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The New Public Management within the Complexity Model

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Abstract

This paper wants to bring up the circumstances and the results that are achieved when observing the new public management through complexity pattern. The complexity theory and the new public management share a point of view for the monitoring and the feedback when steering the behavior in organizational systems. The concepts are not well implemented on the local organizations although. The new public management focuses on results and underlines the need of evaluating the performances on objectives-achieved scale, when the responsibilities are clearly defined for reaching the goals. The article synthesizes how the public management can evolve when taking notice of the two concepts, and also when dealing with limited resources and multiple challenges, generated by the complexity of the system to which it pertains.

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1. Introduction

The tools of complexity science found their articulation within the physical sciences. Once developed, scientists started to bring up similar processes in everything; fluctuations of different mechanisms, population of seas and living ecosystems, movements of stock markets and traffic. Social organization and groups are complex systems that are difficult to define and to put them in specific contexts. You cannot easily establish the general properties that guide the analyzed system in a whole of other parts that represent an ecosystem.

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The complexity science explores the emergent behavior of complex systems by focusing on interconnections of the system components and systems architecture, rather than the individual components themselves. It represents a novel scientific approach across traditional discipline boundaries.

A model of the complexity science it is offered by the complex adaptive systems. Matei and Matei (2011) offer in their work a view of the complex social environment represented by the European Union and they say that EU administration is a complex system, with multiple loops of feedback, incorporating the national administrations in its structure, respecting their identities and values. This research will focus more on the local level of public service systems, governed by the EU regulatory ecosystem.

All the adaptive systems have a great number of agents, which interact. Interconnected and interdependent elements and dimensions characterize the systems. Feedback processes shape how change happens within a complex system. The emergence describes how the behavior of systems emerges, unpredictably, from the interactions of the agents, showing that the whole can be different to the sum of the parts. E. Mitleton-Kelly (2003) considers that a complex adaptive system is defined by their general characteristics:

-self-organization; emergence; interdependence; -feedback; Systems far-from equilibrium; Space of the possible; co-evolution; historicity; trajectory dependence.

Besides social applications, we will observe the political ones that are approached through a complexity lens (Scarlat, 1997). We will focus on the feedback concept in the economical-administrative systems, especially on the local development. The complexity theory brings an alternative, which admits the importance of the information and monitoring in having a success organization. „The complex management”, according to Kauffman (1995), is having democratic problems resolved and a decentralized experimentation, rather than control from the center and conformity. The public management, which has its basis on complexity theory it, is also seen as an approach of a complex system and includes within its references a wider environment, and so the organizational performance appears not only as a function but also as the performing platform of the entity.

2. The New Public Management- efficiency and evaluation

New public management theory focuses on results (Hughes, 1998, Strathern, 2000). Those outputs need to be monitored for the success of an organization. This organization needs to perform in order to achieve great results and to prove to be efficient. We will study the behavior of the agents inside an organization when they need to come up with a public policy, efficient for the problem that was brought in the agenda. This policy needs to be evaluated in order to see the impact that has on the environment to which it refers.

We take into account not only the problem that needs to have a resolution but also the strategy that leads to the accomplishment of the objectives. Although in complex systems we cannot have optimal approaches for every situation, we can still use that optimal solution for the required choice. The justification stands on intermediate evaluation that shows the evolution of the social-economical context and the possibility of making the policy within the established frame.

When we analyze if the objectives established within the policy of local development were implemented we must talk about the effectiveness of how the process took place. This is another characteristic of the new public management, which requires an economical evaluation of the costs related to the results. Effectiveness represents ex-post evaluation criteria and refers to the social impact that occurred when using an amount of resources. Cost reduction and smart resourcing are two concepts that are embraced by the new public management and leads to the idea that efficiency and effectiveness can represent performance criteria for the local development politics.

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