

The Post Bureaucratic Model Is Suitable For Public Organizations in the Era of Modern Reform

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Abstract

The post-bureaucratic model is suitable for public organisations in the modern age of reform. Yet, managers can find optimal things most suitable to their organisations depending on specific political institutions. Analysis of change in contexts for decision-making, staff mobilisation, control, planning, and change management... are all basic elements that help managers change organisational performance.

Keywords: Post-bureaucratic model, public organisations.

1. Introduction

The state ruled by law is the institution of democracy and a fruit of human development. That state has its citizens as the subjects and the laws as the criteria to manage society. The core of the ideology on the socialist state ruled by law is that it is a state of the people, by the people, and for the people. One of its requirements is to build a “serving” public administration for citizens’ “satisfaction”.

The development of Vietnam towards a socialism-oriented market mechanism is closely connected with changing the essential role of the state and the way the public administration works. Under the integration into the world, the economy undergoes many changes and complicatedness. Changes in the surrounding strongly influence the activities of an organisation. In many cases, it can break the structure or cause a disorder in the activities of the organisation. This is but the inevitable rule of development. It is the mission of the public manager to be aware of a change and adapt it to benefit the organisation.

This assignment will mention some issues of operation of an organisation such as context, decision-making, planning, personnel management, the performance of the manager, control, and change. It is because they are important elements of the organisation, which are closely related to one another; and change in one element can cause a change in another. To improve organisational performance requires attention paid to those elements. They are the starting points for such activities as an adaptation of the personnel and organisational culture to social development and change...

To confirm and clarify the above issues, Dien Bien College of Economic and Technique, will be the reference frame used for analysis and evaluation. This is a public institution in the education and training system of Vietnam. With the common development trend now, Dien Bien College of Economic and Technique is not exceptional and should have changes to match the general context.

1. Some advantages and disadvantages of bureaucratic management model in organizations

When applying the bureaucratic organization model (Weber, 1940), it also reveals some certain advantages, that is “there is a definite separation between individual ownership and organizational ownership, and individuals are not the owners of their position, the position is determined strictly in terms of power and areas of specialization, functions, and capabilities, organization respect, management structure to bring about fairness and transparency”. But this model has been applied in the context of changes; if we do not promote advantages accordingly there will lead to certain shortcomings.

Due to the fact that the college was previously built based on bureaucratic organization model, power is always associated with the position and title with a high hierarchical structure, and individuals work independently without paying much attention to the results and satisfaction of the learners and employers. The college often focuses much on the budget, not on training competitiveness. At a certain time, this model also helped my college develop and meet the needs of society. However, given the development of science and technology, of information and social-economic globalization, the college has encountered some disadvantages arisen from this model:

There are many training specialties with few or no students; Some lecturers of such specialties cannot do their job as a lecturer: They have to do other jobs instead, and thus, they only get low income and do not love their job; Students cannot find their job after graduation because they cannot meet the demand of employers etc.; In addition, facilities for study such as library, laboratory and other equipment are poor and backward; There are not enough textbooks for students in terms of types and quality and they are not updated regularly; and teachers do not focus on scientific research so that they do not have deep and updated knowledge about their field; There have not had strict regulations in training association so that colleges compete with one another in terms of numbers of students, and this leads to the decrease in training quality; Some training association programs have not met the standards of training. The college also has no short term plans for human resource development for teaching staff and managers. Although the college has conducted many activities to improve teaching quality, the survey results show that students are not satisfied with teaching content and methods of the college and that the training quality has not met the needs of recruitment.

From the above reasons, I think that the college should make some changes and improve training quality and efficiency of scientific research to meet the demand of current practice. However, in order to solve this problem effectively, there is a need for synchronous actions upon factors ensuring quality of training such as identifying training management model, establishing and perfecting system of regulations on training management, enhancing effectiveness and efficiency of curriculum, changing methods of assessment and testing, strengthening training inspection and organizing training courses on training management. One of the most effective solutions for the college in the current period is the post-bureaucratic organizational model.

2. The bureaucratic approach

It is a fact that each management model has its own historical values. In a bureaucratic centrally subsidised economy, plans show the Government's direct limits of social and economic activities through issuing ordinances and decisions from the central level. Quotas in those plans are determined by central planner for comprehensive and sufficient plans; human resources, main supplies, and finance are not distributed at market prices or by the laws of demand and supply but in line with the demands of the overall plan and administrative decisions of leaders of different levels.

The bureaucratic organisation comes into being and exists because of both the objective and subjective needs of the bureaucratic centrally subsidised economy. Its production follows administrative orders and ordinances; the organisation has a tight hierarchy; and, power comes from positions one may hold. More specifically, the operational mechanism of the organisation upholds organisation, manages structurally, upraise rules, acts independently, appreciates the status quo and procedures, centralise the authority, and has political autonomy

As a result, implementing the organisational tasks is executing administrative orders and criteria set by the state. Assigned to specific tasks and specific budget, public organisations implement them "rigidly" without basing on local practice. Activities of administrative and public service organisations are more "ruling" than "serving". All of those factors lead to lack of coordination in both activities and organisation for the common goals. The staff does not exchange internal information. Lack of information is the cause of the disorder, lack of motivation and creativeness at work, which in their turn result in lack of responsibility for organisational tasks. The manager himself lacks leadership skills. As a result, the low individual performance of both the staff and the manager will result in low performance and low service quality of the organisation.

3. The post-bureaucratic approach

The focus of any reform is to change daily principles, life and work to build a successful public administration that treats citizens and organisations as real "clients". Accordingly, the system of public organisations will be well structured and organised to meet their clients' needs, and those organisations will build their client-based culture.

3.1 Context

To do so requires openness and transparency in budget and spending management, planning, administrative procedures, and work styles and methods. It will be then an open and accessible public administration.

Our organisation exercises openness and transparency of our annual budgets and publicise internal spending reports (including both central and local budgets, funding from domestic and overseas organisations for unexpected relief, regular support, and social security). The openness and transparency enable the stakeholders (i.e. beneficiaries, government officials, investors...) to evaluate actual outcomes of used resources, and resources are used in line with intended purposes and the financial regime.

Yet, it is a fact that there remains some merely formal transparency. One of the main causes is the lack of accountability by public organisations and civil servants. Insufficient information remarkably prevents people's participation and supervision of specific activities of public organisations.

All organizations are seeking long-term stability, but to achieve such stability, they will need constant renewal and adaptation. In the context of competition in education, the college should change the training programs and training forms to make them suitable with learner's needs. The college is also influenced by factors such as economic crises, capital, and human resources, organizational culture, scientific and technological development... The college, therefore, should apply 6 leverage factors produced by OCDE¹, that is, building an open education system, suitable for learners; creating high productivity (how to build curriculum, what to teach, how to implement and evaluate the outcomes?); Accountability and controlling conducted before starting work and after completing work (when starting recruitment of new specialities and implementing new curricular, evaluating to see if the students satisfied with the their study after completion); restructuring different parts in the organization; identifying partnership relations and providing good training services, suitable with the learners with the lowest cost.

3.2 Decision-making

During the organisational operation, administrative decisions and behaviours are specific expressions of the managerial process. Decisions express the manager's will during problem identification, information collection, projects development, planning, plan implementation, and supervision

Decision-making should meet the urgency and importance of problems with certain priority attached to the settlement of more urgent and important problems. In addition, the manager during his decision-making process has to identify all possible consequences, select optimal options, and even accept risks.

Among the problems facing our organisation is the proposal by our subordinate units for sending orphans to social protection centres. There is an inconsistency between state regulations and local practice in the field, which causes an ambiguous context. It is regulated by the state that "an orphan is one without either of his/ her parents and the other parent cannot support him/ her", yet it is very difficult to determine whether the single parent can support the child in the local mountainous areas because most local people live on farming. On the other hand, it is a custom of the local H'mông people that the wife cannot take her child along upon remarriage after her first husband dies. As a result, reliance on the legal provisions without identifying the actual and urgent problems of orphans may lead to no assistance to them. If we do so, we will encounter our "clients'" resistance; thus, our organisational objectives and values for the sake of humanity and social welfare will not be realized.

Therefore, our timely relevant decision-making shows that we are the best practitioners in the field.

To fulfill such above tasks, the leaders of the college should make right decisions, in accordance with the present time, that is choosing key training specialties which are suitable with a training capacity of the college and can meet the requirements of learners and employers. But when taking this decision, because the college is operated under the leading principles of its president with high hierarchy and arbitrary in decision-making, the leaders are influenced by internal factors. This leads to the fact that decisions taken are not made public. Therefore, the quality, content, and forms of some decisions become old, outdated and inappropriate to current practices and must be adjusted, causing cost and time consuming. External factors,

¹ Prof. Pierre Gignac, Public Organisation Management, *Context*, NAPA-ENAP, 2010

such as public opinion management, politics, the orientation of senior officials, the authority of the decision-maker, legal environment and decision-making time, values, experience and opinions of managers also influence the process of decision making. Thus, when making a decision, the leaders should pay much attention to the (decision level /decision-making style/and barriers hindering the implementation of such decisions)², at the same time, they should base on specific situations in each developmental stage of the college.

Leaders should know how to manage and select information for decision-making, to identify proper criteria accordant with all staff and learners; they should also anticipate the risks to be faced by decisions made. Besides that, the leaders need to have the vision to capture changes, analyze and evaluate the elements of given context to make accurate decisions, consistent with the objectives of the colleges. Those objectives are equipping learners with high professional skills, improving quality of students so that they can be able to compete with students from other colleges in finding jobs after graduation and appreciated by local employers and businesses. In addition, the leaders need to empower more to their subordinates in decision making because the lower hierarchical level is, the shorter duration the decisions are made. The decisions taken are therefore less elastic, less ambiguous and less abstract and then, the solutions tend to be predetermined; the meaning of events and relationships is more clearly, and in general, the decisions at a lower level are more tightly structured.

3.3 Organisational performance

It is a fact that selecting proper options and makes timely relevant decisions will contribute to improved organisational performance because organisational performance is realized through quality interpersonal relations, and meaning conveyance is conducted by a visionary manager.

The performance indicators of the organisation include costs, personnel, staff mobilisation, and clients' satisfaction. Satisfaction is not only seen through technical service quality but also includes questioning service users of the purpose of public services and a "solidarity" in the name of the vulnerable citizens and "equality". Clients' satisfaction motivates civil servants' behaviours leading to frequent improvement. All that is evaluated will be improved. Performance measures allow identification of expected contribution by each staff member.

Proper decisions will help to increase the productivity of the organization towards the goal of the college. Here the leaders are required to have a clear vision and show their respect for organizational values. Now there are many kinds of students and training specialties, the college should know how to identify learning needs of the learners and how to motivate their staff to make them understand the value of the college, mobilizing them to carry out goals and objectives of the college so that they can help to increase its productivity. When mentioning the Performance of the organization, that implies that the managers are interested in performance evaluation, the value of vision and moral of teachers and learners.

Here the college bases their management on Performance and focuses on results and output, employing Performance indicator system to directly assess the results of the organization. Identifying, developing and using such indicators are gradual and interactive work and destination is not the only a goal to reach. "Such indicators should be appropriate, transparent, reliable, functional, feasible and comprehensive"³. To achieve stated productivity, the managers need to understand the competitors, apply management manners based on value and eight principles of quality management, capture the risks, implement sustainable development, pilot new training specialties, and mobilize teachers to further study so that they cover new discipline. That means the college should offer new management methods based on the needs and satisfaction of learners with the lowest cost.

3.4 Performance by managers

It is necessary that performance by managers be taken into account to improve organisational performance. It is because the competences of managers are closely connected with and inseparable from the

² Prof. Pierre Gignac, Public Organisation Management, **Decision – making**, NAPA-ENAP, 2010

³ Prof. Pierre Gignac, Public Organisation Management, **Performance of the managers**, NAPA-ENAP, 2010

organisational productivity and performance. Managers play the interpersonal roles of the symbol, the leader and the liaison agent; the informational role of the observer, the diffuser, and the spokesman; the decision-making role of the entrepreneur, the regulator, the resource distributor, and the negotiator.

It is a fact that the staff may pay little attention to what their manager says but very much more attention to what he does. His behaviours and communicators carry the organisational image. All those require the manager to ask questions about what he is going to do before he does it, to apply useful things for the organisation, to make an action plan that he is responsible for, and to take into account and take opportunities for the organisation.

In a frequently changing context, the manager is required to have updated information and to communicate to mobilise his staff's participation and adaptation to every requirement of the practice. It is because leading is to influence individual behaviours in one group or an organisation, to identify objectives, to provide means and to propose social standards. The leader not only "steers" the organisation but also accompanies his staff coaching and supporting them to act together for the common organisational objectives. The performance of the manager is thus also that of the organisation

When mentioning organizational performance, we cannot help discussing the capability of managers. They need new capabilities to meet the development needs of the college. Currently, the most important goals of the college are as follows:

Firstly, the training of the college should be closely associated with the job and meet the needs of society.

Secondly, the college should establish a training force with high quality and qualifications; teachers are enthusiastic and love their job.

Thirdly, the college needs to equip them with modern facilities together with new teaching methodology and apply scientific advances into practical teaching.

In order to achieve such specific objectives, the college should apply 14 new capabilities given by Maltais⁴ in which visions and renovation, human resource management, intellectual management, moral value realization are the most important.

The managers should have the equivalent capacity for each objective. First, managers of the college need to identify the needs of learners and employers to decide what new training programs and types to be open to making them associated with employment and needs of learners. The college should also prepare the teaching force to undertake such programs and create active cooperation with other institutions when they don not have enough resources. If all the goals and objectives are clearly identified, there are many different ways to increase the productivity of the managers with the lowest cost.

3.5 Staff management

Staff management is a regular activity of the manager. Each individual tends to have his own inclination. The manager, therefore, should provide them with motivations to work on the principle of enhancement which reads that individuals tend to repeat behaviours that satisfy them. When they identify their own values with those of the organisation and their own objectives with those of the organisation, they will make their best efforts and even carry out tasks out of their assignments.

The manager may not ask his staff to have good performance when their basic needs (i.e. security) are not met. Accordingly, he should keep paying attention to his staff's needs though each member has his own ones which vary from time to time being needs for respect or security, etc depending on different events. As a result, the manager and his staff should both arrive at the "compromising area" to satisfy their needs. Since the manager operates his organisation, teamwork is a compulsory skill for them. A successful manager has not only competences but also, largely, his staff's cooperation.

Yet, an organisation may have many individuals. Apart from mobilising and uniting his staff, the manager should be strict and fair in treating behaviours that may damage organisational benefits and prestige.

⁴ Prof. Pierre Gignac, Public Organisation Management, **Performance of the managers**, NAPA-ENAP, 2010

Influenced by the bureaucratic administration, many civil servants are deeply imprinted with the public authority and coerciveness of the state under which citizens are subject to management and rule other than being '*the clients*' who are served by the public administration. As a result, public administrative activities are in many cases "*administratised*" with too much focus on execution of orders and obedience of superior instructions and administrative procedures other than upholding a sense of responsibility to serve citizens flexibly to meet their needs most effectively. Therefore, further reform is needed to establish relevant relations between the public administration and citizens.

3.6 Planning

Plans include specific objectives, indicators, and solutions that managers should achieve in a certain period of time. Planning helps managers to "steer" their organisations, through which to show the reasons for existence of their organisations and answer the questions of where we are, where we want to get to, how to get there with the best performance and most sustainability, and how to know we are getting there in the right direction.

Planning is "for cohesiveness and trust, the significance of actions, facilitation of mobilisation through approval, communication of a strong and clear image, and encouragement of those in charge to "coach" their staff. Planning also involves linking what "I think, I say, and I do" of the manager.

Planning, however, should take into account conditions of success, which include a commitment by political leaders, overall vision and coordination from the central government that ensures horizontal cohesiveness, a mechanism for uncovering conflicts from the beginning, a decision-making process which harmonises between political and budget priorities, and flexibility against contexts.

As a result, public managers, through their planning, outline the roadmap and objectives for their organisation and staff. Planning shows a close connection between actions and results, in which results come from specific organisational actions other than anything else.

However, managers should pay attention to communication in order to make planning clear and include important issues as well as satisfactory solutions.

When making strategic plans, our organisation mobilises its staff's and even beneficiaries' active participation. This shows our attention to the performance of each individual in the system as well as that of the whole system, which is measured by citizens' or beneficiaries' satisfaction (the latter including the poor, poor households, labourers in need of vocational training, especially needy children, those involved in such social evils). Only in so doing can a strategic plan be in line with local practice other than a miniature of the national plan.

The manager communicates to receive comments by the stakeholders (i.e. government officials, investors, and beneficiaries) and to sufficiently inform him in decision-making because every citizen is interested in what he thinks is important. This is also an inevitable requirement of the change process. In other words, it is a promotion of grassroots democracy.

Because changes in economic structure lead to changes in labour structure or human recourse, there poses the needs to change the training structure. In order to be able to train human resources appropriate with the needs of social-economic development of the province, the college should build a strategic plan through specific objectives and measures. When determining development strategies, the College will produce curricula and syllabus to meet the needs of labor market and make them associated with goals and tasks of social-economic development of the province. In details, the college has carried out the following steps:

Firstly, training new specialties and such training needs to focus on specialties that society is demanding (such as Informatic Technology, Business Administration, Tourism Administration, Restaurant Management, Network Administration, Finance and Banking); narrowing or abolishing those specialties that have no longer be appropriate. For those which the college is inefficient to undertake, the college will link with reputable universities in the country to carry out training association to meet the need of human resources for the province and to get more training experience.

Secondly, the college sets the goal of diversifying training types for new specialties. The contents of training programs should be modern and standardized to meet the needs of society. Constructing and perfecting straight training programs from intermediate level to the collegiate level, collegiate level to university level and intermediate level to university level for all training specialties.

Thirdly, the college plans, trains, cultivates and develops of teaching force, ensuring the continuity and development of three aspects: training, retraining and new recruitment.

Fourthly, renovating teaching-learning methods and testing - evaluation measures.

Fifthly, establishing a network of facilities including classrooms, laboratories, practice rooms, etc. and creating field study trips inside and outside the province to make training theories and contents associated with the reality and practice.

To successfully implement the above goals the managers are required to have a commitment from leaders at all levels from the central to the locality in the formulation and implementation of strategic development programs of the province. Therefore, they should have the overall vision to ensure horizontal cohesion in the organizational structure. Decision-making process must ensure reconciliation between the political priorities and budgets. Thus, when planning, the managers need to use communication skills, exchanging and providing information so as to mobilize the participation of staff, teachers, and students in the implementation of the plan.

3.7. Control

Control is an integral part of the managerial process, aimed not only to discover shortcomings and weaknesses to settle but also, more importantly, to keep track of and develop individuals in one organisation. As a result, it is becoming necessary under acceleration of construction of a modern public administration, and managers should pay adequate attention to perform it. Control includes ex-ante and ex-post controls. It helps identify expected outputs, keeps track of the process, and evaluates the relevancy of a programme because there is a certain gap between needs and the practice during planning. Supervision and evaluation help narrow down the gap and provide adjustments. In other words, control helps managers to play their “coaching” role. This is the way to approach the organisation and conduct an output-based performance evaluation.

For the public administration to provide society with open and transparent information and to listen, to receive comments and to be willing to go under supervision, control, and criticism by citizens, public organisations should proactively provide relevant channels for different classes of people to access and give feedback on their managerial activities, based on which they can promote social criticism of policies and improve the accountability of the public administrative machinery. They should also enhance direct democracy to mobilise people’s more active and authentic participation in socio-political activities.

3.8. Restructuring the organization

To implement plans for the training of human resources according to social needs, the college conducted organizational restructure, redesigning positions, designing coordinate relations and making decisions and at the same time combining structure methods vertically and horizontally to improve the quality of education, associating education with scientific research, production and employment and serving the cause of social-economic development. Currently, the college should apply five mechanisms for self-adjusting given out by Mintzberg and labor organizational model through promotion by Olsen to contribute to increasing its management productivity. From that, the college can inherit and develop efficient bodies and establish new departments such as Consultant and job introduction, student management, international cooperation division, education inspection, etc. to enhance its prestige and status towards the process of educational socialization.

3.9. Personnel management

In personnel management, the managers need to master the knowledge in the theories of needs and expectations produced by Maslow and Vroom. Accordingly, they should know how to motivate and mobilize their staff, teachers, and students to participate in the changing process of the college. Besides that, they not only manage the operation of the college but also need supporting and coaching their staff towards common goals of the organization. Therefore, in the operation of the organization, there has been cohesion

between the individual and the organizational values to meet the needs of employees, creating motivation for its activities.

Every year after recruiting new teachers, the college has opened training courses on teaching methodology, modern teaching methods and application of informatics technology in teaching. Thereby, the college has created motivation, confidence, and creativity for their staff and helped them enhance professional skills in teaching and management. Specifically, we have set up many different forms of training such as organizing training courses inside the college, inviting consultants, and going abroad to learn new management methods which prompted. By so doing, we have promoted to faculty initiative, creativity, and effort of the teachers.

3.10. Management of changes

When the context changes and both the internal and external environment are no longer suitable, the organisation is required to change. In other words, the production relations have to change to adjust to the current development of the production forces.

A change process is challenging and necessary for each organisation. However, to conduct an active change process consistently and to mobilise staff mobilisation, the manager should pay adequate attention to related factors. It is a fact that only 15% of the staff support, another 15% disagree while 70% remain neutral upon a change. To gain a consensus among 85% of the staff, the manager should be aware of why they may not support the change. It is because change will never be conducted successfully without agreement by those in the organisation. Change is an important factor related to the performance and success of the organisation which shows the values and reasons for the existence of that organisation. Without quick adaptation to change, the organisation will lose its values.

Two model of bureaucratic and post-bureaucratic organizations are based on principles of management (plan / organization / direct / control). However, the bureaucratic organizations expect stability because the managers are afraid of both losing power, and risks. The managers focus only on their power without paying attention to changes inside and outside the organization. This thing leads to the organization not achieve high performance. Meanwhile, the post-bureaucratic organizations always pay attention to the change. The cause is because the working environment will change faster than the things which the managers can see. This is the essential requirement and mandatory for the organization. So, the managers must be sensitive, understand, and take new opportunities to adjust the goals of the organization to suit the changing world. For my college, the teacher not only uses lessons in books but also frequently updates new knowledge.

Today, to respond to essential requirements of education for the long - term development of DienBien province, the managers are required to use successfully management capacity of them and mobilize their staff to participate in the changes of the college. Therefore, the leaders need to direct individual values towards the common goals of the organization. They should also provide full information needed and create proper awareness about the changes to each member of the college and that will help all employees adapt to changes and create a new culture within the organization. In addition, they need to make dialogues regularly with their teachers and help them understand the value of such changes towards the future. Finally, the managers need to mobilize commitment from their staff rather than use power to persuade or to force them to do their task.

4. Conclusion

When the college successfully implements all the above activities, they are on the right way to reach the common goals of paying much attention to the attitude and satisfaction of learners to meet the requirements of employers. They are also reaching nearer and nearer to the vision, organizational values and individual attention to motivate and mobilize the participation of staff, grasping new opportunities and taking risks and at the same time, identify learning needs and further develop their staff as well as empower to middle ranking-levels., making them more confident in their job. I also see the need for changing the structure of the organization where I am working for in particular and of the public administration of Vietnam in general. It needs to be changed into a post-bureaucratic model to quickly meet the increasing demands of globalization.

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