

# THE LOCALITIES OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

*By*  
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Presented in The International Conference "Cultural Diplomacy; Effort to Maximize  
Soft Power as a Main Based of Diplomacy"  
Faculty of Social and Political Science  
University of Jenderal Soedirman  
Purwokerto  
Saturday, November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2009



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14 NOV 2009

## THE LOCALITIES OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION<sup>1</sup> By. Muslih Faozanudin<sup>2</sup>

### Introduction.

At recent decade, the formation of public Administration is still subject for the debate among academic and practitioners across the world. There are two big issues concerning the development of public Administration, those are the emergence of globalization in one hand and the growing awareness of localities on the other hand. Both are very crucial to the development of public administration. The emergence of globalization has its own challenge to public administration. The world has become more complex and culture as well as governing system has become more rapid and widespread. The task of public governance and administration has become more numerous and ideas to meet the increasing challenge of the age of hyper-uncertainties (Farazmand, 2009: vii). In line with the globalization, the paradox, called localities was emerging. The localities, with the uniqueness of value have been colored the daily process of administration. There are many custom and traditional principles that may be worth to public administration.

This paper will examine the local values that might be adopted by public administration. The work will focus on the question, 'could be possible that public administration is set by local basis (locally based public administration model).

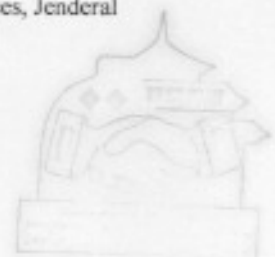
### A. The Development of Administration: At Glance

At the end of nineteenth century, there was monumental work, written by Woodrow Wilson, entitled 'The study of Administration', published in Political Science Quarterly Journal in 1987. This work was essential for the declaration of separation of Public Administration from The Politics. For the recognition of public administration into independent science, Wilson suggested to explore the study of administration separated from politics. This is way there should be a

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<sup>1</sup> Presented as Call paper at International Seminar on Cultural diplomacy Indonesia – Japan, on 24<sup>th</sup> Inauguration of Faculty of Political Sciences, Jenderal Soedirman University, 14 November 2009

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science of administration which shall seek to strengthen the path of government, to make its business less businesslike, to strengthen and purify its organization and to crown its dutifulness (Wilson, 1887:16). Wilson's works, in line with Goodnow who noted that 'in order the routine task of government could be more effective, there should be the administration separated from the politics, because Politics concern to policy formulation, and administration concerned to on how the policy executed. "Politics has to do with policies or expression of the state will. Administration to do with the execution of these policies" ( Goodnow, 1900:27)

With time, dramatic change occurred in the nature, orientation and application of public administration. New work was published by white 'Introduction to the study Public administration'. This work was the first book in the field of public administration. When Wilson with his work viewed that public administration is business and separated from politics, however white proposes his view that public administration would be effectively work when the theory of government and administration were integrated. And by that time, the principle of administration was developed (dalam Frederickson,1980:2).

Theoretically, the separation of Public administration from mother's discipline was not without problem. The long adventures for seeking its core content through the development of its principles, in fact, public administration could not be fully separable from politics. "Neither the study nor practice of administration –or politics—can be complete without theory that like them . According to Vigoda, (2006) Public administration was frequently understood through the eyes of policy analysts or political scientist, while the root of administrative process are definitely identified with political science, policy studies and managerial constructs of institution.

During the last three decades Waldo's diagnosis of the late 1960s on public administration as a science in formation struggling with a pernicious identity crisis has not changed much. Waldo (1968) noted that these ongoing transformations reflected an identity crisis of a science in formation. They also signaled a struggle for a recognition and legitimacy of public administration as an art, a body of knowledge, and a profession (Lyne, in Vigoda:2002) It seem today, the formation



of public administration is still unfinished business. It is always been subject for debate among academic and practitioners and across the world who seek higher and more extensive recognition, more accurate self definition and better applicability of the field to rapid changes in modern life. This also really reflects, there was a lack of self-confidence both as a science and as a profession.

The next generation of public administration was characterized by the liberalization of public administration, which is recognized as 'New Public Management (NPM). Some say that it is actually a new arena in the study of the public sector. It constitutes a revival of an old spirit of managerialism and applied in the public sector. NPM has advocated the implementation of specific performance indicators used in private organization to be applied in the public sector (Vigoda, 2006). Having been some years NPM introduced, Denhardt with his work, called 'New Public Service' (NPS) introduced. Denhardt criticizes the existence of NPM which tended to pull a way public administration to private arena, and returned the spirit of Public administration into the publicness.

As portrayed above, we could see that as discipline and profession, the development of public administration has been mostly focused on universal principle. Only did limited book or idea which explores the existence of local culture in correlation to public administration. This may be still rarely to discuss this topic, since globalization has blocked-up the localness or locality idea. Therefore, struggle and seeking an alternative model of public administration which is locally based should be supported. The next section will describe on how the local culture could construct the localness of public administration.

### **C. The localities of Public Administration : Cultural Point of View**

As a discipline, Public administration is universal. The principle of administration could be applied and exercised in any countries and at all level. But as the profession or practices, Public administration could be different, and 'country specific' or Culture specific. Administrative systems and procedures must be grounded on the cultural, social, and implementation capacity realities of the specific country. (Campo, 2002:13). It means that, best practices rooted from local



values, custom and culture is possible to color public administration in practice. So, it is true that when we say that, Public administration is a part of the greater culture of their society at the same time, it develops and nurture it own community culture. In other words, public administration is not 'value free' or neutral (Frederickson, 1987: 3). It always linked to the community problems where it is. It is part of the overall societal culture that determine a community's attitude toward the quality, style, and vigor of its government operation (Shafritz and Russel, 1997:75)

The work of Comparative Administrative Group (CAG), a group of scholars who concerned to the development of administrating, by evaluating the experience of administrative process in developing countries, founded in 1960s, was worth to explain how administrative system exercised in any developing countries or traditional society. Summer Seminars was to be a discussion forum for developing and spreading idea concerning the development of administration (Riggs, 1986:4). Having been some years conducted their research, there was a basic question proposed by this group which is very important: "what extent to which the public administration did not work properly in developing countries?" According to CAG study, there was an external problem correlated to the answer of this question. Public administration in developing countries faced external problem rooted in community structure, especially the connection between community and its environment. It means that local community where public administration was conducted, was a one of determinant factors in exercising of public administration. Local community with their custom, wisdom, value and culture, has its own administrative model, although its model, for some scholars, might be called traditional or ancestral.

In many countries, (especially in developing countries) the nature and exercise of government authority is explained more by cultural factors than by formal legal and administrative rules. The multiple roles played in many developing countries by government leaders—in business, tribal chief roles, and—explain why the machinery of government works differently from its formal design, and why ethnic and kinship loyalties often predominate over the formal



responsibilities. By this explanation, we could say that the ethnicity and kinship with their values and custom has influenced the exercising of public administration. It means that the applicability of public administration is unique, and in same sense cultural factor colored the administrative system applied.

In the history of Indonesia's ancestral government, we could see that every local community has its own model of local government, empirical practices could be seen by the existent of locally based government, '*Nagari*' in west Sumatera; '*Lembang*' in Tana Toraja, '*Pakraman*' in Bali, '*Ondoafi (andewapi)*' in Papua, and '*Gampong*' in Aceh. (Diwpayana and Eko, 2003: viii)..This heterogeneity of local government model shows that local communities have their own traditions and customs which order their life. The unity of tribal community who formed law society was constructed based on ancient tradition on defined area and regional, which has authorized on the earth and the inner and outer wealth. This was an original local autonomy in tribal and villages level. At that time, administrative system which had been applied was locally based, rooted on values and norm. Administrative system however was exercising suited to local condition and local need.

By the time of new order regime, that ancestral model has been systematically marginalized and eradicated, from the Indonesia Administration System, when the act No 5, 1979 about Village government was declared. All of the village administrative systems --covering the term, model and organizational structure--, were unified. All of the lower government (village) must use the same term. However, when the reform era was coming, this uniformity of village administrative system has been changed and returned to original system which is locally based. This was in line with the strengthening of decentralization and local autonomy in the local government level, which signed by the declaration of act no 22/1999, then renewed by the act no 34/2003. Since that time, the autonomy at local level, -- villages and local community--, has been intensified. Recently, each local community with its own custom and culture, has been given opportunities to choose the model and structure of local government system. It meant that, it is possible for local community to revitalize their local and ancestral model suited to



the need of local community. Therefore, public administration as mean to cope with local community business must be adapted to the local need. This includes the organization structure, leadership, and other "best practice" applied by local community.

When public administration which is locally based, it is needed to be considered some limited bellow:

1. The local norm and culture must be recognized and internally as general norm by local community
2. The local norm and culture could be 'best practices', which is put into action in daily live in local institution
3. Local culture is only be practiced locally and only selected one that could be universally practiced.

However, there are some the weaknesses of the locally/cultural based administration:

1. Central Government is sometimes difficult to perform correspondent directly, especially correlated to the nomenclature which is used differently at every local administrative system;
2. Some national program might be different in action at local administrative system, consequently, the performance of program is also different.
3. Uniformity of administrative system is only in the defined and general subject.

However, to make more comprehensive on the applicability of any administration generated externally must be carefully analyzed in the light of the local context and rejected, adopted, or adapted as needed. (Campo, 2002:13). Perhaps the most important is to integrate more widely existing knowledge of social sciences to formulate the appropriate model of locally based administration. In coming years, public administration which is locally cultural based must be developed. Therefore, scrutinizes of appropriate theory should be more concerned. The exploration of interdisciplinary horizons for public administration is thus essential and inevitable for the successful passages of the field in the next decade.

For this idea, Campo (2002:16) suggest that while cultural factors do make a major difference on how governments are run and the public sector is managed,



recognizing their importance must not lead to immobility or relativism. *First*, cultural factors do not explain why some countries succeed in crafting effective impersonal institutions alongside kinship criteria, while other countries in the same cultural matrix do not. In East Asia, for example, Confucian values are alleged to emphasize paternalism over legalism, and family loyalty has been used to justify personalism and nepotism in public transactions. But, however they may be interpreted, Confucian values do not explain the varying record of success of different Asian countries in the same tradition (ADB, 1996).

*Second*, there is a temptation to use cultural specificities as a justification for more mundane objectives, such as trade protectionism. The difficult but important challenge is therefore to differentiate between those cultural values that are genuine and positive from those that are codewords used as cover for vested interests. In the case of East Asia, there are unquestionably cultural values that have fostered economic and social progress—primarily, an attitude of cooperation between the public and private sectors, and a propensity for hard work. Asian values”, however, have also been used to justify the cronyism and closed circles of influence and privilege that eventually led to the financial crisis of 1997-1999. (Campo : 2002:15-16)

#### **D. Concluding Remark**

The locality of public administration means the use of local values, custom and culture rooted in local community to be personalized in exercising in local administrative system. However, the applicability of local based administration is only in the practice arena. It is possible, but it is very difficult to raise up the local culture to be universally perform at all level. Therefore, for developing this idea, scrutinizes of appropriate theory should be concerned. Hence, the exploration of interdisciplinary horizons for public administration is thus essential and inevitable for the successful passages of the field in the next decade. So, it is our homework for formulating comprehensive model of public administration which is based on local culture.





## SOURCES

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The International Conference on Indonesia – Japan Cultural Diplomacy  
24<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of FISIP UNSOED

Secretariat Committee : FISIP UNSOED, Jl. Prof. DR. H. Bunyamin 993  
phone : 0281-635292, pesawat 128,221, 222 Purwokerto - 53122

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No. : 018/SI.FISIP/2009

To. : Muslih Fauzanudin

Dear Mr/Ms.

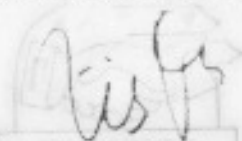
Related to the abstract you have sent for "The International Conference on Indonesia – Japan Cultural Diplomacy" that will be held on November 14<sup>th</sup> at Faculty of Social and Political Science, we notify that **your abstract is accepted.**

We do hope that you will send us the full paper and fulfils the administration's requirement as soon as possible.

We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Purwokerto, 2009 November, 1<sup>st</sup>

Head of Committee,



Elly Triasih Rahayu



The International Conference on Indonesia – Japan Cultural Diplomacy  
24<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of FISIP UNSOED

Secretariat Committee : FISIP UNSOED, Jl. Prof. DR. H. Bunyamin 993  
phone : 0281-635292, pesawat 128,221, 222 Purwokerto - 53122

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No : 052/Sl.FISIP/09

To : Muslih Fauzanudin

Dear Mr/ Ms,

Following a letter from Triwindu Fisip Unsoed Committee concerning the application papers and speaking at international conference, we ask you to attend and present your paper at:

Time : Saturday, November 14<sup>th</sup> 2009, 08.00 am – end

Venue : Office of University Head, University of General Soedirman, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor

In order to make class seminar effectively, we hope you to submit your power point by November 10<sup>th</sup> 2009 . We'd like you to fulfil the administrative fee which amount IDR 150.000 by 9<sup>th</sup> November 2009. You can transfer the administrative fee to Bank Mandiri a.n. Poussy Dinar, Rek: 139-00-0465758-5 and please fax your payment sheet to: 0281-636992. You can also pay the administrative fee at International Relations Secretariat. But if you have paid it, please disregard the request.

We hope that you can attend this seminar, thank you for your cooperation

Purwokerto, 2009 November, 7<sup>th</sup>

Head of Committee,

Elly Triasih Rahayu