

Cultural Effects on Modernization of Public Administration in Vietnam

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Abstract

Currently, the Public Administration Reform (PAR) is the Vietnamese government's priority program in order to facilitate the economic development. Hence, a huge amount of capital has been invested in the Public Administration System Modernization, especially in the Information Communication Technology (ICT) training systems, with expectation to reap success. However, in late 2007, the computerization of the administration operations was suspended. Among other factors, in this paper, we firstly found that the some characteristics of Vietnamese culture, which are the power distance, individualism and long-term orientation, drawn by the culture model of Hofstede (2002) and previous research have the effect of preventing modernization. Combining with the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the theoretical propositions are proposed and supported by the information from interviews which the author conducted with the Vietnamese administration officers from December, 2006 to February, 2007. As a result, rather than continuing to invest mainly in ICT knowledge, the training courses which focus on the culture context are encouraged to be designed. This not only benefits for the Computerization Process but also for all other targets of Public Administration Reform since there is the inter-relationship among these targets. In addition, with the long-term orientation culture, the long-term modernization roadmap is decided upon before implementing any computerization program to increase employee's belief that ICT knowledge they learn today can be applied tomorrow.

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