

Factors influencing the implementation of public service culture in state administrative agencies in the context of international integration

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Abstract: *In the context of international integration, state administrative agencies have established and implemented standards of public service culture values as one of the crucial methods to build a transparent and modern administrative system, meet the requirements of serving the people and organizations effectively, and contribute to enhancing Vietnam's prestige, position, and image on the international arena. However, the implementation of public service culture is influenced by various factors. Therefore, it is necessary to clearly understand the level of impact of these factors and make proposals to enhance the effectiveness of implementing public service culture in state administrative agencies.*

Keywords: *International integration; state administrative agencies; public service culture; influencing factors.*

1. Factors influencing the implementation of public service culture in state administrative agencies in the context of international integration.

1.1. Objective factors

Firstly, regarding international standards. In the process of international integration, Vietnam has signed and implemented numerous international agreements and conventions, including standards of conduct at both macro and micro levels. Simultaneously, the context of international integration opens up

opportunities for extensive cooperation and exchange and sets international norms and practices to fulfill international commitments effectively. From the perspective of state administration, international integration requires each country's administrative system to ensure professionalism, service to the people, and efficient organization. Therefore, the values of public service culture are highly regarded in almost every country worldwide, including professionalism, integrity, transparency, commitment, and

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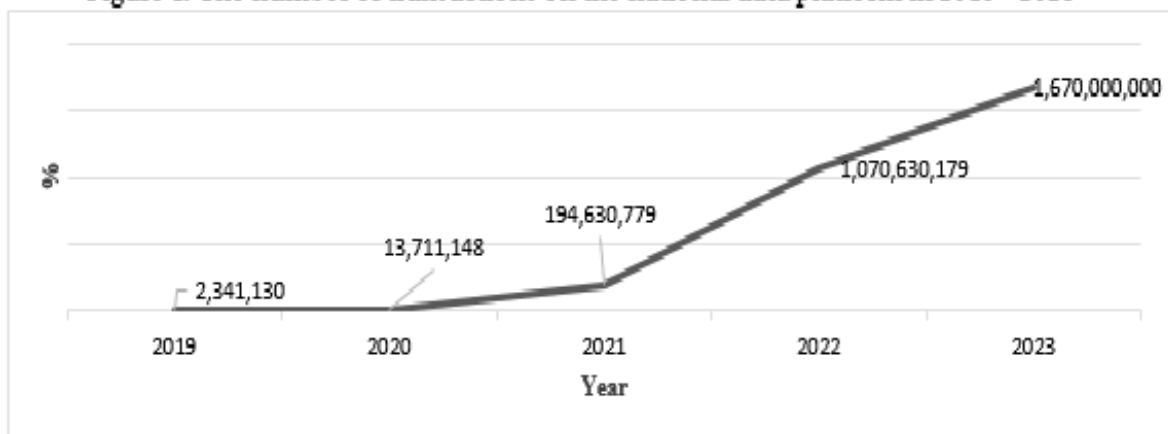
accountability. These values have become criteria of international standards to ensure freedom, peace, and practical cooperation among countries in the region and the world. Hence, to achieve successful international integration, state administrative agencies, in performing their duties, should adhere to international standards and values of the public service culture to build Vietnam's reputation and position in the international arena. Additionally, they should promote the image of Vietnamese people, the country, and traditional Vietnamese culture to the world.

Secondly, regarding the Industrial Revolution 4.0. The impact of the technology revolution 4.0 has changed the methods of management and operation and the way public servants work in state administrative agencies, requiring officials and civil servants to acquire new skills and knowledge to meet job requirements. With the achievements of the Industrial Revolution 4.0, particularly in the development of information

technology, digital technology, artificial intelligence, and communications, favorable conditions will be created to ensure democracy and transparency in most activities of the state administrative machinery. Currently, Vietnam is promoting digital transformation, intensifying administrative reform, enhancing the application of information technology, and building shared databases and open data to improve the efficiency of state administrative agencies. At the same time, the achievements of building an e-government towards a digital government in Vietnam have helped to make the interaction between citizens and the government more effective.

According to a Ministry of Information and Communications report, the number of citizens and organizations participating in transactions on the National Data Sharing Platform (NDXP) has been trending upwards from 2019 to 2023 (Ministry of Information and Communications, 2023).

Figure 1: The number of transactions on the national data platform in 2019 - 2023



Source: Summary report on the work of 2023, and the directions and tasks for 2024 by the Ministry of Information and Communications.

In particular, in 2023, out of 85 ministries, sectors, and localities, 54 had issued catalogs of shared databases, marking a 35% increase compared to 2022. Moreover, 42 out of 85 had issued catalogs of open databases, reflecting a remarkable surge of 425% from the previous

year. The number of transactions conducted through the national data platform reached 1.67 billion, surpassing the target for 2025. Seven national databases were successfully operated and shared among state administrative agencies.

Additionally, in 2023, 80,698 digital technology community groups were established across all 63 provinces and cities, representing an increase of 11,765 groups compared to 2022. These community groups had 378,941 members at the grassroots level, demonstrating an increase of 58,102 from the previous year (The Ministry of Information and Communications, 2023).

Therefore, the impact of Industrial Revolution 4.0 on the operation of state administrative agencies is evident in the need for cadres and civil servants to enhance their capacity to execute public duties, acquire knowledge of digital technology, develop skills for working in digital environments, improve language proficiency, and adapt their behavior to suit the current digital working environment.

Thirdly, regarding the market economy. The development of the market economy in Vietnam has prompted state administrative agencies to change their perspective in building and developing the state administrative system towards professionalism, dynamism, effectiveness, efficiency, enriched service values, and sustainable development. Therefore, the values of public service culture will be an essential intrinsic factor to guide the thinking and adjust the behavior of the cadre and civil servant team in executing their duties to ensure professionalism, responsibility, and efficiency in meeting the requirements of the people and organizations.

In addition, the downside of the market economy also impacts a portion of cadres and civil servants in state administrative agencies, affecting the reputation and image of state administrative agencies in the eyes of the people. It is clearly stated in the Resolution of the 7th Central Party Committee (Term XII) that "a large number of cadres have faded their ideals, lost their will, worked superficially, are afraid of difficulties, are afraid of suffering, degraded in political ideology, ethics, and

lifestyle, showing signs of "self-evolution," "self-transformation." Some leaders and managers, including strategic-level officials, need more role models, have low reputations, capacity, and quality, need to be better with their tasks, are bureaucratic, distant from the people, and are individualistic. They were entangled in corruption, waste, negativity, and group interests. Many managers of state-owned enterprises lack education and training, lack the Party spirit, take advantage of loopholes in mechanisms, policies, and laws, intentionally commit violations, profiteering, and causing loss of capital and assets of the State, causing serious consequences, subject to party discipline and handling according to the law" (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2018).

Fourthly, regarding traditional national culture and regional culture. Implementing public service culture at state administrative agencies is strongly influenced by national traditional cultural factors, including "village" cultural factors. Specifically, the "community solidarity" culture has impacted public service culture. Firstly, on a positive note, the culture of community solidarity is one of the outstanding features of traditional Vietnamese culture, representing the soul and character of Vietnam. These values need to be preserved and promoted in modern culture. The spirit of unity, mutual assistance, and compassion in traditional village culture influences officials and civil servants in state administrative agencies in terms of behavior, communication, and lifestyle, creating collective strength and commitment in addressing organizational tasks. However, the limitation of the "community solidarity" culture lies in the mentality of being "comfortable with the familiar," which affects the work style of cadres and civil servants, leading to a tendency to rely on others and poor coordination in solving everyday tasks. As a result, it creates a working environment lacking dynamism and fails to

unleash the creative potential of each individual.

Regional cultural factors also influence the implementation of public service culture within the context of international integration. The impact of regional culture on public service culture implementation reveals differences between regions and localities nationwide while also highlighting the unique characteristics of public service culture implementation by state administrative agencies in different cultural areas (such as the South differing from the North). Regional culture acts as a "filter" for external cultural influences on local culture. Overall, public service culture is part of the national cultural stream, bearing the characteristics of national culture. Still, regional culture has its own unique identity, directly affecting the implementation of public service culture.

1.2. Subjective factors

In the trend of international integration, the state administrative apparatus of each country needs to innovate its state management activities to meet the specific historical demands of its people and organizations. Therefore, the state's institutions, mechanisms, and policies regarding public service culture influence the implementation of public service culture in state administrative agencies. The institutions and policies on public service culture are manifested through regulations on professional ethics, responsibilities, and duties of officials and civil servants; rules on behavior, communication, and conduct; regulations on disciplinary actions and handling violations of disciplinary rules in implementing public service culture. The more comprehensive, coherent, and practical the institutional framework and policies are, the more conducive they are to implementing public service culture. Conversely, inconsistent, contradictory, and impractical institutional frameworks and policies will create difficulties and obstacles in implementing public service culture.

Institutions and policies serve as incentives for implementing public service culture

through policies on training, fostering, remuneration, commendation, and discipline for cadres and civil servants. Accordingly, training and fostering policies help enhance the professional competence, expertise, and skills in executing the duties of cadres and civil servants, thereby improving the quality of implementing public service culture. Adequate remuneration and commendation policies will encourage cadres and civil servants to perform well in public service culture. Strict and timely disciplinary policies will prevent cadres and civil servants from corruption and violating the culture of public service.

In the context of international integration, the Government and authorities have issued regulations on the development and implementation of public service culture, exemplified by Decision No. 129/2007/QĐ-TTg dated August 2, 2007, by the Prime Minister promulgating the Regulation on staff behaviors at state administrative agencies; Decision No. 03/2007/QĐ-BNV dated February 26, 2007, by the Minister of the Ministry of Home Affairs promulgating the Code of Conduct for officials and public servants working in the local government apparatus; Decree No. 09/2017/NĐ-CP dated February 9, 2017, by the Government detailing the making of statements and provision of information by state administrative agencies to the press; Decision No. 733/QĐ-TTg dated June 14, 2019, by the Prime Minister on the issuance of the Plan to organize the emulation movement "Cadres, civil servants and public employees participate in implementing office culture" for the period 2019 - 2025; Decision No. 1847/QĐ-TTg dated December 27, 2018, by the Prime Minister on approval of civil service culture project; Decision No. 874/QĐ-BTTTT dated June 17, 2021 by the Ministry of Information and Communications promulgating the Code of Conduct for social media. Legal regulations on public service culture have

been implemented in state administrative activities, achieving specific results and contributing to building a professional working style and enhancing the cadres' and civil servants' discipline and administrative ethics. However, in state administrative activities, implementing these regulations still reveals many shortcomings and limitations, failing to truly bring about effectiveness and meet the requirements of the people for a service-oriented state administrative system and the demands of international integration.

2. Requirements for cadres and civil servants in implementing the public service culture

Currently, state administrative agencies are making significant efforts in administrative reform to meet the requirements of the people and adhere to international norms regarding rules and standards of conduct to ensure successful international integration. The government and state administrative agencies have continuously innovated and enhanced service culture, providing valuable public administrative services for individuals and organizations. They selectively learn and adopt other countries' public service cultural values worldwide while leveraging traditional cultural values as internal strength for the effectiveness of state administrative activities. Therefore, implementing public service culture in state administrative agencies within the context of international integration in Vietnam requires the cadres and civil servants to ensure the following requirements:

Firstly, concerning the ideological awareness of officials and civil servants, the effective implementation of public service culture in state administrative agencies within international integration is strongly influenced by cadres and civil servants' ideological and perceptual factors, especially leaders and managers. Leaders and managers with proper ideologies and perceptions regarding the role of public service culture in the effectiveness of state administrative activities will

have political determination in organizing the implementation of public service culture in their agencies or units. Consequently, if leaders and managers can establish a scientific and professional working style and always know how to create a cultured working atmosphere, they will contribute to building a democratic, responsible, disciplined, and rigorous working environment. Particularly, leaders and managers who exemplify public service culture will inspire and motivate work and foster a spirit of unity, sharing, and positive connection within the organization. However, leaders and managers who do not prioritize creating and implementing culture within the organization, specifically public service culture, cannot establish a democratic, fair, professional, disciplined, and rigorous working environment. Notably, they will need to instill trust among the organization's members.

Secondly, the ideologies, perceptions, and capacities of civil servants and public employees on duty in state administrative activities are crucial. This contingent is responsible for embodying the cultural values of public service. They are the agents who implement state administrative activities in compliance with legal and administrative standards, thereby actualizing public service culture values in practice. Therefore, if civil servants and employees continuously enhance their awareness and responsibility regarding compliance with public service culture standards in executing their duties, continuously improve their expertise, professionalism, and vocational skills, and cultivate their sense of public duty ethics, they will contribute to realizing public service culture values in state administrative activities to serve the public and organizations effectively.

3. Recommendations

Firstly, enhancing communication and education on public service culture will raise the awareness and responsibility of leaders, officials, and civil servants regarding this culture. The dissemination should focus on

core values such as integrity, responsibility, professionalism, and serving the people.

Secondly, it is essential to perfect the system of institutions and policies on public service culture, ensuring synchronization, uniformity, and conformity with international standards. Regulations on public service culture need to be specified and effectively implemented in the activities of state administrative agencies.

Thirdly, the organizational structure and state administrative apparatus should be renovated to streamline, improve efficiency, and increase effectiveness. This renovation should be closely linked to implementing a public service culture, ensuring that officials and civil servants have the capacity and qualities to implement it.

Fourthly, improving the capacity and quality of cadres and civil servants through various forms of training and fostering. The content of these programs should focus on the skills and knowledge necessary to implement public service culture.

Fifthly, promoting effective digital transformation and enhancing the application of information technology in the operation of state administrative agencies to build a professional and scientific working style for cadres and civil servants. Successful digital transformation will help state administrative agencies create integrated, connected, and standardized databases, thereby enabling unified and modern working procedures. Based on modern working procedures, officials and civil servants will be more capable of implementing public service tasks and contributing to establishing professional working styles, serving citizens and organizations effectively.

4. Conclusion

It is essential to master the factors affecting the implementation of public service culture at state administrative agencies. Identifying

the level of impact of each factor on the implementation of public service culture will help cadres and civil servants in state administrative agencies proactively comply with the standards of public service culture values, thereby making a significant contribution to building a professional and modern administration, serving the people and organizations effectively, and contributing to improving Vietnam's position in the international arena.

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