CENTRALIZATION, DECENTRALIZATION, LOCAL ADMINISTRATION AND ETHICAL IMPACTS: NEGATIVE ASPECTS EVIDENT IN THE CONTEMPORARY PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

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Abstract

Authors of the presented contribution put their attention on the relationship between the central government and the local self-government in connection with the constantly on-going processes of centralization and decentralization. Moreover, they take into consideration priorities as well as negative aspects of both levels of governing, the central government and the local self-government. Problem areas, such as the tension between the centralization and self–governing and the democratic mode of governing in relation to the local governments are dealt as well. An inseparable part of the article is created by the presentation of the lack of ethical aspects which are evident on all public administration levels in the Slovak Republic including the local self-governing bodies. Besides that it is emphasized the aspect of inevitability to leave the unethical practices or at least to eliminate them and thus create the more favorable conditions for the further improvement of the professional and ethical cultivation of public sector which is one of the basic preconditions if a democratic society has to live on.

Key words: *Government, local self-government, centralization, decentralization, priorities, negatives, ethics*

INTRODUCTION

Regarding the obligations and tasks of the work division between the local government and the central government the following rule might be valid; first of all it is necessary to analyze positives and negatives of the both mentioned approaches towards the solving of certain problem areas. Only after that the decision-making can be implemented whether to prioritize a centralized or decentralized territorial approach. In this connection, besides that the presented contribution tries to indicate the most important tensions which appear as a result of these continual going-on processes, and therefore in any case, they should be taken into the consideration. It is evident that processes, the process of centralization as well as the process of decentralization signify their own advantages and disadvantages [Batley, Stoker: 1991].

The priority of centralization is its unified approach, the approach of equality, better financial opportunities, concentration of information and resources. Last but not least it is the power to act and at least a definite theoretical coordination [Imrovič, Švikruha: 2015]. For the most part the decentralization deficiencies rest upon an insufficient sensitive approach concerning the local specifics. The result of this is that the citizenry do not share the decision-making-processes participation, and as regards the responsibility and accountability, they are likewise scarce and limited [Mihálik: 2015]. On the state level the minority interests are rarely taken into account and finally the processes are ended in the origin of the so called centralization spiral [Mosneaga: 2014].

On the other hand the priority od decentralization consists of an awareness of one`s identity and in a greater range of the direct accountability, division of power, participation and the direct information transmission. When observing the subsidiarity principle and flexibility principle the more unified system of making-decisions is being created. The greater attention is paid to minorities which on the state level remain on the margin. Decentralization creates the conceivable conditions for a policy which can hardly be met by the wide consensus but, on the other hand, it might be implemented as an experiment on the local level [Smith: 1985]. Decentralization limitations are evident in the practice inequality and in endangerment of the appearance of harmful faults especially as regards an insufficiently coordinated procedure and the splitting up of force. What's more in the area of labor power the limited financial means bring about the lower level and range of the self-sufficiency. In an extreme case we can even come across with the undermining of the whole-state priorities.

Nevertheless, the presented summing up of the positives and negatives concerning both processes does not finish our contemplation concerning the existing topic. The attention is given to the chosen ethical impacts which are interrelated with the centralization and decentralization on the state and local levels as well. Besides that the contribution includes one of the many-sided reflections regarding the notion which nowadays is understood as democracy in connection with the constantly changing processes of the presented object matter.

1. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The local self-government has become an irreplaceable mode of implementation by means of which public policy and public services are operated and thus coming into the direct contact with citizenry and its field of activities [Lukáč: 2016]. On the other hand we cannot forget that at the same time the local self-government becomes a source of tension as simultaneously with its activities the central government, the central bodies of public administration, the regional public administration bodies, and of course, the local public administration bodies provide their own activities. It is without any doubt that Parliament and the Central government make decisions on many questions concerning the position of the local governments. The Central government only rarely encroaches into the activities of local self-government administration as the central government is more interested into such questions whether the local governments are capable to fulfil their tasks, and if their deeds and actions are in compliance with the democratic control [Rhodes: 1981].

From the point of view of an effective management and the supply of public services to citizens, it is needful to create an efficient organic structure of all self-government administrations in order to make their activities of a high quality and efficiency [Cíbik: 2014]. The conception of local government is anchored in the Local Government European Charter which was approved by the Council of Europe on the 15th November 1985 and besides that the local government principle is often attached in the constitutions of individual member states. The right to make decisions directly belongs to the elected councils or assembly and to the executive bodies which are subject to them. For that reason public administration has a political character as well. Moreover, the local government enables to citizenry to participate in taking decisions regarding a certain territorial community to which they belong to and whose identity is specified by the administrative arrangement. Besides that the local communities must be encouraged to participate in the following activities: the preparation of their municipality's budget, decisions on the municipal services provision, monitoring and reviewing their municipality's performance, and the preparation, implementation and evaluation of their cohesive development plans.

Recently decisions and decision-making processes have become of such an importance that the rule to solve problems only on the one level stopped to be binding but, on the other hand, they started to be discussed on various administrative levels. What's more, the contemporary social development shows the strong centralization tendencies. Majority of the problems have turned out to be of such significance that they are becoming the subject of the entire state interests. With this phenomenon we can mostly meet when the most fundamental values, norms and principles of democratic administration are endangered. Many of them require decisions made on the European level, e.g. unemployment problem, migration, etc. Besides that many contemporary problems want such mobilization of financial and a lot of other resources which might be met only by the central government. Therefore, it is not a mere chance, when in cases of catastrophes and period of crises an appeal is mostly turned to the central government than to the

local administrations. In addition to the mentioned facts there are some hidden tendencies supporting the centralization tendencies which play an influential role. The central government can always use its influence and authority without using and presenting its reasons for its actions even if it concerns the solving of problems on the local level. This reality is mostly used by political parties and pressing groups as for them it is easier to persuade the central government about advantages of some solutions. This phenomenon is known as the centralization spiral.

Even the mentioned negative aspects do not vacillate and doubt the significance of the decentralization implication. Looking back at the European Charter concerning local government, we can find out that an importance is given to various reasons declaring acknowledgement and strengthening the independence of self-governing units.

In the first place the Charter affirms an assumption according to which the local bodies create an essential pillar of whatever type of the democratic system we have in mind.

The first argument rests in the citizens` right to vote their representative deputies and thus sharing their participation in the creation of local policy which is without any doubt a democratic principle.

The second argument is that the local administration bodies are the safeguard of upholding an effective management in a close cooperation with citizenry.

The last argument is connected with the idea that protection and strengthening of the local administration is considered to be an important aspect of building up Europe which is based on democratic principles and decentralization of power, fostering cooperation and partnership.

The needful part of discussion regarding the decentralization is considered to be the principle of subsidiarity. In this connection we cannot forget to take into consideration those authors who are of the opinion that there are many obstacles to implement and put into practice the subsidiarity principle. It is because subsidiarity comes from the assumption that we can exactly define which competences are more suitable for smaller local administrative units and which ones are better to be left for solving by the central government. The complication of a social structure and the higher rate of their economic and technical dependence hamper to divide competences in this way. However, in connection with this, we can come to the conclusion that those might be the reasons for larger expansion of closer cooperation among states.

2. PRIORITIES OF THE LOCAL SELF-ADMINISTRATION

In spite of what was said, the local self-administration preserves its reasonable meaning. There are the following reasons for this:

- The first one rests in the fact that the self-governments accomplish projects which are aimed at the use of all community potential, it means that their usefulness cannot be denied which they have as the local self- government bodies knowing their local conditions best of all and therefore they try optimally to distribute the products.

- The second reason is connected with the principle of demands differentiation and the civil preferential safeguard. Demands and localities` preferential might differ from each other.
- The third reason lays in the fact that the local governments can complement plans which are prepared and approved on the central government level.
- The last reason has its source coming from the necessity to decentralize the central government competences. This necessity is done by the division of work but, at the same time, it is caused by the citizens` constant changing preferences and the flexible requirement to meet their needs.

The demand to take into account citizens` preferences is more suitably and most easily fulfilled on the local level, but it quite often happens that the self-governments come with such proposals which only later on in their further phases require the broader consensus. In case of need such proposals might become the component part of the state policy. Some authors emphasize that it is the essential precondition of the fulfillment of democracy to support decentralization and the need of having the local self-administration. Within this context the democratically elected and operating local self-governments are considered to be as an object where citizens can try their potential but, on the other hand, they are well thought-out as a kind of laboratory for the future "big-time politicians." From what was said it follows that decentralization finally contributes to the maintenance of political stability [Smith: 1985]. Other authors bring to the fore the role of values and local democracy for citizens whereas the dominant accent is put on equality, liberty and responsibility, principles safeguarding democracy [Maass: 1959; Sharpe: 1970; Dahl: 1989 and others].

Experiences confirm that local democracy contains the following positive essentials:
- It creates the further potential for participation concerning political decision-making and in this way weakens *the concentration* of power in centralized governance which is mostly accompanied by rigorous bureaucratic structures and is usually a result of nondemocratic culture.
- It contributes to the greater government responsibilities for their activities and what`s more the citizen achieves a larger degree of freedom.
- Minorities, to whom not sufficient attention is paid on the state level, may try to use their powers and influence on the local level.
- On the local level problems and needs of citizens are met with a greater understanding since the local administration is more familiar with their life circumstances.
- Local administration is less over-bureaucratic and their capability for responsibility and accountability is more answerable to the citizenry needs.

3. TENSION BETWEEN CENTRALIZATION AND SELF-GOVERNMENT

If self-government is investigated as a result of political will, a certain tension issuing from the contradiction between centralization and decentralization is also apparent. The tension between centralization and self-government management brings along with it a lot of problem areas which, besides other things, are evident in a different share of the local governments regarding the total expenditures of

public administration. Even here the thesis that problems are the source of other problems is valid.

The first problem seems to be the level of autonomy of the political processes on the local levels. Nowadays the majority of local administration activities are not thought to be the issues of a local character. Furthermore, it is acknowledged by the fact that the central government shows their interests to solve problems which in the past had belonged to the local competences. As a rule the government enacts laws according to which the local administrative bodies have to respect and follow when solving certain problems, e. g. environmental problems, education, maintenance of the important local services etc. And here a question arises; what kinds of powers are delegated to the local self-government under these conditions? And another question: Is it not only the reduction of the local government function to become just a kind of tool?

The so called interactive administration has to be implemented where the necessary agreement is needed and mutual understanding among all individual stages of the administrative management.

Identified on the experience base the other form of tension appears among the local political control and the legal supervision. Generally a presupposition is valid that the administrative supervision acts in accordance with the norms of higher validity and the implementation of procedures which are in contradiction with the legal rules are not allowed. This presumption creates a loyalty base for the local government towards the existed political establishment.

Here comes another question if the observance of legal rules, respectively their violation, has to be judged exclusively by the legal institutions. And the question: Should not the higher stages of administration supplement the legal institutions in cases regarding the solving of misunderstanding in the area of respecting laws and norms?

Further on, the demand of congruence with the public interest as a criterion of control evokes many kinds of misunderstanding. A certain type of tension might appear on the base of unequal financial relations accompanied by the question to what kind of extent the local governments have to rely on the citizenry taxes, respectively to what kind of the extent they have to be financially independent from the higher administrative bodies.

Other types of tension might arise between the functions of self-government and the local state-administration, and the self-administration and the decentralization of responsibilities. It might be given by the fact that some representatives of the local state bodies mostly do not show a satisfactory interest in local affairs, this tension is more evident in the separate public administration model. Similarly, the unreasonable transfer of functions from the state administration to the self-government institutions causes tension in spite of the fact that the local self-government achieves its legitimacy by means of direct elections. These processes are frequently not under the political control and citizenry control, and consequently causing the problems.

The manner of the public administration accomplishment might even cause the tension between the legislation and execution. The extraordinary emphasis is put not only on the quality of government operation but the quality of legislation approved by the parliament is essential as well. The government is expected to

govern well and just and the parliament is expected to approve the legislation of a high quality to enable and promote this. The mentioned requirement quite often calls for a discussion, not only regarding the tasks how they are fulfilled by those institutes, but the quality and their political "(in) competence" are in the center of the general interest.

4. DEMOCRATIC MODE OF GOVERNING AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

First of all the democratic mode of governing ensures citizens participation in the management of society. Several conditions have to be fulfilled in order to carry out this requirement:
- All political structures must be transparent and open to all citizens.
- Political system must flexibly react to immediate demands while rule of adequacy has to be implemented.
- Component parts of governing structure must be adequately critical to each other but at the same time to be capable mutually cooperate; to follow common course of action, to agree on joint agreements etc.
- Within the system of public administration each stage of governing must strictly delimitate its responsibility.

Regarding the local administration it requires an effort and managerial qualities of its representatives which are of a paramount importance in order to act most effectively and democratically. The most important is the fact that the local governments must be able to satisfy the needs of its citizenry and to offer services which depend on an actual situation. Abilities and operation of the local government is considerably influenced by the demographic factor; by the number and structure of population, human, financial and technical resources, the level of independence, number and quality of competences and many other factors. The same is valid when we have in mind transparent and democratic ways of governing involving an open public administration, integrity, solidarity, courage, justice and the ethical conduct of public-sector executives. Responsive public-sector executives must be reactive, considerate, sensitive, and capable of feeling the public`s needs and opinions comprehended in the dynamic and constantly changing public administration processes which require the developed systematic approaches to understanding them.

We can say that in their essence the abilities of the local self-government depend on their composition, efficiency and the democratic character of political elected bodies. In addition to that the professional qualification of individuals, financial means and the organizational work of management and administrative apparatus play a decisive role.

What`s more, the abilities of local government as the bodies being elected by citizens are evaluated in accordance with the standards how they are proficient to meet the demands of citizens having in mind the role of a local élite, recently the relationship between the central and local levels is starting to be of an interactive character, it includes some political agreements and the shift of some competences to the local élite. That concerns only the local élite and the local cooperation and not the local government as such. Decentralized structures of governing regarding the local development do not create reasons that the local government

automatically plays the most important role in those structures. By experiences it is convinced that it might quite easily happen that the local community might be represented by the private actors, local industry and the local elite while the elected local government would only play the marginal role. Moreover, such opinion is increased concerning these political relations since the one sided relationship dependence model between the local élite and the dominant standpoint of the central government is applicable. This reality produces a space for political racketeering and the clientele strengthening–like political culture which is in a strong contradiction with the demands of democratic good governance of our society; we can only hope that local bodies and citizens would not become reconciled with such status quo as the citizens have the right to good administration which is guaranteed by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union in paragraph 41 and by the White Paper on Local Government. Paragraph 41 of the Charter referring to the right to good administration says: "Every person has the right to have his/her affairs handled impartially, fairly and within a reasonable time by the institutions and bodies of the Union." Accordingly the White Paper on Local Government brought into play a new term called "the developmental local government" with its four inter-related characteristics maximizing social development and economic growth and putting into forefront integrating and coordinating democratizing development, and finally, leading and learning. The key developmental outcomes which are envisaged for the local government mentioned in White Paper are:

- Provision of household infrastructure.
- Creation of habitable integrated cities, towns and rural areas.
- Local economic development.
- Community empowerment and redistribution.

Besides that, the right to actively participate in public matters governance is guaranteed by the majority of the European countries constitutions, e.g. the right of the Slovak citizens to take part in public matters is stated in Article 30 of the Slovak Constitution. However citizens do not generally refuse their participation in political life, but they are of the opinion that it should not be excessively persistent, time consuming and complicated. In this context the model of communicative democracy seems to be the most optimal as it arouses from the increased and permanent communication lead between the elected representation and their voting public. Communication is not understood in a traditional way of meaning provided by participation in meetings, assemblies, or as a membership in political party, but at this time an essential role in communication is played by media, which appear to be the main communication devices between the political class and civic society. But, in this connection the important thing for media is to maintain their free and open character. The communicative democracy stays for a frequent discussion and it differs from the participation democracy which requires the direct participation in decision-making processes, even if we can admit that various democratic forms cannot be strictly separated from each other. Nevertheless, the communicative democracy requires citizenry interests in politics based on a certain amount of information concerning public matters. Of course, in this connection we have to account with a certain degree of ignorance and apathy on the side of citizenry, and

here the opportunity for the local government appears to play more pro - active and influential role in order to bring to become the subject of the public discussions.

In relation to democracy the importance of public administration is marked by the following aspects:

- Firstly: It is most evident in the macroeconomic area and in using of the most effective devices, such as, e. g., providing a certain kind of service on the required level keeping an equal balance between costs and profits in a chosen region. It is much more effective procedure than if all services must be provided by a certain local government. The local government is capable to adjust services in such a way as to be well-matched to the short-term demands and changing citizenry requirements.

- Secondly: The local administration stands for a distinct democracy maxim; it means the diffusion of political power and at the same time it is the safeguard of the protection of control and balance within the political system. The existence of control and balance creates a space for dialogue among the central and local political levels as the mutual control system impedes the monopolization in making decisions. In this way the political system is more vigilant if it is evident that among the different stages of administration the elements of public control and public discussion exist.

- Thirdly: The argument to promote a strong local government rests in the validity of the decision-making processes dynamism and the creative problems solving. This scheduled plan to meet the citizenry demands on the local base will be later on accompanied by the central government when the central government takes into consideration that satisfying the mentioned needs regards all citizens.

The mentioned reasons might be briefly summarized in the following way:

1. Effective supply of services.
2. Democratic character of system.
3. Constant pressure on the requirement of higher quality of activities.

5. NEGATIVE ASPECTS EVIDENT IN THE CONTEMPORARY PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

5.1. Epidemic citizens' mistrust to top executives and public administration servants

In many municipalities and self-governing units there is evident a wide amount of the lack of professional and ethical strategies going hand in hand with the spread of public distrust, suspicion, helplessness and cynicism which have become almost as epidemic disease throughout our society causing a wide spread disbelief and doubts towards political leaders, high executive leaders, judges, supervisors and public top administrative management in general. Besides that, such cynical attitudes in society are caused by the lack of trustworthiness of investment, lack of transparency and the existence of generally accepted ethical values, principles and norms. The result of this issues in people`s mood is that they feel weighed down by the pressure pushing them inescapably towards the self-interested behavior at the expense of their higher aspirations and wishes, and in this way consequently

contributing to their feeling of helplessness and submissiveness encouraging passivism and at the same time raising barriers for the active individual involvement in community affairs. OECD argued that: *"citizens trust public institutions if they know that public offices are used for the public good"* [OECD: 2000, 5].

5.2. Prevailing of the old orthodox practices in the local public management

The model of self-government on the local level has not only benefits and advantages but also its specific disadvantages, e.g. excessive particularism evident mainly in observing and following one`s own personal interests by the local representatives and administrators as well which might lead to mutual relations of the communal dependence which in some cases favors fostering clientélisme, nepotism, and generally is the reason of the abusive corruptive practices damaging the local community interests and welfare.

Sporadically, in the local levels it is observed the lower willingness to share, cooperate and to become a partner with citizens. Quite often happens that public administrators try to satisfy just some certain specific citizenry groups or individuals even if such actions are counter to the required public community interests. Every so often short-term considerations and popular decisions are put forward while the other long- term goals receive little or simply the unsatisfactory attention which is mostly influenced by the powerful ones pretending to be the opinions of many.

Another negative aspect is the excessive control and observance of individual citizens daily lives by the local administrative bodies having at its disposal much more effective means of control than the central government apparatus and thus creating a kind of pattern of coerciveness in the citizen-ruler relationship instead of a receptive and cooperative model of mutual collaboration and partnership. Therefore, from the local public administrators it is needed to be less concerned about keeping their power and control of citizens, but instead showing their concern for favoring to share community responsibilities with citizens and supporting a dialogue with them which will certainly lead to higher level of communal cooperation and partnership. In order to run public life more effectively, besides activating the direct citizen's participation, another way how to stimulate citizenry in being interested in community affairs is to foster an indirect participation by means of the civic society multiply pluralistic engagement. That means to initiate individuals, voluntary interests groups, different organized citizens groups, the third sector, private sector and the diverse kinds of organized citizens' activities. As it is remarked by Vigoda: *"investment in spontaneous behavior and activities is low cost and economical compare with other public administration reforms"* [Vigoda: 2002, 536] and, of course, creating necessary conditions for such involvement. At the same time it means to be open to media and citizenry providing necessary information how public resources are used, presenting community plans, strategies, programs, long- term initiatives, short-term initiatives and everything what is connected with the community life.

Last but not least, the local governments are not capable to cope sufficiently and effectively with the huge bundle of the obtained competences which have been

delegated to them by the processes of decentralization. The stated problem is mainly connected with the insufficient professional accomplishment of the local administrators 'discharging with their duties predisposed by their unprofessional background, lack of the appropriate qualification, education and professional training.

5.3. Lack of highly qualified professionals in public administration

Requirements for a highly qualified group of professionals whose main mission is to provide services to the state and public go hand-in –hand with increasing demands for a higher quality of services. Of course, such progress wants further professional and ethical cultivation as well as perfection of the public-sector executives and bureaucrats closely connected with their cultivated expression of their decent and professional approaches to citizens.

The prime moral virtues; wisdom, justice, compassion, and respect for individuals, courage, temperance, generosity, kindness, reliability and industry should be a part of the professional virtues of public executives and administrators being in the democratic society service. Having a post means at the same time to have a greater responsibility and personal accountability for one`s deeds and decisions which might have an enormous impact on citizens.  If we develop these virtues, we are more likely to act rightly avoiding misdeeds, dishonesty and fraud.  Being an accountable suggests being not only responsible for something, but also ultimately answerable for one`s actions, misjudgements, defaults in decision-making, and to be ready to undertake themselves to be controlled and judged by those to whom they have their obligation to serve. The term implies the idea of taking into account the consequences of one`s actions for the wellbeing of others.

Being an accountable actor means to be subjective to external factors as he/she is liable for his deeds and decisions to a certain community and subjective to their control and judgment, praise or criticism. Even when people in public service know what right thing is, they often find it difficult to do because of the social, institutional, group or organization compulsion they meet with.

Besides that the responsive public-sector executives must be reactive, considerate, sensitive, and capable of feeling the public`s needs and opinions comprehended in the dynamic and constantly changing public administration processes which require the developed systematic approaches to understanding them. A responsible actor in public sector is understood by Bivins *„as one whose job involves a predetermined set of obligations that have to be fulfilled in order for the job to be accomplished"* [Bivins: 2006, 20]. Bivins as well as many other ethicists emphasize the weight of a responsible- accountable-actor who is capable to keep his/her personal integrity and instead of having "robust traits of character", term used by Törbjörn Tännsjö, possessing adequate professional virtues to make choices according to one`s own insight, intuition and ethical consciousness, not neglecting the respect of basic ethical public administration values and norms to serve the people and to steer clear of being under the influence, pressure or control of other actors, e.g. financial groups, political actors, or someone`s secular individual interests, and in this way to esteem the other side of the dimension of integrity [Tännsjö: 2008]. Leader actors and administrators possessing these quality traits

are according to Johnson "true to themselves, reflecting consistency between what they say publicly and how they think and act privately. In other words, they practice what they preach [Johnson: 2009, 71]. It seems to be that all those values and virtues had been relevant only in theory and, as we all know, their practical application had been in fact far away from what was theoretically and officially declared.

5.4. Lack of the competent and ethical leadership

A lot of authors and general public are of the opinion that leaders and generally the fair and constructive atmosphere of organizations are mainly responsible for the standards that govern the conduct and activities of individual employees within the public administrative institutions and organizations, that those are the leaders and their sense of being conscientious and personally answerable set the just, prolific and ethical tone. In public administration the emphasis on duty and fair ethical environment promotes the determination towards the consistent and answerable conduct. Respecting the right of others is an important guideline to keep in mind when making reasonable and ethical choices. As it is expressed by Johnson: *"seeking justice, truth and mercy is more inspiring than pursuing selfish concerns"* [Johnson: 2009, 142]. Leaders whether they are political, high ranking bureaucrats or local public servants must see themselves as being committed to citizens looking at them as partners who agree to be led or governed by them under the condition that their lives are continuously being value-added and enriched respecting democratic principles of equality, participation, cooperation and mutual understanding. The leaders who use their power ethically and reasonably leading their organizations toward the cooperative workplace atmosphere respecting majority opinions instead of the blind obedience to authority and at the same time supporting corporate accountability and social responsibility can achieve a higher level of effectiveness as it is acknowledged by Carole Jurkiewicz in her study Power and Ethics: The Communal Language Of Effective Leadership: Effective executives, in the public sector as well as in the non-profit sector, tend to have high levels of power motivation and exit thigh levels of ethical reasoning" [Jurkiewicz: 2005, 96].
On the other hand the impulsive and selfish leaders make abuse of power easier by pursuing their private interests without considering the needs of others and community good. As it is mentioned by Craig Johnson *"they are likely to justify their actions by claiming that their rights and interests take priority over obligations to others…another significant ethical burden associated with leadership are the greater privileges they enjoy, therefore they must give the same careful consideration to the abuse of privilege as to the abuse of power"* [Johnson: 2009, 15]. Incompetent and bad leaders called by some authors "the toxic leaders" are likely to cause prevalence of destructive and unethical atmosphere in public administrative organizations where it is difficult to speak about following ones` responsibilities and accountability towards community. Unfortunately the abuse of power by the public administrators and elected representatives seems to be a common reality with which we can meet in public administration daily.

5.5. Existence of the red-tape bureaucracy

First of all the existence of the operation of traditional orthodox red-tape bureaucratic public administration model belongs among the widest spread negative aspects. It is still true that in many cases in public administration institutions and organizations on all levels the over-bureaucratic system of operation is an everyday reality. The red-tape bureaucracy of public administration considerably maximizes the formal bureaucratic procedures including commands and restrictions as it assign them the significant importance which is often transformed into a kind of administrative ritual performance labelled by Adams and Balfour as an administrative evil [Adams, Balfour: 2004, 118]. According to Vigoda the red-tape bureaucracies *"embody a firm hierarchy of roles and duties, a vertical flow of orders and reports, accountability to highly ranked officers, fear of sufficient accountability dynamics constituting a work site that is anything but democratic. All of these signal that the natural state in public administration is authoritarian"* [Vigoda: 2002, 530]. The sign of such public executives' and administrators` behaviour, actions and decision – making processes in public administration are cases of the absolute standardization of the bureaucratic practices which are becoming in them the aims of all activities provided by the public executives and administrators entirely ignoring the probable negative impacts on their communities and citizenry. Their conduct often gives the impression of being bored, uninterested, helpless, ineffective, and last but not least moving towards the immodest misbehaviour and actions which every so often issue into the abuse of power. "The dissonance between the official rhetoric and the palpable reality have more than anything else contributed to cynicism among the general public and decline in public trust" [Garofalo: 2014, 18]. Such practices are in a deep contrast with the new concepts and missions of the modern democratic public administration which has to be in accordance with respecting the fundamental democratic principles and the ethical values facilitating the needful services to citizenry. It means that in their practical activities it is necessary to pledge the public dignitaries and administrators to be oriented more on the use of practical and critical reasoning striving to change all worthless and obscure measures which are applied in public service and to do away with the obscure measures which are applied in public service, finally it means to put away the contra- productive and time-worn policies.

On the other hand, to initiate them to respect and support the constitution principles of liberty, equality, fairness, representation, responsiveness and the consensus-oriented towards the community providing the quality of public services by means of applying the sound policies processes aimed at the protection of citizens requirements and community wellbeing.

One of the ways how to do it is to create effective communicative channels aimed at making dialogues with citizens. Communities and citizens have to understand and feel that their city, municipality are open-minded and interested in their problems and needs, and what`s more, that they are willing to solve them. Municipalities should make such concepts and targets to be understandable and transparent for all participants of the decision making processes. Public executives sense for "small

things" and tangible minor decisions, which might substantially influence their everyday life, are the most important for the community public.

5.6. Extraordinary Politicization of the public administration

Politicization of public administration is another burden and a quite widespread phenomenon causing a lot of incompetent, non-professional even corruptive decisions which are in an alarming incongruity with the observing public interest by public-sector executives. One of the reasons generating this problem is caused by pressing political influences and constant changes of governments. It reflects a situation in which public administration is the right hand of politicians and thus must preserve power by means of centralization and control over decision–making processes and resources.

According to many experts it would be better for public sector not to be managed by politicians as to be a good politician does not immediately mean to be a good administrator. The achievements in public administration could be attained in a more reliable and successful way by the capable and competent managers without having their tough party affiliation. For that reason one of the public administrators' requirements might rest in their political neutrality. In our country it is a quite commonly happen symptom and that is the tendency to change professionally and even the ethically competent public-sector executives immediately after the change of political garniture. Of course, such practices are in a sharp contradiction with the forward - developing democracy.

5.7. Implication of the Ethical formalism in public administration

In Slovakia there is a lack of the comprehensive system of an appropriate, consistent and context-based ethical system of professional values, principles, norms and standards for public sector representatives and administrator which might help to overcome ethical confusion in public administration, avoiding its motivational degradation and to stop PA professional erosion which leads to the loss of legitimacy and public confidence. The development of such ethical public administration standard system would certainly promote better fight with such severe problems like corruption, low employee morale and finally the lack of legitimacy and public mistrust. If there are any devices aimed at ethics and more ethical behaviour there are mostly of a formal character in content and form serving just to have something, e. g. if they have a code of conduct which is usually placed somewhere in the wardrobe and usually nobody knows that something like this exists, it is difficult to speak about of any kind of an active and influential tool of ethical device.

The adoption of a code of conduct should not be a goal but an instrument to achieve the objectives dedicated by ethical management. The code of conduct is the right step, which must be followed by some other actions. These should lead to the development of appropriate professional virtues of government employees and the overall ethical culture with an emphasis on the fulfilment of the obligations and pursue the public interest [Mitaľ: 2016].

Besides that, in Slovakia the constant public administration aim still remains in providing the most modern and more reliable, confident and safe system for communication of bureaus with citizens, a system which would be able to meet the sense of the most precious value resting in making substantially their lives better by saving their time when they come into contact with administrative bodies including all levels of public administration, and thus creating a prospect to use their time more sensibly by providing other useful activities. Moreover, it is necessary to establish an independent body to be responsible for the implementation of ethical values in public administration.

CONCLUSION

Nowadays the conservative idea on the local autonomy is difficult to be defended since the many tasks require the far above the ground financial means and many problems are concurrently the problems of several local governments. More often the local governments must move toward the common decisions and widen their cooperation with other subjects in order to fulfil their goals.

The mission of the contemporary local government is to fulfil tasks of a kind of a mediator among the individual levels of public administration, other local governments, private sector and citizenry. The local government has its validity and its role is particularly important in fulfilling public discussion. But, on the other hand, its activities should not be provided in isolation from the activities made by the actors of other political life areas. The ability to solve problems is in a direct proportion to the level of cooperation. In this connection the local government should play an active role, it should organize public discussions regarding mutual projects. Fulfilling these tasks the local government meets with two groups of obstacles, inner difficulties and outer ones.

Inner difficulties rest in rising demands concerning the governing and political level within the local government. Enhancing the political level is connected with the ability to lead community public discussions and, what`s more, to play an active role in these discussions regarding the further community development. Enhancing demands on the management means to be willing to run the local government on the professional level. This requirement is related to the proper selection of highly qualified administrators who, when receiving a decent payment, will provide a good-quality work. Besides a good and decent remuneration, the requirements for highly qualified professionals contain an amount of ethical and moral qualities, such as common decency, honesty, integrity, openness, generosity, the character traits which esteem and pursue the prime ethical principles, the principle of humanism, justice and fairness, and the principle of honesty and diligence which create a common and universal foundation for a code of behaviour for everybody, every situation and every field of our life having particularly their predominance and validity in the public administration.

Finally, we can conclude that the outer impediment for the discharging their tasks by the local government rests in the size of territorial self-governing units. Current development shows that local governments will have to start with the inter-municipal cooperation even if it is a rather complicated problem caused by the conflict of interests among the local governments. The inter-municipal cooperation

is successful only in cases if it brings equal benefits to all local governments that are integrated in it. Anyway, in future the advancement of inter-municipal cooperation will depend on the state support and the potential of the local government.

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