

IMPLEMENTATION OF CHANGE MANAGEMENT IN ORGANIZATIONS DOMINATED BY MECHANICAL BUREAUCRACY

Mihaela BARCAN*
Laurentiu BARCAN**

*Pneumoftiziologie Hospital Leamna, Craiova, Romania
**University of Craiova, Craiova, Romania

Almost two years after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Romanian institutions in the fields of public health and national security have gone through and continue to go through processes of organizational change, with a major impact in terms of national security. Change management in these organizations of military origin is based mainly on coercion, being dependent on the political factor and the mechanistic bureaucracy, the resistance encountered being likely to affect national policies to combat the perpetuation of the pandemic and its effects.

Key words: national security, public health, change management, mechanical bureaucracy.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the last two years, Romania has been affected by the global crisis generated by the COVID-19 pandemic, its effects being felt both at individual and organizational level, including at the level of institutions in the field of national security and public health. Various internal and external factors intervene in the change processes in these institutions, often due to the mechanistic bureaucracy, specific to militarized organizations.

Change management in public health institutions has a special role in the functioning of these

organizations and so far has not been addressed in terms of authoritarian management. In order to successfully go through the processes of change, each organization will have to design its own strategy and aim for new, effective practices through which to innovate and innovate, so that clearly designed image strategies allow them a better relationship with taxpayers.

2. CHANGE, A SAFE SOLUTION

In the current pandemic context, it is absolutely necessary and possible to have change management in the public institution in the field

of public health because the public environment is hyper-formalized. All bureaucratic rules are only stable for a while, so we need change management. Now come the problem as such, the hallmark of this change management.

Institutions in the field of national security must respond operationally to the challenges posed by the changes needed to operate at the international level, amid international influences and the promotion of adaptation strategies in line with security strategies. Thus, the management of these institutions must constantly face minor changes, some imperceptible, both in an international and national context, which are the basis for decision-making. Simon (1977, p. 23) considers that the elaboration of the decision is synonymous with the whole managerial process, the management functions actually representing a series of chained decisions.

Taking into account the country's macroeconomic situation and medium- and long-term development prospects, in the context of its integration into the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the topicality of the research topic is in line with both finding solutions to eliminate the effects of the pandemic crisis, especially in the area of efforts to identify managerial solutions to

eliminate the elements that slow down the processes necessary to align organizational structures and managerial policies to those imposed by strategic partners (Barcan, 2013).

2.1. Change, a permanent necessity

This paper aims to critically analyze the influence of change factors at the organizational and individual level in organizations in the field of health and national security. The theoretical and methodological basis used is focused on bibliographic research and scientific research conducted at the level of public health organizations that have an impact on national security.

The scientific novelty is given by the study of some phenomena that transcend the social life and the practical value of this thesis is given by the identification of useful methods and strategies in the processes of change of the targeted institutions.

From a theoretical point of view, change management is considered to be an accumulation of disciplines, techniques and skills through which specialization and complexity are metamorphosed into actions and results, with the help of organization. At the same time, change management can be defined as a set of processes that act in the sense of planning, organizing,

coordinating, training and controlling measures aimed at actions aimed at replacing, modifying, transforming or transforming the organization, in form and content, in with a view to increasing its efficiency and competitiveness.

Change management in institutions in the field of national security has a special role in the functioning of these organizations, being so far approached through the prism of authoritarian management and coercive strategy of change, because the mechanistic bureaucracy governs these institutions.

Public organizations are constituted in very specialized systems, there being different criteria for their classification. Thus, some work in public health, others in the field of administration and others in the field of national security. On the other hand, some are profit-oriented, some are non-profit, some are in the public sector and some are active in the private sector. In conclusion, no two organizations are identical, each having its own particularities.

The transfer of techniques from the private to the public sphere means a change in existing structures and methods and the implementation of changes must be in line with the coordinates of the EU integration process, i.e. the achievement of operating standards characteristic of the Member States. For these reasons, public organizations must be able to

meet the challenges, because rigid administrations, constrained by rules and regulations, but also by their own resources, cannot provide a prompt response to the needs of society, constituting a barrier (Agapie, 2008).

2.2. Mechanistic bureaucracy, a changing brake?

The activity of public organizations is inextricably linked to the government sector and the management of the public sector controls the activity of other organizations, taking into account economic and social policies. The efficiency of public institutions depends on the way in which governments use effective control mechanisms, supported by motivation, without resorting to the adoption and application of rigid procedures. The transformation of institutions can change things for the better, especially against the background of the economic-financial crisis affecting the Romanian state.

The mechanistic bureaucracy limits the employees to a narrow specialization, being characterized by rigidity. The obsessive preoccupation of this kind of organization for the observance of the rules makes it an inappropriate structure for conditions of uncertainty and risk, reason for which the respondents consider that the mechanistic bureaucracy represents one of the main elements of braking in the process of change.

Given that the institutions concerned are dominated by a mechanistic bureaucracy, a strategy that can be used in case of a change is the coercive one, but with short or very short results, the organization and functioning regulations allowing maintaining order and discipline even especially in crisis conditions.

This strategy can be complemented by indoctrination and rewarding those who support change, without hesitation in eliminating staff who do not act operatively to overcome resistance to change.

Today, importance is given to management to the detriment of the administration and more attention to results than means, but in crisis situations there is the possibility that personal authority may take the place of rules and civil servants may be forced to submit to power factors. Crises can be useful for the system of bureaucratic organization, which consists of routine procedures but also of periods of crisis which then ensure periods of stability.

From the point of view of the elements that slow down the change, the mechanistic bureaucracy represents a symbol of resistance to change, the interviewed persons not having the possibility to effectively participate in the change process, in the current conditions the militarized hierarchy innovative, possibly useful to the entire organization.

Mental blockages and disinterest are also, in the opinion of the respondents, elements of slowdown in the process of change, narrow personal interests or limiting thinking on the background of excessive indoctrination sometimes leading to the employee's refusal to give up routine tasks specific to mechanistic bureaucracy. The routine of the daily activity represents an obstacle in the way of change, the employee being convenient to keep in a circuit of tasks or operations with which he became familiar and which he executes rhythmically, almost automatically, with a minimum effort of thinking in the adaptation process.

Against the background of transformation, change and modernization processes the risk of adopting erroneous decisions or with adverse consequences in the current or future activity of national security institutions is all the greater as the complexity of the international environment is joined by the volatility of domestic and international legislation. In this sense, in order to reduce the risks associated with the decisions, the management must act for the improvement of the technology of information collection and processing, but also for the continuous monitoring of the environment and the immediate identification of the changes occurred.

Effective means in preventing the occurrence of risk situations are both continuous adaptation to changes in the environment and organizational learning. Continuous adaptation to changes in the environment has positive effects in terms of competitive advantage. The organization may use third-party intermediaries in volatile environments and direct efforts towards a stable and low-risk environment, with negative consequences for competitive advantage.

3. IMPLEMENTING CHANGE MANAGEMENT

The change can cause another change or a chain of changes, with employees being affected by it and reacting differently, amid emotional reactions. Their consequences can be accepted, ignored or even rejected. As such, these reactions to change depend mainly on the ambiguity of the role and control exercised by the individual, the change can be perceived as an opportunity but also as a threat.

The techniques and methods by which change management materializes are adopted in an extensive decision-making process, directly determined by the professionalism and experience of the participants and managers. Because of this, this process is difficult to implement, but necessary

and mandatory, being required by the need to overcome the barriers caused by resistance to change.

From a conceptual point of view, organizational change in the international environment is characterized by volatility, high degree of complexity, continuous change and risk influenced by the national environment of organizations (Doval, 2005, p. 19). In reality, the national environment takes over the changes from the international environment, which automatically induces changes within the organization.

3.1. The need to implement change management

The variety and continuity of change to which modern public organizations are subjected has given rise to multiple approaches to organizational change management. At the same time, all approaches propose general directions to lead the change process without defining the formalities that allow the representation of the change process, the vision of change, the impact on the organization and / or the possible results of the change process.

Governments often provide facilities to disadvantaged groups, but these facilities initially require high-value investments, which in turn attract monopolistic tendencies and practices, so that, by their nature, they can generate a political impact

(Marinescu, 2001, p. 8). The control that is supported by legislative regulations fully ensures the coordination of public institutions, but there is a risk that, for reasons of financial nature or poor management of resources, the budgets of these organizations will be adversely affected (Mitrache and Budica, 2006).

Public organizations are in a volatile environment in direct competition with private equity firms, so that in order to support and promote the rules of the market economy, ie fair competition and to maintain proper control over economic branches considered strategic, governments they maintain direct control over these companies.

Governments have the authority to get actively involved in the economy, including by setting up their own companies. The administration has traditionally operated under the formal control of the political elite, but the evolution of society has imposed several types of administrative systems.

In this context, there are two conceptions about the state and about the beneficial or paradoxical effects of welfare policies (Preduț Radu, 2008b). The emergence of the first governments was possible due to the aggregation of human communities at the level of national systems, so that administrative structures emerged, which allowed citizens

access to government based on their own values, recognized locally or by laws and procedures imposed by the central level.

Changes in public organizations require redefining customer relations, reorganizing work, acquiring cutting-edge technologies, using quality management, but also investing in information campaigns.

The metaphor of the “flat earth” was launched by Friedman (2007, pp.26-27), suggesting the evidence and strength of globalizing processes. According to him, the flat world platform is the result of the convergence between the personal computer with the fiber optic cable and the development of software to automate business procedures, it was prevalent around the beginning of the XXI century, when people around the world began to realize that they had more than ever to develop globally as individuals.

The research conducted by Pripoae-Șerbănescu (2012) leads to the idea that new paradigms, such as network-based operations or effects-based operations, urgently require managers to acquire new comprehensive skills and superior decision-making skills, adapted to new managerial approaches. Thus, research on problem solving that is poorly structured and occurs under uncertainty has shown that applying a single decision model is both inappropriate and counterproductive

as decision makers naturally use intuitive methods. Through these, managers value both experience and previous methods of thinking, avoiding to follow the steps of a standardized algorithm.

For these reasons, at the level of organizations with responsibilities in the field of national security, as a response to the use of the classical decision-making method, Military Decision Making Process (MDMP), the alternative of practical thinking was proposed by specialists. This comes and is derived from the theory of naturalistic psychology, in its case being taken into account both the cognitive limitations and those pitfalls that the decision-making process can, inherently, induce.

Practical thinking proposes, from a managerial point of view, a style of thinking that is interrogative, reflective and integrative. Through this style of thinking, the manager has the opportunity to define and redefine, continuously, those problems that arise along the way, in order to identify and evaluate the solutions that have been adopted and the effects produced, by creating its own system for evaluation activities and control.

The change of the management model of the public organizations is inevitable and will produce effects both on the individuals and on the private sector, the public organizations not being guaranteed the

functioning or the level of financing. They will need to understand the dynamics of changing technologies, so that each public institution will need to have its own strategic design and consider new, effective practices, to innovate and innovate.

3.2. Trends in public organization

The problem of change, ie the stage reached from the current stage and the structured and organized process that allows the transition from one stage to another, is permanently at the center of change management, and may be higher or lower, in terms of final purpose or implications. Change management can be oriented towards individuals or groups of individuals belonging to different directions or departments, on the whole organization or only on certain components of the environment in which the organization operates (Preduț Radu, 2008a).

In Romania, the most significant difference between social and public policies is that, while social policies designate government intervention to address social problems, public policies can be proactive, such as sustainable development, and responsible government agencies can hire an institution. specialized for the elaboration of an alternative variant of intervention, respectively the implementation of the policy or its evaluation (Chiciudean, 2007, p. 12).

Increasing the speed of information processing and the rapid transfer of innovation to a global market are external pressures underlying organizational change. At the same time, change is caused by forces within the organization, such as absenteeism, fluctuation and insufficient or non-existent motivation of staff or low level of productivity. For these reasons, managers working in public sector organizations need to invest more and more time and energy in planning organizational change management.

Organizational change planning is due both to the complexity of the challenges posed by competitive and turbulent environments and to the demands of those beneficiaries and decision makers who orchestrate change. Within the planned change programs, it is necessary to involve employees from all organizational levels, these programs providing for actions carried out at individual and organizational level.

Digital e-Government, ie that government based on new technologies, is a set of systems and resources that are specific to public management, which, through the appropriate use of information and communication technology, aims to optimize the administrative act (Becheanu and Floricel, 2011, pp. 25). From the experience of other public organizations, most change planning and management efforts have failed

when they set out to provide viable solutions to organizational problems, finding that organizational change projects are very expensive and costly and energy consuming. whereas a large proportion of managers and consultants make erroneous decisions when based on summary diagnoses and prompt interventions.

The public management system focuses on the services provided to citizens and presupposes the coexistence and coherent interaction of the public administration, the economic sector and the civil society (UCRAP, 2006, p. 10). The classical administration is governed by a package of dedicated normative acts, no longer adequate today. For this reason, public organizations have taken over both the techniques and management practices that are used in private equity organizations.

In the planned change, it is necessary, in several stages, to go through a complex process that requires a diagnostic analysis, the elaboration of an action plan aimed at the implementation of the change project and the evaluation of the obtained results.

At the conceptual level, the problem refers to the transition from one stage to another, the transition being fulfilled as a result of setting and achieving three types of objectives (transformation, reduction and application). If the transformation objectives focus on identifying the

differences between the two stages, the reduction objectives focus on determining ways to eliminate these differences and the implementation objectives focus on implementing measures that have the effect of eliminating those differences.

In general, and especially in the field of national security, there is no single strategy for change, so the adoption of a general strategy requires the application of a combination of strategies, which depends on a certain type of factors. An important factor is the degree of resistance. A strong resistance implies a combination of coercive strategies, adapted to the environment and a weak resistance implies a combination of empirical-rational and normative-educational strategies.

Another important factor is the target population. It has been observed that a large population requires a combination of strategies, one for each. High stakes involve a mixture of strategies and short-term temporary staff involve a strategy to exercise power, a situation different from long-term temporary staff, which involve a mixture of empirical-rational, normative-educational and environmentally friendly strategies.

A combination of strategies is needed for adequate change expertise. In situations where expertise is lacking, a coercive strategy can be adopted as a last resort. However, if the organization subject to change is

dependent on people, the ability of management to command or demand is limited.

Addiction is a double-edged sword. If people are dependent on the organization, their ability to oppose or resist is limited. In essence, mutual dependence almost always requires a certain level of negotiation, based on the expertise and experience of the staff, as well as on the possibilities of employee loyalty, the type of training and the characteristics of the job. It generates both a dominant position for the right person in the right place but also a decrease in the chances of getting a job elsewhere.

4. CONCLUSIONS & ACKNOWLEDGMENT

In terms of national security, change management has been, in our opinion, permanently connected to the influence of external factors, especially legislative, legal entities of the nature of institutions with responsibilities in the field of national security being the first to be transformed when politically significant mutations. Considering the concept of hierarchy of needs, developed by Abraham Maslow, immediately after the elementary physiological needs, the needs of security and safety are felt.

In order to meet these needs, a continuous adaptation is needed, the institutions in the field of national security having, in our opinion, the permanent obligation to prevent and

counteract the occurrence of risks, vulnerabilities and threats to national security, public health being often affected by the manifestation of factors that impede the processes of change or that disturb their effects.

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