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Mauro ROMANELLI[1]

Abstract

Rediscovering sustainability as a source for developing strategic and organizational change helps drive public administration to proceed towards future by promoting the organizational dimension that relies on enhancing the quality of people as human resources, strengthening public managers as leaders and public servants as employees committed and motivated to public services. Sustainable public administration improves performances, supports public trust and enhances democratic life. Rediscovering the organizational dimension as a means to promote sustainability within public administration helps develop ethical and organizational culture within public administration and enables people to adopt new values, attitudes and behaviors. Developing sustainability within public administration relies on strengthening the behavioral and human dimension in order to enable both processes of change and advance ethics-oriented policies and initiatives within public organizations. Promoting an effective public management requires people able to behave as ethical and transformational leaders who motivate, support and drive the employees at work. Investing in human resources requires to develop education and training programs and policies that contribute to sustaining public service motivation and improving competences of employees who assume behaviors and adopt values in order to drive sustainable and ethical-oriented process of innovation and change within public administration as an organization that serves the public interest and contributes to value creation within community.

Keywords: *sustainability; public administration; organization; human resources.*

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1. Introduction

Rediscovering the organizational dimension within public administration helps develop the good functioning and effectiveness of public sector organizations, and enables ethics-oriented policies that contribute to improving behaviors and action of public employees. Rediscovering both ethics and organizational values within public administration helps advance sustainability as a source for driving continuous innovation and change. Developing sustainability within public administration helps advance a new vision for public governance and management, facilitates efficiency and effectiveness of public services, and contributes to enhancing public employees in performing their task, taking responsibilities and acting for public value creation process for community and citizens [1], [2], [3].

Even if there are several studies that have investigated on the concept of sustainability within and across organizations [4], still few studies pay attention to the role and issue of sustainability within public administration as an organization that contributes to public value creation [2].The research question refers to understand how sustainability as a source for change and action can be embedded within the life of public administration as an organization serving the public interest and working for value creation processes within community.

The aim of this study is to elucidate how public administration can identify a pathway for sustainability as a source for change by developing the organizational dimension by enhancing the quality of employees as human resources and public managers as leaders who drive effective and ethical behaviors. The study relies on a narrative and descriptive analysis that refers to literature analysis and review in the field of sustainable public administration, human resources training, public management and leadership [5]. The analysis tends to reflect some propositions and advance some lines of action for future sustainable public administration.

The study is structured as follows. After introduction, in the third paragraph the theoretical background about sustainable public administration and organization is elucidated. In the fourth paragraph it is elucidated how public administration can proceed towards sustainability by developing the role of leadership for public management and strengthening human resource management policies for public service motivation. Finally, discussion and conclusions are outlined.

2. Towards changing and sustainable public administration

Public sector governance and management reform processes have driven strategic and organizational change within public administration in transitioning to public management value approach that enhances the relationship with citizens, supports public trust and promotes accountability [6]. After the waves of New public management doctrines and practices leading public sector reform to make more efficient and effective public administration to achieve sustainable performances and issues for citizens and community doing more with less, the overcoming of critical aspects of managerial reform in the search of democratic accountability process has led public administration to changing by considering the public service approach to public sector reform relying on quality of human resources and public service motivation [7], [8], [9], [10].

Sustainability as a source for change should drive public administration to redesign strategy and organization of public services and democratic accountability. Today, the role of public administration is to enhance democratic life and citizen participation, support public trust and public value creation within communities [3], [11], [12].

Public administration should behave as a responsive institution that serves the public interest and contributes to democratic life and citizen engagement and participation, and develops human capital to support public value creation processes. Sustainable public administration should serve the public interest and contribute to public value creation for citizens and communities by promoting the quality of human resources and management, investing in the organizational dimension by making public managers as effective transformational and ethical leaders, relying on strengthening human resource management policies concerning training and education for public service motivation.

Today, public administration should deal with sustainability as a condition that enables better functioning of the organizational structure as a means that enables value creation and helps public administration to learn and live as a change-oriented actor. Public organizations should approach the sustainability as a long-term vision for driving change, action and decision-making processes, sustaining public trust, democratic life and value creation within communities [2], [3].

As following a public value management view [11], [12] to serve the public interest as a result of dialogue with citizens [7], public organizations should rethink how to approach the issue of sustainability. Sustainable public administration should foster the organizational dimension that relies both on training and motivating people at work in terms of public managers

as leaders and employees who feel public service motivation. Sustainable public administration relies on strengthening the quality of human resources in order to support public value and reward the employees who believe in public services and value being committed to work in virtue of public service motivation at work [8], [9].

3. Driving public administration towards sustainability

Public administration should identify a pathway for sustainability rediscovering the importance of leadership for public management and promoting training and education policies to support public service motivation and aliment work commitment of employees.

3.1. Rediscovering public managers as leaders

Changing public administration promote innovation in structure, processes and human resources leading to new behaviors and values within background and professionalism of public servants [13].

As institutions serving the public interest, public administration should rediscover the ethical attributes of office as vocation as a means and source to drive value creation processes [14]. Sustainable organizations should invest sources in order to support the quality of human resources, driving an ethically-oriented organizational culture [1], encouraging the organizational commitment of employees as public servants who contribute to responsiveness of public administration in terms of collaboration with citizens and associations within society [9], [15].

Making public managers as leaders is the challenge to face in order to help public administration to proceed towards an ethics- and sustainability-oriented pathway. Rediscovering public managers as leaders between organization and society helps sustainable effectiveness within public administration. Successful changes rely on rediscovering public managers who are leading and motivating employees, feeling to contribute to public service value, strategically developing human resources, attending to community value, enhancing accountability within society [16].

Sustaining and promoting ethical leadership within public administration as value creation-oriented organization helps to enhance public employees' commitment, to reduce the absenteeism end encourage the employees to report ethical problems and questions assuming coherent values and behaviors. Public managers should learn how to become ethical leaders who contribute to supporting employee commitment and job satisfaction, and to improving the absenteeism reduction, helping face and

solve ethical questions that exert positive influence on employees' behaviors and attitudes at work [17].

Public managers as transformational leaders help process of change, leveraging on the personal characteristics of the individuals, support public service motivation and enhance the commitments to public mission, fostering job satisfaction, work performance [18], [19].

3.2. Sustaining human resources and service motivation through training and education

Reinventing government requires that managerial policies and practices pay attention to the value of human capital resources. Modernizing public administration relies on promoting the quality of human capital and investing in human resources and professionalism of public servants [9].

Changing public administration as an organization should support public service motivation of employees [20]. Public employees manifest higher attention to service than private employees. The concept of public service motivation (PSM) refers to a behavioral process in which public service motives lead to behaviors that benefit the public [21]. Promoting an ethical approach and culture within organizations relies on developing training and education to public values as a means to drive change and help employees to face organizational change and feel high public service motivation at work [19].

According to Rainey and Steinbauer (1999) effective public organizations have high levels of public service, task and mission motivation [22]. Human resources management policies contribute to supporting service motivation at work. Human resources practices contribute to improving and achieving high performances for public administration which relies on investing in human resources as a means for sustainability [9], [23]. Sustaining training and education of public employees helps reinvent government and drive effective organizational change. In particular, training initiatives enhancing a responsible management education support sustainable value creation for business and society, learning experience for leadership, the search for dialogue government-citizens, promote interaction between civil society and public management, fostering social responsibility [24]. Education and training help develop successfully the human side of public management and contribute to reinforcing organizational and managerial culture and values of public servants [25]. In particular, developing training and education as human resource practice helps understand «the importance of encouraging public employees to feel that

they are personally contributing to an organization that performs a valuable service» [19, p. 48].

4. Discussion

The future developments and advancements of public administration relies on rediscovering sustainability as a source for driving effective and efficient public administration serving the public interest and providing good services and performances for citizens. Sustainability of public organizations relies on strengthening the ethical and organizational dimension of public administration as an institution called to promote public values and virtues, to contribute to public and social value creation interacting with citizens and groups within communities.

Public sector management reform tends to continuously shape behaviors, strategies, policies and action of public administration as an institution in charge of serving the public interest in transitioning from abandoning the dark side of a managerial orientation to embracing a new public service as an approach to governance and organization of public services management. Globalization, new ethical values and behaviors, the increasing relevance of organizational and behavioral dimension, and the importance of human capital for value creation processes contribute to shaping processes of public sector management reform for change within public administration.

Public administration should identify a pathway for sustainability investing in people, organization and policies in order to drive change within public organizations. New public managers should behave and act as ethical and transformational leaders. Human resource management policies contribute to sustaining service motivation of employees by developing training and education initiatives and programs.

5. Conclusions

Future public administration should serve the public interest in long-terms, interacting with citizens and helping public value creation in order to identify a strategic pathway to proceed towards sustainability as a source and vision for change, continuous renewal in order to design and implement operational action and policies. This study only elucidated theoretical analysis on perspectives that public administration is to follow and approach in order to perform the primary task of contribution to value creation, developing democratic values and equity, and ethics, interacting with

citizens, providing access to information and knowledge sources in order to reinforce public trust of citizens and communities in public administration. Some propositions are elucidated. Sustainable public administration is advancing relying on strengthening both leadership and ethical behaviors of public management and developing the quality of human capital through human resource policies that invest in training and education. In particular, promoting a sustainability-driven pathway for public administration helps develop ethics-oriented organizational culture and behaviors in work environments.

This study has some limits. Any empirical research is presented. Further research and studies should investigate the role of ethics-oriented human resource management policies and practices public administration adopted within local autonomies.

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