Administration Social Assistance Policy: the Social Assistance Town Department of Sapucaia (Rio de Janeiro).

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Abstract
This article aims to present a research carried out at Social Assistance Town Department of Sapucaia, a small town in the Central-South Fluminense region in the State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The objective of this research was to assess the quality of the management of this local social assistance department, through the use of selected questions from the self - assessment questionnaire used by the MPE (Micro and Small Companies) Brazil Award - Competitiveness Award for Micro and Small Companies.
Keywords: Management. Public Management. Social Assistance.

INTRODUCTION

Human society is made of organizations that provide the means to meet people's needs. An organization is not necessarily an enterprise, it can also be an NGO, a school, a hospital and etc.

It presupposes, however, a certain order, a set of rules and pre-established norms; it is also a resource system. All organizations have objectives and a purpose, because resources are finite. Therefore, there is administrative rationality in order to think about where resources will be applied.

Administration can be defined as a dynamic process of making decisions about the use of resources, leading to goals achievements. Management is a synonymous of action. It can also be understood as:

> Art, in the sense of profession or area of human action. All art depends on abilities. People who run organizations (managers) need skills, which include different managing skills. These abilities can be acquired or enhanced through experience and study. Some people reveal exceptional talent as managers, in the most varied types of organizations and human enterprises. (MAXIMIANO, 2004: 35)

Thus, administration consists in public or private business management, being a set of principles, norms and functions whose purpose is to order the factors of production and control their productivity and efficiency, in order to obtain a specific result.

Administration is studied to produce more using fewer resources. Managing means achieving a goal or a result. It has to do with management and you can only do it, manipulating resources and counting on people.

The public administration, on the other hand, can be understood as any activity carried out by the State; is a set of norms, laws and functions performed by the State, in the three spheres of government, which main objective is the public interest, following the principles listed in article 37 of the Federal Constitution of 1988, the principle of legality, impersonality, morality, advertising and efficiency.

These principles aim at giving singularity and coherence to the public administration, controlling the management activities of all spheres in the government, Union, States, Federal District and cities.

Public administration aims to meet the needs of society, such as education, culture, social assistance, public safety, health etc., i.e., it is the management of public interests through the provision of public services.

It can be divided into direct and indirect management: the direct one is performed by all federated entities, in which the State exercises its functions directly; and in the indirect management, the State transfers its ownership or performance of the functions to other legal entities related to it. Indirect management is

composed of cities, foundations, mixed-capital companies, public companies and other entities governed by private law. These entities have their own legal personality, assets and administrative autonomy.

The functions of public administration are performed through agents, public bodies, entities and public activities, guaranteeing the direct and immediate achievement of the objectives sought by the State.

Managing also means to plan and elaborate actions in order to face the problems of the society, so, it needs the elaboration of public policies that can guide the governmental actions.

In this article, we will talk about a research carried out at the Social Assistance Town Department of Sapucaia, a small town, located in the Fluminense Center-South region in the State of Rio de Janeiro.

This research intends to assess the quality of management of this town social assistance department, through the use of selected questions from the self-assessment questionnaire used by the Brazil's MPE[1] Award Brazil - Competitiveness Award for Micro and Small Enterprises done by SEBRAE[2], by the Competive Brazil Movemente (*MBC)*, which is based on the Management Excellence Model (*MEG*) of the National Quality Foundation (*FNQ*) and adopted by numerous companies.

To achieve what is intended, we will cover the social assistance policy in Brazil and the management of it in Sapucaia city and, finally, present the carried out research and its results achieved.

Brief Considerations on Social Assistance in Brazil

Social assistance has always presented itself to society as a practice and not as a policy, its action was characterized as provisional, which kept it isolated and disjointed from other social practices.

Without a legal support that conceived it as a social right and a duty of the State, assistance was easily confused with temporary help to meet the individual difficulties of the poor, generally considered to be incapable of maintaining their own survival.

Social assistance used to be seen as a favor, as something complementary, to subsidize those who did not have the conditions or competence to guarantee their subsistence; and the citizen was not seen as an individual of rights, but as needy. Finally, social assistance was understood as an action of charity, benevolence, or philanthropy, governed by the logic of non-entitlement.

The Federal Constitution of 1988 introduces the concept of social security, instituting the three pillars: health, social security and social assistance, which the last one turns into public policy and is now recognized as a State duty.

Known as the "Citizen Constitution", the Federal Constitution of 1988 received this denomination because it was the result of great popular mobilizations, but also because it absorbed the population's ideals, in order to redefine social policies. According to FERREIRA, (2007: 23):

> *The promulgation of the 1988 Brazilian Constitution, recognizing assistance as a social and political right that is part of social security, established elements that contributed to change the historical condition of social assistance in Brazil, enabling its development under the principles of gratuity and non-contribution, universality and the guarantee of benefits and services, redistribution, decentralized and participatory management and progressive and redistributive financing. Principles that indicate that a new model of social assistance policy must be built in Brazil, once the State has a fundamental role and primacy in its implementation.*

The 1988 Constitution advocates overcoming welfare and consolidating social assistance as public policy, citizen's rights and state duty; guided by standards of universality and justice, aiming to promote the dignity of those who are in situations of exclusion, open possibilities for these people to be able to exist as citizens and for the incorporation of a culture of rights.

It is understood that, starting with the 1988 Constitution, a new conception about social assistance was born. However, the legal recognition of social assistance as a right of all and the duty of the State did not mean its real effectiveness in the society that needed it. For Social Assistance to be recognized as a public policy in the field of social rights, it was necessary, among other actions, to break the idea of right as a favor or emergency aid, performed without regularity, that had been becoming a reality in Brazil, aiming to overcome paternalism, clientelism and palliative actions.

Social assistance gained recognition after the regulation of the Organic Law on Social Assistance (LOAS), which regulates the constitutional precepts of social assistance, making it a basic social policy, characterized as a social right, part of the Social Security and, therefore, a duty of the State.

This law intended to break welfarism, with the favor and the vision of care as a set of charitable actions; and aims to achieve the integrated assistance to other policies, the search for the universalization of social rights, the provision of quality services, the primacy of the State in the conduct of assistance policy, the organization of a decentralized and participatory system and being part in the formulation and control of actions.

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[1] Abbreviation for *Micro e Pequenas Empresas*, which can be translated as *Micro and Small companies*
[2] Brazilian Service to Support Micro and Small Enterprises

Thus, the law establishes that social assistance is related to citizen's right and State duty, is a non-contributory Social Security Policy, which provides social minimums, carried out through a set of public initiatives and society, to ensure meeting basic needs. (BRAZIL, 1993).

Social Assistance Town Department of Sapucaia (Rio de Janeiro)

Social Assistance Town Department has the institutional mission of formulating, implementing, regulating, financing, executing, monitoring and evaluating the Social Assistance Town Policy, as an integral part of the Unique System of Social Assistance (SUAS). It seeks to develop a work of excellence, based on planning, coordination and structuring, developed within the parameters and requirements of the social assistance policy.

It aims to contribute to the reduction of poverty in the city of Sapucaia, respecting the principles of the National Policy of Social Assistance, the supremacy of meeting social needs on the requirements of economic profitability; the universalization of social rights; respect for the dignity of the citizen, his/her autonomy and his/her right of quality benefits and services, as well as family and community life; equal rights in access to care services, without discrimination of any kind, seeking to build a more fairer town, with dignity and respect as fundamental values.

The Social Department is the managing body of the social assistance policy in Sapucaia. It is legally and administratively linked to the Sapucaia Town Government, and is a public body, and its resources come from that town, as well as resources from the State and the Federal Government.

SATD[3] works with the planning of social policies at the local level, and with the implementation of national, state and town social policies, providing services related to the social assistance public policy. Through it, the town has the responsibility to manage social assistance giving it the equivalent format to its characteristics.

The actions performed in the social assistance area are planned and determined by Municipal Social Welfare Office itself through territory knowledge and the demands that comes from it.

The Social Assistance Town Department has administrative autonomy and its own budget, and includes in its organizational structure the management, financial sector, housing sector, 05 (five) Social Assistance Reference Centers, 01 (one) Reference Center specialized in Social Assistance, 01 (one) Long-Term Institution for the Elderly and 01 (one) Institution of Reception for Children and Teenagers. This results in more than 85 (eighty-five) employees, ranging from general service assistants to higher-level technicians.

The high managers of the SATD is composed by the Social Assistance Department, its advisers (SATD advisor and Housing advisor) and a Coordinator of Social Protection and the *Bolsa Família*[4] Program.

Administrative Procedures.

In addition, SATD has 11 social workers, 8 psychologists, 1 lawyer, 05 social counselors, 08 equipment coordinators (CRAS[5], CREAS[6] and host institutions), 02 drivers, 03 technicians from the *Bolsa Família* Program, 17 caregivers (09 for children and teenagers and 08 for the elderly), 07 administrative assistants, 09 general service assistants, 02 cookers and 04 secretaries.

Management and housing and financial departments are managed directly by the social assistance secretary. The equipment, however, has its own coordination, being managed directly by the coordinator and indirectly by the special protection coordinator, the SATD assessor and the social assistance secretary. The equipment has autonomy in the execution of its services and purposes, however, all the planning and the most complex decisions are taken and discussed with the high managers.

RESEARCH METHOD

According to MINAYO, (2007) methodology is understood as being the path of thought and the practice of approaching reality. Thus, the methodology is not reduced to the use of knowledge operability instruments, it also involves the method to be used and the researcher's creativity. Still quoting MINAYO (2007) it includes the theoretical conceptions of the approach, articulating with theory, empirical reality and thoughts about reality.

Throughout the elaboration and execution of a research, the methodology becomes important because the researcher aligns the method to the instruments that will operationalize the research, allowing the obtaining and knowledge of results.

Research is a theoretical practice, a basic activity of science for the knowledge of reality, which links thought and action. The research carried out at the social assistance town department in Sapucaia (Rio de Janeiro) was a qualitative research.

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[3] Social Assistance Town Department

[4] Brazillian Social Assitance Program, which is called *Bolsa Família*

[5] Abbreviation for *Conselho Regional de Administração,* which means Regional Management Council

[6] Abbreviation for *Conselho Regional de Engenharia e Agronomia,* which means Regional Engineering and Agronomy Council

According to MINAYO, (2007: 21) qualitative research:

works with the universe of meanings, reasons, aspirations, beliefs, values and attitudes. This set of human phenomena is understood here as part of social reality, because the human being is distinguished not only by acting, but by thinking about what he does and interpreting the actions within and from the reality lived and shared with peers. The universe of human production that can be summarized in the world of relations, representations and intentionality and it is the object of qualitative research cab barely be translated into numbers and quantitative indicators.

A qualitative research presupposes three stages, as presented by MINAYO (2007: 26). The first is called the exploratory phase, and it refers to the planning of the research; the second stage, the field work, carries out the research empirically and the third step, analysis and treatment of empirical and documentary material, includes the ordering, classification and analysis of the data obtained.

Bringing the theory to the present research, during the exploratory phase it was possible for the researchers to deepen knowledge about management, with emphasis in the public administration; as well as social assistance policy. In the second stage, from the instituting visits to Sapucaia's Social Assistance Town Department and the application of the self-assessment questionnaire to the high managers and some employees, the researchers could observe the organization searched, in addition to obtaining the data needed for the research. After, it was possible to perform the analysis of the obtained material.

The instrument used in the research was a structured questionnaire, with questions previously selected, taken from the self-assessment questionnaire used by the Brazil's MPE[7] Award Brazil - Competitiveness Award for Micro and Small Enterprises done by SEBRAE[8], by the Competitive Brazil Movement (*MBC)*; which is based on the Management Excellence Model (*MEG*) of the National Quality Foundation (*FNQ*) and adopted by numerous companies.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The questionnaire used in the interviews was applied to four people, including the general manager and another member of the high management and two technicians with higher education.

We will present the results of the research here, raising the questions and briefly analyzing the answers obtained.

Regarding the mission of SATD, understanding that the mission of the company formalizes the reason for its existence and defines why it exists, we note that in SATD the mission is defined and registered in written form, but it is known and understood by some collaborators.

Indeed, what was emphasized is that the mission of SATD, despite being registered in written form, is not in a visible place to everyone in the organization, nor in the equipment linked to it, being restricted to the registration in formal documents of the SATD such as the annual management reports, the multiannual town's social assistance plan, etc.

In order to do so, we emphasize that registration in written form and communication of the mission to the collaborators would contribute to everyone knowing, sharing and pursuing the same ideals, enhancing the contribution of each one in the organization.

Regarding the incentive, by the leaders, to an ethical behavior in internal and external relations, the interviewed people highlighted that in SATD there are no specific rules to ensure ethical behavior, however, due to being a public organization linked to the City Hall of Sapucaia, public employees need to follow the rules and conduct stipulated in the statute of town public employees and related legislations. In addition, some categories have their own code of ethics, such as social workers.

We understand that ethical behavior in the organization means transparency in their relationships, respect for users, employees and suppliers, the practice of honesty and resistance to any type of harassment and acts of corruption. However, although there are no specific ethical rules of conduct for SATD employees, the interviewed individuals emphasized that ethical behavior is considered as one of the values of SATD, both managers and employees conduct their activities with respect and attention, especially directed not only to the users of the social assistance policy, but to other employees and involved individuals in the organization.

The third question of the instruments used in the interview was about the analysis of SATD performance and whether it is performed by the directors.

It was highlighted by the interviewed people that the SATD performance analysis is done regularly and includes aspects that are broad to the needs of the organization. It was emphasized that in the scope of the equipment, each one is responsible for elaborating its planning and evaluating its results. This assessment is accompanied by the high managers. They are responsible for gathering all these analyzes and annually elaborating a Management Report that evaluates the performance of the services in accordance with the goals set forth in the Social Assistance Town Plan, all at the town level.

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[7] Abbreviation for *Micro e Pequenas Empresas*, which can be translated as *Micro and Small companies.*

[8] Brazilian Service to Support Micro and Small Enterprises.

In relation to the information sharing, it was emphasized that managers do it regularly and it covers all employees. This is done through institutional visits made by senior management at the equipment, meetings, forums, capacities etc.

In fact, the sharing of information with employees, such as goals, objectives, strategies and results, develop a collective feeling of belonging to a group of people who pursue the same ideals and goals, which ultimately enhances the contribution of each one.

According to the people who underwent the interview, this is a quality of SATD high managers, because when all employees understand the company' s objectives and follow the results obtained towards compliance, the productivity, commitment and involvement of employees increase significantly.

Regarding the questions that the managers invest in their development and apply the knowledge acquired in SATD into the company, the interview confirmed that they do so.

The current management of SATD is committed to being permanently empowered and is concerned with disseminating the knowledge acquired with employees. This permanent training is not restricted to the high managers, but extends to employees who have full management support to undergo trainings and events related to social assistance and services developed in the town.

For the correct and ethical performance of the organization in society it is necessary that it meets applicable legal requirements, including environmental aspects. The legal requirements are contained in laws, decrees, regulations and other existing instruments applicable to the organization's products, services, facilities and operations, and are mandatory. The legal requirements are dynamic, in other words, they are changed and updated continuously. This way, they need to be kept updated by the company.

In the question regarding the legal requirements needed for the operation of SATD to be known and kept up to date, interviewees answered that the legal requirements applicable to SATD are known and kept up to date. Mainly because it is a public organization, constantly supervised, even by the Social Assistance Town Council, which is a social control body.

In relation to the question that asks if the negative impacts caused by SATD to the environment are known and treated, it was pointed out by the interviewees that SATD does not directly cause any impact to the environment, however, it cares about saving energy, water, paper and so on. Employees are also advised to separate recyclable waste, reuse materials, avoid unnecessary waste and etc.

SATD demonstrates its commitment to the community through social actions or projects. The company participates or carries out social projects on a regular basis with employees' involvement. This question is relevant in the sense that the social aspect is the object of the company's work.

Every organization influences, positively or negatively the community in which it is inserted. This community has needs and expectations that can be met by the organization on a voluntary basis, motivating and involving its employees in these activities.

In the case of SATD, community service is provided through the services, programs and projects offered in the equipment, through social actions or projects that contribute to local and regional development. All the work done involves employees, stimulating the exercise of citizenship and individual social responsibility.

The organizational structure defines the positions and functions necessary for the effective operation of the organization. These functions are held by managers and employees and each function is associated with a set of responsibilities.

Responsibilities of the function are the activities that must be fulfilled by its occupants to ensure the fulfillment of company's mission. The knowledge of these leaders and employees' responsibilities clarifies the participation of each person in the activities of the organization and promotes the synergy of teamwork.

At SATD, the roles and responsibilities of individuals (managers and employees) are defined and documented by federal legislation. Each professional, depending on his or her role, has specific roles and responsibilities within the national social assistance policy.

The selection of employees is intended to fill vacant jobs with people who can perform the job duties. The choice of people must obey the requirements established by the organization for each function.

These requirements are necessary for proper training and subsequent performance in the function. Due to the fact that it is a public organization, positions, by law, must be filled by public examination.

Currently in SATD only some positions are occupied by people who underwent the public examination, the vast majority is occupied by contracted professionals, who are chosen through an interview with the high managers.

Some employees have commissioned positions, and their hiring is motivated by political issues, nominations, alliances etc. In fact, in every public organization there are political offices with this characteristic. This can jeopardize the development of work, since it depends on the professional effectively appropriating his duties and developing an ethical work for the benefit of the users.

SATD employees are regularly trained in their duties. The training of employees aims at developing knowledge, skills and attitudes that allow the correct performance of the function, thus promoting the efficiency and synergy of the work team.

In the question of whether the hazards and risks related to occupational health and safety are identified and addressed, the interviewees pointed out that it does not apply to SATD. There is apparently no risk or danger related to health and safety at work.

Dangers related to occupational health and safety must be identified so that its risks are addressed in order to prevent factors that may threaten the physical or psychological integrity of the employees as a result of their activities.

The treatment of risks consists in the establishment of preventive actions with the purpose of preventing or avoiding their occurrence and reducing its effects. Compliance with the legal requirements of the ERPP - Environmental Risk Prevention Program and OCHMCP- Occupational Health and Medicine Control Program is mandatory for all companies that have employees. However, at Sapucaia City Hall there are not any activities related to this yet.

The right conditions for work, not only in relation to health and safety, but also in terms of comfort in workplaces, provide well-being and satisfaction at work and with the organization.

It is necessary to identify the factors that affect the well-being and satisfaction of the employees and to provide them with adequate treatment, in order to promote a pleasant and participative work environment, with consequent motivation and enthusiasm of them. The existence of additional benefits required by legislation, confraternities, creation of leisure areas in the company and open communication at all levels are examples of actions to treat factors that affect the well-being and satisfaction of employees .

Regarding the welfare and employee satisfaction, it was emphasized that there are no actions to promote the well-being and satisfaction of employees. Eventually the high managers organize motivational events for all employees.

Although some employees are hired, it was highlighted by the high managers that the town intends to hold public examination this year. The public examination is important because it reduces the possibility of hiring for political and paternalistic motivations, as well as promoting guarantee of work.

In the visit to the organization and in the interviews conducted, it was possible to notice that the speech of the interviewees, as well as of the other employees who were approached informally, converges towards a work accomplished and thought in team. Valorizing employees, their opinions and contributions, mainly in the preparation of work planning.

It was possible to observe that the work environments are equipped and decorated, some with even air-conditioner, which contributes to the quality of the service, reflecting the well-being of employees in their socio-occupational environment.

High managers are receptive and accessible, actively participating in the day to day of the employees, constantly visiting the environment, organizing meetings to discuss work planning, goals and conducting monitoring and service evaluation.

CONCLUSIONS

As we have seen, the SATD mission is defined and registered in written form, but it is known and understood by some collaborators. Regarding to an ethical behavior, due to be a public organization, public employees need to follow the rules and conduct stipulated in the statute of town public employees.

The performance analysis is done regularly in this organization and includes aspects that are broad to the needs of the organization. In relation to the information sharing, it was emphasized that managers do it regularly and it covers all employees.

We could notice that the managers invest in their development and apply the knowledge acquired in SATD. Mainly the organization demonstrates its commitment to the community through social actions or projects. The company participates or carries out social projects on a regular basis with employees' involvement.

The research showed also some problems in the organization. Although the selection of employees is intended to fill vacant jobs with people who can perform the job duties, some employees have commissioned positions, and their hiring is motivated by political issues which can be prejudicial to work done.

Also regarding the welfare and employee satisfaction, it was emphasized that there are no actions to promote the well-being and satisfaction of employees. It is necessary to identify the factors that affect the well-being and satisfaction of the employees in order to promote a pleasant work environment. The employees must be trained and work in a suitable environment so that the tasks are carried out as planned. The human resources are very important do raise organizational productivity.

In fact, the success of an organization, whether public or private, is directly related to its capacity to meet users' needs and expectations, and to a responsible performance in the society with which it interacts. To do so, management needs to formulate strategies and establish action plans and goals to achieve the desired results. Plans and goals should be communicated to other employees and monitored and evaluated by management and staff.

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