

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM AND SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT REFORM IN VIETNAM

Ass.Prof.Dr. Dao Thi Ai Thi
Management Training Institute, MOST

Abstract:

Over past many years, scientific and technological (S&T) management in Viet Nam encountered a lot of difficulties due to lack of a public administration platform to promote a maximum use of S&T resources for the construction and development of the country. Vietnam has already undergone two phases of the country's administrative reform strategy (1991-2001, 2001-2010), and is now implementing phase 3 (2011-2020). It was observed that though S&T was present in all areas of life, S&T management had almost been separated from the general trend of the country's administrative reform. Achievements of modern science and technology had not been properly utilized by the administrative reform itself, therefore it was difficult for it to support effectively the state management of science and technology. So, in the process of administrative reform period 2011-2020, if the public administrative reform is not associated with the management reform of individual sectors/areas towards achieving a synchronized reform effort it is really hard to talk about the effectiveness of public administrative reform as well as an effective S&T management.

The purpose of this paper is to show the relationship between different aspects of administrative reform and their connection with the S&T management reform, including institutional reform, organizational structure reform, empowerment of public servants, reform of public financial management related to S&T management.

Keywords: *Public administrative reform; S&T management; S&T management reform.*

Code: 14032301

1. Relationship between different aspects of the public administrative reform

1.1. Resolution of the Government on the Master plan of Public Administrative reform for the period 2011 - 2020

The Master plan of public administrative reform for the period 2011-2020 was issued by the Government under its Resolution No. 30c/NQ-CP dated 08th November 2011. The Resolution included 9 articles of the ten-year master plan. The main objective of the reform was to make Vietnam basically become an industrialized and modernized country by 2020. Resolution 30c/NQ-CP was enacted as a continued effort of the previous

administrative reform programme 2001-2010 launched under Decision No. 136/2001/QĐ-TTg dated 17th September 2001 of Prime Minister.

This current program was launched with five specific objectives, as follows:

- (1) To develop, improve the socialist oriented market economy institutional set-up to liberate productive forces, mobilize and effectively use all kinds of resources for national development;
- (2) To create a fair, open, enabling and transparent business environment in order to reduce cost, in terms of time and budget, of enterprises of all economic sectors in complying with administrative procedures;
- (3) To develop a smooth, clean, strong, modern, effective, efficient system of state administrative agencies from central to grassroots level, increased democracy and legislation in management activities of the Government and state administrative agencies;
- (4) To ensure practical implementation of the people's democracy rights, protect human rights, link human rights with the rights and interests of the nation;
- (5) To develop a contingent of qualified public servants, officials capable to provide public services to people and meet the requirement of the country's development.

The new features of the administrative reform program 2011-2020 are:

- There are specific provisions to secure funding for the program including funds from the central budget to ensure enough financial resource for the development and implementation of those programs, projects at national level;
- The central budget shall support some localities with difficulty in implementing administrative reform tasks to ensure the national administrative reform programs, projects be implemented in a unified and synchronized manner;
- The budget of ministries, ministerial-level agencies, government-attached agencies and Provincial/City People's Committees shall ensure the implementation of their administrative reform programs, plans, tasks. This designated budget is taken from their estimated annual budget approved by competent authorities and from other legitimate sources of funding.

As concerns the reform of administrative procedures, they shall be simplified and improved in quality in all areas of state management, especially those administrative procedures relating to customers as citizens, business entities. The central focus of administrative reform in the next 10-

year period shall be placed on institutional reform; building, improving the quality of the contingent of public servants, officials, paying attention to remuneration policy reform in order to generate a real motivator for public servants to provide high quality and high efficient services; improving the quality of administrative public services.

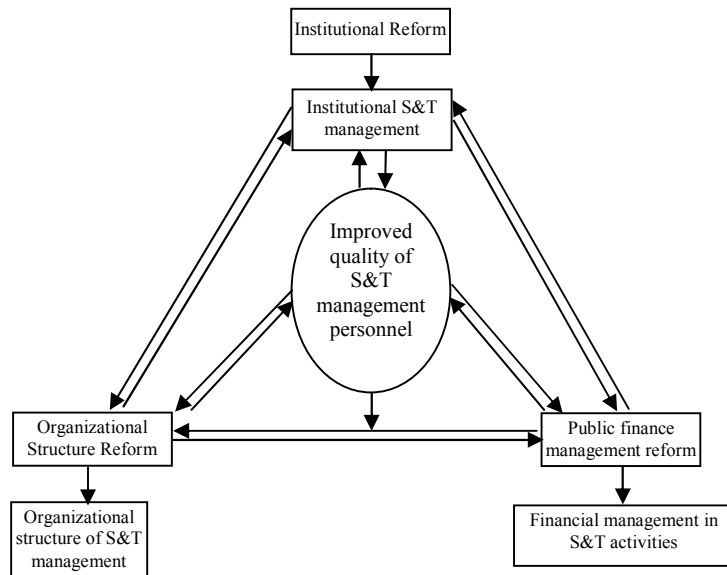


Figure 1. The relationship between different contents of administrative reform

The public administration is composed of four elements: manpower (public servants), institutional framework, administrative apparatus and material resources (public budget and asset).

Institution is the key element and always stands at the top of the triangle, human activity is successful or not it depends very much on the institutional appropriateness, if institution is scientifically correct and appropriate to the practice it is also the safety legal corridor and facilitator for an effective administrative operation, otherwise it can be a barrier to all human activities.

Contingent of public officials plays a central role in the state administration. They are persons who issue institutional framework and create administrative organizational machinery, whereby institutional and organizational structure makes reverse effect on and adjustment to all behaviors and activities of the contingent.

If the contingent of public personnel is capable, they can issue correct, appropriate institutional set-up, arrange right job to right people in a rational, simplified, scientific manner, obtain effectiveness and efficiency of

operation. In return, this efficient institutional set-up will provide enabling environment and convenient mechanism for public servants to enhance their talent and personality. Conversely, if the capacity of public servants, in terms of knowledge and skills, is low, lack of the personality, ethics they shall issue inappropriate, strict, bureaucratic, cumbersome administrative institutions and as a result, the system will come back to torture civil servants and refrain their development.

Physical conditions are always a decisive factor and foundation to nurture and maintain the existence of civil servants and institutional set-up. In contrast, civil servants, institutional set-up has a direct impact, influence on physical conditions. V.I.Lenin argued that "material is decisive to consciousness", Ho Chi Minh also confirmed that "well eating, well doing", These thoughts mean physical conditions are always a fundamental need, a means of decisive character for public servants and their institutional organization to exist. But to have physical conditions provided it depends very much on whether the institutional mechanism, organization is reasonable or not, particularly whether civil servants have enough capacity, conscience, ethics in financial management or not.

In fact, it could be said that public servants is the subject of management, the other three remaining contents reflect the result of the subject of communication. Therefore, institutional organization and finance are products and outputs of the administrative officials' capacity. At the same time, civil servants are the product and result of the institutional organization and financial conditions. This is a dialectical relationship always supporting and complementing each other in an unified and comprehensive context. The success of administrative reform depends on this relationship, especially on the cognitive capacity, attitude and skills of civil servants in the assessment of this relationship by their scientific and practical perception.

2. Relationship between the content of public administrative reform and S&T management reform

2.1 The connection of institutional reform in public administration with S&T management mechanism reform

During the sixties, under the centrally planned mechanism there were successes in military field with outstanding scientific and technological advances. However, such a bureaucratic mechanism exposed weaknesses of the economic policy and management. The main reason was that there lacked of scientific basis and the role of science and technology in economic policy and management mechanism, as a result, it hindered the economic development. Application of S&T achievements in modern policy making

process, management mechanism is extremely important as it helps make public administrative institution be of desired quality and make important contribution to the comprehensive reform programme and the synchronized S&T management mechanism of the country.

Lessons learnt from management mechanism in Vietnam after 1975 had demonstrated the failure of the centrally planned institution in S&T development. Without general institutional reform and in S&T management, in particular, we cannot speak about S&T development. Specially, the institution to ensure the ownership of intellectual property, institution on standards, metrology, product quality, institution for management of S&T tasks, particularly the financial mechanism for S&T activities.

Due to lack of management mechanisms, policies for intellectual property rights protection, it led to a series of problems in S&T activities. For instance, "brain drain" problem, conscience, morality infringement, loss of talents, waste of resources, all of these often occurred are killing the motivation of social development.

The absence of a scientifically qualified state administrative institution has resulted in a S&T management mechanism which does not guarantee the freedom in creative activities, S&T results, products are not associated with market. Coordination mechanism among ministries, sectors, areas relating to S&T activities is still loose leading to tied S&T management mechanism, inactive scientists. The institutional reform, therefore, will serve as a basis for S&T management mechanism reform with the aim to obtain a correct, binding and controllable mechanism to ensure desired quality and surmount the barriers to S&T development as well as the application of global advanced S&T progresses into Vietnam.

General administrative procedure reform, serves as the basis for the reform of administrative procedures in S&T management. Reduced bureaucratic administration in public management, in general and in S&T management, in particular shall help scientific research and technological development have chance to succeed. Administrative procedures in S&T management is heavily affected by cumbersome, complicated and "ask-for" administrative procedures of ministries, sectors concerned. The situation of "sharing the cake" among agencies involved in plan making and financing, as well as between managers and scientists also affects S&T activities leading to low quality, uninnovative, unpractical products, waste of resources.

Institutional administrative reform shall help limit the power of competent authorities imposed on S&T management. In general, institutional reform supports S&T sector to promote its autonomy and professionalism so as that S&T activities shall become a place of real intellectual freedom for

creativity, encourage individuals' endeavour for self-exploration, discovery, invention, and scientists could become better-off standing on their own foot and intelligence without "pirating", "copying" scientific research and technological application.

Those institutions containing high scientific knowledge and technological level are of democratic institutions, they can control the power and also be a safety legal corridor for a stable, sustainable S&T development of the country.

Policy corruption was the main issue of outdated, backward institutions. Slow progress often occurs in less developed countries where scientific and technological achievements have no contribution to the policy development and promulgation process. A non-scientific and not transparent institution was the root cause of corruption and backwardness, therefore science and technology could not be correctly developed and it could hardly touch upon industrialization and modernization.

Any reform in public administrative institution is always directed towards a transparent, professional, modern, effective and efficient system. Particularly, institutional reform aims at creating open, transparent, powerful and controllable mechanisms to avoid the abuse of power and corruption in all areas, especially in scientific and technological activities.

In making management decisions and developing administrative procedures there needs to involve scientists to properly identify, assess relevant issues to be improved to minimize errors, attract more foreign investment and promote scientific and technological innovation, increase productivity, quality and efficiency of production, business. Based on the results of such an assessment, it is to develop a clear and appropriate S&T management mechanism for the state to collect tax and ensure that all S&T investments be effective, save human, material resources. Institutional administrative reform has brought about motivation for S&T development.

Institutional administrative reform in relation with S&T institutional management reform and development is the key to build a modern, advanced S&T based nation.

2.2. Relationship between public organizational administrative reform and S&T organizational management reform

The reform of the state apparatus aims at establishing and designing respective organizations in conformity with their functions and tasks, with sound coordination, clear division of assignment, decentralization, authorization in a scientific manner. Currently, there is a lot of concern about the coordination among agencies at ministry level and local

authorities in the S&T management. There exist overlapping functions and duties among agencies, particularly the coordination between S&T management and planning and financial management agencies are still inappropriate. This is a major barrier to the country's S&T development.

It is therefore crucial to review and adjust the functions and tasks of the Government, ministries, ministerial-level agencies, and local governments at all levels, in the direction of overcoming this overlapping and duplication problem. Some categories of S&T management previously handled by the Government and Ministry of Science and Technology have now been delegated to local governments and provincial S&T services to implement; It should clearly define the jurisdiction/competency of ministries, ministerial-level agencies; clarify the functions and duties of state administrative agencies in relation with enterprises and S&T institutions.

To implement Resolution No. 08/2004/NQ-CP dated 30th June 2004 on continued promotion of decentralization of state management between the Government and provincial/central city governments. In this spirit of reform, the management of science and technology has been improved by implementing decentralized management, this has contributed to new positive changes in S&T activities at local level. The process of decentralization has been linked with the reform of administrative procedures in the management of S&T tasks, reducing troubles and more quickly meeting requests of organizations, businesses and individuals working on science.

The arrangement of staff specialized in S&T management at local level, especially at district level is very crucial with a view to promoting locally available scientific and technological potentials.

Reform of organizational apparatus would move towards more autonomy given to local authorities; ensured more transparent, clear coordination-work division-responsibility- authority in every position. S&T management requires an administrative apparatus be more simplified, with less intermediary steps, more direct communication channels, multi-dimensional feedback opportunities created. This is an administrative apparatus in which there are clear functional tasks, assigning right people to right jobs, locating capable people in right position will be the condition for the S&T development of the country.

2.3 Relationship between the reform content concerning general public staff empowerment and S&T management public officials, in particular

The content of renovation and improvement of the quality of general civil servants is directly related to the capacity of S&T management personnel, it

plays a central pivotal role and is the key to bring about the success of other content reform (see diagram 1). A capable team of public officials, in which sufficiently converge all three angles of human ability in respect of intelligence, emotion and action in the relationship between skills and capabilities, and in the role of S&T management personnel in the implementation of the country's S&T development goals.

In order to make S&T management renovated public officials should be decentralized managed by sector and field of operation. At the same time, there must be training programs with appropriate content and methods, with a view to improving the level of staff with specific considerations of each sector/field. Especially, it should ensure incentive policies, wage reform to motivate public servants working in respective sectors/fields. Administrative public servants only work effectively when they are assigned with jobs relevant to their abilities. Professional capacity is one of the elements that constitute the quality of administrative public servants in each sector/field.

A quality team of S&T management is the one who can ensure necessary standards that the ultimate measurement is the management efficiency in practice in terms of its professionalism and specialization. The efficiency of S&T management in practice is tested through maximized use of S&T resources for the construction and development of the country. Therefore, the quality of the S&T management team depends heavily on the capability of public management and its connection with the S&T sector.

2.4. Relationship of public finance reform in ensuring financial resource in management of S&T activities

The Resolution No. 30c/NQ-CP dated 08th November 2011 by the Government on the master program of public administrative reform for the period 2011-2020 has decided upon a very important task relating to financing mechanism for S&T management, quote: “To renovate fundamentally the mechanism using the State budget and the mechanism of development of S&T tasks towards the achievement of objective and effective application of the result as top criteria; to move state funded S&T institutions to the mechanism of autonomy and self-responsibility; develop S&T enterprises, technology innovation and venture capital funds; develop synchronous training policy, incentive policies to attract, respect S&T talented personnel”, unquote.

It shall improve the capacity of public officials in charge of financial management so as that they can be able to convey complicated information on financial reform in a most simple and understandable manner so that everyone can easily digest; try to simplify the complexities of financial

issues but not missing their basic concepts; make all subjects participating in the budget- finance process read, better understand relevant financial data, possess communication skills in the budget- finance process to ensure the ethic value, democracy, transparency. The content of this reform serves as a basis for financial management in S&T activities to ensure that the budget-finance process of S&T activities is effectively carried out; communicate the relationship between financial and budget management; the reform of tax policy shall be in a way that brings satisfaction and fairness to scientists; the reform of public finance requires linkage with specific conditions of the sector/field, especially the S&T sector to be relevant with its development goals and the budget and finance balance.

The connection of public finance reform with management is expressed through the financial commitment for S&T activities. In contrast, the S&T management also helps public finance reform to be more effective. In the first phase of the public administrative reform programme, Vietnam obtained a number of significant achievements, aggregate productivity factor had contributed to economic growth, but in recent years Vietnam has experienced a lot of difficulties. This shows the obtained results of administrative reform are still limited and demonstrates the constraint of science and technology in Vietnam, for which the main reason was due to inadequate financial management from the ministries concerned to the S&T operation of each sector.

The world financial - monetary crisis showed that there was a lack of advanced S&T basis in public financial management. Without this scientific basis and application of modern technology in public financial management, in general, and in financing S&T activities, in particular, the financing for S&T activities encountered many difficulties. Reform of public finance, especially for S&T activities should encourage organizations, enterprises to invest in scientific research and more effective technology transfer and application.

The reform of public financial management mechanism associated with the implementation of Decree No. 115/2005/ND-CP dated 05th September 2005 of the Government issuing autonomous mechanism, self-responsibility of public S&T institutions has increased the responsibility, enhanced the autonomy, creativity of heads of S&T institutions, facilitated the development of potentials for S&T organizations, linked scientific research and technology development results with production and business, empowered S&T human resource, attracted resources of society for S&T activities.

In summary, public administration reform in Vietnam has become a very urgent matter before the requirement of S&T development. If the public administrative reform fails, it is hard to obtain an effective reform of S&T management. Conversely, without reform of S&T management, Vietnam would not take advantage of utilizing S&T progresses in the administrative reform./.

REFERENCE

1. Science and Technology Law 2000.
2. Science and Technology Law, revised and amended 2005.
3. Science and Technology Law, amended 2013.
4. Resolution No. 30c/NQ-CP dated 08th November 2011 of the Government issuing the master program on public administrative reform, periods 2011-2020.
5. Resolution of the 6th Conference of the Party Central Committee at its XI term (Resolution No. 20-NQ/TW) on science and technology development for the industrialization and modernization under the conditions of socialist oriented market economy and international integration.
6. Decision No. 136/2001/QĐ-TTg dated 17th September 2001 of Prime Minister approving the master program of public administrative reform, periods 2001-2010.
7. Decision No. 677/QĐ-TTg dated 10th May 2011 of Prime Minister approving the National program of technological innovation up to 2020.
8. Decision No. 418/QĐ-TTg dated 04th November 2012 of Prime Minister approving the strategy for science and technology development, periods 2011- 2020.
9. Decree No. 115/2005/ND-CP dated 05th September 2005 of the Government on autonomous mechanism, self- responsibility of public S&T organizations.
10. Strategy for administrative reform, periods 1991-2001; periods 2001-2010