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A SYSTEM APPROACH IN THE POLITICAL-ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT

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Abstract

The article presents the results of the study on a system approach in the political-administrative management in order to improve the efficiency of administrative activity under the social transformation conditions. The system approach value in the process of a modern Ukrainian state development is grounded.

Key words

public administration, political and administrative management, governance paradigm, system approach, management interaction, managing group dynamics, group processes management.

1. Introduction

Nowadays the state building requires new approaches aimed at managing the political and social development. The reforms in the political and administrative spheres require changes in the way of communication between institutions, affect the system qualities of their components, and require the use of modern approaches to politics and public administration. This is reflected in the development trends under which the government system, presented by an interaction of a large group of hierarchically dependent managers, no longer remains a superstructure that controls the development of the society and under the influence of democratic processes gradually transforms into institutions providing public services to society. It leads to a system

approach implementation, which has been practically applied in the political and social management, meets the demands of the time and aims at provision of social and psychological conditions for political and administrative interaction.

Paper objective is to substantiate the use of a system approach in the political-administrative management in order to improve the efficiency of administrative activity under the conditions of social transformation.

2. Theoretical aspects of system approach to management

It should be noted that the public-political relations – is a specific branch of social life with its fun-

damental laws, internal links, development sources and environment interdependence channels. An unsurpassed heuristic impact on conditionality processes conception in political life has been made by a system approach which developed in the Western political sociology in the mid-twentieth century. The most important principles of this approach are:

- integrity of the system, i.e. a new state of connected various events and institutions, generating new properties and features of a single entity;
- quantity and variety of internal and external systems links which reflect the complexity and richness of relationships between elements in the middle of integrity and interactions with the environment;
- viability of the system is determined by the balance of interaction processes; change and stability, upgrades and preservation; implementation and routine, etc.

System approach function is to identify the means of achieving and maintaining a balanced, stable condition of a political and administrative system, its ability to adapt to the external environment. The modern world is becoming more complex; the risk of global disasters, crises and conflicts is increasing, because of social, economic, ethnic, national, environmental, demographic and other reasons. The understanding of the complexity of the processes of social and political development and the need for their regulation is the order of the day. The political and administrative system in all its structural and functional diversity is a means of social integration, containment of damaging effects of destructive processes and indigenous social differences for a single interconnected existence of the social elements.

New trends in policy and management development are to shift attention to process management and the human factor activation. It requires from the politicians and civil servants to take over new types of competencies, including group dynamics management and group processes management which are becoming particularly important in the context of policy and management cooperation, interpersonal and group awareness phenomena, psychological competence. A new wave of modern political development is based on increasing importance of a human factor as the central one in the strategic and tactical management. A holistic management paradigm is becoming increasingly popular as it challenges the linear thinking and helps to integrate different management approaches. Tom Peters and Robert Waterman in their study of 62 successful US companies point to a new period of management theory evolution: "In stead of rational actors comes a complex social and active image – a man with the

achievements and shortcomings, limitations, contradictions and even irrationality. Teams, isolated from the outside world, are changed by an organization affected by constantly moving highly dynamic set of forces – the objectives, means and external transformations" (Питерс, 2011).

In the area of policy and management interaction system approach technologies in managing organizational processes can be used in solving the following managerial tasks:

- decision-making;
- management relations improvement;
- provision of social and psychological support of managerial activities;
- policy-making;
- distribution and delegation of authority;
- self-management;
- feedback provision;
- the monitoring system improvement;
- identification of management aspects which require assistance, training and research.

Every management system has a huge potential that can remain unrealized. Application of system approach technologies in political and administrative activity has already found its practical implementation, because their ideology is based on common patterns of interaction between living systems and the environment. Herewith, if the need for individual development can be satisfied at a personal level, it will probably correlate with the process of group, organization or community life at the "social organism" level.

System theories in the context of administrative activity optimization as one of the important aspects of modern management have been reflected in studies of Western scholars U. Grau et al. (1988). An important aspect of the practical application of psychological counseling technologies is their usage in decision-making processes. Summarizing practical experience of system technologies application in administrative cooperation processes, we can formulate the main goal of their implementation: management of social development processes, ensurance of human resources efficient use, their professional and social development (Афонін et al. (eds.), 2010).

Application of system approach technologies in administrative activity is an important lever for improving interactions of political and administrative management as their scientific and practical achievements are looking for the answers to the question what determine the efficiency of administrative cooperation?

In the process of political and administrative interaction the feature of system counseling is a sys-

tem view of the existing situation and the subject of system consultants' activity is to focus their attention on the living system of relationships that can be presented through a variety of its manifestations, namely:

- managerial (who sets the rules, what rules have power);
- functional (ways of communication and interaction, coalitions, alliances, symptoms and their functional role in the system);
- morphological (structure, organization construction in terms of hierarchy and borders, organization history and myths);
- axiological (values, precepts of previous generations).

The hypothesis of problem areas availability and strategies for further development of the system are based around these concepts. The focus of their work is a system understanding of the issue, which reflects the main idea of a problem emergence where it's not a system that „has“ a problem, but rather the opposite – a situationally characterized system is created around some fortuitous behavior, activity or topic in the process of communication about the problem.

From a perspective system approach scientists propose an algorithm of detection and identification of problematic issues as those that can lead to a system approach in management.

According to K. Ludewig (2002, p. 98), a problem is “any communication subject that contains undesirable but potentially able to change components”, that is someone sees as an undesirable condition requiring changes.

The scientist offers a step by step algorithm to determine and identify a problem that can be applied to make analysis in politics and public administration. This algorithm includes the following components:

1. “Condition”: the problem is determined by experts or participants of a public management process as a certain condition. That means that the priorities were selected: from many simultaneous processes one or some were chosen and placed in the spotlight. This condition is given its own name, and other processes retreat into the background.
2. “Who?” are experts: the identification and description of a particular “condition” is carried out by one or more observers who define such a “condition” as an important, draw attention to it and can agree or argue about it.
3. “Undesirable, or one that requires changes”: there are experts of this condition who see it as undesirable for public management, or as one that requires changes. This is the basis for own

motivation or for encouraging others to make changes.

4. “Capacity for change”: condition of public management activity is subject to change and there are at least some experts describing it as capable of change. As well as there are those in public management process who can take responsibility, or at least believe that the situation can be changed.

The interaction of these four abovementioned factors determines the complete description of the problem and is an important part of the consultation process. Its purpose is to identify (detect) links and people involved in the problem situation and therefore – their “live” inclusion or, at least, alleged one in the process of solving problems. Thus, all the process participants who recognize this problem and have undesirable consequences from it are taken into account. In general, systemic counseling should be seen as an attempt to transfer problematic condition into unproblematic one which means an attempt to find an adequate solution. This strategy is implemented through various approaches: the initiation of new processes or new conditions, another assessment of the existing problem (positive reinterpretation), that is called reframing in neurolinguistic programming framework, i.e. new reformulation. The feasibility and nature of psychological system consultation is well reflected in the following statement: “The challenge is not whether here should come all those whom the problem concerns, – the challenge is: here may come anyone who is able and can contribute to solving problems” (фон Шлинне, 2004).

3. The system approach introduction to political and administrative management

The concept of political and administrative management can not be considered without communication, interaction, influence. In the course of this interaction managerial influence is exercised and effectiveness and implementation of public policies and social development are stipulated for.

The political process covers the political system of the society, the functioning of which is provided through a specific interaction among policy actors (Головатий, 2005). The main content of the political process is a set of actions taken by political subjects in order to implement their political interests. In the most general terms the political process is a “form of a political system of the society which evolves in space and time” (Головатий, 2005). The political process is developing together with the political

system and depends on factors that are part of the political system and the political process. The basis of political and public administrative activity process is made up with relationships which are developing in the process of interaction. "Certain relations on the policy itself and its individual features (components), such as power" belong to the political interaction (Головатий, 2005).

Any interaction, including political, exists in two basic forms: informal and formal (through political institutions – formal structures or with their help) (Головатий, 2005).

Moreover, relations within the government include:

- relationship between the politician and his political group;
- relationship developing within the political group;
- relationship between the political leader and a member of a political party;
- relationship developing among political groups.

Power relations (between those who govern and those who are governed):

- relationship between any politician and government authorities;
- relationship between a political group and government authorities.

Relations within the social system:

- relationship between any politician and social groups;
- relationship between a political group and communities.

Essentially psychological process of any social interaction is performed by certain actors – individuals, groups, masses. For all that each of them interreacts more or less under the conditions of the current social environment.

The combination of such conditions and interactions forms a kind of "socio-psychological field" (which in different paradigms is also called "social context", „inter-subjective foundation of social actions", "collective fabric", etc.). The concepts of "field", "space" are here mostly figurative in nature (Донченко, Романеско, 2001).

Any interaction and any possible relationship are possible in community with other people and stipulate for the impact of an individual and groups of people on the management process and a return impact of management relations on the psychology of an individual or a group.

The effectiveness of joint interaction is influenced by various factors: executives' legal authority, work incentives, age and gender differences, personal relationships and more. Interaction mechanism short-

comings also manifest themselves in various forms: conflicts, psychological barriers, etc.

As a result of a contact setting among people there is an influence of one person on another, information exchange and development of a common strategy for interaction, perception, understanding of another person. Communication satisfies the need for another person. Communication is important in the formation of the human psyche, person's development and the formation of reasonable, cultural behavior. Through communication a person acquires and develops all his higher cognitive abilities and qualities, through active intercommunication he becomes a personality himself.

System consulting in organizational processes management draws attention to the importance of the activity that can be carried out being aware of the dominant needs of the individual and the dominant group or organization needs, realization of significant objects or subjects of the environment which can help to satisfy this need, and awareness of ways of interacting with them. System approach emphasizes mutual influences that make up the system, the importance of the context in which the interaction occurs and draws attention to the lack of a single recipe for achieving success in different kinds of systems. This is based on the assumption that the originality and uniqueness of an individual or a separate organization and the environment, in which they are located, may contribute to their adoption of "authorship" or responsibility for the choice of aims and means, as well as motivate them for changes. This approach brings not only an individual system but also an organization system to another level of development and opens up wide opportunities for the needs satisfaction, their coordination and achievement of the objectives of the management system development.

The application of psychological technologies in the management interaction process has its own peculiarity, which is a prerequisite for their effectiveness. The special features of a consulting process in management include the following:

- the specific content of this activity;
- the structure of public management;
- solution targeting;
- traditions and rules existing in public institutions;
- factors of professional impact on the personality of a public manager;
- characteristics and patterns of interaction;
- short durability;
- focus on resources.

Based on the system theory of public authority's levels – these are its system components in relation to the context. Any system is both a whole and a part

of a larger system. As well as people who work in the organization, on the one hand, are an independent whole system, and on the other hand they are the constituent elements of a larger system. The boundaries between the system and the environment (and among units within the system) first create identity of the system or its parts, its uniqueness – difference from the environment and other systems. In management systems, complex in structure, there is a constant tension between integration (awareness of the whole – we) and differentiation (awareness of its own autonomy – I). Hereat the parts can contribute to the whole, subjecting their goals to it and sharing their purposes, or, what often occurs, causing imbalance.

There are three levels of organization – individual, group and organizational. System consulting in organization management deal with six major levels: an individual or intrapersonal, interpersonal, subgroup (sub level), group or collective, and intergroup level of an integrated organization. And we always have to take into account how the interaction in the middle of the system occurs and how the system interacts with the environment. In this case, two more levels are added to the analysis: a society level and a culture level (Лебедева, 2009). According to the needs each level provides the system interaction with the environment and has a tendency for another level interaction.

The concept of “interaction” is extremely multiphased. In terms of philosophy, this category is one of the common forms of relationship between phenomena. Its essence is to reverse the impact of one object or phenomenon to another. So interaction reproduces processes of objects impact at each other, their mutual conditionality and the derivation of one object from another. In sociology the definition of “social interaction” is used to determine such forms of communication among people, social communities, groups where there is a system impact made on each other, social performance of each partner is realized, adjustment of one’s actions and to another’s actions is achieved, a community in understanding the situation, sense of actions and a certain level of solidarity or agreement between them.

A society is a complex system of interactions among people. Various social relations, the subject of which is a personality, are conditioned by diverse social interests. Social relations have an objective character, but for every person they, refracting through his inner world, obtain a personal color, which is manifested in a particular human behavior, his feelings, sentiments, etc. That is why an interpersonal social and psychological aspect of social relations appears as a fact of the specific reality. So inter-

personal relationships are formed not outside public relations but in their midst as personified reflection of impersonal social ties. In other words, in the interaction social relations are “given” through that real social activity, the part (or a form of an organization) of which it is. All interactions are traditionally divided into two groups: cooperation and competition. The first group includes actions that promote the organization of joint activities and ensure their success, consistency, efficiency (there are other terms to refer to this type of interaction: cooperation, consent, adjustment, association). The second group includes actions which to some extent prevent joint activities, creating barriers to understanding. This type of interaction defines such concepts as competition, conflict, opposition, dissociation. This classification uses the so-called dichotomous division of all kinds of interactions. Another classification is based on a quantitative aspect which refers to the number of entities involved in the interaction. According to this classification interaction among groups, between an individual and a group, between two individuals are distinguished (Афонін et al. (eds.), 2010).

It should be noted that in the management process the implementation of innovative changes are accompanied by resistance, because the system needs time in order to estimate future benefits. Resistance forms can vary. Passive resistance becomes apparent in hiding and ignoring information, solutions, in delaying their adoption and implementation, in limiting the initiators’ activity and other factors. Active resistance may include providing false information, intentionally false orders, and diversion of resources to other purposes. “Usually the resistance depends on the destruction degree of established life foundations, traditions, customs, principles and rules; on speed and intensity of understanding the need for change process, involving people, trust in the initiators and leaders” (Загороднюк, 2000).

J. Pfeffer (2007) defines power as “the potential ability to influence behavior, to change the course of events, to overcome resistance and force people to do things that otherwise would not be made”.

4. Conclusions

In the interaction of politics and management a system approach can be used to solve management problems, to find optimal solutions, to identify and reformulate the problematic situation. The feasibility of a system approach depends on the ability of managers to contribute to the solution of the existing problems of state-management.

The system approach to the process of politics and management interaction has its own specificity, which is a prerequisite for its effectiveness. It is likely that on the way of its implementation into public authoritative bodies the resistance can arise which can be caused by psychological braking factors (or psychological barriers).

System approach reveals the essence of political and administrative coherence; provides tools for analysis of interaction forms with nature, economy, culture and social structure; highlights channels of influence of political and managerial behavior on the nature of political and administrative institutions and structures.

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