

# Public administration and democratic governance

[Sociology](#)



Citizen awareness has been another driving force enabling changes in the functioning of the public administration. Citizens are more demanding, ask for more out of less, and have raised the bar for public administrators from just governance to good governance. This notion has moved the responsibilities of public servants from service providers to the ones responsible for the greater public good and minority upliftment. The three branches of governance - Legislative, Executive, and Judiciary are no more seen as separate entities, instead, their packaged service accessibility is one of the other major responsibilities of a public administrator.

The drivers mentioned above lay the stepping stone for "New Public Administration" (NPM). This initiative has become a synonym for public administration's effort towards democratic governance aiming to achieve greater economic and social development. The self-governance process introduced by NPM is driven by innovation at all levels intending to face the turbulent dissatisfaction environment.

Some of the salient features of the new democratic governance system are:

**Decentralization:** The hierarchical system is changed to a more decentralized and flat system. This improves access to information as well as increases the responsiveness of the body. This also reduces the risk of power concentration and encourages collective decision making.

**Competitive:** The challenges posed by continuous change require the government to be competitive rather than the monopolist. The government alone cannot stand up to the challenges of globalization. Hence democratic governance in the form of privatization is in vogue today. Activities best performed by private or nongovernmental agencies are deregulated to enable efficient functioning.

Customer orientation: The days of the seller's market has gone. Public administrators have to cater to the changing focus of the business to prioritize customer relations. All policy and decision making should involve a thought towards the acceptance of such changes by the most powerful stakeholders in the process - Customers.

Innovative: Solutions to problems sometimes require out of the box thinking. Such innovative ideas are incorporated into the advancing economies in various ways. True to the democratic governance nature, most of the ideas are an outcome of dissatisfied customer's suggestions. Innovations sometimes require a complete shift in the fundamental culture and beliefs. These changes are incorporated in the governance system by teamwork and partnership approach to social learning.

In general the face of public administration and as a result, the administrator's role has changed significantly over the decades. The domain has moved into a representative, participative, transparent, responsive, accountable, equity, and vision-oriented mode. These drivers of good governance are enabled by innovative solutions like E-Governance. All different strokes for improvement used in the right context, stand the current portfolio of public administration and its sister disciplines enriched.