

# THE ACTIVATION OF THE PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNMENT AT THREE ADMINISTRATIVE LEVELS

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**Abstract:** The present article aims to identify at three administrative levels- the level subordinated to the local administrative level, the local administrative level and the county administrative level -what are the principles of governance under which administrative activities are carried out and which shall ensure the goods and public services or of the public interest. Also, the present research proposes to identify a number of similarities and differences in relation to the principles of governance- sensitivity, suitability, effectiveness, impact, sustainability, efficiency, equity and fairness- within different institutional administrative types.

JEL classification: **D01, D03, D23**

Key words: public administration, principles of government, administrative level, decentralisation

## 1. INTRODUCTION – FROM PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION TO THE WELFARE STATE

The public administration can be defined as that organizational-institutionalised structure of which purpose is the provision of goods and services for the public or of the "public interest" (Matei, 2006, p.106) in a certain community, region or State.

„The research in public administration is concerned with the problem of the efficiency and effectiveness issues aimed at improving the performance of the public sector. According to the scientific approach specific to new public management, starting from this challenge, it must also consider the knowledge and the perceptions of the players / customers / citizens on the public sector processes and mechanisms that must meet public needs" (Vigola, 2000, p.165).

The public administration developed more institutional structures aimed at ensuring common good at different administrative levels: from the administrative level which is closed to the citizen - which we call administrative level subordinated to the local level - at the level of local government, to the district level, then regional, and national level, if we consider that last reference pillar of the state.

Moreover, given that the public administration aims to provide goods and services, they can be provided on its own regime (as in municipalities), but also by delegation or autonomous regimes (as the companies subordinated to the municipalities or councils) (Beligrădeanu, 2001, pp. 3-5), etc.

In all cases, regardless of the institutional formula adopted to ensure a good or a public service (Albu, 2005, pp. 82-84), the idea of public management implies the idea of the good governance and the activation of some governing principles that finally

ensure the common good of a society, of a community. Although there is not a unique range of principles of governing in the public administration, in general we talk about: objectivity provision of the services and goods, as well as the exercise of public functions; assuring the good to the citizens; spending and use of the resources to resolve the problems of a community, etc.

From this point of view, this article aims to identify a set of principles governing to the various administrative levels and in different types of administrative institutions in order to see if there are or are not differences between the items mentioned.

## 2. WHAT ARE THE PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNMENT?

One of the authors who made a classification of the governance principles is Blalock (Blalock, 1991, p. 117) (see Table no. 1), defining the effectiveness, the efficiency, the appropriateness, the fairness, the sensitivity and the accuracy. In the above, to provide a greater coverage of the governance principles we have added to the table two principles: the sustainability and the impact.

Table no. 1

Types	The question
sensitivity	Meet the results of policies the needs, preferences, and values of different social groups?
appropriateness	To what extent obtaining that result solves the problem that led to the formulation of that policy?
effectiveness	Was obtained a valuable result?
impact	The overall effect of benefits on beneficiaries
sustainability	The degree of continuity of the public services offered
efficiency	How great was the effort required to get that result?
equity	The costs and benefits are distributed equitably among different social groups?
fairness	Are the desired results valuable?

We defined the impact as that principle that refers to the overall effect of the benefits policy which is implemented on the direct or indirect beneficiaries of the program. The sustainability indicates whether there is a possibility that the positive results of policy or project to continue after the initial public program planning is over, on medium term or long term in a particular region or sector.

## 3. METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLE

This research is performed in three institutions from Iasi, at different administrative levels and within different frames: Termo-Service – as a company providing local public services, subordinated to the Local Council, Iasi City Hall, and Apavital that assure public services at the county level, subordinated to the Iasi County Council. So we deal with three government bodies that provide public services at three levels: the level subordinated to local level – local level – county level, in order of their jurisdiction.

The hypothesis of the research is based on the idea that the public governance is a process that can take its own rationality beyond the cycle of public policies, legislation, an important role starring the principles that administrative institutions use. The research uses as an instrument the questionnaire, self-applied. It operationalises a number of principles which the administrative institutions use at different levels of their government.

The total volume of sample research is 123 people, 41 people for each administrative unit. The sample is probabilistic, based on sampling multilateral technique: initially, we split the total population by areolar sampling, in sections, identical with the types of the structures of the institution concerned (departments, services, offices, according to the organizational chart) subsequently, by lot, were selected departments, services and offices related to the same probabilistic manner, and, finally, to complete the total number of respondents in the sample structure.

#### 4. RESULTS

Regarding the results of this research, we will identify the principles used in the three government bodies in an attempt to determine whether there are similarities or differences between the three administrative levels, if it can be established any administrative model or, conversely, each institution has its own governing principles in determining / administrative governance process in a personalized manner.

For sensitivity, the values of this principle grow from the bottom to up: from the level subordinated to the local level, to the county level (vezi Figure no. 1).

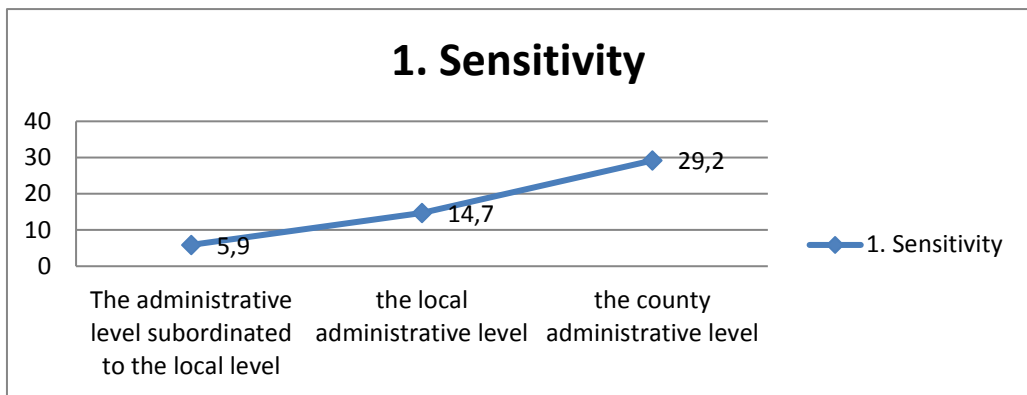


Figure no. 1

This seems to demonstrate that the principle of sensitivity has higher values with as increases the administrative level, at least in relation to this research. Previously, defining the sensitivity as a possible response to the needs of various social categories, it might have been likely that the effect of applying this principle may have been reversed with the administrative levels: if the administrative level is closer to the citizens, then this principle will have higher values. However, this principle works here in the other way around, which can lead to the next hypothesis: sensitivity principle is related to the administrative management of each institution, not necessarily to the degree of the administrative decentralization.

As regards the principle of **appropriateness**, the values are very high at the administrative level subordinated to the local level, and falls towards the local level to increase to county administrative level (see Figure no. 2).

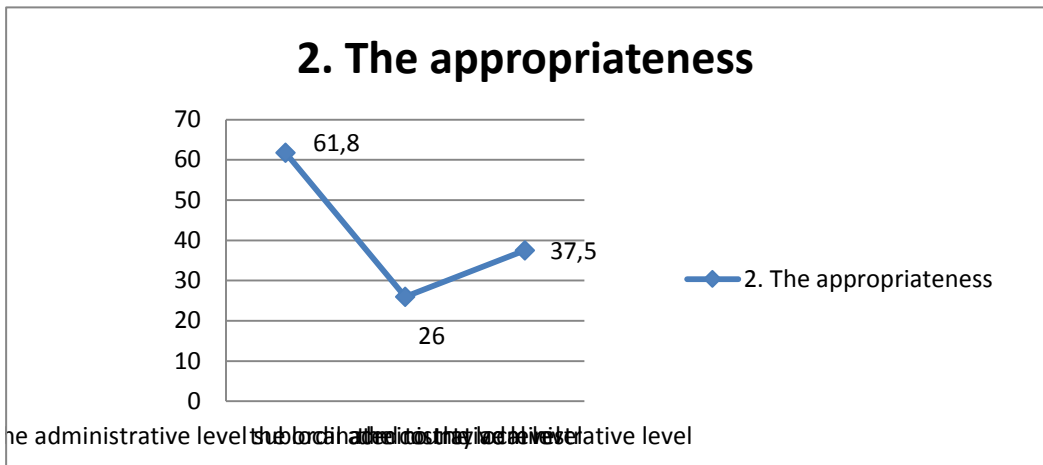


Figure no. 2

The bottom line may be similar to the above: the suitability is not determined by the degree of the administrative decentralization.

For **the effectiveness**, all three levels of the percentages are increased for the three administrative levels and the dynamics is the same: increased at the administrative level subordinated to the local level, to decreases after, and then to increases at the county level (see Figure no. 3).

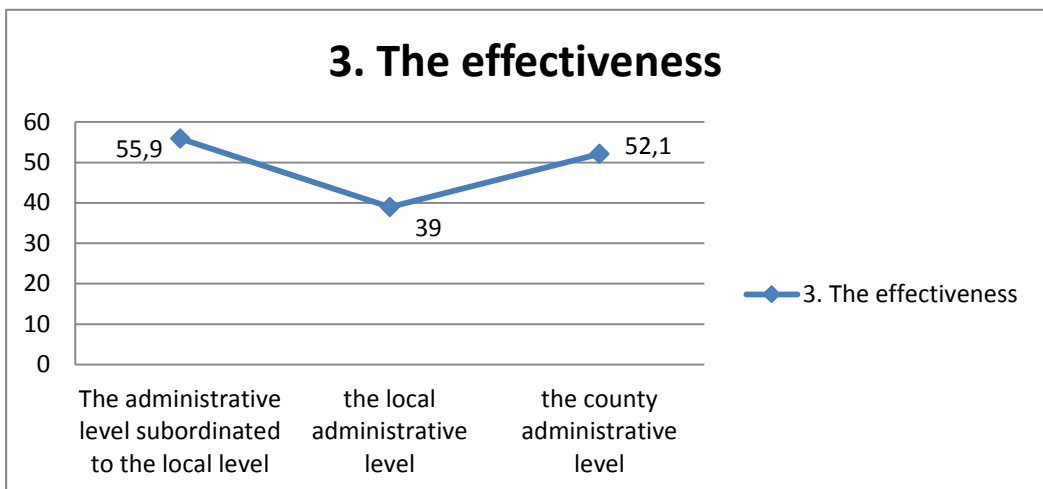


Figure no. 3

The **impact** has a different percentage values dynamic: decreased at the administrative level subordinated to the local level, increases then to the local administrative level, then drops to the county administrative level (see Figure no. 4).

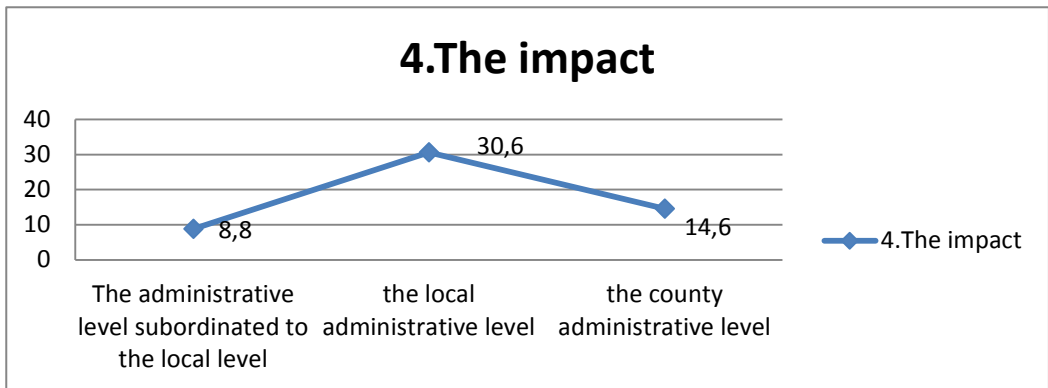


Figure no. 4

With regard to **sustainability**, the course is the same as in the case of sensitivity: its values are in an increasing order from the administrative level subordinated to the local level to the county level (see Figure no. 5).

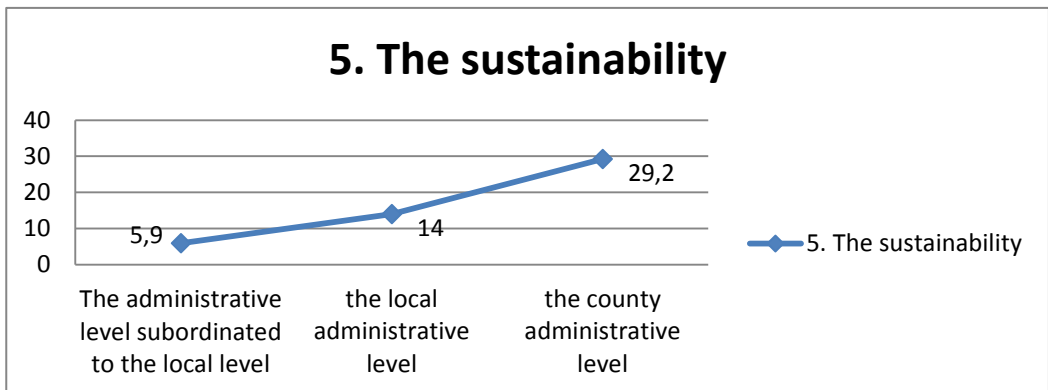


Figure no. 5

The **efficiency** has the same dynamic as in the case of the impact, and the values of the percentages are close to those of the impact (about 2%) (see Figure no. 6).

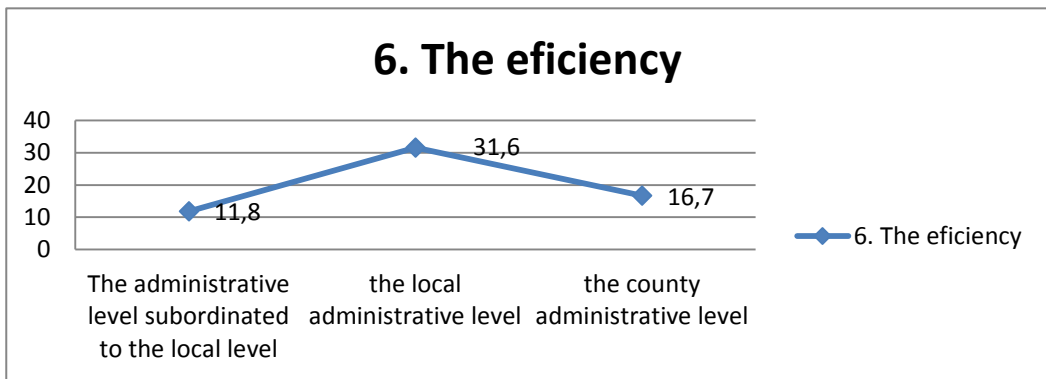


Figure no. 6

For **the equity**, the dynamics is decreasing: from a high percentage value at the administrative level subordinated to the local level, decreases to the local level, and then to the county level. We might say that the equity is assured at least of the rank of decentralization, without excluding other determinant factors (see Figure no. 7).

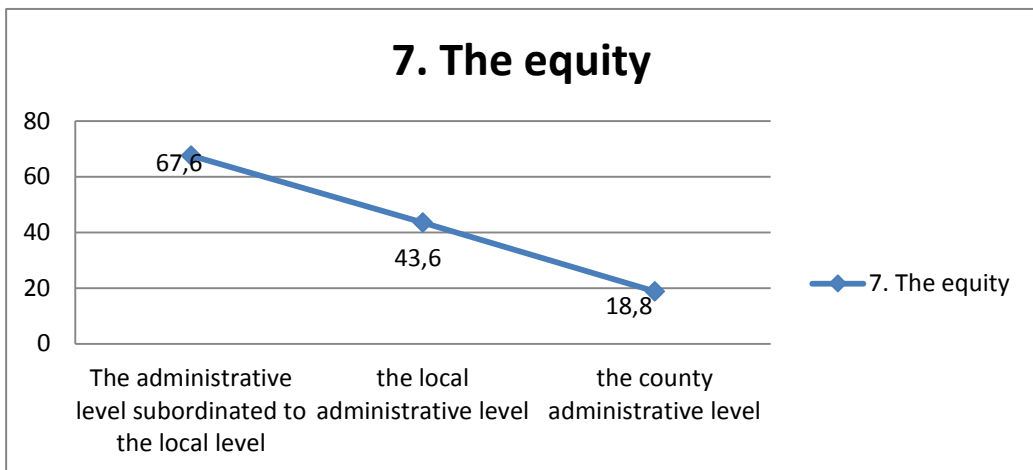


Figure no. 7

**The fairness** involves a similar dynamic to the principle of sensitivity and sustainability: an increasing dynamics of the principle (see Figure no. 8).

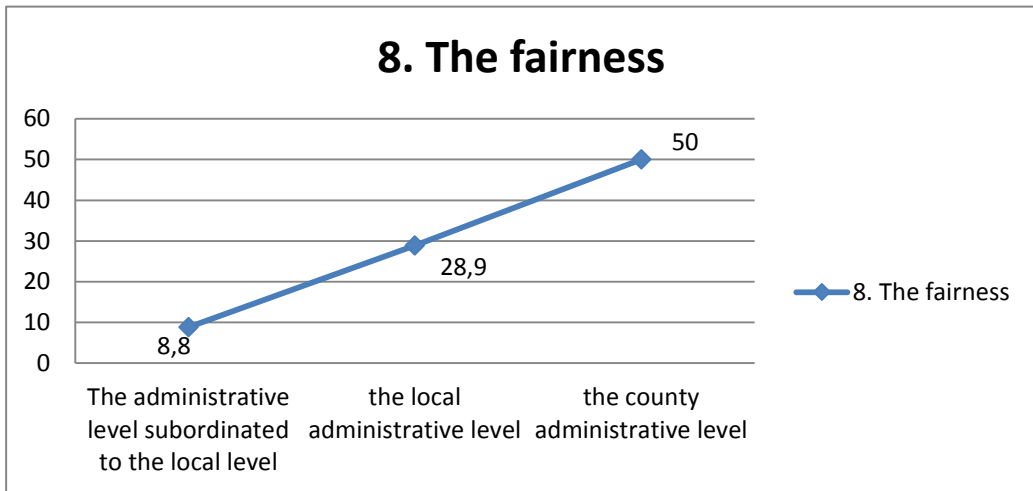


Figure no. 8

It can therefore be noticed that three of the principles have an increasing dynamic of the percentages values - the sensitivity, the fairness, the sustainability - one does a decreasing dynamic of the percentages of the values in relation to administrative levels-the equity- the efficiency and the impact have a dynamic type low-increased-low, and the appropriateness and the effectiveness have a dynamic type such as: grown-low-grown (see Table no. 2).

Table no. 2

The principle	Termo-Service administrative subordinated to the local level) %	lasi City Hall (the local administrative level) %	Apavital (the county administrative level) %
The sensitivity	5,9	14,7	29,2
The appropriateness	61,8	26	37,5
The effectiveness	55,9	39	52,1
The impact	8,8	30,6	14,6
The sustainability	5,9	14	29,2
The efficiency	11,8	31,6	16,7
The equity	67,6	43,6	18,8
The fairness	8,8	28,9	50

Also, it can be noticed that the highest values of the percentages are obtained at the administrative level subordinated to the local level for: the fairness (67.6%), the appropriateness (61.8%), the effectiveness (55.9%), at the county administrative level that have two values of percentage over 50% - for the effectiveness (52.1%) and for the fairness (50%) (see Table no. 2).

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The public administration, no matter what are the levels to which we relate, involves the activation of some principles of operation that may cause the guarantee of the public goods and services at the level of a community, regardless of its borders.

The present study determined the fact that regardless of the type of administrative institution, regardless of the services that these must ensure, regardless of the administrative level at which we relate, the public administration involves the activation of some principles of government.

These principles are turned on and assessed differently by each institution and at each administrative level, in relation to the factors that may be located both at the administrative level, and outside of the system itself. It has been observed that many of these principles have been assessed in a manner more supported at the administrative level subordinated to the local level-which can be a positive consequence of decentralisation and of the need of preserving it, but, on the other hand, also at the county administrative level - which may be an implication of effective public management, customized for each of the institution's part.

On the other hand, there is a constant common to all the principles of the institutions analysed, no principle having zero values of the percentages. There are among the similarities- also similar dynamics of the activation of the principles: the case of sensitivity, fairness, sustainability, versus appropriateness, effectiveness versus equity, efficiency and impact. The only principle that has a single dynamic -decreasing of the values from the administrative level subordinated to the local level- to the local level- to the county level, is the fairness.

Beyond these similarity or differentiation, we can say, however, that at each administrative level that we obey the attention, beyond the institutional/administrative typology, there is a dynamic of the public governance principles that must not be neglected in a study that proposes a diagnosis over the public/administrative space.

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