

TOWARDS BETTER PUBLIC SECTOR MANAGEMENT: A CASE OF MALAYSIA



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5.2 Enhanced Executive Summary

(Abstract of the research) – 1 page only

The purpose of this study is to examine the influence of organizational leadership, professional attitudes, entrepreneurial values, and macro-environment context within the parameters of the new public management (NPM). A major feature of NPM is its market-oriented approach. The premise of NPM reform wave is that more market orientation in the public sector will lead to greater cost-efficiency for government, without having negative side effects on other objectives and considerations. It is hypothesized that the presence of those four independent variables will influence public employees to exhibit market-oriented values. Survey questionnaires were sent out to 248 public officials in four government agencies in the federal government agencies in the capital city of Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia. The response rate was 60.5%. The findings indicated that only professional attitudes and macro-environment context are statistically significant while organizational leadership and entrepreneurial values were positively related to market orientation but were statistically insignificant.

KEYWORD: Public Administration, Public Civil Servant, Market Orientation

5.3 Introduction

There is no doubt that bureaucracy exists in all government departments of the world. Most of the time, the opinions tend to be negative. Wasteful, inefficient, arrogant, irresponsible, impersonal, autocratic, and undemocratic are among the harshest criticisms thrown at bureaucracy. Yet, despite these criticisms, public service plays essential roles in implementing and enforcing government policies. Citizens' lives have been affected by government agencies through a variety of policies in areas such as local government series, taxes, income redistribution, environmental protection, crime prevention, and healthcare management. Yet, public services operate within a legal and financial framework that is very different from the profit-oriented private sector. This means that services cannot be produced on demand but placed within a wider context of societal demand and supply, which must be decided politically. Movement towards means-tested payment has caused anger and dissatisfaction among the public who are not willing to pay extra for government services and thus, expect government to

continue to subsidize those services. Within public services, a combination of factors including economic competition, rising expectations, environmental concerns, and the emphasis on quality improvement has fueled intense debate whether the public sector has to change its orientations from a more selfish and self-protective ethos to one that is more market-oriented, customer-driven, and quality-focused. Because of that, public organizations can no longer enjoy being a passive actor in this rapidly changing era. Every little change that affects the way a private sector is doing business also affects the momentum of public sectors, especially service agencies.