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ADMINISTRATORS OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN VIETNAM IN THE CURRENT AND FUTURE GLOBAL CONTEXT

1. Universities as global knowledge based organisations

Permanent changes are a characteristic feature of globalisation. Sometimes they may mean only minor adaptive changes, but often they involve deep transformations. One of the most important areas affected by these significant changes is the paradigm of organisational formation, its organisational culture. Obviously, the need for change can provoke various reactions. For some people managing organisations, such a situation evokes a sense of uncertainty, lack of stability, predictability, security. For others it may be a stimulation to take up challenges, create new ideas, introduce innovative solutions. One of the very important aspects of fulfilling the role of a manager in an organisation, especially an organisation which meets the expectations of the contemporary global world, is building the involvement of all members of the organisation. Creating the right conditions for the development of all employees is still the primary task of all managers. Effective managers have to take into account more and more new factors influencing their organisation, both external and internal. Existing action patterns, stereotypes, habits are becoming less and less effective. According to the literature (Drucker 2000; Kozmiński 2004; Juchnowicz 2012) changes must concern almost all aspects of organisation functioning such as:

- economic situation of the organization connected with its position on an increasingly competitive market;
- the strategy of the company;

- the style of organizational management, especially the changes in its structure and the role of managers;
- innovative products, services, technologies as well as innovative human resources management;
- organizational culture of the company;
- the labour market – changes from “employers’ labour market” into “employees’ labour market”;
- competencies, skills and knowledge of workers (Juchnowicz 2012).

The development of the organization concerns not only professional skills and knowledge essential to complete a task, but also skills and knowledge that affect some changes of the organizational and personal attitudes in the sphere of interpersonal relations, cooperation, contacts with other organizations and customers. In many companies nowadays more and more emphasis is put on “soft competencies practicing”. They include, not only knowledge and managerial skills – for managers, but are directed to all employees at all levels. Moreover, organizations recognize the need to build teams of workers based on relational principles. Such teams should be aware of their potential as well as ready to work on correcting and eliminating inappropriate attitudes and behaviours. Organizations are transformed into knowledge – based organizations.

Knowledge – based organizations represent some characteristic features, such as:

- decentralization of management which demands deputing most tasks and responsibilities to workers;
- willingness to take some risks;
- good conditions for experiments and innovations;
- diagnosis of the situation and the process of making decisions based on the analysis of empirical data;
- planned training process aimed at directing and supporting the development of all employees’ careers;
- learning from mistakes;
- extensive cooperation both within the company (between departments) and externally (e.g. with customers, suppliers, subcontractors or stakeholders);
- cooperation with scientific institutions in order to improve knowledge and to introduce innovative solutions (Juchnowicz 2012).

The process of changes must rely on the cooperation of all employees in the field of values, standards, norms, objectives and policies implemented in the organization (Zygałło 2019). It can be achieved through the process of “bottom-up” creation of organizational culture. The importance of managing based on the sustainable, vertical hierarchy has decreased. Properly created organizational culture becomes an important element of the company intellectual capital. This, in turn, affects not only greater

identification of all employees with the objectives and values of the company, but also increases its position on the competitive market (Drucker 2000).

Modern organizational culture which creates employees' engagement should:

- support learning process of all employees through motivating and rewarding;
- promote the process of sharing knowledge, skills, responsibilities and empowerment;
- create a sense of community, co-ownership, and identification of all organization members with the values and objectives of the company;
- create good atmosphere based on trust and honesty;
- support proactive and innovative attitudes, experiments and taking responsible risks;
- promote team work by creating the right conditions for direct and efficient communication;
- give greater freedom to act and take responsibility; tolerate various points of view;
- be opened to changes and support innovative thinking (Zygadło 2019)

The concept of organizational culture is closely related to the concept of work culture. Work culture can be understood as all achievements of humanity related to professional theory and practice which have been created for many centuries of civilization development. Zdzisław Wołk proposes understanding of work culture in a narrower sense. The author defines this concept as a personal feature of each of us. It means that every person has certain individual properties that enable them to participate in the process of work. Work culture consists of three interconnected elements that constitute an indivisible, complementary whole. These are:

- operational knowledge about work based on wide general knowledge
- intellectual and manual skills;
- attitude towards work (Wołk 2009).

All of the above components of work culture are developed throughout entire life of each person. Particularly intensively by participating in the process of lifelong education. Properly developed work culture represented by individual employees and thus the desired organizational culture require engagement of members of an organization. An employee engagement in the aspect of organization management can be understood in three following ways:

- as a kind of attitude presented by each of the organization members;
- as a system of specific behaviours of each of the organization members;
- as a process of mutual exchange of benefits between employees and the organization they work for.

Employee engagement is also understood as a kind of individual attitude which consists of cognitive factors (knowledge), emotional factors (feelings) and behavioral factors (behaviours) (Cook 2008). Employees' engagement can take various forms and

affect various areas of their work for the organization. The co-occurrence of all forms of engagement is the desired state. Then members of the organization cross the expectations of their managers and customers. They even take activities which cause their superiors' positive feeling of surprise and admiration. The most frequently mentioned forms of employee engagement are:

- employees identification with the mission, values, objectives and tasks of the company – engagement into the organization;
- performing current tasks at a high level – engagement into work;
- identification with individual objectives of the professional development and implementation of an individual career path – engagement into profession;
- identification with the other members of the organization (co-workers and supervisors) – engagement into social environment (Juchnowicz 2012).

The concept of employee engagement is inextricably linked with the sense of being treated in the subjective way. In many organizations such a treatment is the demand or idea rather than an everyday procedure. Ambiguity of the concept of subjectivity can also cause even contradictory interpretations. Being a subject can mean freedom, identity, self-awareness, personal fulfillment, autonomy or responsibility (Zygałło 2019). The specific space of freedom and the ability to change the existing system of functioning within the organization are the essential condition of subjectivity. A person – subject performs independently having an impact on the appearing events. He or she also has conditions to assess their activity which involves incurring the consequences for their choices. Staff members who in the organization want to be and are treated in a subjective way fulfill their responsibilities with greater commitment. They are active in making independent decisions and have a positive impact on the surrounding material and social reality.

A number of important factors influencing the shape of an institution as a knowledge-based organisation, promoting employee involvement, subjectivity and an appropriate work culture have been highlighted above. However, there is one condition without which no institution, including a university, will become an organisation that functions efficiently in the contemporary global market. It is, of course, proper, efficient management of the organisation.

2. University governance – rationale

University governance is currently both a theoretical and practical issue that attracts concern in the academic world. Many authors have emphasized the important role of governance in the development of universities. According to I. Victor Baldrige good

governance is the heart of higher education; governing activities form the destiny of a university. Proper university governance is the decisive factor that determines the success or failure of any university (Baltridige 1971). When considering the significance of university governance concerning the quality of higher education, Fabrice Henard and Mitterle pointed out that the university governance had become the main leverage tool to improve the quality in all areas of higher education (Henard, Mitterle 2009). According to Michael Shattock university governance is one of the “important pieces” of any higher education system. The improvement of this activity may exert a significant effect on improving the quality of education of the whole higher education system. The fundamental element that makes a university the world’s leading one can be attributed to the leading system of governance (Shattock 2006). In the meantime, Jamil Salmi listed key factors of a prestigious international university, including: a focus on aptitude/competence (students, teaching staff, research, internationalization); abundant resources (public funding, revenue, tuition, research grants); favorable governance (regular support structure, autonomy in training, leadership team, strategic vision, superior culture) (Salmi 2009). Thus, according to Salmi, favorable governance is one of the three factors of a prestigious international university (Salmi 2009). However, how to conduct governing activities of a university depends on the quality and competence of the administrators. Therefore, it is an urgent issue to implement research to determine the role, the quality and competence requirements for the administrators, from which a training program can be built to improve the quality and competence of the administrators.

3. Research content

3.1. The roles of public university administrators

In a university, the administrators usually play the following roles:

i) Leadership role

With this role, the university administrators must be able to come up with the university’s manifesto and mission; at the same time outline the university’s strategic development plan for the next 5-10 years, along with many important policies on the fields of organization, personnel, academic and finance of the University. Besides, with a leadership role, the administrators are required to know how to encourage their staff members to complete assigned tasks.

ii) Linkage role

Gradually, universities have to expand their relationship with many stakeholders and societal organizations, for instance, the labor market, businesses, employers, sponsors,

etc. Each of them has its unique characteristics and has different effects on universities. Therefore, the administrators must find the right way to establish a relationship so that the stakeholders can take advantage of their strengths to actively participate in the development of the university. In associating with stakeholders, the administrators must constantly pay attention to the interests of the stakeholders. To this end, it is necessary to build a linkage mechanism between the university and the stakeholders, in which the administrators play the most important role.

iii) Communication role

Within the university, the administrator plays a role as the information processing center, the one who communicates and disseminates information, in addition to being the university's spokesperson. All information released from and received by the university must be "filtered" by the administrators. Thanks to this "filter", information disseminating to university members and other stakeholders are not "jammed", is always mainstream information; helping the university management and administration can be done effectively.

iv) Creative role

This is considered as a vital role of the university administration. Under the impact of the fourth industrial revolution (Industrial Revolution 4.0), higher education is changing drastically and deeply. New university models such as Smart University, Entrepreneurial University, Innovative University, etc. have been increasingly becoming a popular trend (Pham Thi Ly 2008). The characteristics of these new university models are based on intelligence universities, data science, and digital technology. To govern universities in the era of Industrial Revolution 4.0 requires the administrators to be highly creative. The role of the administrators is not only to help the university adapt to the Industrial Revolution 4.0 but more importantly, to make sure that university can have a worthy significant contribution to the development of the Industrial Revolution 4.0.

v) Controlling roles

At university, the administrator is considered to be the controller. In this role, the administrator must regularly review the decisions and policies issued to bring to light irrational problems in decisions and policies for timely adjustments. In the field of university governance, compared to the personnel sector, the financial sector often experiences more changes, due to the variance of the state's financial and accounting policies. The academic field is, however, less likely to change.

vi) The role of resource coordination

Resources for universities are often limited, especially in terms of financial resources. When universities exercise autonomy, this resource becomes more and more difficult to access, because the state budget provided is becoming much scarcer than before. Therefore, the administrator must know how to coordinate the resources (finance,

facilities, human resources, etc) for the operational and developmental needs of the university. Based on the tasks of each academic year, the development strategy of the university, the administrators decide whether the priority should be given to investing resources in this field/unit or other fields/units. Any scattered investment is not only effective but also a waste of university resources.

vii) Role of negotiation

In this role, the administrator has to meet stakeholders to discuss issues that have not been agreed upon. Typically, disagreements are often involved with the benefits that the university is required to please the stakeholders. These conflicts can also occur within the university when a policy of the administrator is not appropriate. The administrator must be the one who “solves conflicts” with a “neutral agreement” between the interests of the university and the interests of stakeholders. Therefore, negotiation is a very important part of the overall work of university administrators.

3.2. Quality and competency requirements for public university administrators

For the governance to be effective, the administrators must have these following qualities and competencies:

i) Have a strong will and desire to succeed

Governance is an activity that requires university administrators to be brave. Sometimes the bravery can be expressed beyond the boundary set by the existing psychological – mental qualities of the administrators. At times of trouble when the administrators must answer the question “to be or not to be”, they need to be unwaveringly confident. Supposing that the university was a ship, then only when having those extraordinary qualities, could the administrator be able to steer “the ship” over the rapid flows of water to reach the new shores where “many passengers are waiting for the ship to use the goods the ship is carrying” (Vukasovic 2006). Along with that strong will, the university administrator must have an aspiration to achieve success. If there was no desire to move forward, no matter how skillful and knowledgeable the administrator is, he or she would not be able to achieve success. Psychologists have considered aspiration to succeed as a personal psychological quality which has a close relationship with the motive of human activity. Therefore, to become a successful administrator, the administrator must have the desire to achieve a certain position of authority, must be willing to accept competition with others, must desire to assert themselves and dare to take responsibility, must desire to show their rights and power to others, must have their style of behavior in public, must have a sense of responsibility when performing daily tasks related to management work, etc.

ii) Have strategic and creative thinking

Although the governance of the university is required to comply with general principles, when applied to each specific university, the administrator must be creative. According to the Vietnamese Dictionary, creativity is “to generate new value whether it is material or spiritual”; “to find new things, new solutions, which do not depend on and is not restricted by the existing one” (Hoang Phe 2003). Thus, creativity is the ability to create new things. The inventions might be new ideas, new principles, new technological processes, new problem-solving methods, new material, and spiritual products, etc. Accordingly, creativity is present in any fields of human activities. For the field of university governance, creativity must be firstly shown itself in the system of governance and the organizational structure to maintain and improve the effectiveness of the university operation. In the current context, when universities are moving towards the model of University 4.0 which is characterized by creativity and entrepreneurship, a university administrator must be creative and entrepreneurial. Only when possessing those capacities, can the administrators help the university not only adapt but also make a certain contribution to the Industry Revolution 4.0. University administrators must also have strategic thinking to guide the development of the university through mission statement and vision. Determining the right mission and vision is important for the university. When defining the mission and vision, the administrators must vividly visualize the image of his university for the next 10 years, 20 years or beyond, to set short, medium and long-term goals for the development of the university.

iii) Ability to connect and persuade others

The highest goal of the university administrator is to formulate the attitudes, values and meet the expectations of stakeholders inside and outside the university. This goal requires university administrators to be able to connect and persuade others. Without this ability, it is difficult for the administrators to direct their members to a positive attitude and pursue the core values of the university. Even if the policy put forward by the administrators is right, if they do not know how to mobilize and persuade others, the mission still cannot be fulfilled. The administrators also must know how to gain the credit from the stakeholders, helping them to trust the innovation and development of the university, instill the hope and expectations in them about the prospect of the university not only in the present but also in the future.

iv) Ability to lead the university to adapt to the changes of socio-economic environment and science and technology

The socio-economic environment of countries around the world is undergoing drastic and profound changes. For Vietnam, the socialist-oriented market economy has been profoundly affecting the whole society and its institutions, including the higher education sector. Over the past decades, Vietnam's higher education has been associated with the development of a market economy. The market economy has both had a positive

influence and posed challenges to the operational mechanism of higher education in Vietnam, resulting in fundamental changes in the theory and practice of university governance in our country. These changes require that the administrators should be more adaptive to fulfill the university leadership mission that is to move forward. Not only has the socio-economic environment changed, but also the science and technology environment is undergoing a drastic and profound change. The Industrial Revolution 4.0 has become the driving force for all innovation and development on a global scale. To adapt to the Industry Revolution 4.0, higher education must possess the following characteristics: Career-oriented training; Academic research-oriented and combined with innovation; Innovative activities in the startup ecosystem; Innovative activities based on smart university, data science, and digital technology; Higher autonomy mechanism in relationship with agencies and businesses; The internationalization activities operated towards promoting innovation; The harmonious development between the goal of capitalizing knowledge assets, increasing the economic value of universities and creating resonant values for businesses and the community. How to build a 4.0 university? What does it mean by university governance 4.0? These are questions that university administrators must be familiar with and then have to find ways to answer and solve them.

v) Knowledge of the law and university governance

To govern a university effectively, the administrators must have a broad understanding of political, socio-economic, cultural-educational and global issues. There are two fields of knowledge that the administrators must master: knowledge of law and knowledge of university governance. Knowledge of laws helps the administrator to promulgate policies for each field of activity, operate autonomy and self-responsibility mechanism and govern the university's resources within the legislative framework. Knowledge of university governance helps the administrator to achieve success in their activities. John Fielden has developed a formula for effective university governance, which is "to have background knowledge, understanding of organization and leadership skills" (Fielden 2008). All three factors are directly related to the knowledge of university governance.

vi) The ability of effective governance of university resources

The university's resources include human, facilities and financial resources. Of those resources, human resources play the most important role. For resources to be properly allocated and used optimally, they need to be effectively governed. The task of the administrator is to balance resources, prioritize investment in the field/unit to create a "breakthrough" in the development of the university. In the context of limited resources for university activities, the administrator must have a strategy to develop resources, promote the human factor, pay attention to building a team of "potential talents", as an invaluable resource of the university.

The above requirements on quality and capacity for university administrators are considered as some basic stokes to create a portrait of university administrators in the

current context. In particular, the core value of the administrators is to have **the courage and aspiration** to succeed while the basic competence of the administrator is **to be able to lead the university to adapt to the changes of the socio-economic and scientific-technological environment**. To acquire these competencies and qualities, the administrator needs to constantly learn and practice.

3.3. Refresher training program to improve the quality and capacity of public university administrators

i) Objectives of the refresher training program

- Program goals: To improve the capacity of the university administrators to meet the requirements of renovating higher education in Vietnam in the context of international integration.
- Specific objectives of the program:
 - 1) Regarding knowledge, learners are equipped with: Common concepts used in university governance; Basic knowledge about the system of university governance; models of modernization; University governance mechanisms; Solutions to improve the efficiency of the university governance; Quality and competency requirements for administrators at different levels (university, department/staff and department/center; subject level); Researching university management science;
 - 2) In terms of skills, learners are trained some skills such as: skills to lead; skills to communicate; skills to create something new; skills to take control; skills to coordinate resources; skills to negotiate; skill to access to advanced foreign university governance models...;
 - 3) About attitudes, helping learners to: raise the professional awareness, morality and behavior of administrators of public universities; Continuing to foster the passion and excitement for the public university administrators; Demonstrating an objective and scientific attitude in the governance of public universities.

ii) Participants of the program

The administration staff of public universities includes Party Committee, University Council, Board of Rectors; Chief, Deputy Dean/Training Institute; Head, Deputy Head of Department/Center; Head, Deputy Head of Department; Other cadres and lecturers in need.

iii) Program content

- Total minimum knowledge volume: 60 periods including: Theory: 15 periods; Discussion, practice: 15 periods; Self-study: 30 periods.

iv) Distribution of training programs

No.	Content of the training	Number of periods	Theory	Discussion, practice	Self-study
1	Concepts commonly used in university governance	12	3	3	6
2	Fundamental knowledge about university governance (elements of university governance; university governance model; mechanism of operating the university governance model ...)	20	5	5	10
3	Requirements of quality and personalities for university administrators	16	4	4	8
4	Scientific research on university governance	12	3	3	6
Total		60	15	15	30

v) Description of the content of the minimum required knowledge

- The commonly used concepts in university governance: governance, university governance, university governance model, mechanism operating university governance.
- Basic knowledge about university management: Factors of university governance (internal factors, external factors); University governance system (Higher education system administration; internal university administration); Contents and methods of university administration; The models of university governance in the world and the methods of application in Vietnam (American university governance model, British university governance model; Australian university governance model; governance model university of Singapore); Requirements for the mechanism of operating the university governance model.
- Quality and competency requirements for university governance: Having the strong will and aspiration to succeed; Have strategic and creative thinking; Ability to connect and persuade others; Being able to lead the university to adapt to the changes of the socio-economic science and technology environment; Knowledge of the law; Ability to effectively manage resources.
- Scientific research in university governance: The need for scientific research in higher education in public universities; The content should focus on research in public university governance; Organizing scientific research on university governance in public universities; Application, transfer, and publication of research results in university governance in public universities...

vi) *Instructions for the program implementation*

- Capacity building program for public university administrators is a tool to help public universities manage the university's staff training.
- Based on this program, presidents of public universities take the initiative in fostering capacity building for university administrators.
- The method needs to be easy to understand, giving a reasonable time for participants to research, discuss and practice by themselves.
- The form of organizing the training program should be flexible to suit all kinds of participants.
- After each part, participants need to be evaluated seriously and objectively through exams and essays.

4. Conclusions

We live in the context of permanent changes. All organisations that are knowledge based ones have to follow the changes. Universities are to be the leaders among the organisations which do something more. They have to create the changes and show the other institutions how to develop. In university governance, the administrators play an important role. If we consider that university governance is the main factor that contributes to the success of a university, then the administrators are the ones who decide the success of all governing activities. The higher education system of our country is undergoing fundamental changes, especially the diversification of ownership of universities, types of training as well as the requirements of employers, which has changed how the governance of university operates. To meet the increasing demands of society, administrators must have certain qualities and competencies. They need to be fully fostered, following a standardized program to have those qualities and competencies.

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Administrators of public universities in Vietnam in the current and future global context

Summary: Modern organisations operate in conditions of permanent changes of global scope. Organisations face the necessity to make transformations in many spheres of their functioning. These include: organisational culture, work culture, employment policy, the subjective role of employees and, what's in the opinion of the authors the most important, appropriate, innovative management. Governance is essential in the development of a public university. In university governance, the administrator plays a pivotal role. If governance is the factor that contributes to the success of a university, the administrator must be the one who takes a decisive role in the success of all governing activities. In the context of Vietnam's higher education system, in which fundamental changes are taking place, the university administrators are required to possess certain qualities and competencies. They need to be fully fostered to obtain those qualities and competencies. The authors of the article, on the basis of the conducted research, presented a number of guidelines and recommendations relevant to the activities of current and future administrators of educational public institutions, especially universities.

Keywords: knowledge based organisations, organisational culture, governance, administrators, competence, quality, public university

Administratorzy publicznych uniwersytetów w Wietnamie w obecnym i przyszłym kontekście globalnym

Streszczenie: Współczesne organizacje działają w warunkach permanentnych zmian o zasięgu globalnym. Organizacje stoją przed koniecznością dokonywania przeobrażeń w wielu sferach swojego funkcjonowania. Należą do nich: kultura organizacyjna, kultura pracy, polityka zatrudnienia, podmiotowa rola pracowników oraz, co zdaniem autorów jest najważniejsze, odpowiednie, innowacyjne zarządzanie. Zarządzanie ma zasadnicze znaczenie dla rozwoju uczelni publicznej. W zarządzaniu uczelnią kluczową rolę odgrywa administrator. Jeśli zarządzanie jest czynnikiem, który przyczynia się do sukcesu uczelni, to administrator musi być tym, który odgrywa decydującą rolę w powodzeniu wszystkich działań związanych z zarządzaniem. W kontekście wietnamskiego systemu szkolnictwa wyższego, w którym zachodzą fundamentalne zmiany, od administratorów uczelni wymaga się posiadania określonych cech i kompetencji. Należy im w pełni sprzyjać, aby te cechy i kompetencje uzyskali. Autorzy artykułu, na podstawie przeprowadzonych badań, przedstawili szereg wskazówek oraz rekomendacji istotnych dla działalności obecnych i przyszłych administratorów edukacyjnych instytucji publicznych, szczególnie uniwersytetów.

Słowa kluczowe: organizacje oparte na wiedzy, kultura organizacyjna, zarządzanie, administratorzy, kompetencje, jakość, uniwersytet publiczny

Nhà quản trị trường đại học công lập trong bối cảnh hiện nay

Tóm tắt: Quản trị có vai trò quan trọng đối với sự phát triển của một trường đại học công lập. Trong quản trị đại học, nhà quản trị giữ vai trò chủ thể. Nếu quản trị làm nên sự thành công của một trường đại học thì nhà quản trị quyết định sự thành công của mọi hoạt động quản trị. Trong bối cảnh hệ thống giáo dục đại học nước ta đang có những thay đổi cơ bản, đòi hỏi các nhà quản trị đại học phải có những phẩm chất và năng lực nhất định. Họ cần được bồi dưỡng một cách đầy đủ để có được những phẩm chất và năng lực đó.

Từ khóa: Quản trị, nhà quản trị, năng lực, phẩm chất, đại học công lập