

THEORY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION MANAGEMENT – A RETROSPECTIVE VIEW

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Abstract: *Since the 1970s, especially in the 1990s, an increased interest in management and implementation of its knowledge in the environment of its performance has been seen within progressive public administration reforms. The cause of penetration of managerial approaches to public administration management lies in limited possibilities of public finances, especially taking into account the tasks of the social state, structural economic changes and internationalisation of public affairs. The reform processes are, in particular, aimed at reducing the bureaucratic burden on public administration and the transformation of social politics in line with the economic possibilities of a particular country. Pressure on these processes in public administration is increasing, of course, even with regard to socio-demographic changes resulting in ageing population and an increase in social spending. Within the reform and modernisation processes in public administration, it is therefore primarily important that the authorities of state administration and self-governance are equipped with better tools and get freer power to effectively perform their tasks whilst fully maintaining their responsibilities. The paper focuses at analysing the concept of good governance, respectively its individual determinants in particular time periods of social and legal development; it is also aimed at bringing to light the ideas of experts who have criticised the concept of the traditional model of public administration and who have emphasised the necessity to introduce management methods into public administration; on this basis it is focused on pointing out the relation of good governance and the modernisation of public administration.*

Keywords: *public administration, management, governance, theories, principles.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the 1970s, especially in the 1990s, an increased interest in management and implementation of its knowledge in the environment of its performance has been seen within progressive public administration reforms.

The cause of penetration of managerial approaches to public administration management lies in limited possibilities of public finances, especially taking into account the tasks of the social state, structural economic changes and internationalisation of public affairs. The reform processes are, in particular, aimed at reducing the bureaucratic burden on public administration and the transformation of social politics in line with the economic possibilities of a particular country. Pressure on these processes in public administration is increasing, of course, even with regard to socio-demographic changes resulting in ageing population and an increase in social spending.

Within the reform and modernisation processes in public administration, it is therefore primarily important that the authorities of state administration and self-governance are equipped with better tools and get freer power to effectively perform their tasks whilst fully maintaining their

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responsibilities. Regarding this issue, Hendrych [1] states that “managerial approaches can be applied rather in the internal organizational structure of public administration and in its effective management in terms of both factual and personal aspects than in external operations of public administration considered as services for citizens”. According to Máša [2], who defines the content of management in the sense of a specific type of management as “effective human activity which is aimed to influence the operation of the managed system in accordance with the adjusted objective, whereas the general function of management is in particular the process of constant selection of objectives and subsequent regulation, e.g. selection of resources and methods in ensuring human cooperative activities”, it is necessary to apply the managerial approaches in the public administration, especially when defining and setting its objectives. Similarly, Průcha [3] expresses the view that, “in order to achieve the objectives and fulfilment of tasks of public administration, both in the sector of state administration and more in the sector of self-government, it is necessary for the public administration itself (of course within the limits of the law) to specify the objectives by itself”. Here, according to the authors quoted, the economic aspects of public administration are manifested the most and the knowledge of economic sciences, mainly the management, can be utilised.

This paper is aimed at analysing past and current management theories related to so-called good governance respectively addressing their individual determinants in specific time periods of social and legal development. In this context, it nears the ideas of experts who have criticised the concept of the traditional model of public administration and who have emphasised the necessity to introduce management methods into public administration, mainly within the concept of New Public Management and good governance.

2. THEORIES OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION MANAGEMENT

The original concept of the **traditional model of public administration**, based on the ideas of J. M. Keynes and his followers and on the concept of rational bureaucracy of M. Weber, was strongly criticised as a result of the post-World War II crisis. H. A. Simon [4] questioned the rationality of individuals by pointing to the fact that objectively-rational decision making is unrealistic because it puts exaggerated demands on the decision maker’s cognitive abilities. This is because decision-making is determined by the determinants of the decision-maker – e.g. his/her abilities, knowledge, personal objectives and interests, immediate condition – psychological condition, mood and objective conditions of material and non-material nature. K. Merton [5] criticised the direct regulation of officials, working in his thesis with terms such as “bureaucratic ritualism” or “trained incapacity”.

Other major critics of the traditional model of public administration include P. Selznick [6] and A. W. Gouldner [7], who have pointed out the shortcomings of formally emerging and managed organisations, and indicated the fact that the concept of rational bureaucracy was, in practice, different from what M. Weber assumed, and that it basically deforms the ways of managing public affairs. In his book, entitled *Bureaucracy and Representative Government*, W. Niskanen made the bureaucrat’s economic effort to maximise the budget standing in the centre of his analysis. He considered the main shortcomings of the traditional model of public administration, in particular, to be bureaucratic wasting and inefficiency (he criticised that the authorities did not have a clearly identifiable baseline which would resemble the net income of corporation and according to which the office’s performance could be assessed; he also criticised the fact that information regarding authorities’ performance originates from a biased source - e.g. the

authorities themselves; he considered legislative control to be complicated because insufficient efficiency of operations does not lead to cessation of operations in the public sector; he pointed out the fact that the bureaucrats and their clients often create powerful coalitions seeking to increase their budget). Last but not least, in the context of criticism of the traditional model of public administration, it is necessary to mention O. E. Hughes [8], who asserts that the existing model of public administration based on the career system conflicts with reality for several reasons. For example, in the words of the author, “such administration which is based on formal control by political management, on a strict hierarchical model of bureaucracy and which consists of neutral, anonymous officials who are employed in permanent-time employment relation, those who are motivated by public interest, who do not contribute to politics, those who only manage politics adopted by politicians”. In particular, O. E. Hughes points out the possible negative consequences of bureaucracy, stating that “traditional bureaucracy has a dominant structure and output is a secondary affair” [8]. Furthermore, he criticises the unrealistic nature of strict separation of politics and administration, asserting that “the traditional form simply does not reflect the extensive, managerial, policy-making role performed by the modern public service (...) Public servants also play their important managerial role which is more important than simple managing and following instructions” [8]. Hughes also criticises short-term thinking (planning) for this model, pointing out that the insufficiently adjusted objectives and ineffective system of their control can result in the fact that officials would perform inadequate functions; he also adds that the mere size and variety of the public sector is the result of difficulty of its controlling and coordination.

Naturally, other areas of the traditional model of public administration have also been criticised. For example, T. W. Wilson [9] demands a strict separation of politics and administration, which would make it possible to remove arbitrariness and corruption in the administration. He holds the opinion that administration lies outside the sphere of politics. Administrative issues are not political issues, and even if politics set up tasks for administration, they should not be allowed to manipulate its performance.

While influenced by the above-mentioned critical responses, the public management concept emerged during 1970s; it became a dominant approach to public administration and public affairs management in the second half of 1980s. As a result of increasingly frequent tendencies to see the administration as business, it is a base for the **New Public Management**. The reason was dissatisfaction with the achieved results, which caused the need to apply the economic criteria to a much greater extent in the way of administration, respectively management of the public sector, especially the principles of project management. New public management is primarily focused on implementing strategic and other objectives. Therefore, it is also usually defined as a way to effectively and efficiently achieve the objectives through individual authorities and organisations [10].

New public management is thus oriented on results and on clients; for this purpose, it utilises management knowledge by objectives, as well as measurement of performance and market mechanisms. It seeks to break down the traditional models of organisational structures of public administration; it emphasises the need to move towards more flexible, smaller and more specialised organisational units which will be fitted with more decision-making powers (decentralisation and deconcentration of public administration). These should then be able to respond more effectively and in a more operational way to the specific requirements of clients - in application to the public administration, citizens. New public management also promotes creation of a competitive environment between the public and private sectors in the field of service delivery; it

promotes a market-based approach (citizens are consumers that need to be satisfied) and it also places a high level of responsibility for results on the manager. A typical characteristic feature of this model is also the so-called controlling within where periodic checks of current conditions and a comparison with the desired and planned conditions take place. As a result, corrective measures are taken. Since the 1990s, New Public Management has focused on the efficient use of resources to achieve a high quality of the services provided. This is a service-oriented model of management of public administration organisations.

Gradually, there are other concepts or sub-concepts attempting to improve New Public Management, or its modifications for the satisfaction of citizens. For example, we can mention the **concept of New Public Administration** based on the ideas of D. Waldo [11], who questioned the dichotomy of governance and politics, emphasising that public administration theory cannot be free of political values and interests. According to this concept, responsibility for administration of public affairs shall be borne by such a government which consists of representatives of political parties; it means the government is political and accountable to parliament or a similar representative legislative authority, it is responsible for assuring that the official organ is impartial, sufficiently educated and also for assuring that the minimum of defined standards will be met.

In the context of the introduction of managerial approaches in public administration, mainly in the branch of territorial self-government, whose main task is to provide public and publicly beneficial services, the **concept of Total Quality Management** was established in the first half of the 1990s. Regarding this concept, it seems appropriate to point out that it was originally developed for the needs of commercial subjects, but some of its elements also penetrated the public administration. However, if competition in the market in private sector is the “driving engine” of modernisation processes, in the non-profit sector, e.g. in public administration, then it is most likely about the satisfaction of citizens as consumers of services and potential voters and co-creators of this system. Therefore, the customer-supplier relationship is meant as the core of this concept. For this approach, it is typical to apply certain marketing methods consisting in qualified finding of the views of clients (citizens) related to timeliness and quality of the services provided to them.

There is also the **concept of New Public Service**, which responds to the shortcomings of the New Public Management. According to this concept, public administration shall not be aimed at controlling or managing society, but at assisting citizens in satisfying and achieving their interests. [12]

The New Public Management concept is also criticised by another, now probably the most important managerial approach to public administration, which is referred to as Governance or Good Governance, due to the unilateral position of citizens in the role of consumers of services. This fact is also often referred to as the main issue of New Public Management. In this regard, it can be said that relations between citizens and public administration cannot be seen only in the sense of the relation between service provider and consumer (consumer or customer). Citizens are co-creators in the democratic, political, state and administrative system; it means they are not only clients of services but also holders of rights at various levels of self-government. This aspect also needs to be applied when implementing management into public administration - it means that the role of a citizen as a co-creator of the administrative system must not be underestimated.

The Good Governance approach is thus oriented towards finding an optimal governance system which is effective and conducive to economic prosperity and social balance, which is important for maintaining trust. Regarding the above-mentioned critic of New Public Management, involvement of the private and non-governmental sector seems to be a key point as seen from Good Governance; participation of the private and non-governmental sector in management and administration strengthens legitimacy and competence of management, especially in terms of communication and feedback. Strengthening the role of a citizen (his/her participation) in this system shall be reflected in deepening / restoring confidence in public administration (government). It should be realised that the citizens themselves are the constituents of this system, ultimately and in the framework of the implementation of their electoral law.

The original Governance concept was first mentioned in the report of the world bank Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth (A long-term Perspective), year 1989. There was discussion of further development and solution of the problems existing in this area. However, this concept has undergone extensive revision in a relatively short period of time; it was developed to the current form known as good governance, which, since 2000, has been the main thought stream whose influence on the practice and theory of public administration is unquestionable. The main features of this concept have been reflected in major international documents of prominent organisations very quickly, such as the World Bank, the European Union, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations, etc. The governments of individual countries in Europe responded similarly to these institutions. The Good Governance approach gets closer to the forefront of interest of professionals involved in public policy and administration issues.

Nowadays, the concept of “good governance” enjoys considerable popularity. It is included in almost every major legal document or study of public administration, including acts of European institutions. At the moment, at least, we can mention the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the European Code of Proper Administrative Practice. However, it is not legally defined in any of them. International documents are based on the term of good governance; and they help to fulfil it further, mainly by formulating certain requirements, standards and principles. A similar situation exists in the Czech legislation, where the term Good Governance is used both by Act No. 349/1999 Coll., related to public defender of rights, as amended; and also, by Act No. 500/2004 Coll., Administrative Code, as amended; but even they do not define it more closely.

In theory, however, we can find a number of attempts at defining this concept. For example, Cheema [13] characterises Good Governance as a “set of values, policies and institutions through which the society manages economic, political and social processes at all levels through interactions between government, civil society and private sector. It is the way how society achieves mutual understanding, agreement... consensus in mechanisms and processes through which citizens articulate their interests and implement their rights and obligations. It is a framework of rules, institutions and practices which set up limits and provides motivation, for individuals, organisations, and business”. The above-mentioned definition shows that Good Governance cannot be translated and identified with the government in the institutional meaning; it is rather the area in which the government operates and its activities (governance). The concept of good governance therefore highlights the interactive relationship between government and non-governmental units of society [14]. It is based on mutual relations between the government and citizens, wider public and public service clients [15]. Simply put, it is predominantly based on

people's suggestions [16]. Governance is a wider concept than the term government. It is about the study and understanding of power, relations and responsibilities. Governance involves the "interaction between structures, processes and traditions which determine the way how power is applied, how decisions are taken and how individuals can establish themselves in society". On the other hand, the government is an institutional organisation operationalising the principles of governance. Good Governance is therefore the "art of managing society and organisations". The British author, A. Massay [17] states that the term Governance "reflects fragmentation and complexity of the modern state (...) it represents activities simultaneously placed on several different levels of government: local, regional, national and global (...) Governance represents differentiation of government, governmental functions and governmental power". Similarly, according to Smith [18], the concept of good governance reflects "recognition of the type of government and its political values, as well as some type of additional components related to that government". In other words, good governance means government plus something more. This "something more" means, for example, the creation of public policies, a system of economic relations, the role of the non-governmental sector in trade and state affairs.

However, the above-mentioned definitions of good governance cannot be considered as exhaustive, satisfactory and generally accepted. In this context, it should be noted that a large number of authors [19] - [24] are asking many questions, in connection with attempts to define good governance (What exactly does this term mean? What was the intention of the World Bank when defining this concept for the first time? What were the critical responses to this concept? Is this a universal concept? How can the system of this concept be improved? etc.); this is also caused by the fact that good governance is an open and dynamic concept. In this context, it can be postulated that "the dynamic principle in a general form emphasises the particular trend. It should not, therefore, be expressed in too rigid terms".

Good governance is not just a legal matter. This includes, for example, quality of management, management of human resources, training and expertise of public employees, changes in thinking, and attitude to citizens. Thus, the content of the concept of good governance is not exhausted only by observing legal procedures. In order to legitimately speak about good governance, it is not enough to be just in accordance with the law - even the lawful procedures can be considered as improper in certain cases - for example, sticking to legal formalism and prolonging the proceedings. This means that, when improving performance of public administration, it is necessary to consider aspects other than legal ones. Ethical, moral and economic aspects must especially be taken into account.

It can be stated, therefore, that the concept of good governance is relatively difficult to define with regard to the ongoing process of formulating its individual components. Similarly, like the term "good morals" or "good faith", it is an uncertain legal term which should be interpreted in concrete contexts. Nevertheless, we can agree with statement of Vopálka [25], who states that "the concept of good governance belongs to those which have been well-chosen, in the set of terms related to administration, due to its comprehension. The term good governance indicates its content and at the same time presents it as tendency. Everyone will probably be able to communicate ideas and will probably begin by assessing what and how the governance does".

Requirements for good governance are reflected in the ability of a state to serve its citizens, whereas the emphasis is given to rules, processes and behaviours used to articulate interests, manage resources and apply power in society. Good governance is understood as a key concept for the stability and performance of society. Poor governance results in injustice, inconvenience

to people through excessive bureaucracy, delays and other undesirable consequences. However, at the same time, it is important to realise that good governance does not only consist of proper contact with citizens; it means that it does not just start on the output; it also includes the organisation and functioning of administration, high-quality legislation, expertness, ethics and, last but not least, relations between politics and administration. Even these requirements for good governance are necessarily reflected in its principles. However, first and foremost, satisfaction of the citizens should be the basic benchmark, but not the only one, to achieve good governance.

Formulating good governance in the sense of final requirement for behaviour of public authorities, which is not directly imposed by law, but which we can still justifiably demand, is achieved by setting individual sub-principles. These are marked as (sub) principles of good governance, or its principles. Just as there is no unambiguous, inclusive and clear definition of good governance, there is not even a comprehensive catalogue of good governance principles. International documents in which the principles are formulated, however, usually require the same. It can be said, therefore, that the content of basic principles of good governance has been slowly stabilised at the present time. Individual parts of “good governance”, such as legality, reliability, predictability, openness, accountability and efficiency, constitute the pillars of European administrative law. As said by S. Skulová [26], “... principles of good governance cannot be understood purposelessly or as a set of randomly formulated demands for public administration. These principles, individually, in mutual ties and contexts, as a certain system, by their synergistic function, are to be used to fulfil or rather to get closer to fulfilment of the core values which are in the foundations of a modern law-based country”.

Depending on the context, proper administration of public matters shall include the following: full respect to human rights, principles of law-based country, active participation of citizens in control activities - partnership, political plurality, transparency and reliability of processes, effective public sector, legitimacy, access to knowledge, information and education, as well as the values which support reliability, solidarity and tolerance.

3. CONCLUSION

The issue of a mutual relationship between public administration and management can be concluded by Hughes’s statement. He said that “... even if public management is not firmly established and even if it gets known that some changes may work better than others, it will not be possible to return to the traditional governance model which worked for most of the twentieth century. Change to the management model now seems to be irreversible” [8].

Implementation of management methods into public administration is undoubtedly reflected in its content. Understandably, a public administration operation will be effectively influenced by high-quality management which simplifies processes, controls spending of financial funds, checks tenders and correctness of contractual relations, streamlines resources used by the authority (mainly the software), provides high-quality education for officials, sets up a functional motivation system, builds a high-quality team, etc. However, **public administration needs its own specific form of governance, not just a form borrowed from the private sector.** In this environment, managerial approaches created in the private sector cannot be applied automatically without further action; specific matters of operations and missions of the public administration must always be taken into account. Briefly, in transferred meaning, Fukuyama’s statement shall be applied, which states that not everything that has been proven in the West is

also applicable in the East. Here, Fukuyama refers to the violent implementation of democracy in Muslim countries, emphasising the necessity to respect differences and specifics during the implementation of management in practice of public administration. Therefore, in order for managerial approaches and methods to achieve relevant results and for the results to be implemented in practice, it is necessary to adapt them to the specifics of the non-profit sector.

Application of these basic principles within the performance of public administration demonstrates a shift from traditional management models to a decentralised model. At the same time, it influences the modernisation processes which necessarily focus on improving the quality of all services provided and further strengthening of the principle of “citizen participation”. In this context, it can be postulated that the pressure of citizens to improve the performance of public administration will continue to grow in the following years. In order for the reform (modernisation) processes to bring the desired results, it is necessary to create certain background and conditions (prerequisites) for changes - this is mainly about achieving a consensus between political and clerical representation, avoiding outflow of highly skilled (experienced) employees to the private sector and creating a suitable atmosphere, e.g. willingness to changes, etc. Without fulfilment of these basic assumptions, any efforts to streamline governance cannot be successful.

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