

# The Substantiation of the Public Administrative Systems Configuration on the Principles of Modern Management

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**Abstract.** The new trends manifesting in the national administrative systems are intended to design and implement certain management structures able to ensure, through the developed activities, the highest possible degree of satisfaction of the social needs determined and summarized in the content of the public interest.

However, the sector approached in this paper is the one where the complex character of public management is most obvious, the changes of the legislation causing major changes in the components of the public management system and in the content of the public administration activities.

Therefore, the effective application of modern management principles is calculated to provide the premises for the modernization and streamlining of the national administrative sector where the public managers harmonize the concepts of political representatives in the administration with the social mission of public institution operating in one sector or another.

The difficulties that arise are those relating to the strong political character of public management, as a significant number of public office positions are occupied by persons appointed or chosen based on political criteria, the aspects concerning the professional and managerial competence of the holder often remaining in the background.

*The research methodology* is centered on the bibliographical research of the Romanian and foreign scientific literature in this area, one of the basic methods being the synectics, a method of identifying new solutions, based on analogy.

**Keywords:** public management, organization efficiency/ performance, public administration institutions, public office.

## 1. Introduction

The concept of public administration is considering the administrative activities of a community as well as the institutions created to conduct this administration and is designating the whole of the bodies responsible for the administration of public interest issues [1].

At the same time, the governance is the mechanism by which the community commits to protect its members from internal and external threats and to establish policies that will provide optimal living conditions. From this perspective, the governance is a formal mechanism designed and used to coordinate the social system [2].

Referring to the issue of administrative reform, we show that the theory emphasizes its results by identifying what makes the administrative system more efficient and a more adequate instrument to ensure political equality, social justice and economic growth.

In terms of practice, the accent falls on the process, the reform can be observed in the changes of the bureaucratic practices, behaviors and bureaucratic structures.

What seems important in this context is the fact that the community, in addition to being the beneficiary, can always mobilize considerable personal resources to solve the problems it faces. Then, it is registered an openness to citizen participation in the decision-making process [2].

We underline the fact that nowadays, the idea of the apparition of entrepreneurial-type governance at the level of local public administration, innovative and oriented towards the private-sector, intended to create a

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more efficient organization asked by the new realities, is supported.

In the conditions created by the recessionist events that manifest globally today and in terms of very low local budgets, we consider the solution of entrepreneurial administration a very useful instrument.

## 2. The administrative system – under the action of principles and laws specific to public management

As shown above, the administration is an area with a theoretical character and a content limited to aspects related to the structure of an administrative system, with laws, rules and regulations on which it is based and it functions at state level.

As for the management, it has a practical character and a multidimensional content. The science of public management studies processes and relations existing between the components of the administrative system, but also within them, in order to discover general principles and laws, as well as methods and techniques to improve forecasting, organization and coordination, resource management and assessment of activities in order to enhance the satisfaction level of the public interest [3].

It also aims to identify the general and specific principles and laws, for the public sector in general and for the public institutions in particular, which, by their content, to provide the necessary foundation to satisfy public interest.

Public management principles and laws are actually a result of analysis and synthesis processes of a representative number of practical situations identified in the public sector, which were generalized and considered as being able to strongly influence the conduct of the activities in the public sector [4].

The fundamental objective of public management is to increase the degree of satisfaction of the public interest, as determined by the general and specific needs. Obviously, the process of improvement of public services occupies a central position (Table 1).

Table 1. Overview of the process of improving public services

| Specification                      | Description  | Examples  |
|------------------------------------|--|---|
| Commitments of public institutions | To comply to the principles of transparency, readability, etc. | Marianne Charter  |
| Internal charters                  | General frame, recommendations                                 | National Charter of equipments, charters of public services |
| Services certification             | External quality recognition of services (by sector)           | -   |
| Labelisation                       | Internal recognition   | -   |

(Source: Report GRANT ROMANIA-FRANCE/ Institutional Twinning RO30/IB/OT/01, <http://modernizare.mai.gov.ro/documente/Sinteza/FR.pdf>)

The system of general and specific social needs fully determines the content of public interest. In order to achieve the fundamental objective, the public management, through the exercise of its functions by public managers, ensures a realistic forecast of the overall system of objectives [5].

The meeting of the fundamental objective of the public management implies that the public officers, both occupying leading and executive positions in this sector, have an additional responsibility to manage all types of resources available to the public sector (human, information, material and financial resources). All this are used in the management and executive processes in the public institutions to meet the social needs and thus to achieve the fundamental objective of public management.

The knowledge of the way that the resources attracted in the system are used and the identification of the extent to which general and specific social needs are met, determines a permanent monitoring by control and evaluation of performance levels achieved in the public sector in general and in every public institution in particular. Information resulting from monitoring and analysis conducted within the public administration system is the basis for the improvement of the level of management performance obtained in the process of achieving the fundamental objective of public management.

The science of public management brings together a series of principles considered as fundamental in order for the management and execution processes of public institutions to have clearly defined basic coordinates and to make cohesion between concept, decision and action.

The principles operating in the field shown are the following: [6]

*a. The principle of unitary leadership*

It involves the definition and implementation by all decision-making factors of the fundamental concepts of public management, starting with the same perception reflected by a common, unified, clear vision of the public sector, in each sector and in each distinct organizational entity [7].

It is imperative that within the same national context, to be clearly stated the mission and role of public management, the type of managerial approach, the management style, the universal and specific methods and techniques and their implementation, in an unified vision, to provide cohesion and harmony within each structural component, each sector and to the system as a whole, thereby achieving the objectives for which it was created.

*b. The principle of autonomous management*

It consists in customizing the content of public management depending on the areas where it is applied and the diversity of general and specific public interests identified.

Thus, the principle of autonomous management involves an appropriate degree of managerial and financial autonomy for public institutions, in order to satisfy general and specific public interests [7].

*c. The principle of continuous improvement of management*

It consists in a continuously dynamic approach of the public management system, as a response to the changes in the national and international environment, and also in the system of general and specific public interests.

This principle is based on the idea that public management content should be improved depending on the degree of achievement of expected goals, and also according to the emerging domestic and international changes, aiming to achieve what we call „effective management” [8].

We must point out the permanent interdependence among the principles of new public management, each significantly determining the quality of management processes in public institutions, due to legal compliance [9].

### **3. Structures and relationships typical to the management of modern administrative systems**

Theoreticians in administration sciences argue that the administrative system of a country represents its spine and that the manner of constitution and operation of each organizational component decisively influences the functional status of the system as a whole and of the public sector in general.

#### **3.1. Operational and functional compartments within the administrative systems**

The department in a public institution or authority brings together a group of public officers or contractual staff involved in carrying out relatively homogeneous activities, with special training in the profile of the institution or public authority, using adequate methods and procedures to achieve goals, working in the same space and directly subordinated to the same holder of public office management position.

Within the public institutions and authorities there are compartments which, depending on the number of employees and volume of their duties are considered to be: offices, services, divisions, departments.

According to the manner in which the different compartments contribute to the general public interest, we can identify two categories of compartments:

- Operational compartments that are directly involved in the development and delivery of public services;
- Functional compartments, where objectives are set, analysis are underlain, decisions are made, and operational compartments provide special assistance to public officers.

In practice, it is necessary to determine the optimum number of functional and operational compartments to maintain an acceptable level of bureaucratization of the structure and hence, of the public services offered by public authorities and public institutions.

### **3.2. The typology of organizational relations circumscribed to structures of public administration**

Organizational relations link all components of administrative structures, aiming – according to S. Churchill - the connections among primary components: position, function and compartments.

These can be divided, according to their content, in four categories [10]:

a. *Relations of authority* - are the links established through official regulations, laws or compulsory internal regulations.

Within this category of relations there are:

- *Hierarchical relations*, expressing the relationships established between the holders of leading public offices and positions and the holders of executive public offices and positions;

- *Functional relation* resulting from the exercise of functional authority held by certain compartments within the institution or public authority;

- *Staff relations* that occur when the tasks, the authority and related accountability of senior holders of leading public offices are delegated, to collectives especially constituted within the public institution to participate to the development and implementation of important projects of public interest.

b. *Relations of cooperation* - established between positions located at the same hierarchical level (public officers in different compartments or in the same compartment. Such relationships arise from the joint development of complex public activities or services.

c. *Relations of control* - are established and developed between control-specialized compartments and other compartments within the public authority or institution. These relationships arise between the public officers holding leading positions within public offices and public officers holding executive positions, directly subordinated to public managers.

d. *Relations of representation* - are established between senior managers of the public institution or authority and their counterparts.

Public institutions and authorities are part of a socio-administrative system that clearly determines the existence of relations among all its elements, in order to create the cohesion and coherence absolutely necessary to fulfill the social mission that most public institutions and authorities have.

## **4. Characterization of the types of organizational structures of public institutions and authorities**

According to D. Farnham, most common organizational structures in public institutions and authorities are the hierarchically functional, territorial and mixed structures. Next, we try to present them as synthetically as possible [11].

- the hierarchical functional structure consists of organizing the public institution or authority at hierarchical levels and on sectors, depending on the types of public services it produces and provides. The main features of this type of organizational structure are:

- The existence of distinct operational and functional compartments - clearly defined in the configuration of the structure - and a large number of hierarchical levels;

- Compartment heads exercise all the managerial attributions and have as subordinates all executive public officers in the structure of the compartments which they preside;

- executive public officers take orders from their hierarchical leaders, as well as from the leaders of the functional compartments, having double or even multiple subordination.

The organizational structures of such public institutions are mainly developed and approved by institutions and public authorities to which they are subordinated and any change in the pattern of the organizational structure is made only by the hierarchical authorities.

- the territorial structure designates the organization of the public authority or institution in relation to the territorial-administrative unit in which they exercise their jurisdiction.

The main features of the territorial structure are:

- The scope where authority is exercised by the components of the structure is determined by the territorial administrative unit assigned to the institution or hierarchically functional authority;

- The number of compartments is determined by the level and intensity of social needs identified in the administrative-territorial unit that is administrated by the public institution or authority with such a structure;
- the existence of a reduced number of hierarchical levels, a high percentage of functional relations among compartments and a greater degree of flexibility, the structure is adaptable according to the identified territorial needs and to the objectives of management pursues;
- the existence of a large number of operational compartments providing public services of general and specific interest for the territorial-administrative unit where the institution or authority is exercising its jurisdiction.
- the mixed structure combines features of the first two types of structures, integrated into the internal organizational mechanism of the institution or authority. This type of structure is most common in public institutions and authorities in democratic states.

Mixed structures are considered as generators of an optimal functionality of an organizational structure within a public institution, the manner in which public managers know how to combine the advantages of each type and to limit the disadvantages of other types influences the achievement of an appropriate level of performance of the public institution.

## 5. Conclusions

The approach of the reform in the modernization of public administration had and has had as its major objective to spend less and to improve the quality of services provided to citizens; this is possible by adapting the state to the process of decentralization and by applying a modern method in the management of the resources.

Currently, the countries of the world are characterized by a variety of administration systems, explained both by economic and historical reasons, but also by the political and administrative organization peculiarities of the political power in each country.

The degree of implementation of basic management principles on which is based the local public administration and the used methods differ from state to state, the specific features being found in the organization of local public services, the constitution of the local budget, urban policies and even in the dimensions of external relations.

What we find in all countries where democratic and market economy principles are applied are the obvious tendencies to promote local democracy and develop the external relations among local authorities, taking into account all the principles of modern public management.

Within the European Union we find unitary/centralized administrative systems, as well as federal administrative systems. These two forms of organization hallmark the manner of organizational structuring of central and local public administration.

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