



## **Factors Influencing the Development of Public Universities' Personnel Specialists**

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**Abstract:** Developing public universities' personnel specialists is essential in the current period to enhance the quality of higher education human resources and meet the requirements of the fundamental and comprehensive reform of higher education. This article figures out the factors influencing the development of public universities' personnel specialists, including globalization and internationalization trend, the development of the knowledge-based economy, and the fourth industrial revolution; the fundamental and comprehensive reform of higher education; State's guidelines and policies; working environment; perception of public universities' personnel specialists of their roles and positions in the universities; competencies of public universities' personnel specialists; administrators for the development of public universities' personnel specialists.

**Keywords:** Factors, influencing, a contingent of, develop, personnel specialist.

### **1. Introduction**

Personnel organization and human resources work constitute a complex and challenging task. It involves many aspects, such as psychophysics, society, and ethics. It is a blend of science and art - the art of human management. With the essential functions and tasks of the personnel organization, the human resources department in each agency and unit in general, and public universities in particular, must be considered a consultant team on human resource policies and strategies to satisfy the development requirements of the organization and the university. To do that, specific plans, programs, and solutions are needed to improve the competencies of personnel specialists, facilitating their long-term and solid development. It should also be appreciated as one of the prerequisites to ensure the upcoming development of the sector.

It is, therefore, crucial for public universities to study factors influencing the development of personnel specialists as a basis for proposing solutions to develop their competencies, meeting the requirements of their responsibilities amidst the fundamental and comprehensive reform of education.

## **2. Literature on the development of public universities' personnel specialists**

Public universities' personnel specialists are administrative staff members (other than administrators) working in personnel departments of public universities. They hold satisfactory professional qualifications and expertise and act as specialists to advise and assist rectors in managing and performing personnel tasks in the universities.

### **2.1. Development of public universities' personnel specialists**

Yuhong He and Shaoyang Zhang (2018), *"Human Resource Management in Public Universities: A Review of Literature"*. This study provides an overview of the factors that influence the development of human resource management in public universities, including the role of personnel specialists.

Mavis Asare and Emmanuel Akwasi Adomako (2016), *"Factors Influencing the Development of Human Resource Management in Public Universities: A Case Study of Ghana"*. This study examines the factors that influence the development of human resource management in public universities in Ghana, including the role of personnel specialists.

Margaret J. Wanjiku and J. P. Ogola (2013), *"Challenges Facing the Development of Human Resource Management in Public Universities in Kenya"*. This study examines the challenges that hinder the development of human resource management in public universities in Kenya, including the role of personnel specialists.

Nicholas P. Lovrich, Jr. and Edward F. Lawlor (2016), *"Human Resource Management in Public Higher Education: Exploring the Role of HR Professionals"*. This study examines the role of human resource professionals in public higher education institutions, including the challenges and opportunities they face.

P. O. Olasehinde and A. O. Afolabi (2013), *"Factors Affecting the Development of Human Resource Management in Public Universities: A Comparative Study of Selected Universities in Nigeria"*. This study compares the factors that affect the development of human resource management in public universities in Nigeria, including the role of personnel specialists.

William C. Hill and Jane A. Carlson (2012), *"The Role of Human Resource Professionals in Higher Education: A Comparative Study of Public and Private Institutions"*. This study compares the roles and responsibilities of human resource professionals in public and private higher education institutions.

These studies provide insights into the factors that influence the development of public universities' personnel specialists, including the challenges and opportunities they face.

Developing personnel specialists is a part of human resource development in general and higher education human resource development in particular.

From the macro, national, and international management perspectives, human resources are the human resources of a country, even multiple countries, regions, and the world. In terms of micro-management, human resource development involves the good performance of management functions and tools to have a proper number of high-quality officers, staff members and employees of an organization so that through their activities, the organization's efficiency has been constantly improved, fundamentally driving the sustainable development of such organization.

Developing personnel specialists is a management activity to ensure their sufficient number, synchronous structure, and improved quality.

In the current context of the comprehensive education reform and international integration, developing personnel specialists plays a special role in ensuring and upgrading the quality of teachers and educational administrators - the critical factor to ensuring and improving the education quality of public universities.

- It can be said that the current contingent of public universities' personnel specialists has been well-trained in daily work to be experts in the assigned field. However, many of them have yet to accumulate enough experience and expertise in human resources and personnel, have yet to grasp the working process and the position and responsibilities for solving work, and have yet to be equipped with knowledge about modern human resource management. In short, they lack the necessary competencies to well fulfill their work.

Hence, developing public universities' personnel specialists requires synchronously taking solutions to communicate the roles and the need of development of public universities' personnel specialists; improving planning and development planning; perfecting the recruitment and employment processes; holding capacity building training for personnel specialists to meet their job requirements; evaluating specialists and establishing a motivating working environment to promote and develop their competencies. Nonetheless, attention should be paid to factors influencing such development to make solutions feasible and fruitful.

## **2.2. Factors influencing the development of public universities' personnel specialists**

### ***a. Objective factors***

- *Globalization and internationalization trend, development of the knowledge-based economy, and the fourth industrial revolution*

Globalization involves increasing international integration in all economic, cultural, and social aspects. It takes place at different levels of individuals, societies, institutions, and states.

For smooth participation in this process, each country must build and develop a knowledge-based economy, especially human resources.

Participation in globalization is posing a challenge to our country's labor forces. Besides improving their competitiveness in technical expertise and skills, they need to be equipped with other qualities such as foreign language competency, good manners, and modern industrial behavior culture, observance of labor discipline and technology,

knowledge of the law. This factor strongly impacts the development of the staff in universities in general and public universities' personnel specialists in particular.

*- Fundamental and comprehensive reform of higher education*

The great mission of higher education is to prepare high-quality human resources to meet the requirements of national industrialization and modernization and actively participate in the international division of labor and join the regional and world economic organizations.

Higher education aims to focus on training highly qualified human resources, fostering talents, developing learners' quality and capacity for self-study, and self-enrichment of knowledge and creativity. Also, perfecting the network of higher education institutions, and the structure of occupations and qualifications in line with the national human resource development planning, including a number of training schools and disciplines on par with those in the world and the region, is another objective. [4].

To fulfill these objectives, fundamental and comprehensive reform is needed for higher education. It then affects the staff's positions, roles, and qualification requirements, including public universities' personnel specialists.

*- State's guidelines and policies*

The policy on human resource development: "Rapidly developing human resources, especially high-quality human resources" [4] is considered a breakthrough to make our country a modern industrialized country. In addition, the State's policy on entitlements to attract highly qualified and dedicated employees will be an opportunity for universities to attract high-quality human resources to develop teachers and educational administrators.

Mechanisms and policies for teachers and educational administrators: The 8<sup>th</sup>-Meeting Resolution of the 11<sup>th</sup> Party Central Committee [5] on fundamental and comprehensive reform of education and training further affirmed the viewpoint that "Education and training are the top national policy and the cause of the Party, State, and the whole people." One of the nine tasks of the Education sector to successfully follow Resolution No. 29-NQ/TW is "Developing teachers and administrators, meeting the requirements of education and training innovation." Accordingly, all-level administrators and schools are required to have strategies in place to develop educational administrators in a synchronous manner. Educational administrators must attend management training courses. "Educational administrators play a significant role in the organization, management, and administration of educational activities. They are responsible for learning, practicing, and improving their ethical qualities, professional qualifications, and management competencies, and adhering to standards and legal regulations. The State must have the plan to build and improve the quality of educational administrators" [6] and "The recruitment, employment, treatment, and honor of teachers and educational administrators must rely on the assessment of competencies, professional ethics, and work performance" [7].

Thus, all-level teachers and educational administrators are the subjects of educational innovation. Building teachers and educational administrators are, therefore, a key task that needs special attention. The education development strategy during 2011-2020 was determined to be

“standardization in training, selection, employment and evaluation of teachers and educational administrators” [8].

Requirements for the development of teachers and educational administrators in the current period are “planning training and fostering of teachers and educational administrators in association with socio-economic development demands, security and national defense assurance and international integration.”

Guidelines, policies, requirements, and orientations aim to build and develop teachers and administrators with sufficient qualities and competencies to satisfy the requirements of the fundamental and comprehensive education and training reform in the current period. They also directly affect the development of public universities’ personnel specialists.

Mechanisms and policies for personnel staff: To make innovations and build a contingent of personnel staff is required. The quality and performance of personnel organization depend on the qualifications, competencies, ethical qualities, and quality of personnel staff. Hence, renewing and building staff to match its historical mission is necessary. The 3<sup>th</sup>-Meeting Resolution of the 8<sup>th</sup> Party Central Committee on “Personnel strategies in the period of accelerating national industrialization and modernization” identifies the “improvement of staff’s quality, qualifications and competencies; and policies on training, fostering and selection of fair, honest, transparent, and experienced people to take charge of personnel organization” as personnel strategies. The 9<sup>th</sup>-Meeting Resolution of the 10<sup>th</sup> Party Central Committee issued Conclusion No. 37-KL/TW dated February 2, 2009, on “Further promoting personnel strategies from now to 2020”, emphasizing the task of “promoting scientific research and building organizations and human resources in charge of personnel organization,” and “strengthening education in the sense of responsibility, competencies, qualities, and ethics of personnel staff.”

The guidelines and policies of the Party and the State towards personnel staff directly affect the development of public universities’ personnel specialists.

*- Working environment*

The working environment is considered an important factor with great impact on specialist’s productivity and performance.

Apart from abilities and qualifications, a specialist’s performance depends on the good balance between his/her ability to perform the assigned tasks and willingness to do the tasks. A good working environment may inspire creativity and motivate specialists to do their best, love their jobs, and never leave work. In addition, a good working environment also creates a sustainable connection between specialists and colleagues, superiors, and the school, positively influencing their health and working spirit.

Therefore, the working environment makes a substantial impact on the development of public universities’ personnel specialists.

***b. Subjective factors***

In addition to external factors, the development of public universities’ personnel specialists is also influenced by internal factors.

*- Perception of public universities' personnel specialists of the role and position of personnel staff in universities*

The awareness of public universities' personnel specialists about the role, positions, functions, and duties of personnel staff in the universities affects their enthusiasm for the performance of their tasks and efforts for self-improvement and self-development. With the proper awareness, specialists can perform their tasks voluntarily and well. At the same time, they will have a sense of learning, accumulating experience, and self-improving of necessary qualities and competencies to meet job requirements in the context of the fundamental and comprehensive reform of higher education, especially reform of higher education management regarding personnel organization.

*- Competencies of public universities' personnel specialists*

Competencies of personnel specialists make up an organic combination of closely related knowledge, skills, and attitudes possessed by an individual, enabling him/her to effectively perform personnel activities. The quality and performance of personnel organization rely on qualifications, competencies, ethical qualities, and quality of personnel staff.

Competencies of public universities' personnel specialists are formed through training and fostering but are developed and perfected through actual experiences in their professional activities. It can be said that self-study and self-improvement are decisive for the development of each specialist. Without self-study and self-improvement of political quality, professional ethics, and professional qualifications, public universities' personnel specialists will fail to meet the current personnel reform requirements and self-development.

Thus, each personnel specialist's competencies affect the development of public universities' personnel specialists.

*- Administrators for the development of public universities' personnel specialists according to the competency-based approach*

The development of personnel specialists considerably depends on the concern of university administrators. Such concern is reflected in their proper awareness of the role of personnel specialists. Consequently, they will provide many appropriate guidelines and policies and facilitate the development of specialists  
in terms of time and funding.

Public university administrators' competencies directly and decisively affect their personnel specialists' development. Administrators themselves, specifically heads of personnel departments/divisions/offices, and rectors of universities must be able to guide and organize planning, selection, training, and fostering; and building a suitable and effective organizational structure, with a clear assignment of responsibilities, thereby motivating specialists to promote their roles. These are positive impacts on the development of personnel specialists.

Public university administrators' leadership and organizational roles ensure the well-oriented and high-quality development of personnel staff.



### **3. Current situation of factors influencing the development of public universities' personnel specialists**

#### **3.1. Survey objectives, content, methods, and sample**

A survey was carried out to collect information on self-assessment and assessment of lecturers/specialists/administrators on the current situation of factors influencing the development of public universities' personnel specialists, including objective factors, subjective factors, and influence level of factors. In addition to objective multiple-choice questions, the survey also used open-ended questions to collect participants' opinions on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges to the development of personnel specialists in the current period.

Questionnaires were delivered to 102 personnel specialists, 245 lecturers and other specialists, and 50 administrators (*rectors, vice-rectors, heads and deputy heads of personnel departments*) of 38 public universities across the country, including 18 universities in the North, 15 in the South and the remaining 8% in the Central region.

Survey participants were asked to rate the influence of these factors on the development of personnel specialists according to the competency-based approach with a scale of 4 levels:

- No influence
- Little influence
- Influence
- Much influence

#### **3.2. Survey result**

Statistical results in Table 1 show that: with these questions, there was a high consensus in all 3 survey groups. The three groups all supposed that the above-listed factors greatly influenced the development of personnel specialists (mean > 3). The rating of factors are as follows:

- Guidelines and policies of the Party and State on the development of public universities' personnel specialists (*ranked 1<sup>st</sup>*)
- Competencies of public universities' personnel specialists (*ranked 2<sup>nd</sup>*)
- Working environment (*ranked 3<sup>rd</sup>*)
- Requirements for the fundamental and comprehensive reform of higher education (*ranked 4<sup>th</sup>*)
- Administrators for the development of public universities' personnel specialists according to the competency-based approach (*ranked 5<sup>th</sup>*)
- Globalization and internationalization trend, development of the knowledge-based economy, and the fourth industrial revolution (*ranked 6<sup>th</sup>*)
- Perception of public universities' personnel specialists of the role and position of personnel staff in universities (*ranked 7<sup>th</sup>*)

Thus, guidelines and policies of the Party and the State have the greatest influence, with the mean given by lecturers = 3.57 (SD = 0.56), mean given by personnel specialists = 3.52 (SD = 0.58), mean given by administrators = 3.66 (SD = 0.52). The perception of public universities' personnel specialists of the role and position of personnel staff in universities has the least influence among the three groups.

Moreover, some administrators proposed other influencing factors to be considered, such as family circumstances, salary regime, training and fostering.

#### **4. Conclusions**

Developing personnel specialists is a part of human resource development and relies on general human resource development theory. Public universities' personnel specialists play an essential role in advising, proposing, and implementing the establishment of an appropriate organizational structure in such universities. Building and developing a sufficient and synchronous contingent of staff with good qualities and competencies to meet the increasing requirements of higher education reform is an urgent requirement in the current period. Exploring and analyzing the factors influencing the development of personnel specialists aim to make use of, apply and promote good influencing factors for higher quality and efficiency as well as proper and feasible solutions to the development of public universities' personnel specialists.

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