

A Traverse To Sustainable Development Steered By Public Administration

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Abstract—Today's notion of Public Administration is better comprehended when closely analysed with public governance. A balanced contribution towards social and economic development and the quality of life is the underlying postulate of Public Administration and its management. The shift in Public Administration to New Public Management has increased the distance between theoretical and pragmatic perspective. The discipline has undergone several layers of evolution and along with it the challenges keep soaring. Addressing Sustainable Development is one of the major challenges of the discipline on its journey towards newer dimensions. Towards the journey of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), one of the primary problems is improper public management.

The systems approach in Sustainable Development is a close match to the eco-system of public Administration with respect to its interdependence on socio economic environment aspects. This paper tries to make a conceptual analysis of the scope of Public Administration in accelerating the achievement of Sustainable Development. Adhering to the 4Es of Public Administration, Economy, Efficiency, Effectiveness and Equity can pave way to proper global and multi-level governance and thereby fruition the goals of Sustainable Development. This article focuses on how far the Sustainable Development approach is woven in alignment with the tenets of Public Administration based on the secondary data collected. The cumulative approach to build resilient services and inter-generational access is what is common about Public Management and Sustainable Development. The paper aims a collocational approach to investigate the challenges and trends related to Public Administration and Sustainable Development in the contemporary scenario.

Keywords—sustainable development, public administration, public management, systems approach

I. INTRODUCTION:

Public Administration as a discipline has encountered several shifts and curves both in theoretical and practical dimensions. It has ascended from traditional Public Administration to New Public Management and digital public governance. Governance in this twenty first century is a complex term because today it is measured through public value improvement and performance management. The challenges encountered in this journey are several and varied. In current scenario Sustainable Development is the strategy towards effective and inclusive management. Modernizing and developing approaches to this is a major challenge faced by Public Administration.

II. RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

This is a descriptive research that tries to find answer to questions such as:

- Is there a possibility to interlink Sustainable Development and Public Administration?
- What are the sufficient measures in Public Administration to support the realization of Sustainable Development Goals?
- What is the role of nation states in Sustainable Development?

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:

The theory instrumented for the study is Systems theory. It became popular in 1960s. The theory got its place in Public Administration from engineering sector. A system is a whole with different parts or sub systems. According to the theory, the different aspects in a system may or may not be inter related but they operate together to generate a comprehensive output. In organizational set up a major contributor to system theory was Herbert A Simon.

In systems approach, Public management or Public Administration can be considered as a system consisting of several interdependent facets and these facets interact among themselves to produce an expected output. This approach depicts Sustainable Development as an intersection of various subsystems or target goals associated with it. This theory can be the basis for the study because of the interdependent and interrelated factors both these

concepts address. Also, this approach focuses on an interrelationship rather than assuming the components as isolated subjects. This would help in finding out the interdependence of Sustainable Development and Public Administration and how these systems contribute in the formation of a larger system. The theory enables to portray real life problems and complexities. Hence this is a study perceived through systems theory.

IV. PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION TO PUBLIC MANAGEMENT:

The contribution of Public Administration in societal development is relevant and irreplaceable. The transition from 'Polis state' to 'welfare state' for instance was facilitated by Public Administration. In a traditional perspective it aided in setting up rules and regulations, organizing and maintaining people and institutions. The discipline of Public Administration traditionally was influenced by Max Weber, Woodrow Wilson, Taylor and sort. Public Administration was pivoted on the role of public organizations. It functioned on jurisdiction and hierarchy. Old Public Administration believed on rigid standards.

On the onset of 1970s, the issues in socio-political and economic milieu paved way to new dimensions in Public Administration. Albeit, political nature, public expectation and mandate became the key to services and management. This later emerged as New Public Management (NPM). It widened the scope of Public Administration as a discipline. New Public Management in the initial days was explored by political scientists such as Osborne, Rosenbloom and their contemporaries. **Invalid source specified..** It functions on managerialism and performance. In the current scenario, the discipline is on the advent of Public Governance which is yet to be devised and defined as an ideology. This latest trend in Public Administration is centered on service processes and outcomes and inter dependent agents.

V. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT DEFINED:

Meeting the needs of the present and trying to negate our socio-economic and environmental limitations balancing the potential of tomorrow is what we understand through Sustainable Development. To sculpture a fair and secure society is what the Sustainable Development Goal etitles for. 'Sustainable Development' as a term attained popularity after 1992, post the Rio Conference (United Nations Conference on Environment and Development) and issuing of Brundtland Report. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and the 2030 Agenda adopted by the United Nations General Assembly is considerably familiar today. The journey to development and economic growth is often slowed down by the ambiguities in sustainability. Sustainable Development is laid on an integrated approach to meet a wide gamut of economic, social, political and environmental objectives.

Theoretically Sustainable Development tries to bring economic progress, social development and

environment's carrying capacity on a single line. Considering the cost paid by developed nations to achieve the economic development they today claim, developing nations still have room for implementation of better managerial and development policies and to take the sustainable path. The larger populace who have been refused a decent and dignified life also comes under the range of Sustainable Development. It is grounded on aspirational and global goals which however are bounded to the national circumstances.

VI. EMERGING CHALLENGES OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION:

The challenges are numerous and they may differ according to regions. Some are generic in nature and they are apposite globally. Lack of credence people have on the system of Public Administration is a lingering challenge. It has its repercussions on the governance offered and reforms proposed. Reinvigorating public service is a herculean task to be dealt by the discipline. Additionally, the international interdependence of Public Administration is a struggle regarding to what is the limit and extend of it. Majority of the problems faced by the countries today is transnational in nature such as climate change, energy crisis and migration. Creation and promotion of modern and resilient systems in meaningful way is something to be tackled.

The tussle between economic resources and the need of the people is another challenge. For instance, national governments struggle to deal with the green energy crisis in agreement with their regional capacities. In today's consensus urbanization and industrialization are complementary concepts of Public Administration. The contradiction and conflicts this trend have caused on the economic and environment interests is an issue to take with. Promoting national interest in an evolving global context is a dare. To translate green and development interests into action, potential and capable public institutions are necessary. The boom of Information, Communication and Technology, rural to urban migrations, financial crises that can impede the growth of the economy etc. have further increased the economic and social divide in developing countries like India **Invalid source specified..** To ensue an Artificial Intelligence (AI) or Information, Technology and Communication (ICT) government ready is a summon of the hour. Furthermore, handling the hegemony and promoting intercultural interactions and global goods hand in hand is another challenge the discipline has to encounter.

VII. CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS:

The Constitution of India has specific provisions for Sustainable Development. It lays down principles and regulations that implies these developmental postulates. Stockholm declaration says that, "Man has the right to equal and adequate conditions of life". The Fundamental Rights of Indian Constitution reflects the same ideology with reference to Article 14. Brundtland Report 1987, mentions about different basis of

participation required for larger projects. Article 19(1)(a) and Right to Know which are specified in the Indian Constitution backs these ideas. Article 21 emphasizes that every citizen deserves dignified life. United Nations also advocates a decent and dignified life to every people around the world.

Directive Principles of the State Policy in the Constitution of India secures the fundamentals of Sustainable Development. Article 47 and Article 48A falls in line with the goal 3 and 13 of SDG. Article 48 and 49 supports environmental and collective development through modern line. Fundamental duties of the Indian Constitution (Article 51 A(g)) stresses on the principle that, human beings and their actions are at the center of concern for Sustainable Development. Apart from these constitutional provisions, there are several government initiatives that endorse Sustainable Development. On a contemporary note, the union budget 2023 throws light to the prospect of Sustainable Development through several projects and allocations. The promises in the budget repercuss the country's exacerbating climate change issues, zero carbon emission goals, COP27 agreements etc. Government has allotted 19,700 Cr for the Green Hydrogen Mission and 35,000 Cr is to be invested towards the emission goal targeted to be completed by 2070. Apart from this Rs 20,000 Cr is given for evacuation and transmission of renewable energy across states. Swachh Bharat Mission, Smart Cities, Namami Ganga Mission, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Sashakt Bharat-Sabhal Bharat, Satat Bharat- Sanatan Bharat, National Action Plan on Climate Change, National Clean Air Programme and Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana are few among such initiatives **Invalid source specified..** Public Administration and Constitution influence each other and they share a reciprocal relation. Constitutional principles serve as the basis of operation for Public Administration. Thus, these provisions set the guidelines as to how to work towards sustainable society.

VIII. DECENTRALIZATION AS AN ASPECT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:

Since the targets of Sustainable Development Goals are in alignment with Public Administration, the local and regional government institutions play a major role in these. Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and their focus on inclusive development is a medium towards the attainment of Sustainable Development. In close observation it can be identified that the wider goals of SDGs are within the scope of eleventh schedule of the Indian constitution. Decentralization is a significant aspect in the agenda of International Development Agencies. Decentralization can be a process of state reform and also a method of state reform through a hierarchical system. Devolution, delegation and de-concentration is a better approach of Public Administration towards Sustainable Development goals. Involving local bodies helps to establish a mutually enabling relationship between local

development goals and global development goals. Decentralized approach of the system of Public Administration towards Sustainable Development goals helps in the creation of an 'enabling environment'. Any reform in Public Administration increases the sequacity of decentralization reforms. Public Administration with its decentralized levels can increase the efficiency and reliability. Incorporating Information Technology based processes and applications at the grass root level expedites the journey towards Sustainable Development goals. One of the main hinderances to the fulfillment of SDGs is the lack of availability of data related to socio economic development at the grass root tier. Digitalized, stratified and localized data can make the process more systematic. Public Administration measures can aid in processing the statistics and data.

IX. PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT- A MATCH:

The role Public Administration has to play in development of nation states is immensely relevant. Public management is the mechanism that rightly analyzes the context of any developmental policy and implements it to benefit people at large. In the words of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 'Public Administration seeks to foster relationships that are guided by respect for human rights, information sharing, Rule of law, integrity and transparency' **Invalid source specified..** According to the UNDP, Public Administration has its extensive role in:

- Setting up responsive and robust democratic establishments.
- Equitable and fair distribution of services, resources and opportunities.
- Social harmony and maintaining transnational interactions.
- Empower environmental sustainability and interests.

Public Administration or Management acts as a prism which diffracts its influence on society, economy and environment which are the major foci of Sustainable Development. In developing nations, Public Administration is the tool to alleviate poverty and human development challenge. Sustainable Development remains a concept on paper in many aspects because of well-intended though ill-designed and executed initiatives. Population increase in developing nations combined with over consumption of resources in developed nations exacerbate the dilemma regarding sustainability. Sustainable Development is measured in terms of its effectiveness, accountability and inclusiveness. In order to meet this Public Administration should operationalize a range of principles.

(1) Effectiveness-

- Competence: Competitive performance and results-based management helps in effective functioning of public institutions.

- Sound policy making: Policies should be well grounded and in good sense.
- Collaboration: Institutions in all sectors of government should work jointly towards the same purpose.
- (2) Accountability-
 - Integrity: Public institutions must work in fair and honest manner. Ethical attitude is significant for better discharge of public services.
 - Transparency: Disclosure of data and being open to scrutiny is a way to ensure corrupt free public management mechanism.
 - Independent control: Public agencies must be independent of any external influence and they should act professional and impartial.
- (3) Inclusiveness-
 - Equality: All human beings irrespective of any strata should be able to access public service, resources and fundamental freedom.
 - Participation: All stake holders must ensure their participation for a comprehensive development.
 - Subsidiarity: Fiscal federalism is important to enhance multilevel governance.

These commonly practiced virtues will aid the journey of Public management to attain Sustainable Development **Invalid source specified**.

According to Systems approach, Sustainable Development is the intersection of three major subsystems which are environmental, economic and social. The ecosystem of Public Administration also involves these systems. Considering Sustainable Development and Public Administration as two different systems, there are three aspects which contribute to their interlinkage. It can be represented as shown in Fig.2.

Development is a broader concept because it is inclusive of basic fundamental human rights to sophisticated technologies and security. Public Administration encompasses all of it. Sustainable Development targets directly find their relevance to the policies and strategies of Public Administration. For instance, women empowerment, public private partnerships, responsible governance and citizenship, global peace etc. It is the implicit responsibility of public governance to provide developmental goods and coherent public services. This can aid in improving social protection systems, clean environment and safe transport systems. The involvement of government in bringing economic progress and sustainability by the influence of internal and external environment is shown in Fig.1.

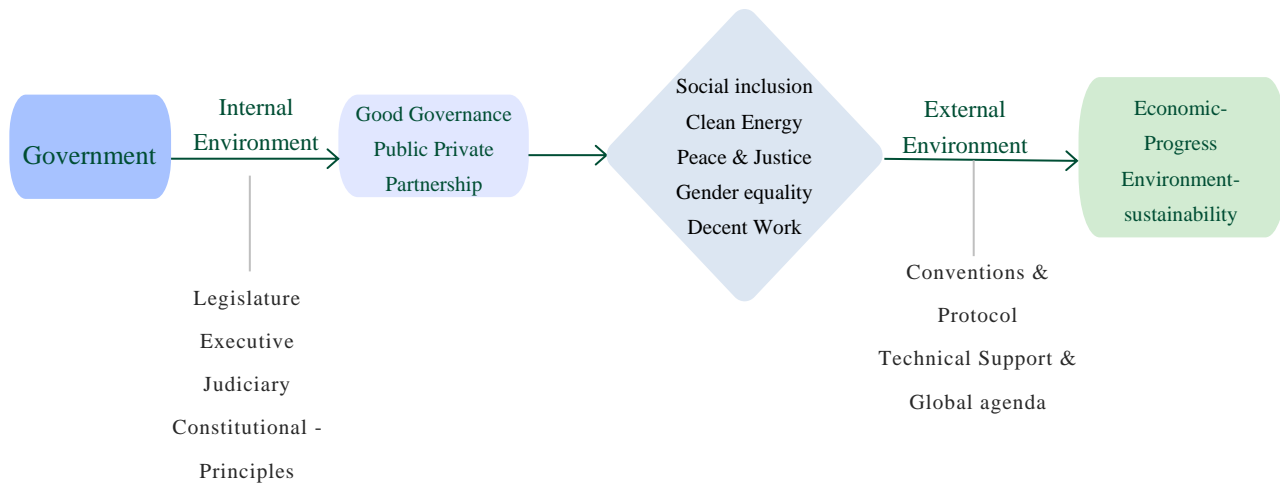


Figure 1. System Approach in Public Administration of Sustainable Development.

To achieve Sustainable Development targets such as poverty alleviation, gender equality, clean energy, innovation, social protection and regulation of financial markets Public Administration should devise policies, strategies and mechanisms. Additionally, the authority to eradicate and restrict certain policies and actions lies with Public Administration. It can assist in the alleviation of discriminatory laws and behaviors. It can prohibit and mitigate substance abuses and financial exploitations. Further, mobilization of resources to attain Sustainable Development is explicitly in the boundaries of Public Administration. It facilitates in innovation and infrastructure, research and development, climate change and environmental protection. Finally, Public Administration's role in international interactions is significant in promoting global and multi-lateral trading system **Invalid source specified..** The transactions between private and public sector contribute to the mechanism of public governance which eventually influences the principles and postulates of Sustainable Development. This interlinkage is reciprocal where SDGs on its own co-ordinate the functioning and actions of private, public and non-profit sectors.

Public Administration as a discipline always is at the risk of entwining its functions and performance management, a different but associated concept. Deploying a better performance management system for Sustainable Development can inculcate effectiveness, efficiency and shape better policies. A performance management system which is not obsolete is necessary to work along with the Sustainable Development network. The United Nation mandates that member states are answerable for updating the performance information. Statistical agencies in each region gets the central point in action for this **Invalid source specified..** In 2015, the panel of the United Nations Expert Committee on Public Administration said that, the SDGs are ambitious and all-encompassing to such an extent that no nation in the world will be able to realize all the goals, targets and indicators. Therefore, each member state should first initiate a national priority-setting

process where priority goals and targets are set and translated into national indicators according to own needs, resources and cultural traditions. This was considered as essential for the national ownership of the 2030 agenda, the avoidance of the bureaucratic risk, and the effective realization of the SDGs¹.

Public Administration is the gateway to provide and access the services catering Sustainable Development. The public agencies must recognize and be clear with the Sustainable Development targets that are critical to the nation, the quantitative targets and the modus operandi towards these goals. The co-ordination mechanisms devised by the discipline include hierarchy, market and network. This helps in setting up guidelines, overseeing, channelizing the services and obtaining feedback. Institutionalisation is another strategy. Professional associations and national institutions should set up as nodal agencies. These institutions can be the visible knobs in the network.

Sustainable Development focus on 5Ps, which include **Invalid source specified.:**

- Planet- Preserve planet's natural resources.
- People- Ensure dignity and equality of all people.
- Prosperity- Ensure prosperity and fulfilling lives.
- Peace- Create peaceful societies.
- Partnership- Implement Sustainable Development agenda through a global partnership.

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https://www.researchgate.net/publication/303444335_Public_Administration_of_Sustainable_Development



Figure 2. Venn diagram representing the 5Ps of Sustainable Development.

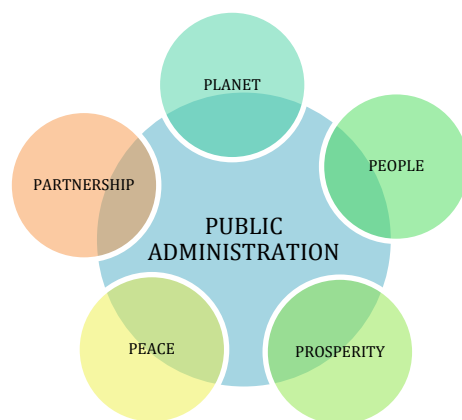


Figure 3. Venn diagram representing the 5Ps of Public Administration

On close observation, it can be culminated that Public Administration also has these 5Ps as its major characters.

- Planet- Public Administration acts as a transnational agent for each region and intend the planet's wellbeing.
- People- People are the consumers and central point of any service provided by the public agencies.
- Prosperity- Comprehensive economic and social prosperity is the underlying agenda of public governance.
- Peace- Public agencies work for a peaceful society.
- Partnership- The partnership of Public Administration with its stake holders and private agencies is essential for development administration

Thus, Public Administration and Sustainable Development are two sets of equal weight on a balance. Co-ordinated and cohesive policy measures along with updated performance management can help the nation states to journey towards Sustainable Development.

X. ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK:

The analytical framework of this paper tries to explain how Sustainable Development can be achieved through Proper Public Administration and their reciprocal relation. To analyze both these concepts through a collocational approach, certain aspects that collectively define them are chosen. Environment, Economy and Social system are the underlying basis for Sustainable Development Goals while Efficiency, Economy and Effectiveness are the indices of proper public management. The analysis could culminate that there is a relation between both these systems. If the targets of both these systems are coupled, it can benefit the global development. The below figure illustrates the analytical framework of this study.

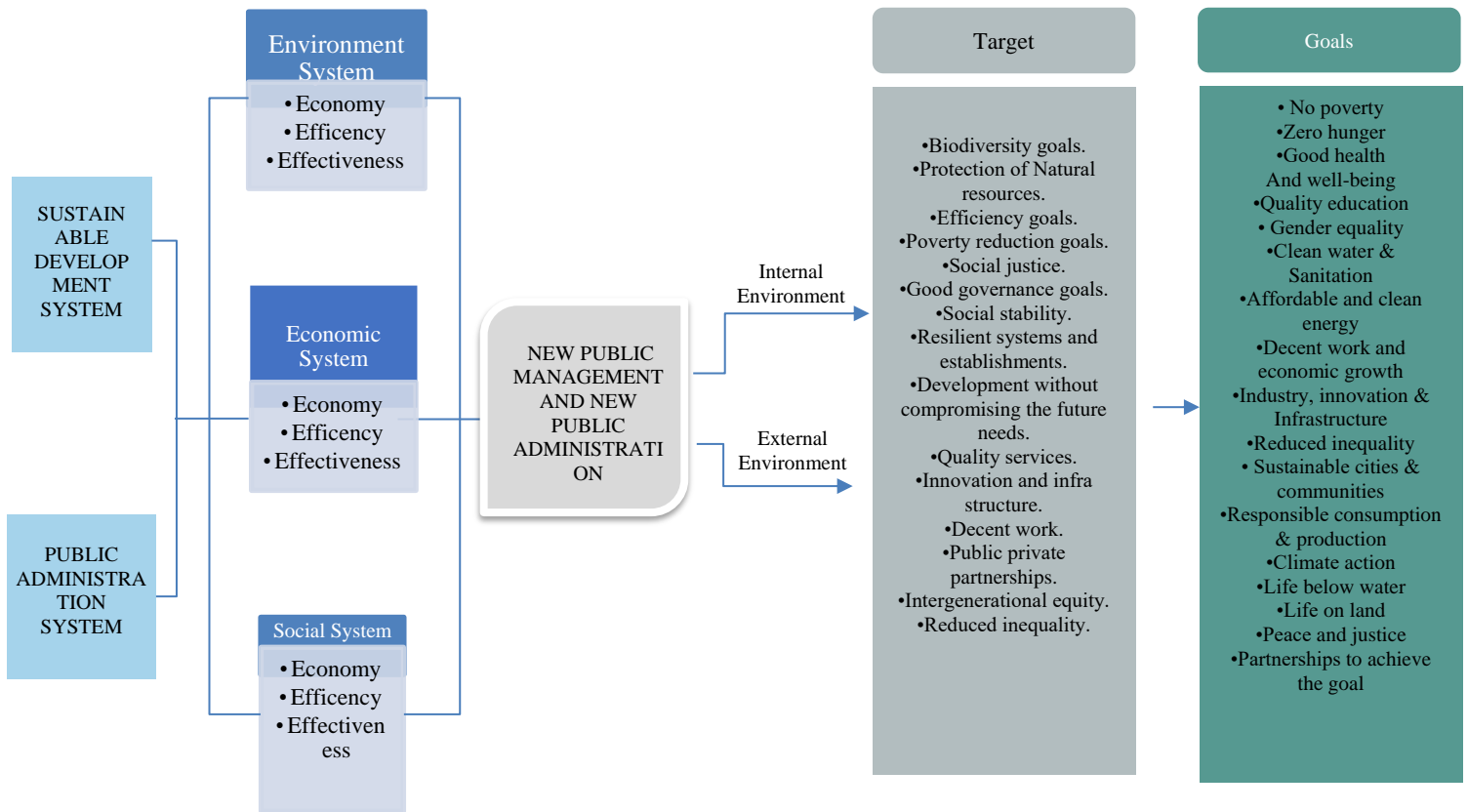


Figure 4. Analytical framework of the achievement of Sustainable Development through Public Administration.

XI. SUGGESTIONS:

These are the times of challenges and changes. Adopting flexible strategies can help in coping with these circumstances and improving the efficacy of public governance. Combating corruption and promoting transparency can nullify several obstacles in the discipline. Policies result in robust action and fruitful results only when it is based on credible knowledge. Competent and innovative methods are the need of the hour in public governance. When capacity building and governance go hand in hand, it enables Public Administration to serve and preserve. Providing incentives to stakeholders can boost performance and ensure proper service delivery. Collaboration with stakeholders and decentralization enables the proper flow of services as well as feedback. Democratized and decentralized policy implementation is the way to better effective public governance. Along with the improvement of existing potential, there is a need to develop technology-oriented capacity to further aid Sustainable Development.

XII. CONCLUSION:

Public Administration certainly helps in the acceleration of Sustainable Development. The efficiency of this journey lies in the risk management

involved in the sectors of Public Administration. It should be capable enough to shoulder the responsibility of Sustainable Development. Both these concepts are not an individual thing. It affects communities at larger level. If operated properly they can be complementary to each other and other wise contradictory in action. Sustainable Development is embedded in the objectives of ` and it is expected to contribute to the achievement of SDGs. To be interdependent means to influence each other, hence variations in one part will affect the other and hence the entire whole. To sum up, an efficient public management leads to change and change will secure development without jeopardizing the resources for tomorrow.

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