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Public management for sustainable development: current challenges and future trends

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Abstract

The objective of the article was to study the mechanism of public administration, which manifests itself at the state and municipal levels of regulation of socioeconomic processes in society. During the research, methods such as logic, dialectic and modelling were used. The result of the study was that an effective solution to societal problems is possible in terms of maintaining a stable interaction of public administration entities on the basis of effective communication in terms of public recognition and support from the authorities currently operating. The scientific novelty justified the need to support a variety of constructive forms of cooperation within the public administration between government officials, private companies and NGOs in the digital transformation to achieve the sustainable development of public administration. The practical significance of the study is that ways to improve the system were proposed in the context of digital transformation.

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It is concluded that a qualitative change in the interrelations of the system with an application of modern digital technologies of public administration is urgent, as a key means of modernizing the formation of various public information resources.

Keywords: publicadministration; publicadministration; transformation; civil society; socio-economic relations.

Gestión pública para el desarrollo sostenible: retos actuales y tendencias futuras

Resumen

El objetivo del artículo fue estudiar el mecanismo de la administración pública, que se manifiesta en los niveles estatal y municipal de regulación de los procesos socioeconómicos en la sociedad. Durante la investigación se utilizaron métodos como el lógico, el dialéctico y el de modelización. El resultado del estudio fue que es posible una solución efectiva a los problemas de la sociedad en términos de mantener una interacción estable de las entidades de la administración pública sobre la base de una comunicación efectiva en términos de reconocimiento y apoyo público de las autoridades que actualmente operan. La novedad científica se justificó la necesidad de apoyar una variedad de formas constructivas de cooperación dentro de la administración pública entre los funcionarios del gobierno, las empresas privadas y las ONG en la transformación digital para lograr el desarrollo sostenible de la administración pública. La importancia práctica del estudio es que se propusieron formas de mejorar el sistema en el contexto de la transformación digital. Se concluye que urge un cambio cualitativo en las interrelaciones del sistema con una aplicación de las modernas tecnologías digitales de la administración pública, como medio clave de modernización de la formación de diversos recursos de información pública.

Palabras clave: administración pública; administración pública; transformación; sociedad civil; relaciones socioeconómicas.

Introduction

The system of public administration from the perspective of the national economy is a unity of different forms of socio-political and economic interaction between official structures of management, representatives of

private business, and non-profit associations. One of the most important elements of this management are technologies of state and municipal regulation of the economy.

As features of public administration, it is necessary to distinguish the following elements:

1. Making policy and management decisions based on the qualified professional activities of specially trained managers in the regulation of the economy and the implementation of entrepreneurial activity on an individual and collective basis.
2. Existence of interdependent cooperation between different subjects of social and economic processes and availability of wide opportunities for participation of representatives of power structures, the private sector of the economy, and non-profit associations in coordinated cooperation on the elimination of social problems.
3. Public and municipal authorities, when performing their functions and powers fixed by law, are accountable to society with regard to the consequences of their functioning.
4. Political decentralization, which is embodied in the delegation of some powers from central to territorial governments, leads to a reduction of managerial tension in relation to key structures of state regulation.
5. Targeted activity, developed and implemented according to a certain plan, in accordance with the existing conditions of development of society and market relations.

It is obvious that in one of its aspects the current stage of development of Ukrainian society is characterized, on the one hand, by increasing contradictions between modern management with its inherent alienation of the objects of management from management decision-making, and, on the other hand, by the objective need to strengthen the public nature of management.

A concrete manifestation of these processes is found in the aggravation of contradictions between the interests of the individual and the state, which most adversely affects both the function of public relations, the quality of human relations, as well as undermine the authority of government, thereby contribute to the weakening of efficiency and security of governance, and thus the weakening of economic security of Ukraine.

1. Theoretical Framework or Literature Review

Scholars responded to this crisis with a wide range of comparative studies and theoretical alternatives that addressed the “big questions” of public administration (Liu, 2021). This article states the authors’ position on current challenges and future trends in public administration, in particular, the digital transformation in public administration. The starting point was the assertion that digital technology opens up new opportunities for the further introduction of public administration by results. A review of the literature on this issue allowed us to identify the main approaches to the definition of digital transformation in the field of governance.

Thus, A. Scupola and Mergel studied the digital transformation of public administration in Denmark (Scupola and Mergel, 2021), MM Young, J. Bullock, and JD Lecy, using Salamon management tools, suggest three main ways in which artificial discretion can improve public administration at the task level: (1) increasing scalability, (2) reducing cost, and (3) improving quality (Young *et al.*, 2019).

It should also be noted that domestic scientists from different fields of knowledge have paid attention to public administration in the economic sphere in Ukraine. Thus, the scientific works of Holovko *et al.* (2020) are devoted to the identification of subjects who, in the conditions of administrative and legal reform and changes in the guidelines in the relationship between the state and the citizen, carry out public administration, and the emphasis is placed on the sphere of relations that cover the essence of public administration.

The analysis of domestic and foreign practices of using digital technologies in the planning, monitoring, and evaluation of managerial decisions and public policies allowed to formulate proposals for the priority areas of digital technology in the further development of the principles and procedures of management by results.

In particular, digital technologies allow to minimize the time lag between the achievement of results and the appearance of data on their achievement; significantly increase the number of data sources and indicators that can be used for planning, monitoring, and evaluation of the performance and effectiveness of government; reduce the risk of deliberate distortion of reporting data.

2. Methodology

The methodological basis of the research is a dialectical method of cognition of socio-legal phenomena. In addition, the logical method (in the

presentation of all material, the formation of recommendations, suggestions, and conclusions); method of system analysis; method of comparative law; method of modeling; method of reference to the conclusions of institutional economic theory, digital computer technology, and other sciences was used.

3. Results

The content of executive power (public administration) as an independent type of state activity is a set of functions, which directly manifests power and organizational content of public administration, which is carried out in various procedural forms through constant information exchange between the subject and object of management based on direct and reverse connections.

Consequently, the function of public administration can be defined as a part of the managerial activity of the state, carried out based on the law or another legal act by executive authorities by their inherent methods of performing the tasks of public administration. The formation of institutions of public administration assumes that they:

1. Have certain state-authoritative powers and, thus, the ability to influence the development of socio-economic processes in society and, therefore, be responsible for their condition.
2. Have opportunities and abilities to act within their own competence on behalf of the state enthusiasm.
3. Function in conditions of a combination of strict normative regulated activity in a formal-procedural way with a sufficiently broad possibility of making volitional decisions based on subjective interpretation of both the situation and the legislative norms regulating it.
4. Directly engaged in the work of preparing, making, and implementing decisions in the executive and administrative activities of the state, and, in most cases, these actions entail noticeable economic and other social consequences for the entire society or any part thereof.

To identify and optimize interdepartmental interaction in the system of public administration, the purpose, tasks, and content of the administrative-administrative process, within which the specified interaction is carried out, are important. At the same time, it is not important at all that works on interaction can constitute a meager part of the whole process, they must be identified, tied to the process, and only then it will be possible to decide on the possible elimination of interaction (for example, through the use of information technology).

One of the main characteristics and directions of improvement and modernization of the system of interaction between state and municipal authorities and representatives of private business is the transformation of the basis of organization and functioning of public regulation of socio-economic relations in modern society. One of the key forms of reflection of the mentioned modernization is the expansion of electronic ways of formation, compilation, and transmission of various information data as a key economic resource.

In this regard, the development and practical development of digital technologies, allow significantly optimizing the development of management decisions of public administration structures. The growing and deepening reliance on AI and machine learning technologies in the public sector has been diagnosed as “transformative” for public administrations (Young *et al.*, 2019). This creates the basis for building a promising system of electronic public-management services for enterprises and organizations of various forms of ownership, as well as for individual citizens.

Public administration at the present stage acts as a mechanism, a way by which the state in practice pursues a policy to reform various contradictions (individual, group, national, territorial, class, etc.) and to meet the material, social, cultural needs of different population groups. This is achieved through specific actions of organizational, economic, financial, political, legal, etc. nature in the system of public administration, including different stages of administrative preparation and implementation of necessary managerial decisions, through which there is coordination and implementation of state policy.

In a modern democratic state, public administration is a central link in the implementation of public policy. It relates to society as a whole and its bases and manifestations, to the state, to the activities that are primarily focused on achieving general social goals and the expression of public opinion. Public administration is a form of implementation of public power, which has special organizational and power structures, has unique means of coercion, not in the arsenal of personal or corporate power, establishes the rules of conduct of a special kind. It is stimulated by public interest and is aimed at regulating certain public relations.

At the same time public power is considered as a static phenomenon (belonging to the people, body, official), and public administration - as a dynamic relation, that is, the action of public power. The content of public administration includes certain forms of territorial state-authoritative organization of the population within the entire state territory, established structure and organizational-legal ways of implementation of people’s power, specially designed institutions - the apparatus of power and persons, hierarchically subordinated, exercising functions of power within its apparatus.

The dominant role of public administration is to ensure a balance between public and private interests, where public interests must include those needs on which the existence and development of society as a whole depend, and private interests are recognized and guaranteed by the state. The most important element in ensuring this activity is the public interest, designed, on the one hand, to provide the basis of society and the state as a condition of universal existence, and, on the other hand, to guarantee the satisfaction of private interests in their singular and concentrated expression.

It is important to add that public interests can be optimally realized only jointly, while private interest is a more individualized concept, they reflect personal preferences, taste characteristics, habits, and so on. At the same time, participants in relations, which arise in the process of public administration, can be classified as those who exert a concerted influence on specific public relations by means of specific methods, tools, forms and aiming to secure public interests and those who fall under the influence of such a concerted influence (Holovko *et al.*, 2020).

In public administration today, many new reform ideas mingle, offering new diagnoses of governmental problems and courses of action (Ingrams *et al.*, 2020). In our opinion, the improvement of the system of public administration should take place in such areas as:

- *Improvement of the system of public services.* In this case, a service should be understood as a method of satisfying the needs of individuals and legal entities. If it is implemented by the state, then accordingly we are talking about the provision of public service. It should be noted that the mechanism of providing public services works with significant drawbacks. For example, the procedure of registration and issuance of passports, registration at the place of location, state registration of real estate transactions require physical and legal persons significant time expenses. We see the solution to such problems in reducing administrative procedures and document flow, changing the work of government agencies, expanding the range of paid services, as the sham gratuitousness of such services only provokes the growth of corruption.
- *Increasing opportunities for public participation in public management procedures.* Formation of bodies of executive power outside of close interaction with the institution of elections, the high degree of their independence in determining the forms and methods of implementation of powers do not exclude the possibility of replacing the interests of the people (population) by officials' own needs.

- According to the above, simultaneously with the highest forms of direct democracy, such as referendum and free elections, other various forms, which, though not generating a generally binding result, allow public officials to inform the actual needs of civil society, to make socially useful adjustments in the activities of executive power bodies. Such forms include, for example, the right of citizens to gather peacefully, without weapons and to hold meetings, rallies, walks and demonstrations, provided by the Constitution of the Russian Federation. Such forms of direct citizen participation in the exercise of state power as public discussions of topical issues of socio-economic development, draft regulations and other socially important decisions, public (public) hearings, people's law-making (public) initiative, opinion polls contribute to the consideration of the interests of the population in the implementation of the functions of the executive branch.
- *Development of the system of self-regulatory organizations in the sphere of economy.* As self-regulation, we understand the regulation of certain markets and spheres by business entities themselves without state interference. Self-regulatory non-profit organizations are non-profit organizations established for the purposes of self-regulation, based on membership, uniting business entities based on the unity of the sector of production of goods (works, services), or uniting subjects of professional activity of a certain type.

The implementation of self-regulation in certain areas are created independent from the state and public authorities' associations of participants of economic activity, which establish standards and rules of conduct in the relevant market segment, ensure control over compliance with them, regulate conflicts. We can express the opinion that self-regulatory organizations are a special form of consolidation of that part of the public which is active primarily in the sphere of market relations and seeks the most harmonious regulation of economic activities.

- *Transfer of powers from the state level to the regional level.* This decentralization, aimed at bringing public administration closer to the population, has an obvious positive effect, namely the motivation for inter-municipal consolidation in the country, the creation of appropriate legal conditions and mechanisms for the formation of wealthy territorial communities of villages, settlements, and cities, uniting their efforts in solving urgent problems.
- The new model of financial support for local budgets, which have gained a certain autonomy and independence from the central budget, has also proven its worth. Decentralization, in particular, brings some benefits, on the other hand, decentralization is not fully realized to offer and increase government accountability (Andhika, 2018);

- *Introduction of a short-term moratorium on changing the system and structure of state executive authorities.* Although administrative reorganization has been a major political instrument in many democracies, there has been limited research on its effects (Hong and Park, 2019). The reorganization of the system and structure of executive authorities should be carried out gradually, an accelerated reorganization is likely to cause delays in the provision of public services.
- *Increasing the motivation of civil servants.* Promptness and quality of public services should be a guaranteed basis for their career development. Since the very beginning, the public sector has been highlighted as a responsibility, a duty, and a calling instead of merely being a job because, these employees are supposed to be motivated by the ethics of serving the public in contrast to employees working in private sector organizations (Zubair *et al.*, 2021).

4. Discussion

One of the outcomes of the 20th century, a lesson learned at the cost of huge social cataclysms was the relative, but very important advantage of the democratic model of socio-political institutions, relations between governors and governed, established in Western countries (Bila-Tiunova *et al.*, 2019).

It is quite obvious - the violation of the balance of public and private interests has as a direct consequence the dynamics of the growth of threats to the economic security of the country, to the weakening of the state and the economy, as well as guarantees of the rights and legitimate interests of the subjects of public activity. In modern socio-cultural conditions of domestic practice gets additional relevance to increase the publicity of the mechanism of state policy to ensure economic security.

This necessarily involves the reduction of administrative procedures and administrative actions - reducing the number of documents for citizens to obtain a public service; the use of new forms of documents; reducing the number of interactions between citizens and officials of public authorities and local government.

The foregoing allows us to conclude: the main role of public administration as a factor in the consolidation of society in general and regional solidarity society, in particular, to assess the effectiveness and safety of public administration is expressed in the elimination of imbalances of private and public interests.

If we consider that the defining element of public administration is the public interest, it becomes clear that it is designed not only to serve as a kind of guarantor of the foundations of society and the state but also in this role to ensure the procedure for the optimal implementation of private interests of citizens of the state.

Public administrations are investing in the digital transformation of their citizen-oriented services and internal administrative processes (Scupola and Mergel, 2021). In the scientific literature, digital transformation is viewed primarily in terms of transforming the processes of public service delivery. Across the world, governments aim for the transformation of public administration, to adapt to a changing environment and address societal challenges (Lindgren and Van Veenstra, 2018).

Today's challenges prompt the search for new, more effective mechanisms of public administration. The role of digital transformation of public administration is as follows:

- In improving the efficiency of public administration, including the quality of public services;
- Reducing costs of the state, business, and/or citizens associated with the implementation of certain state functions.
- Increasing the productivity of civil servants in the provision of public services and the implementation of control and supervisory activities through the standardization, modernization, and automation of administrative and management processes, the introduction of electronic document management, creation of departmental and interdepartmental databases.
- Reducing the cost of creating and administering information resources and systems through the reuse of information technologies and services.
- Increasing the level of trust of citizens and businesses in the authorities and officials, support for their decisions, etc.

The more efficient management, carried out within the concept of new public management, taking the place of the traditional administrative management and borrowing for this purpose market principles in the production of public services, was faced with the need to solve the contradictions of a valuable nature.

It also proved insufficient the role of the state in coordination and communication with civil society associations, businesses, trade unions, which is the cause of a new crisis and has necessitated another change of paradigms. These contradictions and the tasks to manage them are obviously inherited by the new paradigm, not yet conceptualized.

The crisis phenomena arising in the processes of modern public administration at the present stage and the new political reality are considered together, their interdependence is undoubted. It is no coincidence that the problem of the new political reality has been actualized simultaneously with the problem of governance, with the aggravation of the crisis of public administration. There is, of course, nothing unusual in the emergence of a new political reality, because it reflects inevitable changes in the development of political reality as such.

The modernization of the socio-economic sphere is directly related to the digital transformation of life support. With the development of new technologies, there has been a dramatic leap for many government agencies on issues of fundamental reform and reorganization. Adapting to the evolutionary process of digitalization has allowed public administration to push the boundaries of new possibilities.

Conclusions

Given the modern challenges that face the system of public administration, the transformation in the formation of elements of sustainable public administration has a number of parameters:

1. Rational combination of economic, administrative, legal, and social means of creation and regulation of modern production-consumption system based on coordination of position of state and municipal authorities and representatives of private business.
2. Development and use of innovative approaches to the implementation of public-management regulation of private-business relations, taking into account the need to carry out public-management functions in conditions of socio-economic instability. Establishment of good methods of situational management of municipal and urban management on the terrain of macro-regions, regions, and individual municipalities (in districts, in cities).
3. Optimal prediction and elimination of various cyberthreats that can hinder the further modernization of public administration in the sphere of socio-economic relations. Related to this is the development of science-based means of anti-crisis regulation to provide the necessary support from the state to small and medium-sized businesses.
4. Radical change in the totality of means of revealing quantitative and qualitative changes occurring in different sectors of economy and life spheres. The specifics and dynamics of changes in the private and entrepreneurial sphere as one of the main sources of

tax revenues and, accordingly, the development of innovative methods of economic analysis of the qualitative characteristics and functions of economic entities with an expanding role of private and entrepreneurial initiatives are a priority. The establishment of various forms of socio-economic partnerships and the use of modern electronic technologies for the formation and use of information resources of public administration.

5. A qualitative change in the system interrelations and relations with a wide application of modern digital technologies of public administration as a key means of modernization of the formation and use of diverse information resources.

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