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Professional Skills, Management Capabilities and Training Needs: The Case of Campania Public Tourist Sector

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Abstract:

This work takes into account the problems linked to professional skills, management capabilities and training needs in the Campania public tourist sector. Starting from privatization theory as economic and organizational notions, we concentrate our attention on the human resource and cultural aspects as two important issues of the service supply and its quality. It is not easy take into account the development of research methods in service management and more particularly in Italian public tourist sector because it can be regarded as a son with many political fathers, but in recent years there has been an increasing interest in the use of service management theory on Italian public tourist sector linked to service supply and its quality. Any service supply is greatly dependent from how the objectives and the managerial resources interact and became integrated with regard to the request of the users and personnel in terms of ties and opportunities, in this contest we show the case of Campania public tourist sector (Cpts) as one of the most important.

Keywords: *Campania public tourist sector (Cpts), service supply, quality, management, organization.*

1. Introduction

This paper takes into account the problems linked to professional skills, management capabilities and training needs in the Campania public tourist sector (Cpts). Starting from privatization theory as economic and organizational notions, we concentrate our attention on the service management capabilities and training needs as two important issues of the professional skills, service and its quality. We show the case of Cpts, as service organization. The first paragraph shows a short history of service management in Italy. The theoretical aspects of management capabilities and Cpts has been discussing in the second paragraph. The third paragraph takes into account the importance of cultural elements into organizations and more particularly into Cpts. The fourth paragraph points out the relevant of the service supply and human resources into the Cpts which an important element of management capabilities. The last paragraph, before conclusion, joints the first three aspects (management capabilities, human resources and service supply) for designing a new process of management of Cpts.

2. A Short History of Research Methods in Service Management in Italy

It is not easy take into account the development of research methods in service management and more particularly in Cpts; because the service management can be regarded as a son with many political fathers and little scientific research. Many political fathers because of the birth to the public sector – years 30 -, politicians and party leaders for the management of public sector – as well as tourist sector – have used political consensus instead of competence, in particular the choice of human resources and those responsible for sector. This behavior resulted in time a strong resistance to changes in the public sector and the subsequent removal of the universities by careful research and directions for solving problems. This is the main reason of little scientific research in public sector. Sociology and economic, as well as the field of organizations studies in particular, only arrived in the public sector of higher education in Italy around years 60. It has been developed by particular attention on service management and macroeconomics assets. A great deal of the impetus to develop service management in private and public service firms, sprang from a group of young Italians who went to the United States to study and were thus introduced to the traditional tenets of service management research. Strictly speaking there were two main types. Some went to US. to get an academic career in Italy, others returned to Italy and took up careers in consulting, largely independent from the university. Most university have service management specialists on their faculty but they are few number within

the Italian academic community and, by and large, quite marginal. Most recently we have witnessed a shift to the management schools. In fact many universities in Italy now offer degrees in management. We would say there is not an Italian school of service management but many of us are working within the more recent approaches such as service management, public service firms (tourist sector), service system and issue-oriented topics. Despite the weakness of management theory, the Italian tourism sector has a strong presence of cultural attractions and historic places to visit, for example In Italy have 4,739 museums and similar institutions, public and private, open to the public, such as:

- a) 3.607 Museums;
- b) 802 Monuments;
- c) 330 Archaeological Sites.

More than 50% is owned and managed by the public sector¹. If we analyze the number of tourists by type of places (DIT 2011) you can see that after the seaside resort has a privileged place in the tourist routes, cities of art:

- a) 38% chose seaside;
- b) 30% City of artistic and historical interest;
- c) 15% mountain resorts;
- d) 8% lacunar places;
- e) 4% hilly and varied interest.

The top three most visited State Institutes annually are:

- a) Colosseum, Palatine Hill, Roman Forum, 4,777,969 visitors, 30,423,950 revenues;
- b) Excavations of Pompeii (Campania) 2,233,496 visitors, 16,369,854 revenue;
- c) Uffizi Gallery, (Firenze) 1,554,256 visitors, 1,530,346 revenues.

After the Lazio region which is in first place for museums, monuments and archaeological sites, Colosseum, as well as number of employees, there is the Campania region (see figure 1). The excavations of Pompeii, most important archeological sites in Campania and one of the most visited sites in Italy, have lost 12% of the visitors². The total number of employees (MiBAC 2011) across the country is 20,367 more than 50% have an employment contract for a fixed period or atypical forms of contract, with a mean age of 51 years, only 17% of employees have an age between 19 - 29 years, 51% are women. Figures technical - scientific occupied are about 3% of the total, a low number in relation to the maintenance and restoration, in fact, many jobs are outsourced to external private companies. In Campania, workers in the sector are about 17% of the national total.

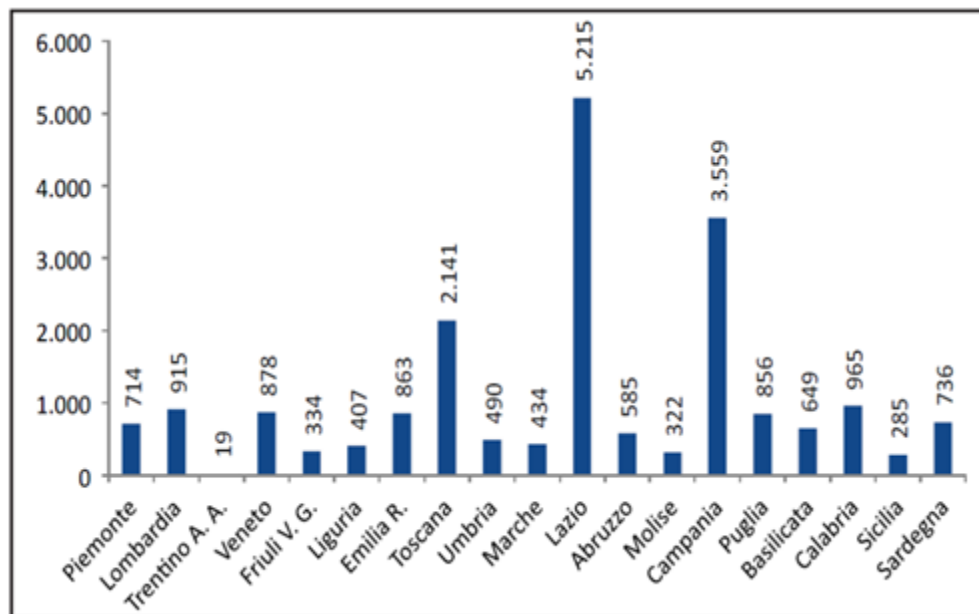


Figure 1: Occupied by region

Source: Ministry of Heritage and Culture, MiBAC, 2015,

3. Management Capabilities and CPTS

In recent years there has been an increasing interest in the use of service management theory on Cpts. This interest has two aspects: the first is an interest in the specific use of service management theory in the public tourist sector and takes the form of an import of ideas and methods developed in and for the private sector. This import action is based usually on a desire to improve the tourist sector as well as Cpts. The assumption (Gooldner& Ritchie 2006) is, naturally, that the private sector is superior to the public sector in

Is useful to remember that the assets of the public are also statements of cultural interest, State archives, public libraries of historical and cultural interest.

Total visitors - public sector - in 2011 was 33,105,821 with a decline in visits equal to 3.88% over the previous period.

specific ways: private sector organization are more cost-consciousness, more inclined to implement modern personnel management, more capable to develop corporate culture as a steering instrument. The question is, can the Cpts be improved by importing methods and ideas from the private sector? The attention for this problems focus on the incentives to productivity and particularly on the necessity to create in the public some reliable measuring elements (Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert, Wanhill, 2008) for management efficiency. The second aspect is an interest in the use of service management theory in the study of the Cpts. Here the aim is somewhat different: do theories and concepts from service management theory help us to understand the Cpts better? The focus of debate regards the following services:

- a) Pompei (National and Local Government)
- b) Beaches (National and Local Government)
- c) Bathing (Local Government)
- d) Natural Parks (National and Local Government)
- e) Museums (National and Local Government)

In the archaeological site of Pompeii there are serious maintenance problems and safety with a drop in visitors. Beaches and Bathing there are a strong presence, more than 50% of sales, black and irregular work tax evasion. Museums, There are many overlaps and few competitive bids despite having a significant cultural and artistic heritage. Close to the parks continues with the disposal of waste, creating serious problems to eco – system. These 5 areas account for more than 70% of the tourist public of Campania. The focus of debate starting from advanced economic and social crisis that involve in Europe, particularly in Italy. The tourist sector is one factor for Italian growth. In Italy, as far as Campania, the sector can be seen as an important output of the public economics, but, various elements in the public economics, such as political parties, public utilities, interest group or politicians, the role of public managers, influence the development of tourist sector.

4. A New Logic within CPTS: A Cultural Challenge

A short history of Cpts let us better understand the nature of sector. The Cpts is now a century old', and its importance to the national economic innovation for the country must take into account central role. It is important not only for the number of employees, the amount of capital involved (both fixed and circulating), the breadth of offer of the goods and services, but also for its contribution to the RDP (Campania region); most recently estimated at 0,84%. The first act of nationalization of Cpts was been created to improve the public service. Also in this case the goals of that reform were related to the improvement the efficiency and effectiveness of service and to increase the autonomy and the flexibility of the company. So it has been suggested that the services are managed by the local administration, while the service that has a high national interest, the high projects and service, are managed by local administration and direct presence of government. It is an important question because the local area has no managerial or organizational knowledge of the sector; has no solid financial base; so what does all this mean for the service? On the other hand the State (Murphy, 1985) has created many ills but also a system that served the whole nation. The local company of Cpts was placed under the economic and managerial control of the local administration. The revenues had to be addressed to finance itself. We have to highlight that budget has always had the necessity of the public fund. More in general the economic performance was not being able to cover personnel a production costs. These aspects are important but we must remember that this effort must be supported by development of management capabilities approach. In fact, productivity and economic incentives (Murphy and Murphy, 2004) cannot assure by themselves a better quality of supplied services, the final output of organization. The problem is not exclusively an economic one but until today it concerns the whole management capabilities of Cpts. A management capability (Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert, Wanhill, 2008) oriented to norms and proceedings must take into account the limits and difficulties raised in the last years. The management, therefore, intended as a serial of symbols values and languages but also, the ability to face problems and changes which require learning processes and ability to act and relate, is a basic element for the improvement of top and operations management. It has not been developing a new culture of management and effectiveness of service supply, and moments of real application and proposal. More in general, it has not been pointing out the new requests coming from the environment of reference and the resulting modifications of role that they must undertake. Until now, Cpts have been managed almost exclusively from an administrative and juridical-formal point of view, instead of being oriented to a culture of aims and results which could allow us to regard services not only as an administrative pole but also a managerial one. Until today the attention of government has been linked to the elaboration of normative and institutional instruments (Cortes, 2008) that were and now are conceived as the possibility to relate the different expectations of employees and users. It must be noted that the oriented service culture is still absent within the Cpts. The service supply is above all the result of a social interaction in which the relation between the needs of personnel and the demand of users improves the performance of company. The challenge is to put service management elements within Cpts from bureaucratic logic (Figure 2) to competitive logic (Figure 3).

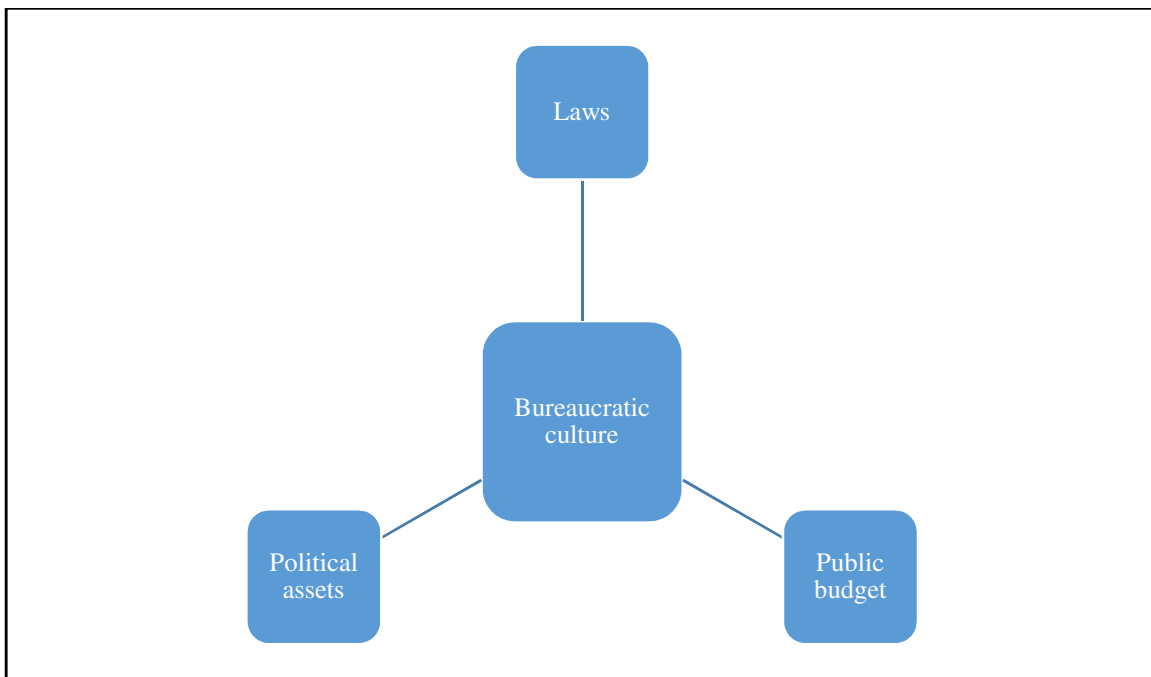


Figure 2: Bureaucratic logic

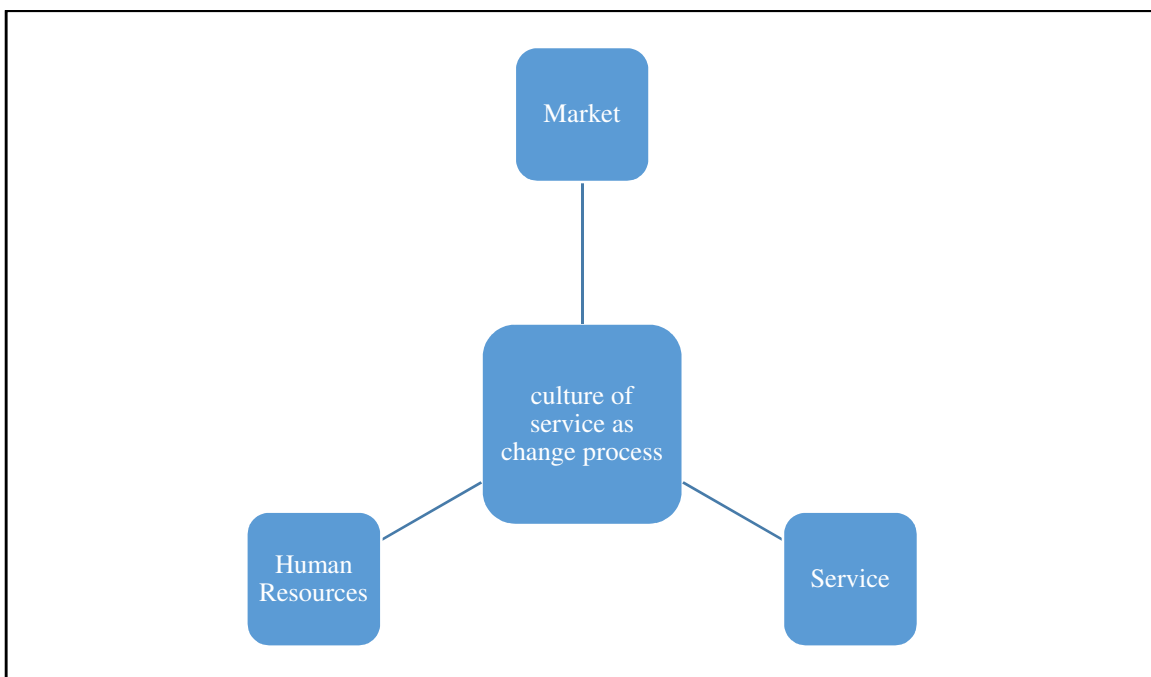


Figure 3: Competitive logic

Bureaucratic organization does not want or can't learn from their mistakes. Change logic, what does it mean for Cpts? Starting for this assumption it is important open the system. Open the system means:

- a) more attention to the market;
- b) a different culture of human resources;
- c) pay more attention to the service supply and its quality.

In Cpts is important to give more space to the market, in terms of information widely diffused, a deep knowledge of customer as different segment of the market, pay more attention to (Amposta, 2009) the idea of travel and its business. A second step must improve the culture of management, in this case the role of public sector with its privileges linked to the system of work, control and direction must be broken to create different behaviors and goals within the Cpts and between this latter and customers. The last but not the list element is the improvement of the quality service. The absence of monitoring system has determinate a lack of attention for the customer value and its quality. Obviously the monitoring system is the point of iceberg. Starting from service as social interaction and nature of the relationships between organization and the customers the Cpts must change the mission. The importance of this

assumption is linked to new idea of service, where the sector, not only as climate, but also as idea of service (comfort, accuracy, noise, security) must be take into account. The challenge is open the system in terms of customer value and new culture of the service. The sun, the tradition are the stage, the front office, are the place where the customer will meet the service, beyond the stage we have the managers with own culture and personal history. The service as social interaction, mean to create a high level of communication with the customer and within the Cpts. Is it possible to create an organization that listens its customer? Is it possible to create an organization that listens its human resources? The first step is open the system, its culture and action. After this first assumption, step by step will be possible to put in the system elements of service management, so that it will be linked not only to the economic perspective (Dodds & Butler, 2010) but also to the social legitimation of the service. Open the system means to improve the economic performance of the company, but also to improve the value of the service and the behaviors of human resources.

5. The Service Supply and Human Resources within CPTS

Service supply pertains to the management of organizations whose core business entails an intangible process that is delivered to the public. In contrast to most manufacturing organizations, tourist services are typically produced in the presence of the customers, often with considerable participation by the customer and interaction with organizational members. Also in contrast to manufacturing, tourist service delivery requires extensive coordination between the front office and back office, a service culture (Gooldner& Ritchie, 2006) on the part of the front line workers, and ability to manage customer expectations regarding each stage of the service. In order to face all the themes, we think appropriate to start from some basic hypotheses; in other words it is necessary to choose a visual angle from which to analyze the functioning dynamics of the Cpts. Starting from those assumptions means to analyze the complexity and specific of the tourist service. The peculiar characteristics in Cpts are:

- a. in most cases, the production and use of service occur simultaneously, in a close contact with user;
- b. as a consequence of this observation, the result of service supply, because of the interaction between user and management, generally is unpredictable;
- c. in the service the factors which determine the decision process are not always standardizable in pre codified norms;
- d. the improvement of the service requires the ability of system to acquire and manage the information concerning the deficiencies founded in the process of service supply.

In our case, service supply is greatly dependent, as a first approximation, from how the objectives and the managerial resources interact and become integrated, with regard to the requests of the users and personnel, not only in terms of demand but also in terms of ties and opportunities. Then, the datum from which we start is just the kind of change occurred in the requests of the users. More particularly for this services the typology of the demand depends from the ease with which it reaches the area, the reception of customers to the ground, the security of the place, the possibility of using space for dining and buying. More in general the sector needs(Mowforth, Munt, 2009) development of the demographic structure, the improvement of way of life and socio-economic conditions, the widening of welfare state, the effects of scientific progress and automation; all these factors - exclusive of public investment in our case - have a great influence on the configuration of specific organization as well as the typology and modalities of tourist service supply .The quantitative culture of the past must be taken advantage of in a transition stage even though it is a contradiction with the vision. Cpts must reconcile the paradox of using that traditional culture on the one hand, and on the other hand act so as to create the condition for changing it. At the moment the evaluation of the results of service supply involves above all the use of variables concerning quality of service and not only variables of efficiency. One of the strategic routes has been an increased concentration on customer satisfaction, courting the customer through a focus on service quality. It successfully applied, the approach has very frequently demonstrated improved revenues, increased market shares and organizational form. Expressed simply, companies providing high service quality as perceived by their customers, tend to be the most profitable. On the other hand, poor service has been identified as the primary reason why customers switch to competitors. The necessity of taking into account of all these factors is due to the fact that a service management is a complex and sensitive system in which many functions and factors are closely interconnected. Service management not achieve a rapid and clear awareness change and the need for a fundamental change in attitudes and behavior at all levels of the company, there is a great risk that Cpts will lose its historical pre-eminent position to more agile competitive system that provide service offerings more closely adapted to real customer needs. Therefore, in the diagnosis of the difficulties of a service supply a single element or problem rarely is sufficient to go back to the causes. Generally, we get better results if we analyze problems (Wahab, Cooper, 2005) in terms of vicious circle in which many different factors influence each other. This kind of description reflects the nature of tourist service supply and contributes to the discovery of strategic key-areas in which a change could turn a vicious circle into a virtuous one.

6. Management Capabilities and Culture within CPTS

In this paragraph we will briefly deal with the main figures occupying managerial position in the Cpts. As to the academic background of top and intermediate administrators, whether at regional or local levels, the most common qualification is a degree in Law. That allows them to deal with legal aspects of the administration procedures involved in the job, as well as with the administrative management of personnel. One of the most important characteristics related to selection and employment of management has been the verification of formal and general knowledge without a verification of employee's skill and ability. The background of the great majority of management is totally lacking in disciplines such as organizational theory and development, management, or job organization. Currently, management in directive position within the Cpts are daily struggling with a control system that is very strict and not at all flexible. A good part of their time is spent in coping with the interpretation of laws and with the difficulties related to the

legal control of procedures little or no attention is given to the results. This behavior is typical cultural feature of these figures. Instead of operating with pragmatic approach, a considerable part of their energies and the time is devoted to an unnerving debate centered on the abstract definition of what their own tasks should be. Similarly, managerial and organizational studies were completed ignored, their academic curriculum was basically conceived with the abstract aim of getting good physicians; nothing was done to prepare them to work within an institution, nor to train them to face an organizational reality. Managerial and organizational issues have often been neglected and subordinated to social and political priorities. The organizational model coincided to a large extent with administrative structured model as it was on bureaucratic principles which were not suited to the new complex, different system. To gain a better understanding nature of managerial culture work, within Cpts it is important to analyze the different strategic choice that must be adopted. The change in culture and behavior that are required call for a new model (Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert, Wanhill, 2008) of management: moving from management by rules and instructions to management by objectives and management by learning; seeing leaders at all levels, including the top, as interpreters of stakeholder demands (Ritchie, Crouch, 2003); the role of leadership in terms of continuously articulating and making the vision and change world view concrete to the organization. In this context, considerable attention must be dedicated to the setting of the monitoring system. A first hypothesis concerning the evaluation of service quality can refer to the relation between expected service and supplied service, and how organization perceives supplied service. In the light of these introductory statements, the operative indicators refer to the characteristics of service as they are perceived from the user and the front-office at the right moment. At this point, a useful methodological instruments are a user's cycle. The analysis by means user's cycle shows the principal critical problems of the service supply. Cpts needs reinterpret its traditional historical technical service into a customer value excellence formula. The touristic experience (Swarbrooke, 2005) must be reinterpreted as a culture – economic experience and even into a relationship experience where the customer is the focus. More particularly three problematic areas can be identified by user's cycle:

- a. personnel motivation, which depends from the ability of the system to interconnect individual strategic objectives and organizational objectives in this sense the quality of supply service becomes a relative concept, and it can be measured and evaluate by means the relation between the users' perception and one of the personnel;
- b. the abilities to face the uncertainties, above all by means of the regulation of the interdependencies between organizational and professional subsystems. A negative performance of supply service causes a user's bad perception of provided service with a high costs and negative social legitimation. At this stage, organization must react by means of an appropriate reformulation of its strategy in order to avoid critical effects in terms of qualitative decrease of its performances.
- c. the modalities of management and control which influence the mechanism and the legitimacy of attribution of the objectives of the performances which are coherent with the general plan and consequently the presence of real possibilities of control and the harmony between service supply and appointed objectives.

These elements (WTO, 2009) all have different interest and will look for support to get the realized demands and wishes. In our region, it is argued that certain characteristic of tourist sector, such as public expenditure or bureaucratic organization that can be effective because of the absence of competition; as well as, to produce an inefficient system of resource allocation. In other words, the main element is that Cpts don't pay attention in theme of efficiency (cost), choice and equity. The primary motivation linked to service management in the Cpts, is the costs of personnel and high running expenses. In this contest the role of top and operations management are essentially problems. From a managerial point of view, the attention to the efficiency, the effectiveness and more in general to the operative functionality of the different institutions that make up Cpts is a basic element in the confrontation between political, social and economic forces in our region and country.

7. Conclusion

The study starts from some remarks concerning the culture and the role of the service management within Cpts. A first analysis reveals a low attention to the development of service and managerial culture. This turns out to be characterized by a low presence of functions relative to service co-ordination, management and control. The challenge is open the system and change public culture. The processes of efficiency has produced in our country some tangible improvements, but in some sector, particularly for Cpts, change the culture of management means to pay attention to the quality and service. The service must be linked to a new culture within Cpts. This approach contends that the Cpts primary goal is to better meet customer requirements by improving the servitization. More in general it has to take into account the conflict between old culture of management within Cpts and the service management. They have fundamentally different behaviors and goals. At the root of the actual model is bureaucratic logic without any attention to the open the system. The new approach should be able to pay attention to customer satisfaction. This approach does not reject the notion that a primary objective of the firm should be the pursuit of revenues and social legitimation, but it views long run profitability as an outcome of serving customers rather than as driving force. The change culture approach takes into account economic, social and quality goals relating to the servitization. This approach emphasizes dynamic performance improvement. Managers - within service management model of public utilities - have the expertise to co-ordinate and direct subordinates; on the other hand, they have to improve co-ordination and control as a learning process linked to growth of environment and needs of customers. Another relevant aspect related to the service management as change process regards "information system". In the service organization the information system normally matches hierarchical structure: key functions are decision support system and monitoring subordinates from the top. In this process of information, as top/down or bottom/up processes, the role of customers is strategic. The tourist public sector has to pay particular attention to dynamic process, and to stress the role of culture service as market, service and human resources.

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