

HARMONIOUS MANAGEMENT IN PUBLIC SECTOR

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Abstract

The article is of a cognitive and application nature. The research objective is to distinguish harmonious management principles applicable to the management of public sector efficiency. Results of the article achieved: 1) The analysis was done of the management principles in social models, as well as between them and harmonious management and its exclusive features. Harmonious management in this article is treated as a continuation of the analysis of the public administration evolution. The extracted specific management principles of conduct can be used for a comparative analysis between the social management models. 2) The analysis was done of harmonious management directions, which may be applied to a public sector organization. 3) The article discusses the process of harmonization and presented stages. Harmonious management process logic diagram integrated exchange organizations into a cohesive process model and principles for promoting efficient activities. 4) The article presents the proposals and conclusions of different options and the need to apply the harmonious management of public sector management to gain efficiency. The aim of the research is to identify the principles of harmonious management applicable to public sector management for the purpose of effectiveness. The paper is based on the scientific literature and document analysis and synthesis, systematization, comparative analysis and case studies. In this article the case study is used by local authorities, which are represented by the public sector. Empirical research is conducted by using the quantitative standardized expert interview method. Visualization method is used, too.

Key words: Harmonious management, harmonization, public sector.

Introduction

Legal acts governing the reformation of public governance as an attempt to harmonise the Lithuanian and EU mechanisms of regional policies fail to comprehensively account for the specific features of the country regions and local self-governance. This suggests that reformation of the public sector administration aimed at increasing economic independence of regions is a relevant issue (Arimavičiūtė, 2009). With the ultimate goal of greater efficiency in governance, Lithuanian researchers (S. Puškorius (2006), K. Masiulis (2007), E. Gaulė (2010)) analyse decisions adopted by the authorities within the context of theories of democracy and rely on the works conducted by world researchers (W. Parsons (2001), H. Fayol (2005), A. Hanberger (2009)) not only to study public governance in general, but also to deal with the issues of improvement of activities by local self-governments, discuss decentralization, partnership between public and private sectors, adequate, sustainable governance, which are some of the key prerequisites of directed and efficient operation of the public sector, and thus of the entire state. Public governance urges for a reform encompassing saving of various types of resources, adoption of rational decisions, framework-based elements of governance, as well as creating bases of new motivating innovations. The ongoing changes must be directed towards contemporary postmodern public governance rather than traditional public administration, reconsidering the traditional normative orientations and dealing with the constantly reoccurring obstacles (Raipa, 2009). With the aim of

achieving efficiency and innovations in public sector management, it would be reasonable to analyse the concept of sustainable management representing the Theory of Harmonious Management (He, António, & Trigo, 2012).

The research object is harmonious management in public sector.

The aim of the research is to identify the principles of harmonious management applicable to public sector management for the purpose of effectiveness.

Materials and Methods

Qualitative research methods have been used for this article. Analysis of the concept of harmonious management in public sector has been performed under the methods of literature and document analysis and synthesis. The method of comparison has been used for identification of the principles of social management models for public sector. Strong and weak aspects of the models have been identified during the analysis of differences between characteristics of the models. The weak aspects have been discussed as the prerequisite for the formation of the subsequent model. The evolution of these models is also relevant for the aforementioned reason. Data for the empirical study have been collected by the methods of semi-standardised expert interview and case analysis. In this article the case study is used by local authorities, which are represented by the public sector. In order to validate the study, proper experts have been chosen according to the guidelines in the scientific literature. Competent people with special experience and expertise in the field directly linked to the object of

examination were involved. The expert competence indicators applied in the paper were the following: position, academic degree, years of the particular research and practical work. Expert characteristics, such as unbiasedness, integrity, ability to analyse a problem without surrendering to the prevailing trends, are particularly important. According to V. Rudzikienė (Rudzikienė & Augustinaitis, 2009), reliability of expert assessment depends on the following: a) number of experts, b) composition of the expert group by areas of specialisation, c) expert characteristics. The selected experts have been grouped into three target groups: researchers analysing the issues of public sector authorities (2 experts), active practitioners working at community organisations (2 experts) and practitioners working at municipal authorities (2 experts). The selection criteria when choosing experts for the study, was that they are relevant opinion practitioners and researchers who globally discuss local self-governance issues. The main keywords used in the expert interview were: harmonisation of functions (transfer, implementation), decentralisation, local authorities, community organisations and their importance. The case of Lithuania is analysed in the discussion of the public sector (organisations) authorities; therefore, local governments, municipal authorities, and community organisations are mentioned.

Results and Discussion

Welfare and image of a state depends on the capability of its public sector to adapt to the processes of change, their ability to plan, adopt decisions, and coordinate their implementation. Nonetheless, introduction of innovative solutions in a public sector is more complex than in the private sector. According to V. Giedraitytė & A. Raipa (2012), innovations influence not only the habits of public servants, nature of work, but also the key public services. Meanwhile the society demands efficiency, new forms of activity, continuously improving qualitative indicators of activity from public authorities (Raipa & Petukienė, 2009). As a result, higher quality-related requirements are inevitably set for the public sector, and more efficient changes in the management system, more effective work organisation and problem solving methods are sought.

Changes in the models of public governance occur as a natural outcome or result of the globalisation processes in social, economic and culture domains rather than for the reason of the 'public' theory of particular importance relevant in policy formation. Three main models of social management are distinguished: traditional hierarchical, the New Public Management (NPM) and New Public Governance (NPG).

The traditional model of public administration (hierarchical). Rationalism is the key idea lying behind the model, directly influencing the practice of public authorities. This, however, has emphasized the main weak aspects of the model. According to R. Vanagas (2006), the traditional model of public administration does not allow for projecting more efficient operation of the public sector. Bureaucracy is good in performing the control functions, but is not successful in dealing with managerial functions and, despite being reliable, opposes innovations. Bureaucrats are not particularly fond of the market demands, attempt to avoid risk and use the available resources improperly.

The new public management. The term was originally used to describe application of methods characteristic of private business to the area of public (social) administration. It also implied the principles of economisation and striving towards efficiency mainly on the basis of quantitative results. Several Nordic countries, the Netherlands and Germany have made attempts to follow the (then) newest fashion of public management, in particular on the municipal level (Guogis, 2012). The new public management is considered to be a more flexible and efficient theory of public administration, with the underlying goal being direction of activities towards a result rather than formal procedures. Client orientation, striving for efficiency, 'juxta positioning', priority planning, global budget, client satisfaction, quality management, 'single window', etc. are set as priorities (Guogis, 2012). Nonetheless, weak aspects have also become evident, e.g.: the market is not suitable for implementation of every area of governance-related activity; effective results that are undefined and subjective are sought; administrators' greater autonomy means vague accountability and higher risk; competition in public sector leads to conflicts between public organisations rather than cooperation, etc.

The New Public Governance pays closer attention to qualitative aspects of social services, emphasizes openness, transparency, polycentric democracy, absence of corruption, and active engagement of non-governmental organisations (Guogis, 2010). A very important component of the new public governance is the component of 'social empowerment', which increases the importance of 'active social policy' (Guogis & Bitinas, 2009). The process of public governance is primarily focused on the process itself rather than only on institutions, structures or public administration actors. The process of governance is mainly of self-organisational character, i.e. implies attempts to abandon centralisation. In this case, governance is performed by shifting the focus from authorities to processes and interactions that cover the civic society as well (Bevir, 2010).

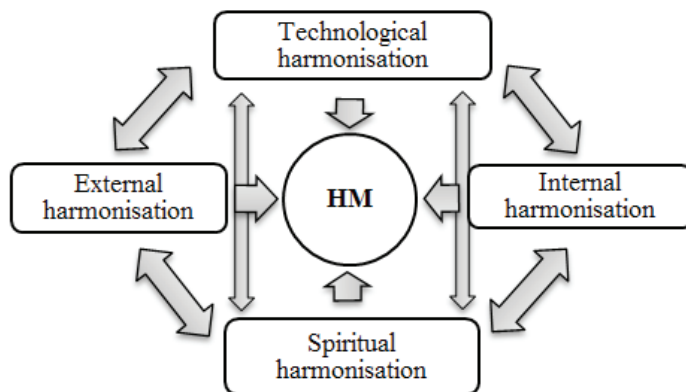


Figure 1. Harmonious management (HV) directions (adopted from He, António, & Trigo, 2012).

Innovation process management as a methodological issue has become particularly relevant in the beginning of XXI century. Under the context of global changes, decisions on innovation, innovative environment, competence of the participants of the innovation process, the culture of development and introduction of innovation, intersectoral nature of the innovative processes, innovative methods, forms and procedures of management of all types of resources of public sector are becoming integral elements of modern public governance (Raipa, 2012).

The concept of harmonious management is characterised by innovative approach towards solutions in governance. In his book ‘HeXie (Harmony) Theory and Strategy’ (1987), Xi Youming has described the concept of ‘HeXie (harmony) Theory’ by discussing and comparing the Chinese and Western theories of management. The Chinese harmonious management theory is based on the traditional Chinese culture (consistency between operational effectiveness and spiritual satisfaction) (Xi, Zhang, & Ge, 2012). Harmonious management manifests itself in the context of governance in four directions (see Fig. 1).

The example of organisation could be as follows:

- ‘Spiritual harmonisation’ in this particular case is explained as consistency between the organisational and individual goals or consistency of individuals’ goals.
- ‘Technological harmonisation’ covers legitimacy of an organisation, effective resource allocation and technological solutions as well as their viability. Moreover, technological and spiritual harmonisation is interlinked. Efficiency of all activities is determined not only by technological decisions, but also by the ‘human factor’. Different coherence is developed when other directions of harmonious management (internal and external harmonisation) are considered.
- ‘Internal spiritual harmonisation’ means sustainable organisational culture, where the

owners, managers and employees all follow the established rules of conduct, consistently working towards the set strategic goals.

- ‘External spiritual harmonisation’ means compatibility between levels of organisational and social cultures.
- ‘Internal technological harmonisation’ shows compatibility between technological solutions and management methods for the purpose of efficiency.
- ‘External technological harmonisation’ is construed as the capability of exchange of information and material resources with external environment of an organisation.

Thus, the key principles of harmonious management could be compared to the models of governance discussed above by means of integration. Summarizing the principles analysed above (strengths and weaknesses), the comparison of social administrative models is provided below (see Table 1).

In general, when changes take place or are initiated in public governance, theories could be claimed to be based on new needs both in practical and in theoretical domains. The differences between the New Governance Model and the traditional public administration are of great importance. The models are different because due to globalization monolithic states are becoming a part of a complex international network and emphasis is placed not on hierarchical but on reticular management style and the priority is given not to the strict form of state regulation but to more gentle management instruments including self-regulation and cooperation with non-state institutions. Therefore, the responsibility of state institutions becomes evident not only to the state institutions of higher hierarchical level but to social partners as well (Domarkas & Juknevičienė, 2007). Under the New Governance Model too much notice is given to ethics. More space is left for social context and the aspects of professionalism, political neutrality, justice

Table 1

Comparison of management principles in social models

Principles	Traditional Public Administration Model	New Public Management Model	New Governance Model	Harmonious Management Model
Accountability of high level officials	Politicians	Customers	Citizens and social partners	Politicians and citizens (the participants of system)
Activity goal	Order consolidation	Provoking changes	Developing social trust	Change of thinking
Activity orientation	Procedures	Results	Needs	Process
Deviation principles	Following rules and regulations	Productivity and results	Accountability, transparency and participation	Compatibility
Major attributes	Objectivity	Regularity	Accountability	Consistency
Management method	Hierarchy	Market equality	Network	System
Normative basis	Administration law	Contracts	Agreements	Common goals (strategy)
Relations between citizens and the state	Subordination	Authorization	Empowerment	Interdependent
Success criteria	Process and outcomes	Outcome	Process	Harmony (dynamic coherence)

Source: adopted from Domarkas & Juknevičienė, 2007; Czaputowicz, 2007; Guogis, Kacevičius, & Stasiukynas, 2010; Schoene, 2014; Lin, 2015.

and avoidance of the clash of public and private interests. Under the New Governance Model it is being assumed that business and public administration spheres are different in principle (Czaputowicz, 2007) and, thus, have to be organized and function in a different way. The harmonious management means, 'a key organizational problem is made by the interaction process between person and material factor in special environment'. Directed by the new methodology, the basis of the harmonious management will originate from three main hypotheses and auxiliary hypothesis, such as 'person is ultimate source of uncertain factor in management action'; 'the uncertainty of material factor can be recognized and controlled ultimately within person cognition' (XI *et al.*, 2005).

In general, it could be claimed that the main idea lying behind harmonious management is harmony and consistency in all activities carried out inside and outside an organisation. The model is construed as a tool for analysis of management and actions that develop the structure for an entire organisation as a whole. The model facilitates problem identification in an organisation, development of strategy and planning of activities for its implementation. This idea reflects the diversity of interrelated elements that define the capability of an organisation to change. The theory brings changes into consideration of possible improvement of organisational management. Development and implementation of a new strategy is not the priority. A new system is rather allowed to

act with the purpose of efficiency (author's remark: to improve 'who will do?' rather than 'what to do?').

Therefore, it could be claimed that where harmonious relationship of management and self-governance between society and authorities exists, these processes reoccur continuously, thus leading to actual development of democracy and national economy as well as progress of the international market (Indriūnas & Makštutis, 2008).

In analysis of harmonious management as a process (or harmonisation), it is important to define the stages (see Fig. 2) that could be applied for the purpose of success criterion in an organisation or interorganisational system. In public sector, harmonisation could be focused on the activities (functions) between separate organisations (e.g. by coordinating inter-agency cooperation) and between separate sectors (e.g. partnership between state and private sectors).

Čiegis and Grunda (2007) have systematized the means of sustainable development of organisations that may be found in literature by whether or not they answer the following questions: 1) What is a sustainable organisation? 2) How could an organisation become sustainable? 3) What indicates sustainability of an organisation (how is it assessed)? The authors have claimed that 'At each stage, an organisation may follow the measures and standards devised by it, the same as it used to do during the development of sustainable development concept;

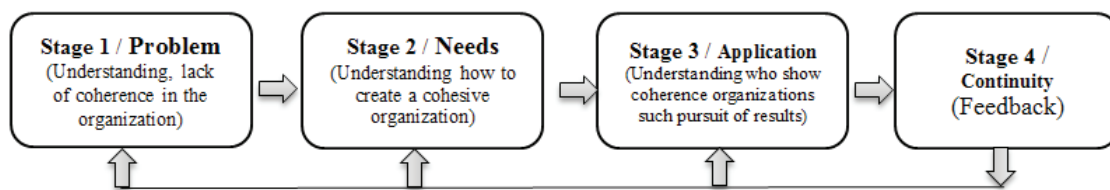


Figure 2. Harmonious management process logical scheme (adopted from Čiegis & Grunda, 2007; Follet, (cited by Gehani & Gehani, 2007).

however, a number of different definitions of sustainable organisation as well as means intended to assist organisations in working towards sustainability and evaluation of the achieved results have been developed’ (Čiegis & Grunda, 2007). The authors’ model of transformation of an organisation into a sustainable process organisation could be extended by M.P. Follet’s (cited by Gehani, Gehani (2007)) insights, namely, that the management process must involve continuous coordination and harmonisation of the available resources (human, material resources, power structures, communications). The author of this paper has identified 4 principles encouraging more efficient operations: 1. Coordination requires that people be in direct contact with one another, 2. Coordination is essential during the initial stages of any endeavor. 3. Coordination must address all factors in and phases of any endeavor. 4. Coordination is a continuous, ongoing process (Follet (cited by Gehani & Gehani, (2007))).

Contemporary environment of organisations both in private and in public sectors is characterised by 4 components that are difficult to manage, yet highly influential in terms of development of organisations, namely: complexity, changes, ambiguity and uncertainty. Thus, harmonisation is considered to be the prerequisite of improvement of public governance of the Lithuanian local self-government authorities. The process of harmonisation is construed as coordination of the set goals and functions as well as available resources (time, financial, human resources) (i.e. horizontal harmonisation) and compatibility of

functions across the EU, central, territorial and local self-government levels (i.e. vertical harmonisation), with their composition and the anticipated result clearly defined and relevant as well as significant for assuring welfare of the local citizens. The main measures of process harmonisation are the following: law, organisation, finances, knowledge and examples to follow (Kobe, 2014).

In analysis of the results obtained by empirical research, the experts have supported the conclusions provided in the analysed scientific literature, namely, that it would be appropriate to analyse the issues of local self-government and/or community organisations. The respondents have identified the problem of lack of mutual trust, absence of communication between representatives of authorities and/or community organisations or diversity of their approaches towards the information obtained from authorities of national or EU level. The process of cooperation between the authority and community organisations is also mentioned as being important in order to engage the locals into decision making that is necessary for implementation of the set goals. The respondents have specifically named (see Table 2) the public sector institutions, harmonisation of activities between which would be beneficial and efficient.

Respondents’ answers to questions ‘Would it be appropriate to include community organisations into the system of public governance?’ and ‘Are there any activities by the executive municipal authorities that could be implemented by community organisations in a more efficient manner?’ are explicitly positive.

Table 2

Local authorities including effective harmonization of activities *

Institutions representing the public interest	Institutions representing the community interests
Central district government	The local action group
Municipality	Rural community
City municipal government	Local organization
Elderate	Community-based organizations
The lowest-level units - Parish / elderships	Private sector
	Social centre

*Institutional names are non-adjusted.

In terms of activities that potentially be taken over or have already been taken over informally from municipal authorities by community organisations, the respondents have noted that community organisations, to a greater or lesser degree, perform all (majority) of the activities of municipalities, and the list of their functions does not need any extension. According to the respondents, community organisations have already undertaken a considerable number of activities voluntarily. Cooperation between municipal authorities and community organisations is needed. Cultural, leisure, social support provision, employment, education for citizens – development of qualification skills, provision of special (forest) services could be mentioned. There are, however, categorical opinions, such as ‘State is a kind of a large community organisation operating in the specified areas by hiring professionals. Why is it becoming common to think that these functions should be performed by the locals? They would need to be paid anyway. What is the difference then?’

The experts have also asserted that decentralisation is inevitable, and it is important that the locals are involved not only into decision making, but also into more activities which are important to the locals and serve to satisfy their needs. Foreign author A.R. Volmert (2010) has noted that efficient local self-government implies inclusion of a citizen into solution of local tasks, enables adopting decisions adapted to the local conditions and issues and favourable to the citizens. Nonetheless, practitioners representing self-government organisations add that although community or non-governmental organisations may possess sufficient resources for expanding the pool of their activities, monitoring and coordination of all activities, from the decision making to the result phase, must inevitably be performed. This would ensure more efficient saving of resources and progress towards the results.

Hence, public governance should cover saving of various types of resources, adoption of rational decision, framework-based governance elements. In doing this, the focus should be put on contemporary postmodern management of public sector rather than traditional public administration; reconsideration of the traditional normative orientations should be demanded and the continuously reoccurring obstacles must be overcome (Raipa, 2009). The new tasks of public administration of the 21st century require proper and service-minded provision of services to the citizens, efficient financial management, adaptation of experience of business management, adaptation of the services to the increasingly segmented society, active cooperation with citizen communities and active support to the policy area (Smalskys & Skietrys 2014). Application of such principles to the

harmonisation of activities of the local municipal authorities creates prerequisites for introduction of harmonious management into the public sector. The result of harmonisation could be achieved by seeking harmony throughout the system (in the related organisations) under the condition, however, that each subsystem performs its functions properly. This could harmoniously lead to the harmony of the entire system, i.e. help ensure welfare of the entire system.

Conclusions

1. The concept of harmonious management is characterised by innovative approach towards management-related solutions. Harmonious management is the model of management based on philosophies of the East and West and may be applied successfully to public sector as well for the purpose of efficient governance and rational use of resources. The theory of harmonious management is based on the traditional Chinese culture, where operational efficiency and spiritual satisfaction to the one who seeks and/or receives the results are in harmony with each other. In the context of management, harmonious management manifests itself in three directions: spiritual harmonisation, technological harmonisation; internal spiritual harmonisation; external spiritual harmonisation.
2. The following characteristics are identified in harmonious governance. In public governance, liability for the adopted decisions and their results is allocated to both politicians and citizens, viewed as participants of the system. The goal of an activity is the changing way of thinking. Orientation of activity towards a goal as a projected process is the key indicator. The key principle of the model that should be followed is compatibility that is achieved and applied as the main measure, i.e. consistent activities and anticipated results. The model of management should be applied to the entire system that pursues certain common goals (strategy). Relations between the locals and the authorities who are the main participants of public sectors are recognized as being interdependent. The criterion of success and the anticipated results are the harmony that encompasses the entire system and is present in each subsystem.
3. The process of harmonisation is split into four stages that are important to coordinate and may be corrected at any phase: 1. It is important to perceive the existing issue and lack of sustainability in the organisation (system). 2. The needs and possibilities for creating sustainability in the organisation are identified. 3. Application and working towards the results. Continuity. This is the stage, where process continuity must be provided and situations must be dealt with in a

- way that would lead to the search of new issues and their exact designation.
4. For the purpose of efficient and innovative management in public sector, the prerequisite for introduction of the harmonious model of management is created. The success criterion of harmonisation could be achieved by working towards harmony throughout the system (in the related organisations) under the condition that each subsystem performs its functions properly. This would enable achieving harmony throughout the system harmoniously and ensure welfare of the entire system.

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