

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MANAGERIAL (ADMINISTRATIVE) CONCEPTS IN PRACTICE

Saulius Nefas

Mykolas Romeris University
Valakupių str. 5, LT – 10101 Vilnius

An unconventional conference EFFICIENCY IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR: HOW MANAGERIAL THEORIES MAY HELP AND WHAT PRACTITIONERS MAY ADVISE took place at Mykolas Romeris University. This conference was unconventional because practical rather than scientific aspects were emphasized. Scientists from universities of Šiauliai, Kaunas, and Vilnius as well as other interested parties debated how the science and practice of management (administration) may be brought closer together.

Objective: to discuss more active involvement of scientific institutions in the process of public administration, application of scientific theories and models in practice, leading to more efficient management.

Participants: Scientists, members of the Seimas (Lithuanian parliament) and the Government, representatives of public administration institutions and agencies, representatives of education centres, politicians from municipalities, representatives of administrations, and students were invited to the conference. Scientists from the Kaunas University of Technology, the Šiauliai University, the Vilnius Law and Business College, the Mykolas Romeris University, as well as many undergraduate students from the Faculty of Public Administration of Mykolas Romeris University participated in the conference.

Interested representatives from non-scientific institutions included: Vytautas Kurpuvesas, the Chairman of the Committee on State Administration and Local Authorities of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, Jolanta Vaičiūnienė, the Director and Sonata Intaitė, an expert from the Municipal Training Centre of the Kaunas University of Technology, and experts from the Lithuanian Institute of Public Administration, Artūras Arbatauskas and Arvydas Tarasevičius.

Saulius Nefas – Mykolo Romerio universiteto Viešojo administravimo fakulteto Viešojo administravimo katedros docentas, socialinių mokslų daktaras. Assoc. Prof., Mykolas Romeris University, Doctoral degree in Social sciences.
el. paštas / email: saunef@mruni.lt

Apžvalga įteikta redakcijai 2009 m. rugsėjo mėn.; parengta spausdinti 2009 m. spalio mėn.

Summaries of the presented papers

A paper by Professor Juozas Lakis (Department of Management Theory, Mykolas Romeris University), *How and In What Way Can Master's/Doctoral Research Be Useful to an Organization?* analysed the lack of cooperation between universities and public administration institutions (cooperation agreements are usually signed, however, are more of a symbolic rather than constructive nature); the paper also analysed the occasional joint projects. *The author recommends:*

- Since a considerable part of the research (especially for a master degree theses) is conducted in certain public administration institutions, it is recommended to present research results in research organizations or to encourage the participation (and input) of representatives from research organizations at the time of the thesis defence.
- To involve social partners—practitioners (e.g., civil service department, local municipalities) in scientific events of higher education institutions (conferences, discussions, round tables).

A paper by Professor Algimantas Urmonas (Department of Administrative Law, Mykolas Romeris University), *Implementation of Administrative Reforms in Lithuania in the Context of the Subsidiarity Principle* proposed that in the implementation of administrative reforms in Lithuania, it would be beneficial to improve the instruments of social science and their implementation through creative application of the subsidiarity principle. *The author recommends:*

- To coordinate the objectives, tasks, functions, methods, and results of public administration institutions in state and local government with the idea that decisions of public administration be passed on the level where they would be most effective.
- To direct the interaction between science and practice based on instruments devised by social science.

A paper by Antanas Bukauskas (lecturer, Department of Personnel Management, Mykolas Romeris University), *State Management: from Revolution to Evolution* analysed how state management is perceived by the President, the Government, the Seimas, experts (both dependent and independent, international, financial institutions,), academia, politicians, political scientists, the media, the Lithuanian Free Market Institute, and the general public. *The author recommends:*

- To acknowledge that under the conditions of uncertainty created by the current crisis, the search for potential solutions of good management requires active cooperation among governmental structures, academia, and other interest groups.

A paper by Artūras Arbatauskas and Arvydas Tarasevičius (experts from Lithuanian Institute of Public Administration), *Training of the Public Administration Institutions' Managers and More Efficient Management* analysed common problems in the public sector—the infrequent application of knowledge about various managerial theories when making practical decisions. *Their recommendations:*

- To strengthen the formation of applied skills in the undergraduate and graduate degree programs within the next 3–5 years, so that graduates can apply to practice the knowledge acquired during their education.

A paper by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Raimundas Kalesnykas (Vilnius Law and Business College), *Possibilities of Implementing the Function of Maintaining Public Order in Municipal Territories* analysed the powers of a municipality in maintaining public order. The research was based on the case of Vilnius city municipality. *The author recommends:*

- To support and stimulate, on the basis of the new public management theories, the abilities and initiatives of municipalities (subjects of the public sector) to manage and control the majority of public matters, taking full responsibility for them and following the interests of the local populace.

A paper by Vilma Tubutienė (Department of Public Administration, Šiauliai University), *Assessment of Personnel Performance in the Pursuit of Strategic Organizational Goals* analysed how organizational strategy is connected to human resources management and performance assessment, and what challenges may arise in practical personnel assessment activities. *The author recommends:*

- Strategic approaches to performance assessment should entail the assessment of process corrections and credibility of results with long-term prospects of the assessment objectives in mind.

A paper by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Jonas Jasaitis (Rural Development Research Centre, Šiauliai University), *Which Strategy is Being Implemented in 97.4% of the Territory of Lithuania? (Rural Development in Strategies and in Reality)* analysed changes in rural areas during the transitional period and newly arising functions, such as: residential, diversification of economic activities, relaxation and rehabilitation, educational, preservation of ethnographic and moral heritage, and landscape preservation. *The author recommends:*

- In implementing the objective of strategic management of the state, a cohesive development of all regions and sectors should be sought, and the place of residence should serve as an obstacle for a full personal development.

A paper by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Rasa Šnapštienė (Department of Public Administration, Kaunas University of Technology), *Strategic Management of Human Resources: a Systematic Approach* analysed why current practice is often accepted as the unquestionable, correct, and optimal set of decisions that do not require any argumentation, deeper knowledge or assessment of alternatives. *The author recommends:*

- To encourage the effectiveness of the public sector by modernization, facilitated by the development of scientific research, new theories, formulation of approaches, and their implementation in practice.

A paper by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vainius Smalskys (Department of Public Administration, Mykolas Romeris University), *Concerning Reforms of Public Administration and Civil Service in Lithuania* analysed requirements imposed on employees of the public sector: quality of services provided to citizens, active cooperation with civic communities, and provision of professional assistance to politicians. *The author recommends:*

- To direct the current civil service towards provision of high-quality services to citizens, and towards cooperation between civic groups and representatives of administrations.

A paper by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Saulius Nefas (Department of Public Administration, Mykolas Romeris University), *Implementation of Scientific Managerial (Administrative) Theories in Practice: Imagination, Reality or Potential Challenge* analysed the absence of observable social partnerships between scientists and practising professionals in Lithuania. *The author recommends:*

- To recognize that poor workplace culture within the public sphere is driven by the absence of contact between theory and practice.
- Educational programs pay more attention to epistemological and empirical concepts.

Conference results

The results are reflected in a survey, carried out by undergraduate public administration students from Mykolas Romeris University. Research group consisted of the same undergraduate students who participated in the conference. An online survey consisting of open and closed ended questions was used.

When questioned about the importance of the conference topics, 57% of the respondents thought that the topics were important, 30% thought they were of average importance, and only 13% thought that they were not important.

Drawbacks and advantages of the conference were identified. 40% of respondents stated that they did not notice any drawbacks, and those respondents, who did, identified the following drawbacks:

- A lack of research on the practical aspects of the modern-day situation in contrast to theoretical ones
- Digression of speakers from their own research topics.
- Some papers not being consistent with the subject of the conference

The following aspects were listed as positive ones:

- The possibility to “touch” on practice at least a bit and to hear about real examples.
- A great opportunity to get acquainted with the current issues in the public sector.
- A possibility to reflect on the disconnect between theory and practice.

DOI: 10.5755/j01.ppa.0.30.26914