

On whether bureaucracy is a major obstacle to public administration reform

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Abstract: Public administration reform is a very critical reform activity of the government, the government changing the function, structure, behavior, and process of public administration. The change of public administration involves many aspects, this reform has many complex and multifaceted issues. The central idea of bureaucracy is entirely contrary to the concept of public administration reform, and bureaucracy has a deep-rooted impact on the administration of most countries. Hence bureaucracy is the main obstacle to the public administration reform. Besides, incomplete decentralization and imperfect supervision are also challenges of public administration reform. Devolution is an essential measure to promote the public administration reform, which can solve many problems of the old system effectively. Therefore, to carry out the public administrative reform effectively, it is necessary to simplify managerial procedures, delegate powers to lower levels and strengthen supervision, and management.

Keywords: Bureaucratic; Public Administration Reform; Decentralization

1. Main challenge in public administrative reform

The reform of public administration is a challenge faced by every government in the world. Through the research and analysis of public administrative reform cases in many countries, a fact can find that countries all over the world have begun to the different level reform of public administration, however, the power of bureaucracy is often huge and stubborn, and it is tough to weaken its power effectively. According to Kim and Han (2015), the South Korean government has expanded the autonomy of local governments and institutions. Still, because the people who carry out and implement these reforms in South Korea are bureaucrats themselves, this lead to a situation of self-reform in the South Korea government has emerged.

Without a strong supervision system, the reform of public administration cannot carry out effectively. In the literature of public administration reform, there is a frequently debated issue about the status of political and bureaucratic personnel, bureaucratic leadership is dominant in most national government institutions, especially in developing countries. Developing countries do not have strong political executive bodies, and the decision-making process is not standardized. This situation provides an opportunity for the bureaucracy to impede the reform of public administration. The main methods of new public management in South Korea is to deregulation, liberalization, and privatization. The South Korean government strives to practice the theory of new public management. However, realistically that South Korean bureaucrats do not work for the public interests, these bureaucrats will strive to expand and enhance their power and status, then this will create a monopoly. It is vital to reduce bureaucracy, the distance between managers and those under management can narrow through reducing class division, and it is beneficial for managers to fulfill the needs and wishes of the managed.

The management methods of bureaucrats are usually mandatory, which is no longer applicable to the new concept of administrative management (Mathur and Mathur, 2017). In Mexico, bureaucrats can control and restrict access to information by other people, and this will lead to other executives in a passive situation, this is very disadvantageous for public administrative reform of a county. At the same time, bureaucracy will hinder the development of the accounting system and weaken the responsibility of public officials to citizens. Public administrative reform is closely related to the public interest. In many countries with low development level,

citizen participation is meager. It is mainly due to the low cultural level of citizens and their inability to participate effectively. Most bureaucracies choose to ignore this phenomenon to retain their power (Wagana, Iravo, Nzulwa, and Kihoro, 2016). There is a problem in many countries that there is no clear boundary between the powers of political and administrative leadership. The purpose of public administration reform is to promote and safeguard the interests of the state and the group. The powerful bureaucracy will lead to the increase of factional struggle and social division, and bureaucracy breeds corruption. They enjoy jobs with high pay and security, and have more subsidies than ordinary citizens. For this reason, they are reluctant to delegate power, and decentralization means that they will lose part of power and interests.

2. Other challenges in public administrative reform

2.1 Insufficient decentralization

The public administration reform is a long and arduous process, and many governments are trying to practice. But the improvement of the organizational structure is not simple, and it involves many forces of the state. Therefore, in addition to bureaucratic resistance, public administration reform also faces many other challenges (Asatryan, Heinemann, and Pitlik, 2015). According to many literature of municipal administrative change, it can find that insufficient decentralization is one of the reasons that hinder the public administration reform. Decentralization is one of the most critical measures in public administration reform, which can effectively promote the democratic process. Decentralization empower the excessive concentration of state power to local governments, while maintaining the integrity of the central and local government institutions (Seregina, 2015). The practical implementation of decentralization measures can promote public administration reform. However, by analyzing the practice of public administration reform in some countries, it can be found that the central government in few countries can achieve effective decentralization. After the implementation of public administration reform, most central governments choose to give up part of their power, and they will not give up the most essential skill. For example, the central government of South Korea has carried out effective decentralization; many laws have enact to promote decentralization, which means that local governments in South Korea have more responsibilities. The provincial government has more autonomy, and they can set up their policies. At the same time, the central government provided more funds to local governments (Koo and Kim, 2018). However, the central government in South Korean is very cunning to control of the regional financial power. In this case, although local governments have political autonomy, they do not have economic independence, and all their economic resources are from the central government. Because of the imperfection of the decentralization system, the central and local governments often have power disputes in South Korea, this situation of political and economic mismatch seriously affects the implementation of public administration system reform. The implementer of decentralization are government officials, but the administrative decentralization reform will damage their benefit. So the degree of decentralization in many countries is limited. In some states, the central government does not monopolize economic power. However, they still do not trust the ability of local governments, so they will firmly grasp the energy related to national infrastructure construction, such as in Kenya, India, and Pakistan. The imperfection of decentralization will lead to another problem: the increase of power struggle between the central and local governments. Too much state intervention will hinder the implementation of decentralization measures, mainly because interventionist state leaders pay more attention to their interests rather than the development of the country.

2.2 Lack of regulatory mechanism

Many countries have a severe defect, that is, the supervision and balance mechanism is not perfect, specifically the lack of accountability system. The accountability system is an excellent regulatory mechanism, which requires officials to undertake responsibilities and consequences while fulfilling their obligations. Officials are elected by popular vote, which is more accord with public opinion, if mistakes cause policy errors, officials need to be accountable to the public and other officials. The internal and external supervision of the responsibility system can ensure the realization of the responsibility, which is conducive to the implementation of administrative reform. Research the specific practice of administrative change in different countries, and a fact can find that lack of accountability is a common problem, especially when the government is eager to complete the change, lack of an active responsibility and supervision mechanism will lead to severe corruption and ultimately affect the performance of the change. The primary reason for crime is that government officials pay attention to their interests. If they can not effectively control fraud, it will have an adverse impact on the reform of public administration. Also, there is a more severe situation that local governments can

effectively manage domestic affairs, but the imperfect regulatory mechanism will make them hide corruption. The behavior of government officials can not be effectively restricted, which will aggravate the contradictions between administrative agencies and lead to social disorder (Bulut and Abdow, 2018). Another point is that when problems arise, no organization takes the initiative to take responsibility. In the absence of an effective regulatory mechanism, officials are willing to have more power and are unwilling to make the same responsibility. Not only conflicts between the local government and the central government will increase, but also conflicts between the government and the members of parliament increase. The referendum elected members, but it was difficult to guarantee that the needs of citizens would meet. This situation will intensify the political struggle and endangering the health of administrative agency. Lack of accountability supervision, the participation of citizens can not be guaranteed, and it will harm the results of public administration reform. If bad regulatory issues of government agencies can not solve fundamentally, the public administrative reform will not further development.

3. Conclusion

The reform of public administration is a great challenge for every country. Because of the different national conditions and ideologies of each country, the problems in the public administration reform are also various. Still, there are some factors will have a meaningful impact on the change of all state administrations. Bureaucracy is the main challenge of public administration reform, and bureaucrats are very powerful and hard to weaken. To make sure of their power and interests, bureaucrats usually oppose the change of public administration. The failure to implement the policy of decentralization will seriously hinder the improvement state power monopoly in the central government, which means that the local government has no real ability to implement reform measures, and it will lead to the administrative reform into a slogan without practice. Besides, the lack of accountability system of regulatory agencies will not only cause the disorder of national executive order, but also make the results of the reform can not be guaranteed. Such change is of no significance to the development of national governmental. Therefore, it is necessary to restructure the bureaucracy as soon as possible, reduce the intervention of the central government, and build a complete responsibility system.

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