinder the reform being introduced?
14. Will the cultural and public values reform, especially the Clean, Open and Transparent Thai Project, help to improve accountability and transparency of the ministry?
15. Will the cultural and public values reform, especially the Clean, Open and Transparent Thai Project, help to minimise corruption of the ministry?
16. Has this reform been successful in terms of the government policy?
17. Has this reform been successful in your perceptions?
Third Dimension: Workforce Reduction

1. What are the factors that drive the workforce reduction in the ministry? How has the ministry been reducing the workforce?
2. How has the downsizing program been implemented in the ministry?
3. How fair was the process?
4. Have the reforms changed your perception of how secure your jobs are?
5. What impact have the reforms had on a workplace level (especially your level)?
6. Does the reform appear to be achieving its aim?
7. How has the workforce reduction program affected government officers?
8. Are you satisfied with the downsizing program implemented in the ministry?
9. What are the problems of the workforce reduction in the ministry?
10. What factors in the ministry may hinder the reform being introduced?
11. Will downsizing (workforce reduction) help to improve efficiency of the ministry and how?
12. Has this reform been successful in terms of the government policy?
13. Has this reform been successful in your perceptions?

Fourth Dimension: Internal Reform Initiatives in the Ministry of Culture

1. Do you know that the Thai public sector has been reforming by implementing NPM ideas?
2. Do you understand what NPM is?
3. Do senior government officials act as managers and have more autonomy to manage?
4. Are they allowed to act freely on their own? How? Please describe.
5. Has the Ministry of Culture set explicit standards and measures of performance? Please describe.
7. Have units in the Ministry of Culture been disaggregated; that is, there will be purchaser and provider distinctions through the separation of functions into quasi-market forms?
9. Has the Ministry of Culture used private sector management techniques in the organization? What techniques and how?

10. Has the Ministry of Culture imposed regulations on resources utilization and also put emphasis on cost-cutting? How?

11. What reforms has the Ministry of Culture initiated?

12. How have the reform initiatives been implemented in the ministry?

13. Have the reform initiatives been successful in terms of the government policy?

14. Have the reform initiatives been successful in your perceptions?
Appendix 3

In-depth Interview Questions for Officials in the OCSC and the OPDC

Part One: Government Officials’ Personal Information

1. What is your educational level?
2. How long have you been working as a government official?
3. How long have you been working at the Ministry of Culture?
4. What is your position?
5. What is your position level?
6. What does your job involve?

Part Two: Perceptions of the OCSC and the OPDC Officials on Thai Public Sector Reform and Public Sector Reform in the Ministry of Culture

Questions for Officials in the OCSC and the OPDC

1. Do you perceive the Thai public sector reform as the new public management? How? Please describe.
2. In your opinion what form of public sector management is being implemented in Thailand?
3. What are the problems of implementing the public sector reform project?
4. How has the Ministry of Culture implemented the reforms introduced by the OCSC and the OPDC?
5. Are the OCSC and the OPDC satisfied with the reforms implemented by the Ministry of Culture?
6. What are the problems of the reforms being implemented?
7. What factors may hinder the reforms being implemented?
8. Have the reforms being implemented in the Ministry of Culture been successful in terms of the government policy?

9. Have the reforms being implemented in the Ministry of Culture been successful in your perceptions?
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