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BUREAUCRACY AND TECHNOCRACY IN THE WORKPLACE

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Abstract: *Work is the most important human activity performed every day in order to provide the best possible quality of life and continuous progress in all fields of society. While working, a worker uses his/her skills and knowledge necessary to simplify and facilitate the job process as much as possible. Therefore, this paper deals with the concepts of bureaucracy and technocracy, as well as with their influence on the performance of work at workplaces. It seems that the mentioned terms are inextricably linked, since a wide range of jobs implies possession of professional knowledge, abilities and skills in order to be able to carry out work tasks efficiently. A large number of theorists view the bureaucratic type of organization as the ability to achieve the highest degree of effectiveness as well as corresponding advantages. Some of the common features of bureaucracy and technocracy are the following: they ensure high effectiveness and efficiency, but also enable application of knowledge, modern methods, calculations and activities that are characteristic for performing a wide variety of jobs. In this paper the author explains who has power in the workplace, for what purposes that power is being used and by what means, but also defines the procedures and ways to achieve the obedience of others within a certain working environment.*

Keywords: *Work, labor relations, bureaucracy, technocracy, expertise.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays hundreds of millions of people around the world are employed, which only confirms the fact that work, as a social category, is a necessary factor for the survival and progress of the human species. Workplaces represent a source of financial security and a space where the worker, as a rule, feels most comfortable, because it is assumed that he/she

has chosen to do the job that suits him/her and that he/she has the affinity for this job. The main content of each workplace consists of jobs and work tasks, while accompanying factors inevitably include the working conditions determined through the organizational and technical definition of the workplace and the professional qualifications of the workers. Of course, in XXI century it is necessary for a worker to continuously work on improvement and additional education, which will primarily enable to keep the job, but also to progress in that specific workplace. Therefore, knowledge and abilities are a *conditio sine qua non* of the efficiency of performance of entrusted tasks within the workplaces to which workers are assigned by the employer's decision. The workplace is an initial organizational-technical unit consisting of one or more similar or related interconnected jobs, to which one or more workers with certain professional and other abilities can be assigned (Jovanović, 2015). The worker establishes an employment relationship precisely because he/she possesses professional qualities that are necessary for the employer. When the worker starts performing job activities between employee and employer it creates a Labor law relationship determined by mandatory and autonomous legal acts. The worker treats his/her skills and knowledge as a type of commodity offered for sale and for which a certain price is paid expressed in financial benefit for the performed work (salary). As a rule, the more difficult the worker's knowledge is available to the employers, the latter will be forced to value such work more, which means that the salaries will be higher.

The term bureaucracy is used most often when someone wants to express a certain form of resentment. It doesn't matter which workplaces we are talking about (local government, health institutions, institutions of legislative, executive or judicial power...) it is always in a negative context. For many, terms like bureaucrat, bureaucratic and bureaucracy imply disparagement and criticism, not only of individuals and their actions, but also of institutions. Nevertheless, bureaucracy can be viewed from another angle, as a way of ruling or communicating, and if we want to find out what it actually means, we must analyze motives for the formation of bureaucratic organization. It was formed so that it could function as a system of individuals or groups whose *spiritus movens* is the realization of profit (characteristic of the capitalist economy). On the other hand, technostructure represents the expert, managerial and consequently more powerful part of a certain bureaucratic organization. It is very closely related to workplaces in the sense of personnel who are engaged in performing certain tasks. Practice undoubtedly shows that any significant movement or reorganization of personnel, especially in the administration, becomes a potential threat for members of the technostructure. Reorganization also means danger that individual members (workers) might be transferred to other jobs, demoted, forced to retire or fired. However, the expansion of the organization makes technostructure more powerful, because then it has the ability to impose its own will on society. The way in which it achieves this is very simple, considering that its goals are declared to be of the greatest importance. Galbraith believes that these are goals that go beyond the market framework and that technostructure uses as a tool to achieve its goals (Galbraith, 1979).

2. THE BEGINNINGS OF THEORETICAL DEFINITION OF BUREAUCRACY

The term bureaucracy or “rule of the desk” was first used by the French physiocrat Vincent de Gornay in 1745 (Petrović, 2006). This term originally intended to include all officials, secretaries, inspectors and quartermasters appointed to improve the existence of services of public interest in a certain way. Gornay’s bureaucracy as a term, but also as a completely new way of ruling by certain structures in Europe at the time, was very quickly accepted. Much later, in 1821 the German publicist Johann Gires, while dealing more deeply with the issues of this phenomenon, proposed the thesis that in order to ensure mutual respect between rulers and subjects, it is necessary to connect the elements of democracy and monarchy. If such connection is not established, it creates conditions for bureaucracy to appear, seen as the civil institution that most resembles the army, given that it is based on the principles of hierarchical authority, discipline, advancement, group respect and centralization. John Stuart Mill also paid a high degree of attention to bureaucracy, precisely because of its ability to perform work tasks, considering it a form of government and the exact opposite of democracy. He advocated the implementation of general control over professional managers. According to his ideas, control should be carried out by representative and relevant elected bodies. He claimed that since the first use of the term bureaucracy, three basic characteristics of the latter can be defined as the form of hierarchically structured system of administration, abuse of power by officials, as well as a new type of rule.

While talking about the abuse of power and bureaucracy, we are mainly referring to administrative bodies established to fulfill the interests of the rulers who act primarily in their own interest. On the other hand, the term government is used to denote other representatives of classic forms of bureaucracy. Later, during the XX century, the negative connotation of the term is being lost, because it begins to be seen as ability of professional managers and essential characteristic of leadership in modern systems. Even then it was completely clear that all forms of government are always exercised by the minority, which is why the governments are divided into feudal, where the same members perform different functions (economic, judicial, administrative, military...) and bureaucratic, where the functions of government are strictly separate and become exclusively the activity of individual groups within the ruling class. One of these groups is bureaucracy, or the selected group of paid public servants (workers). The obligation to continue and improve the analysis of his predecessors (Mill, Fayol, Michels) was taken by Max Weber, who set up the bureaucratic theory of organization. He believed that every force manifests itself and functions as administration, and every form of administration requires power (Morgante, 1984). He was successful in recognizing the evolution of bureaucratic organization in Germany and argued that new developments in the latter suggested a new form of administration (Styhre, 2007). In fact, he accepted the traditional concept of organization as an inevitability excluding its economic dimension. For Weber, bureaucracy represents management by office means (position), and not by means of people, it is an

ideal organizational model, but not ideal in the sense of perfect, but ideal for theoretical analysis (Wren & Voich, 1994, 53). Classical, as well as contemporary literature, agrees that Max Weber's contribution to defining bureaucracy exceeds all the studies of his predecessors combined. In this way, professor Mihailo Đurić devoted a studious analysis to the properties of Weber's bureaucracy through theory and practice. Đurić well noted that according to Weber's claims, the specific way of functioning of modern bureaucracy is reflected in the following:

- 1) There is a principle of competence of individual authorities for the performance of official duties. Jurisdictions are clearly established by general rules, laws or administrative acts. We are talking about regular activities necessary for achieving the goals of bureaucratic structures, which are precisely differentiated as official activities. For the performance of these duties is necessary the existence of a commanding authority, which is distributed and made available to certain authorities in the form of coercive means within strictly limited rules. The mentioned means can be physical, sacral (Vujaklija, 1972), related to church affairs or some other. In order for these duties to be performed regularly and permanently in the spirit of the appropriate rules, Weber emphasized that planning care must be taken, so that persons (workers) with prescribed professional qualifications must be appointed to appropriate positions.
- 2) The second principle refers to the hierarchy of positions and transitional instances (competent authority). It is a strictly established system of subordinate and superior authorities where higher authorities have the right of supervision, and in which individuals can complain to a higher instance about actions of a lower authority. The principle of organization on a hierarchical basis is present in all bureaucratic structures: in state and church communities, in organization of large political parties or in large private companies. If the principle of competence is fully implemented, at least in public services, this does not mean that hierarchical subordination gives possibility to a higher authority to simply take over tasks of a lower authority. The rule is that only the competent authority can perform certain tasks, and no other.
- 3) Bureaucratic business management is based on original written acts or documents. According to Weber, hired or authorized officials (workers) who work in a certain service and use different types of appropriate material resources and written acts and documents make up a certain "bureau". In practice, it is called the "office" (Đurić, 1964), which Weber noted well when formally distinguished between office and, for example, a domestic private household. He also distinguished business relations from private ones, as well as private property from company property.
- 4) For the performance of official, clerical jobs and state functions, which are considered specialized duties, there is a necessity for workers who have gone through regular and thorough education process. This is precisely dimension of specific and modern performance of work duties, which modern officials (managers) in private economic enterprises, on the one hand, and engaged state officials, on the other, should possess as much as possible.

- 5) Trained representatives of bureaucratic services, both in the private and in the state sector, are the best guarantee for quality performance of entrusted work tasks. If the official is fully engaged and dedicated to job duties in accordance with his/her abilities, then the work is of high quality and developed. Limited working time of workers (officials) in the service is not the factor that could significantly affect quality of the performed work tasks or activities. The best argument for this claim lies in observation of development of bureaucracy in relation to jobs that require quality performance, where it is stated that jobs are normal phenomena that have contributed to good results in both public and private services.
- 6) Engaged and authorized officials (workers) perform official activities on the basis of general rules that are more or less constant and comprehensive and that can be learned. Their knowledge is a special skill and dexterity that they must have in order to carry out the entrusted work tasks in a high-quality manner.

3. CRITICISMS OF WEBER'S THEORY OF BUREAUCRACY

Weber believed that services are established and organized on the principle of hierarchy, where duties are clearly defined and filled on the basis of a free contractual relationship. Candidates for certain positions are selected on the basis of technical qualifications verified by exams or diplomas. Officials (public servants) are paid in money and have the right to a pension. Public service is the only, or at least basic, occupation as well as a career, because there is a system of advancement according to the length of service or according to the success achieved at work. Weber advocated that bureaucracy represents rationalization applied to the organization of human activities and that it relies on rational-legal authority based on impersonal rules which are legally established (Theuvsen 2004: 1). The elements set by Weber were used to establish work discipline, both in very serious state services and in private entities.

Although he was accepted as ideologist of a new form of management in organizations that are now defined as bureaucratic, Weber became target of many critics. His intention to create a new form of bureaucratic organization meant achieving maximum results, which would give it the characteristics of an ideal organization. He claimed that the wealth of bureaucracy lies precisely in its technical superiority and the fact that within a bureaucratic organization precision, speed, unity of action, continuity, discretion, cohesion, clear subordination, reduction of conflicts, objective and personal costs are carried out in a better way than all forms of collegiality or honorary functions (Weber, 1961). Also, he believed that the growing demands for culture were determined, although to varying degrees, by the growing wealth of the most influential strata in the state, while increasing bureaucratization was a function of the increasing possession of goods used for consumption. This affects the standard of living and creates an increasingly subjective necessity for organized, collective, inter-local, and therefore bureaucratic services for the most diverse needs, which were previously unknown, or were met locally or by private economy (Weber, 1947).

Peter Blau, a well-known American sociologist, did not differ much with Weber's views, because he believed that Weber's approach could be accepted when it is established that social structure is functioning quite well, that is, when it is in full effect (Blau, 1956). On the other hand, in terms of establishing a balance in functioning of bureaucratic organizations, Blau puts forward the thesis that it is important to succeed in intention to avoid falsely presenting of stability of organization and to correctly present all changes (social, economic, sociological) that affect its functioning (Blau 1960: 545). Also, he claimed that in his researches, Weber left a space for which did not have enough convincing facts, when attention should be paid to the consequences arising from inadequate functioning of the work organization or some of its parts.

Criticisms of Weber's claims were the most numerous in United States of America, and certainly one of the most significant remarks referred to the fact that he was only interested in pure, formal bureaucratic organization. However, a deeper analysis of Weber's work shows that he rightly gave importance to informal relationships and unofficial practices. On the other hand, Bernard Chester argued that it is impossible to imagine the functioning of formal organizations without informal organization (Chester, 1938). As Marshall Goldman points out, Weber's thoughts are to some extent a consequence of the limited development of production forces and an expression of certain production needs, whereby bureaucratic organization plays a positive role in a certain sense, because it contributed to rationalization of production (Goldman 1988: 455). Undoubtedly, the harshest criticisms of Weber's assumptions came from Robert Merton, who claimed that the features that characterize Weber's bureaucratic organization (established forms of behavior, discipline, hierarchy and formal services) are actually the main and greatest sources of weakness of the theory itself. However, Merton still defended himself in expressing his harsh views, claiming that in complex organizations and relationships, mentioned elements might correspond to their function and fulfill certain goals, but same elements, viewed from other aspects act dysfunctionally and negatively on the achievement of organization's goals (Merton 1973: 154).

From the aspect of socialist organization of society, the danger of bureaucratism lies in the fact that the latter, like a disease, weakens the entire organism of the socialist social system, while at the same time strengthens anti-socialist forces and tendencies. Bureaucratism inevitably breaks all ties between the leading political forces and working class, and increasingly sharpens internal social contradictions. As far as the bureaucracy and its understanding of the emergence of socialism are concerned, it led to heated polemics between Marx and Hegel. Hegel basically defines bureaucracy formally, considering that it represents the real interest of society. To him belongs the first systematic attempt to clearly define the place and role of bureaucracy in political society (Hegel, 1989). Marx believed that bureaucracy is the corporation of the state and its spirit, it is the state formalism of civil society and turns the formal state attitude into a categorical imperative. Bureaucracy is a closed circle from which there is no escape, and its hierarchy is a hierarchy of knowledge. In fact, it is an imaginary state in addition to a real state, that's why for bureaucrats everything has a double meaning - real and bureaucratic (Marks, 1972).

4. TECHNOCRACY AS A CONSEQUENCE OF BUREAUCRACY

The word technocracy derives from the Greek words *techno* - skill, knowledge and *kratein* - to rule. Thus, technocracy implies technical rule or the rule of knowledge. It is considered an American invention, and it was brought to Europe in order to Americanize European countries. This term was first used in 1919 by William Henry Smith, an American engineer, and was widely present in the 1970s when technocracy seemed to be a viable future form of government (Lindstam, 2014). However, its creator is considered to be the French socialist-utopian St. Simon, who advocated that the nation should be led by some kind of academy, that the parliament should be presided over by a mathematician and that the exercise of power should be free. Since bureaucratic circles always aim to achieve some form of government, this idea had its supporters. Combining the teachings of St. Simon, his followers and Henri Fayol, American President Wilson gathered intelligent people (ethnologists, physicists, lawyers...) as creators of peace in the world, not politicians and diplomats for whom he claimed to be greedy careerists (Petrović, 2006).

If the role of bureaucracy and technocracy is analyzed based on the given opinions, and if we talk about governance, then there is a certain difference between them. The first rule (bureaucracy) cannot do without the second, and the second (technocracy) can do without the first. However, it should be borne in mind that they are directed at each other, as well as that they are very tightly connected. Bureaucracy, in the sense of group of administrative and executive apparatus, officials in the state administration and its institutions that perform public affairs, especially in their high hierarchy, is an integral part of bureaucracy in a broader political sense. Bureaucracy cannot have complete power or control over social and economic relations if they are established and maintained based on the influence of members of the technostructure. This means that the political bureaucracy cannot, with the help of administrative and executive functionaries who are in fact an integral part of it, realize and achieve its rule without solidarity with the technocracy. Thus, society as a whole became a training ground where technocratic management of the economy and management of the state apparatus almost came together. Technocratic management is essentially a manifestation of the collective management of capital by bureaucrats who do not own the latter, because it is the property of a bureaucratic organization. That is why technocracy is not considered an ideology, but a practical management intelligence based on interests. It should be noted that complexity of modern production conditions organizational management functions that favor the emergence and development of technocracy. This social layer does not have property and is not the bearer of a certain method of production, so it has no class elements, which is why it can simultaneously intertwine with the ruling class, the middle classes and educated part of the working class (Pantelić-Vujanović & Čukanović-Karavidić, 2014, 245).

Technocracy actually appeared as a consequence of scientific and technical revolution and is an instrument of bureaucracy. The difference between them is more quantitative than qualitative, considering that technocracy only matured on Weber's bureaucratic

model. Technocracy essentially represents the possibility or opportunity for science, as the bearer of rationality, to take all power into its own hands. And power is the ability of an individual or group to impose their interests on others and to achieve their goals and satisfy their own interests. Thus, technocracy implies the rule of experts and as a model wants to make politics more rational and efficient, taking into account that growth of scientific knowledge and technological inventions is faster than process of political decision-making and the fact that politicians cannot understand all such complex issues (Fischer 2008: 4). The members of the technostructure aim to protect their interests, that is, their own existence, and technostructure resists any external intervention or influence.

Contemporary literature distinguishes two basic types of technocracy, which classical literature in a certain sense did not manage. Certainly, rapid economic development and increasing volume of needs for professional workforce of all profiles and occupations contributed to this. The first type of technocracy is technoplutocracy, which is defined as the rule of knowledge supported by the rule of rich people, which includes the management elite - managers in large companies and other personnel who perform certain management functions in financial organizations and institutions. It is the characteristic of technoplutocracy that it first experienced its maturation thanks to the rapid development of the capitalist economy and the flourishing of a large number of production and service capacities. American and European companies were leaders in this area, and in the interest of conquering and expanding the market through mergers and consolidation of capital, they created large joint-stock companies. This dynamic flow of financial material did not oblige their owners to manage, so instead of occupying managerial positions, they transferred that competence to managers. Managers perform tasks for the account and on behalf of shareholders-owners of the capital, but at the same time they also earn their own money. The main directions in which representatives of technoplutocracy act on the state and its rulers are the financing of political parties and creation of public opinion through the use of mass media. This phenomenon is called information totalitarianism, for which Gunther says that media devices take away our ability to speak and turn us into minors and serfs (Gunther, 1956).

Another type of technocracy is known as technobureaucracy. This category of technocrats includes managers who do their jobs in public administrations. Maybe it is not possible to call them managers in the true sense of the word, but many authors still call them like that. Technobureaucratic ideology values technical expertise and technical experts, efficiency, economic development and resulting mass consumption. It believes in planning and rational management (Fatile & Olojede & Adejuwon, 2015: 150). This only reinforced Weber's view that bureaucracy is based on knowledge. He once said that bureaucratic administration represents rule by the power of knowledge. In addition, technocracy by performing tasks in the public interest, encounters confidential sources of documents whose opening, and therefore interpretation, requires solid and sometimes expert legal knowledge. This is manifested in mastery of knowledge, professional qualities and abilities. Namely, it is in the interest of the state apparatus that regulations and other

legal norms related to its smooth functioning are properly and timely applied in order to ensure the rule of law and respect for basic democratic principles.

5. CONCLUSION

The workplace represents a space where workers perform entrusted work tasks and realize a wide range of rights from the employment relationship that are guaranteed by mandatory and autonomous legal acts (constitution, law, collective labor agreements, labor contracts...). It is in the employer's best interest to employ worker for a specific position. These workers, according to his/her professional qualities, will most efficiently fulfill the set work goals, because the work performed in this way will fulfill its basic purpose - productivity. Workers acquire their knowledge, abilities and skills most often through schooling, when they are being prepared for the future jobs they will perform. A large number of authors believe that bureaucracy is a form of government that is effectively implemented by formally engaged workers (civil servants and corporate managers). Normally, they perform their functions professionally and in a legal manner, applying the professional knowledge they possess. Therefore, bureaucrat is a person who performs certain state tasks based on the knowledge and powers that belong to him/her. People are very often unfair when they accuse bureaucrats of all the failings of the entire state system. Namely, mistakes are not in the people who directly perform certain functions, because they are equally victims of the new way of life as all other representatives of society. The system is bad, as it should benefit people.

Bureaucracy could not be known in its pure form until recently because it is intertwined with other forms of government. In essence, all forms of government are the same, only methods by which the power is exercised differ, as well as the spaces where its executors operate. Ancient Egyptian pharaohs and ancient Chinese emperors built huge bureaucratic structures, and so did other rulers. Medieval feudalism was an attempt to organize rule over large areas without bureaucracy and its accompanying methods, but that attempt ended in failure. There is no doubt that bureaucratic system is fundamentally illiberal and undemocratic. However, bureaucracy and bureaucrats are being wrongly accused, while the number of bureaucrats is increasing day by day, which is a signal that the origin of the system's non-functioning must be sought elsewhere. Bureaucracy and bureaucratic methods are as old as civilization itself, they existed in the apparatuses of every state government, which only confirms constancy of its duration and characteristic of the inevitable companion of jobs. There is no doubt that its structure will continue to expand and improve, because possession of professional knowledge to perform a wide range of jobs in the modern era necessarily requires continuous work of employees on their own improvement. As a result, such circumstances also benefit the technostructure, because it is based on people who, with their authority, knowledge, work and life experience, are in position to manage economic entities and regulate the position of workers around the world.

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