
DEVELOPING COMPETENCES OF PUBLIC MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION SPECIALISTS: IMPLEMENTATION OF FOREIGN EXPERIENCE IN UKRAINE

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The paper focuses on the comparative analysis of professional competences development in public management and administration university programmes and the possibilities of implementation of international experience in Ukraine. Using the methods of comparative and system-functional analysis, synthesis and generalisation, the authors concentrate on the features of curriculums in public administration field taking into account the current realities of social development. The most common methods of training in the field of public administration and their practical focus are analysed. Particular attention is paid to the methods of problem-based learning in public administration, including case studies, case scenarios, and simulation games as part of the education gamification. The authors carried out an essential comparison of competences adopted in the European public administration training and those defined in the Ukrainian Standard of Higher Education in this area and revealed that the Ukrainian Standard lacks a pool of competencies related to the development and analysis of public policy.

Keywords: public administration; public policy; universities; learning methods; competencies; curriculum.

Introduction

The last few decades have been a turning period in transforming of basic approaches to the management of social processes and systems in the global and regional contexts. This has led to an increase in requirements to the level of knowledge, skills and abilities of specialists authorised to perform state functions. Thus experts in governance and administration began to borrow a more flexible management style from the business sector and implement it in their work. As a result, the norms and traditions which are inherent elements of business management were introduced in the realm of public management: transparency, flexibility, competitiveness, efficiency, accountability, etc. For example, in Great Britain, the processes involved in the Brexit procedure demonstrated an urgent need for additional knowledge and skills of public servants. As Dunning (2019) points out, Brexit's procedure "has required hiring specialists in policy analysis and trade, and promoting the need to work collaboratively across government" (p. 3).

At present, according to the State Electronic Education Database, in Ukraine, there are more than 60 institutions of higher education which provide Bachelor's Degree Programmes and 70 institutions which provide Master's Degree Programmes in Public Management and Administration. Such a big number of institutions may ensure the country's need for qualified public management specialists. However, the question arises if they can provide a high quality of training of specialists? This, particularly, relates to the content component of curriculums which must take into account the current realities of social development.

The formation of a new paradigm for the training of public officials and the corresponding institutional changes in the field of education require a detailed study and understanding of both foreign and domestic experience in the implementation of educational practices in this field. Indeed, according to Larat (2017) "an appropriate training of the elites in charge of public administration clearly represents a need for society and a duty for the state" (p. 89).

The **aim** of the research is to carry out a comparative analysis of competencies development in the field of public administration and public management in European, American and Ukrainian universities in order to outline possibilities of implementing foreign educational practices in Ukraine.

Theoretical background

Taking into account the specificity of the area under study, quite a limited number of scientific studies was conducted and published on this subject. Mostly, such scientific researches have been published in profile editions (e.g. EPAN network and NISPAcee). Some of the first comparative studies of public management training models in different countries of Europe were presented in the works of Cleary (1990), Reichard (1998), Verheijen (2000), and others. However, the debate on the comparison of national

educational practices in this field seems to be no longer so vivid and the number of such studies is gradually decreasing. “Using Elsevier’s SCOPUS rankings of the top 50 public administration journals worldwide, not one is dedicated to public administration educational research” (SCIMAGO, 2018). In the early 2000s, in particular, Raadschelders and Lee (2011) joined the discussion, considering the main trends in the field of public management education, based on the analysis of Public management Review 2000-2009. Later Kotnik and Kovač (2018) carried out a comparative study (content analysis of the NISPAcee Journal of Public Administration and Policy) using a similar methodology in the regions of Central and Eastern Europe. The current study in this area is continued by Nemeč, Larionov & Hintea (2017) who focused their attention on features of the so-called “national curricula” in different countries of Europe. Features of national models of public management training were also analysed by Kovač (2013), Gellén (2013), Muralová et al. (2015), Andresani and Ferlie (2006).

Training in different types of public administration and public policy schools

Recently, public administration and public policy areas of training and research have become so intersecting that we can hardly find any significant differences between them. Richard and Rhoda Goldman School of Public Policy (University of California, Berkeley, USA), one of the leading educational institutions in the field of public management training, which was among the top five in its area under the QS World University Rankings in 2017 (Social Policy & Administration, 2019), offers a comparison of specialties “public policy” and “public affairs”. It is noted that training in the field of “public policy” focuses on the creation of perfect analytical and leadership skills. The programme is designed to train the next generation of leaders able to understand, analyse and solve the most complicated and complex problems of state policy, while educational programme in “public affairs” speciality emphasises the training of middle-ranking managers.

The variability of educational programmes in the field of public management is even more confusing if we try to differentiate the educational programmes within public management and public administration fields. London School of Economics and Political Sciences where students are offered to choose between 5 specialisations within the framework of the Master of Public Administration (MPA) programme: MPA Public and Economic Policy, MPA Public and Social Policy, MPA Public Policy and Management, MPA International Development and MPA Social Impact. In addition to these, the university offers such training programmes as: Master of Public Policy, MSc Public Policy and Administration. The MSc International Social and Public Policy programme prepares students within five streams in accordance with their specialisation: MSc International Social and Public Policy (Development), MSc International Social and Public Policy (Migration), MSc International Social and Public Policy (Non-Governmental Organisations), MSc International Social and Public Policy (Research) and, in fact, the main stream – MSc International Social and Public Policy (London School of Economics, 2019). And this is only one example of choice of specialisations provided at the level of master degree education.

In the Western European and American systems of higher education, particular educational approaches of specialists training in the field of public policy were formed. Brans and Coenen (2016) distinguish three types of European training programmes: the first – with a predominance of the legal component, the second – with the dominant public component, and the third one – with a significant share of the corporate (business) component. These authors also provided the typology of different approaches to the organisation of public management education based on their geographical origin, distinguishing countries of continental Europe, with their particular attention to political sciences, countries of northern Europe with predominance of the business component in public management and countries of Southern Europe, including those of the former socialist block, with the domination of legal component. They observe that in France PA is typically taught in Law Schools or sometimes in political science and sociology. In the Netherlands, PA is an independent discipline, almost detached from political science. However, PA schools are often housed with political sciences in social sciences faculties, and only sometimes in law faculties. In central and eastern Europe, PA is often studied in Economics faculties, which is part of the legacy of communist times and central planning of economy. One more home to PA programmes, particularly those that are focused on management, is business schools, which is often the case in the UK (Brans, & Coenen, 2016, p. 334).

The experience of creating public management schools in the new member-states of the European Union is of particular value for improving the Ukrainian system of training public managers. This is due to the fact that the traditions of MPA training in such schools are not much longer than those in schools of Ukraine. The countries of former socialist block underwent similar transformational processes in educational systems and a few decades ago were oriented on the socialist model of economic development. In general, training programmes in Slovakia, Czech Republic, Romania, Poland and others originated on the basis of

different sciences and corresponding schools: economics, law, political science, and others. According to a comparative study of public management programmes in Central Europe “besides the fact that there is no real study programme in public management, the most public administration programmes in Macedonia are mixed with courses close to law or economics” (Nemec, Dimeski & Matei, 2011). Nemec (2000) finds similar tendencies in Slovakia and the Czech Republic where public administration programmes are developed on an economics basis and more (Bratislava) or less (Banska Bystrica) dominated by economic and management disciplines (p. 251).

In Ukraine, the scenario of the development of public management education is different due to the long-term monopolisation of this educational “niche” by the National Academy of State Administration under the President of Ukraine, general trends in the system of national education, and the transformation of the public management system itself. In our opinion, the involvement of a big number of higher educational institutions and the increasing competition between them opens opportunities for improving the quality of education in this area.

The issue of finding criteria for identifying leaders in the quality of education in public administration and management in Ukraine remains unresolved (and it is unlikely that a single universal indicator of the quality of education will ever be found). As stated by Williams & Slagle (2017), “ranking and indexing within the field of public administration and other related disciplines is a highly debated and controversial topic for the field and its classification. In any given ranking system there will be obvious inherent limitations and subjectivity concerning the outcomes on an academic level” (p. 281). However, today it is possible to observe how the schools of public management are emerging in Ukraine, which set the pace and vector of development of this educational branch. The content of training programmes is increasingly taking over the so-called Public Service-Dominant Logic (Osborne, Radnor, & Nasi 2013).

Methods of training in public administration

One of the main features of the modern model of public managers training in western universities is its practical orientation. In our opinion, in modern transformational period of Ukrainian education of future government officials, the experience of foreign countries deserves attention. International experience in teaching methodology in public administration is particularly important since, as stated by Profiroiu (2013), “it is important for the academic staff to be able to use a variety of methodologies within their teaching in order to cater for individual learning preferences and to use the correct methodology at the appropriate time in order to improve student development and interest while meeting the needs and requirements of the curriculum” (p. 153).

Wildavsky (1985), a political scientist known for his pioneering work in public policy and the first dean of the Graduate School of Public Affairs at Berkeley (California), in his work on the role and future of schools of public administration argues:

More important than their curriculum, in my opinion, is their ethos. From the first week, students are placed in an active position. They analyse, grub data, reformulate problems, write and write again to communicate with clients. Fieldwork is their forte. An analyst with clean hands (in general sense of the term, as we shall see) is a contradiction in terms (p. 32).

Although the article was published more than thirty years ago, the author’s focus on the practice-oriented component as the cornerstone of training of future policy-makers remains relevant. Furthermore, the main challenges arising before the traditional US schools of public administration outlined by Wildavsky (1985) at that time – the expanded use of education technologies and other interactive learning methods used in business sector for training employees – still exist at present. He emphasised on the importance to adapt training programmes for leadership development to the needs of business, promoting entrepreneurship, creativity, teamwork training.

The analysis of curriculums of master’s degree programmes in leading schools of public administration clearly demonstrates the awareness of such a need by western schools of public administration. For example, in the John F. Kennedy School of Government (Harvard), with its unique educational practices, students are involved in two practice-oriented learning units within Master’s in Public Policy programmes: Spring Policy Exercise and Policy Analysis Exercise. The ultimate goal of the first unit is the development of practical guidelines by groups of students in a certain area of management. To achieve the goal, students conduct their own research, attend specialised events (such as expert panels and presentations, thematic forums and conferences) and develop potential solutions to the problem.

When performing Policy Analysis Exercise, students develop solutions to real problem situations offered by client organisations from the public or non-commercial sector. As a result, students not only learn to apply the acquired knowledge, experience and skills in practice, but also help the partner companies of the

university to solve real problems. This form of cooperation between universities and corporations helps to broaden and enrich the university's educational practices, adapt them to the real needs of public administration field, and open the prospects of employment of students in this sector.

The curriculum of the London School of Economics and Political Sciences, one of the world's leading educational institutions in the field of public administration, has a considerable research component. For example, "Evidence and Analysis in Policy-making" course provides students with methodological knowledge and practical skills for analysing and evaluating political programmes and decisions.

The Cambridge University MPhil in Public Policy curriculum provides such educational unit as "Policy Specifics" that provides 16 hours of work in a case study form. The content and process of discussing the results of the study of selected cases are moderated by professional experts.

In addition, public policy schools have mandatory summer internship programmes which usually take place in the summer between the first and second semesters of master's studies.

The effectiveness of public administration programmes can be clearly demonstrated by the existing employment trends. Thus, according to the information provided on the official website of The University of California, Berkeley (<https://www.berkeley.edu/>), almost half of 2017 graduates of public policy master's programme of The Richard and Rhoda Goldman School of Public Policy are employed in the public sector (moreover, at all government levels: international, federal, state and local). 23% and 22% of graduates work in the nonprofit and private sectors respectively, 14% work in the field of education and science, and 7% continue their education.

The practical orientation in PA education is realised through learning methods widely used in European and American universities which can be conventionally grouped as problem-based methods. Close to them are methods of experiential learning or learning through experience. Engbers (2016) particularly states that its advantage in teaching research methods in political science and public administration education is in that "experiential learning gives the students the opportunity to begin with preconceived notions about the research process, experience research first hand and then reflect and conceptualise new notions of research based on their own problem-driven experience" (p. 273).

Another method that has proved its effectiveness in achieving practice-oriented learning goals is case-study. Reflecting on its application in the field of PA education Walsh (2006) argues that "the case study method presents a unique opportunity in public administration teaching to meet the challenges to the profession posed by globalisation; yet, its effectiveness lies in insightfulness in its adoption and application" (p. 9). Glennon, Hodgkinson and Knowles (2019) focus on the value of this method for the development of skills of group work "that requires participants to summarise evidence, make judgements (from one's own and other's perspectives), share thought processes on a contentious issue, and, arrive at a consensus together" (p. 5).

One of the most recent trends in the development of teaching methods within PA programmes is gamification. Modern pedagogical practices in this area have been enriched with various modifications of business and simulation games, realised both in real-time mode and via ICT. According to Douglas et al. (2019), this teaching method can provide "some tentative insights into how serious games can be used to display the range of instruments available, trace the often unpredictable effects of management interventions, and review the applicability of instruments across different contexts" (p. 1574).

Silvia (2012) points out that "traditional pedagogical techniques of assigned readings, lectures, tests, and papers often fail to replicate the "real world" in that these learning experiences frequently do not require the students to integrate, synthesise and apply the course material in realistic situations. As a result, some have turned to role-playing simulations to help achieve their course objectives" (p. 397). Simulation is one of the most popular methods of active learning used in public administration and public policy education. Thus, Syracuse university holds an annual competition with the use of simulation games on topics of public administration. Discussing the use of simulation games in decision-making within legal frameworks Harding, Garrett and Wang (2015) affirm that they not only allow students to motivate their active participation through their attractive and easy-to-understand form, but also allow them to "play" situations that are typical and unpredictable for the public manager's workflow. Such practices are useful for the development of competencies that are essential for the effective managerial decisions making in the public administration with an understanding of their social context, strategic implications of their implementation, for example, in solving social dilemmas.

Comparative analysis of competences in public management and administration education in Europe and Ukraine

A competence-based approach that provides a clear focus on the formation of specific knowledge, skills and abilities is a key one in the higher education at present. Competence is commonly understood as a new personal quality acquired as a result of learning, which merges knowledge and skills with a spectrum of integral characteristics of training.

Results of the Tuning-PA research project of European Association for Public Administration Accreditation (EAPAA) in collaboration with the European Group for Public Administration (EGPA) and the Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe (NISPAcee) on identifying and assessing competences relevant for academic degree programmes in Public Administration throughout Europe could be useful for adapting Ukrainian standards of PA education according to world's best practices. In this project, a set of 31 generic competencies (Tuning Generic Competencies) were developed and tested (in the sense of their relevance for academic jobs for graduates and realisation in certain degree programmes) in more than 10 disciplines and in more than 15 countries through questionnaires for employers, graduates and academics (Reichard & van der Krogt, 2014).

Since the knowledge of international and national standards in the field of professional activity is extremely important (Akimova, Melnychenko 2018), in our study we made an attempt to compare sets of PA competencies defined by Reichard and van der Krogt (2014) and those contained in the Ukrainian Standard of Higher Education in this specialty (see Table 1, where we put "+" against those competences in Reichard and van der Krogt (2014) set which are also present in the Ukrainian higher education standard, "-" against those which are absent there and "+/-" against those which are presented in the Standard of Higher Education partially).

Table 1. Comparison of competences sets for academic degree programmes in Public Administration in Europe and Ukraine

Set of specific competences for academic degree programmes in Public Administration in Europe (Reichard and van der Krogt, 2014)	Reflected/not reflected in Ukrainian Stanard of Higher Education in "Public management and administration" speciality (MA)
1. Competencies to manage in public governance	
Competencies for executing management functions in public sector organisations	+
Competencies (particularly) for leadership functions	+
Competencies for networking and cooperation with other organisations	+
2. Competencies to participate in and contribute to the policy and administrative process	
Competencies for recognition, analysis and interpretation of social, official, political or administrative problems	+/-
Competencies for consideration of problems from different disciplinary perspectives	+/-
Competencies for policy formulation	Reflected in PhD standard (project)
Competencies for policy implementation	Reflected in PhD standard (project)
Competencies for policy evaluation	Reflected in PhD standard (project)
3. Competencies to articulate and apply a public service perspective	
Competencies for understanding social, political and economic developments	+
Competencies to handle problems with regard to the economic, political, legal and social reality	+/-
Competencies to explore key concepts across institutional boundaries within the public sector	-
Competencies to incorporate public service ethics and public values	+
Competencies to analyse and to solve problems from the perspective of third parties, particularly politicians, professionals, citizens and representatives of civic organisations	+/-
Competencies for evidence-based decision making, interpreting and applying policy agendas, anticipating future trends in public services, and adapting activities to suit specific public services contexts	+/-

4. Competencies to communicate and interact productively in the public domain	
Competencies for communication with politicians, experts, citizens and representatives of civic organisations	
Competencies for formulating advice to important stakeholders	
Competencies for negotiation with politicians, experts, citizens and representatives of civic organisations	+
Competencies for cooperating in multidisciplinary teams	+ partially reflected in Bachelor training standard
Competencies for communicating and interacting in an intercultural context	
5. Competencies to analyse and to solve PA-related problems by applying appropriate scientific methods	
Competencies to conduct applied research with regard to a given problem	
Competencies to select and apply appropriate methods, techniques and tools to analyse and solve a problem	+
Competencies to be familiar with research developments in the respective policy field	+ fragmentarily reflected in Bachelor training standard and PhD standard (project)
Competencies to use methods and techniques of socio-scientific research, including statistics	
Competencies to set up, execute, present, and assess research	
Competencies to use the results of research for decision-making or policy proposals	
6. Competencies to understand the public domain	
Competencies to understand the disciplines dealing with public administration	-
Competencies to make use of the theoretical knowledge of the PA-related disciplines to analyse and solve problems in the public domain	
Competencies to compare and evaluate different PA systems	

Besides the study by Reichard and van der Krogt (2014) modern scientific discourse about the standards of public servants' education contains a number of important researches on the core components of such education. A vast overview of competences in public administration education is presented by Rosenbaum (2015). ICT component in the training of public administrators is analysed by Van Jaarsveldt and Wessels (2015). Martínez, Moreno and Brage (2014) show the results of the study on competencies determined by employers. Varga, Hajós and Szira (2016) suggest a general overview of important competencies based on students' evaluations. These research projects are quite similar to annual polls conducted at National Technical University of Ukraine "Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute" aimed to determine labour market evaluations of the quality of education.

According to Stare and Klun (2018), most of these studies highlight the increasing importance of general knowledge and competencies which are considered to be even more important than specific ones.

Our analysis of teaching public administration in Ukraine shows that domestic standards lack a clear list of competencies related to the development and analysis of public policy. At the same time, university autonomy allows the programmes of different higher education institutions to be enriched with this component. Moreover, the Standard of Higher Education contains only a list of key competencies that can be complemented in the educational programmes of certain universities.

We have made an attempt to form a list of key competencies that are in line with contemporary domestic developmental conditions. This list includes the following competencies: profound understanding of public management and administration foundations, strategic management, knowledge of administrative law, public finance, skills and abilities in the field of records management, knowledge of expert technologies and e-government basics and skills of their implementation, competences in administrative processes reengineering, governance and administration technologies, principles of anti-corruption policy, intellectual property protection, knowledge of Internet systems and information technology in public administration, skills to establish effective public relations, fundamentals of information security and data protection, knowledge of the principles of sustainable development, skills and abilities in executive decision-making, expert technologies and foresight methodology.

Conclusions

Analysis of training in different types of public administration and public policy schools in the world has shown that these areas of training have recently become overlapping. However, we can still distinguish several types of PA and PM training programmes with the legal component predominance (which are most common in Ukraine), with the dominance of public component, and with a significant share of the business component. Public administration and public policy domain of specialities recently have adopted practice-oriented methods of training, such as experimental study, case-study, simulation as a form of training gamification that represents its' transformation process toward the practical orientation requirements.

Comparative analysis of competences in public management and administration education in Europe and Ukraine has revealed that local Ukrainian standards of PA and PM specialists training lack a pool of competencies related to the development and analysis of public policy, such as competencies to explore key concepts across institutional boundaries within the public sector, competencies to understand the disciplines dealing with public administration, to make use of the theoretical knowledge of the PA-related disciplines, to analyse and solve problems in the public domain, to compare and evaluate different PA systems etc. So the "reinvention" of the public administration system must also involve the "reinvention" of the educational paradigm in this field that should be balanced along administrative and policy vectors to ensure the efficiency and rationality of the managerial system.

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