




# INFLUENCE OF THE BUREAUCRATIC MODEL ON HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN THE MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT OF PASSOS (MG)

## INFLUÊNCIA DO MODELO BUROCRÁTICO NA GESTÃO DE PESSOAS NA PREFEITURA MUNICIPAL DE PASSOS (MG)

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### Abstract

According to Weber, bureaucracy is a form of organization characterized by the integration of procedures and rules that govern the functioning of public administration. On the other hand, bureaucracy can also represent an obstacle to the development of processes. In light of this dilemma, the aim of this article was to analyze how bureaucracy influences human resource management in a municipal government located in the interior of Minas Gerais, Brazil. To achieve this, a qualitative-exploratory methodology was employed, with data collected through interviews and document analysis. The evidence found contributed to identifying the negative impacts that the bureaucratic model generates within the organization and in the professional lives of public servants.

**Keywords:** Bureaucracy. Human Resources. Limitations.

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#### Resumo

De acordo com Weber, a burocracia é uma forma de organização caracterizada pela união de procedimentos e regras que regem o funcionamento de Administração Pública. Em contrapartida, a burocracia também pode ser um obstáculo para o desenvolvimento de processos. Diante deste impasse, o artigo teve como objetivo analisar como a burocracia influencia a gestão de pessoas em uma prefeitura no interior de Minas Gerais. Para tanto, serviu-se de metodologia qualitativa-exploratória com a coleta de dados feita por entrevistas e análise de documentos. As evidências encontradas contribuíram para verificar os impactos negativos que o modelo burocrático ocasiona na organização e na vida profissional dos servidores.

**Keywords:** *Burocracia. Recursos Humanos. Limitações.*

#### Declaration on the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the Preparation of the Manuscript

The authors hereby declare that no artificial intelligence (AI) tools or platforms were employed during the preparation of the manuscript submitted to Mythos, including but not limited to writing, translation, editing, or in the conduct and analysis of the research.

The authors assume full responsibility for the originality, accuracy, and integrity of the entire content submitted.

#### Data Availability Statement

The research data have not been made available by the authors in a public repository.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

People management is a highly complex field, as it deals with human beings and their subjectivity. With the changes in society, its needs, and demands, employee management has also had to evolve. Furthermore, according to Reis and Sadrudin (2022), people management is a function of the administrator, who must be competent in recognizing the peculiarities of each position, ensuring that the most important asset of organizations – people – remains motivated.

One of the classical models of people management presents a bureaucratic view that leads to a less fluid development, with several obstacles. According to sociologist Weber (1982), bureaucracy is the best organizational model ever created, as it allows maximum efficiency to be achieved. Additionally, he refers to bureaucracy as the only way to efficiently organize many people, which drives economic and political growth.

According to Olsen (2022), discussing people management means addressing the human component of organizations, which goes beyond formal job functions, encompassing organizational culture, mindset, intelligence, energy, action, and proactiveness. When addressing Human Resource Management in the public sector, the bureaucratic model presented by Weber is notably implemented, which brings strict adherence to laws and rigid rules, making it difficult to introduce new strategies—unlike what is often seen in private organizations. However, this type of management has been increasingly pressured to adopt tools already applied in the private sector, which have proven to deliver satisfactory results.

According to research conducted by the Federation of Industries of the State of São Paulo (Fiesp) between February 1 and 11, 2017, 75% of respondents believe that excessive bureaucracy can be harmful and may serve as a gateway to corruption. Additionally, about 65% of those surveyed believe that reducing bureaucracy should be a priority (Borges, 2017).

The application of this bureaucratic model is carried out with extreme rigor in public institutions, significantly impacting both Human Resource Management and overall Administration in a negative way. Therefore, there is a clear need to implement a more modern model aimed at meeting the real needs of public service and its employees, improving the quality of work life, and consequently promoting more efficient service delivery.

In this context, the article is developed around the following research question: In what ways does the bureaucratic model influence people management in the public sector? To answer this question, the general objective of the study was to analyze how bureaucracy influences people management in the city hall of a municipality located in the southwest of Minas Gerais, specifically Passos-MG. The specific objectives were: (1) To understand the bureaucratic model and its limitations for people management; and (2) To investigate the role of bureaucracy in the people management of the studied city hall.

Methodologically, this research is classified as descriptive-exploratory with a qualitative approach. The method used was a case study, with data collected through document analysis and semi-structured interviews conducted with six municipal employees. Data analysis was performed using content analysis, aiming to understand the limitations imposed by the bureaucratic model on people management in the studied city hall.

This article is structured into five sections. The first consists of this introduction. Next, the theoretical framework is presented, covering concepts related to bureaucracy and its prevalence in public management. The third section discusses the methodology applied in this study. The fourth section presents the results, and the fifth provides the final considerations, followed by the references used.

## 2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Bureaucracy Theory

Bureaucracy is generally perceived by laypeople as an excess of processes and formalities that tend to slow down development, thus giving it a negative connotation. This perception has become increasingly common, especially as globalization accelerates the speed at which information is obtained, consequently raising people's expectations of receiving it in the shortest possible time and making them increasingly impatient.

"If, for you, the word 'bureaucracy' carries a negative connotation and brings to mind an excess of paperwork and regulations, think again. The word bureaucracy, in its original sense, refers to a form of organization based on the rationality of laws." (Maximiano, 2008, p. 60 as cited in Freire, 2019, p. 6)

The sociologist Max Weber introduced the concept of bureaucracy. This period coincided with the rise of capitalism in society at the time, when organizations needed something that would ensure order and protect workers' demands, aiming for fair and impartial treatment. "The decisive reason for the progress of bureaucratic organization has always been its purely technical superiority over any other form of organization." (Weber, 1982, p. 249)

Bureaucracy is a form of human organization based on rationality, intended to guarantee maximum possible efficiency in order to achieve the desired objectives, following rules and avoiding misalignment. Its main purpose is to keep organizations under control and ensure standardized procedures (Ajemba, 2022).

Weber defined the bureaucratic model as an impersonal system.

“[...] bureaucracy is ‘dehumanized’ to the extent that it succeeds in eliminating from official business love, hatred, and all purely personal, irrational, and emotional elements which escape calculation. This is the specific nature of bureaucracy, praised as its particular virtue” (Weber, 1982, p. 251).

According to Freire (2019), for Weber, administration is only possible when there is authority and power, making it feasible for one person to impose their will on the conduct of another. In Weber's conception, authority consists of the probability that an order will be obeyed, representing the ability to influence others. Weber's model presents three types of authority. He discussed different types of authority, notably: traditional, patrimonial, feudal, charismatic, and legal/bureaucratic. The latter is related to the legality of rationally established orders and the rights of those in positions of authority, being impersonal and objective (Lopes & Silva, 2020).

Lopes e Silva (2020) explain that this type of authority occurs when orders are followed because they are supported and justified by legitimate norms. Its legitimacy is derived from a set of rules and regulations, regardless of the individual who holds the position. "The bureaucratic theory argues that subordination and the exercise of power over people are natural processes within organizational relationships." (Lopes & Silva, 2020, p. 85).

The figure below summarizes the types of authority according to Weber:

**Figure 1**

*Typology of Authority and Its Characteristics, According to Weber*

Types of Authority	Characteristics	Legitimation	Administrative Support
Traditional	Inherited power, delegated and based on the lord.	Traditions, habits, customs, and usages.	Patrimonial and feudal form.
Charismatic	Not rational, inherited, nor transferable. Based on charisma.	Personal characteristics (heroism, magic, mental power) of the leader.	Unstable. Chosen for loyalty and devotion to the leader.
Legal, Rational or Bureaucratic	Rational, formal, and impersonal. Meritocratic.	Justice (Law). Regulated by legal norms.	Bureaucracy.

Adaptade from Migott; Grzybovski e Silva (2001, p. 4)

Only after defining the authorities within the organization can functions be delegated without external interference: "only through individual merit is hierarchy defined within bureaucracy, and this is one of the characteristics of bureaucracy" (Freire, 2019, p.7).

Silva (2017) states that Weber argues the advancement of bureaucratic organizations is a consequence of their exclusively technical and rational nature, and that their association with other forms, when fully developed, resembles the relationship between machinery and production methods.

In this sense, Weber (1982) considers bureaucracy an efficient organization for achieving excellence, and to reach this goal, the details of how things should be done are thoroughly explained. "Precision, speed, clarity, knowledge of files, continuity, discretion, unity, strict subordination, reduction of friction and material and personnel costs are all brought to an optimal level in strictly bureaucratic administration [...]" (Weber, 1982, p. 249).

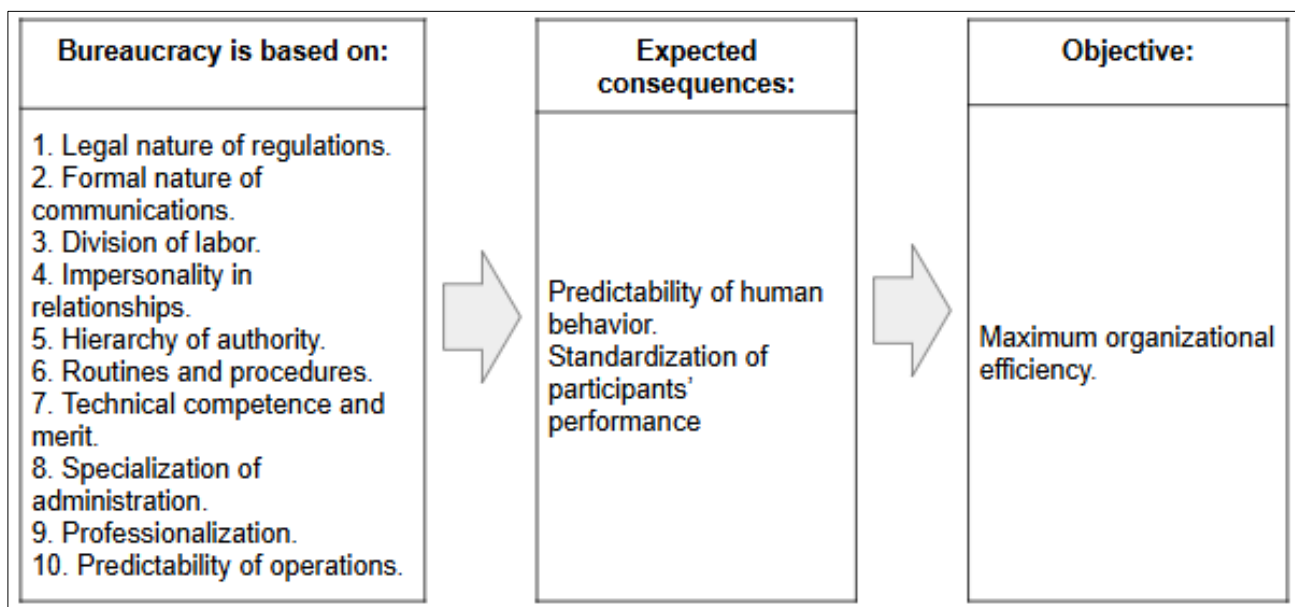
According to Weber (1982), bureaucracy has the following characteristics: i) Legal character of rules and regulations: it is an organization based on pre-established rules that define how the institution should operate. These regulations are extensive, as they cover all areas, anticipating occurrences and regulating everything that happens; ii) Formal nature of communications: communications and processes are conducted in writing, thus providing documented proof of the activities carried out, giving the organization a formal character; iii) Rational character and division of labor: each individual has their functions systematically defined by roles, positions, and areas of competence. Everyone must know their duties, their authority, and their limits, so as not to overstep and interfere with the responsibilities of others; iv) Impersonality in relationships: tasks are assigned impersonally, meaning they do not depend on the individual as a person, but rather on their ability to carry out the activity. The same applies to obedience, which stems from the position and the hierarchy. Thus, while people may change within the organization, the positions remain; v) Hierarchy of authority: all roles must be supervised, which necessitates the establishment of a hierarchy where each lower position is overseen by a superior. This hierarchy is defined by specific rules; vi) Standardized routines and procedures: the functions performed by each role are fixed and developed through regulations. As such, each individual carries out what is assigned to them, not what they wish to do, thereby regulating behavior and maintaining consistent procedural routines; vii) Technical competence and meritocracy: all processes are based on individuals' competence and merit, in an impersonal manner. This requires testing, allowing all participants the opportunity to grow in their careers and receive

promotions; viii) Specialization of administration: a specialized management professional emerges to lead the organization, as it should be managed by the person with the highest technical competence. This person may or may not be one of the owners or shareholders; ix) Professionalization of participants: each employee is a professional, specialized in their functions, receiving salaries aligned with their positions. They are selected based on competence by their immediate supervisor. Their tenure is indefinite but not for life, and they may advance in the organization if they demonstrate merit. They do not hold ownership over the means of production; e x) Complete predictability of operation: the goal of this model is to ensure predictability of both organizational functioning and employee behavior. Thus, processes are predefined and organized to avoid human interference, and the organization prescribes employee behavior to maximize efficiency.

According to Chiavenato (2003), Figure 2 briefly illustrates the characteristics of bureaucracy as defined by Weber:

**Figure 2**

*The Characteristics of Bureaucracy According to Weber*



Adaptade from Chiavenato (2003, p. 266)

Lopes e Silva (2020) state that, according to Weber, bureaucracy offers many advantages. Among them, one can highlight rationality, precision in defining roles, speed in decision-making—since there is standardization of what should be done and by whom—consistency, reduction of conflict, and reliability.

According to Lopes e Silva (2020), Weber also recognized a weakness in his model, as it requires that orders be accepted at a level of rationality and discipline that is difficult to maintain. This leads to a tendency for bureaucratic organizations to dissolve, shifting toward a more "natural" type of relationship.

There are both supporters and critics of bureaucracy. According to Chiavenato (2003), Perrow can be considered one of the defenders of bureaucracy:

After years of studying complex organizations, I have come to two conclusions that contradict much of the organizational literature. The first is that the errors attributed to bureaucracy are not errors of the concept itself,

but rather consequences of the failure to properly bureaucratize. [...] The second conclusion is that the concern with reform, humanization, and decentralization of bureaucracies, while healthy, merely obscures the true nature of bureaucracy and diverts us from its impact on society. The impact on society is more important than the impact on the members of an organization. (Perrow, 1972 as cited in Chiavenato, 2003, p. 276)

The author also presents another point of view. Merton (1957), while studying the intended consequences of the theory, also encountered the unintended (undesired) ones that led to inefficiency. “According to Merton, there is no such thing as a completely rational organization, and formalism does not have the depth described by Weber” (Chiavenato, 2003, p. 268). Based on this, Merton named them the Dysfunctions of Bureaucracy.

### **2.1.1 Dysfunctions of Bureaucracy**

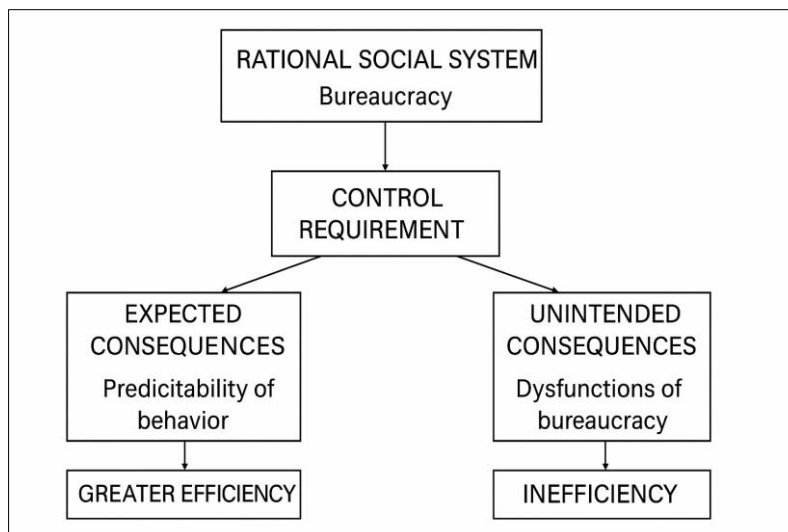
Dysfunctions of Bureaucracy was the name given by Merton to the functional anomalies of Weber's model, which led to the pejorative meaning commonly used by laypeople. According to Maximiano (2000), these dysfunctions exist because organizations are made up of human systems, not mechanical ones strictly governed by laws.

Not every formal association possesses the full set of characteristics incorporated in the ideal type of bureaucracy. The ideal type can be used as a standard that allows us to determine in what specific aspect an organization is bureaucratized. The ideal type of bureaucracy can be used like a 12-inch ruler. One cannot expect all objects measured by the ruler to be exactly 12 inches—some will be more, others less. (Gouldner, 1971 as cited in Maximiano, 2000, p. 97).

According to Chiavenato (2003), the dysfunctions of bureaucracy are: i) Internalization of rules: In Weber's model, the employee becomes a specialist not due to knowledge itself, but for knowing the rules of their role very well. In this way, the rules (means) become the main goals (ends); ii) Excessive formalism and paperwork: One of the main dysfunctions lies in the accumulation of paperwork due to formality, where all processes are documented in writing; iii) Resistance to change: The standardization and predictability of bureaucracy generally generate in employees, immersed in this environment, a sense of comfort and stability due to the repetition of tasks. This often makes people resistant to new ideas, leaving them feeling insecure; iv) Depersonalization of relationships: Impersonality emphasizes roles and positions, where employees are often known by their job title rather than their own name; v) Categorization as the basis of decision-making: The rigid hierarchy of bureaucracy leads to decisions being made by the individual with the highest hierarchical level, even if they are not knowledgeable about the specific issue at hand. According to Chiavenato (2003, p. 270), “[...] to categorize means a way to classify things, stereotypically, in order to deal with them more easily.” As a result, decision-making is deprived of alternative solutions; vi) Overconformity to routines and procedures: Routine ends up limiting the organization's possibilities, since the rules become absolute and processes are rigidified. This consequently weakens innovation initiatives; vii) Display of authority symbols: Due to the strong hierarchy, a tendency arises for the use of authority symbols, such as uniforms, office and restroom location, among other signs that indicate hierarchical position to employees; e viii) Difficulties with clients and conflicts with the public: The bureaucratic model does not accommodate the personalized service that clients often need, as it is used to standardization. This leads to dissatisfaction and pressure from the public.

Figure 3

*The Bureaucratic Model of Weber*



Adaptade from Chiavenato (2003, p. 271)

Therefore, it is possible to see that bureaucracy has both positive and negative aspects, being fundamental to the functioning of the organization. However, it is necessary to find a balance between bureaucratic processes and the demands brought about by the evolution of society.

## **2.2 Public Administration, People Management, and Bureaucracy**

Public Administration is composed of a set of governmental bodies established by the State, which aim to promote actions for the benefit of the population, addressing their needs in various areas, such as education, health, infrastructure, culture, and social assistance.

According to Article 37 of the 1988 Federal Constitution, "the direct and indirect public administration of any of the Powers of the Union, the States, the Federal District, and the Municipalities shall observe the principles of legality, impersonality, morality, publicity, and efficiency" (Constitution, 1988).

When examining the Principle of Legality, Article 5, item II, of the 1988 Constitution states that: "no one shall be obliged to do or refrain from doing something except by virtue of law." (Constitution, 1988). In other words, Public Administration must be subordinated to laws and regulations, with no personal will from its members.

Throughout Brazil's history, bureaucratic administration, a model based on the work of Max Weber, emerged as a solution to combat the corruption of the previous system (patrimonialism) during the 1930s, through the Bureaucratic Reform of President Getúlio Vargas's government. It was grounded in laws, along with strict and standardized control of administrative processes, promoting a more efficient government (Moura, 2016).

Although this model was later replaced by initiatives from the so-called managerial administration—which is based on applying private sector techniques within the public sector—it still affects a range of processes within public organizations (Moura, 2016). Among these is human resource management. In this functional



area, it is noted that little emphasis is placed on its integration into the public sector, unlike what is portrayed in private companies.

Human Resources has long ceased to be a simple Personnel Department and has become a central player within organizations. With the evolution of organizational methods, coupled with globalization and technological advances, people management has been undergoing a broad transformation process, as traditional systems used as references have shown weaknesses in the face of new demands (Reis & Sadrudin, 2022).

Furthermore, the authors state that people are fundamental members of corporations, especially regarding the fulfillment of services and the achievement of organizational objectives. Therefore, they have come to be regarded as partners rather than mere resources (Reis & Sadrudin, 2022).

From this perspective, people management began to focus on and invest in the development of human capital. Managing a qualified, satisfied, and motivated team differentiates a company from its competitors, increases productivity, and achieves better results (Olsen, 2022).

The bureaucratization present in public service imposes limitations on the sector's efficiency. Given this outdated framework in which the public sphere is embedded, it is necessary to take measures to ensure that the Human Resources sector becomes more effective in this context (Lopes & Silva, 2020).

Competency-Based Management is a people management model aimed at understanding the strengths and areas for development of an employee concerning their knowledge, technical and behavioral skills, and attitudes. Based on this understanding, the organization begins to offer training so that the competencies it needs for its growth align with those that employees have to offer (Lopes & Silva, 2020).

People management has proven to be a fundamental tool for all types of organizations. Despite the obstacles faced within public administration, it tends to significantly improve the quality standards of services provided to citizens and promote the development of the external environment (Lopes & Silva, 2020).

### **3 METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES**

This article aims to conduct a study to understand the influence of the bureaucratic model on people management and, consequently, to investigate the events surrounding this topic in the Municipal Government of Passos – MG. This municipality is located in the Southern and Southwestern Mesoregion of Minas Gerais, with an estimated population of 115,970 inhabitants, spread over an area of 1,338.070 km<sup>2</sup>, according to IBGE data from 2021 (IBGE, 2021). Additionally, its economy revolves around agribusiness, agriculture and livestock, the garment and service industries, and more recently, it has gained national prominence in the furniture industry (rustic and fine furniture).

This study is characterized as an exploratory research, as it seeks to investigate a phenomenon that has not been extensively explored. According to Gil (2017), exploratory research tends to be more flexible in its planning, as it aims to understand and observe various aspects related to the phenomenon studied by the researcher.

The study is also classified as descriptive research, as it aims to describe phenomena or the characteristics of a certain population. According to Gil (2019), descriptive research exposes the characteristics of a particular phenomenon or population, establishes correlations between variables, and defines their nature. Furthermore, this type of research is not committed to explaining the phenomena it describes, although it serves as a basis for such explanations.

Being a descriptive-exploratory study, it uses a qualitative approach, in which the information collected seeks not only to measure a topic but to describe it, relying on the respondents' points of view, impressions, and opinions. It delves deeper into the proposed questions to gather the most data possible in order to understand the attitudes, ideas, and motivations of a specific group. According to Minayo (2022), qualitative research involves an interpretive approach to the world—that is, its researchers study things in their natural settings, seeking to understand phenomena based on the meanings people assign to them.

The study was developed from a bibliographic review on the bureaucratic model and its predominance in public administration. Subsequently, a case study was conducted to understand the limitations of this structure within the scope of this institution. To obtain the necessary information, document analysis was carried out and an interview was conducted using a semi-structured script—that is, there was a pre-established guide, but the interviewer was allowed to ask questions beyond what was initially planned—with two managers from the studied area and four permanent public servants. Furthermore, the interviewees were previously asked to sign the Ethics Protocol to confirm that participation in the interviews would be voluntary and to inform them that their identities would not be disclosed.

Subsequently, through the content analysis technique, the information collected during the document analysis and interviews, as well as the observations made by the researchers, was examined. The aim was always to understand the underlying meanings of the respondents' statements in order to identify and understand the possible limitations of the bureaucratic model in the implementation of people management in the Municipal Government of Passos – MG.

#### **4 DATA ANALYSIS**

The research consisted of conducting interviews with six employees from the Municipal Government of Passos, aged between 24 and 45, occupying either permanent or commissioned positions, all of whom had either completed or were pursuing higher education. Initially, it is observed that most of the interviewed employees hold positions that are completely unrelated to their academic backgrounds, which do not align with the functions they perform in their respective departments. For example, employees with degrees in Pedagogy, Graphic Design, and Languages are working in roles such as Administrative Officer and Personnel Department Director.

This situation is directly related to the lack of emphasis on performance, as the institution does not appear concerned with whether the employee is qualified to perform the assigned function. Furthermore, this highlights the absence of organizational planning, as management does not prioritize placing employees in positions that match their skills and knowledge (Pantoja, Camões & Bergue, 2010).

Initially, interviewees who work or have worked in the Personnel Department, along with management, were asked to differentiate between Human Resources and Strategic People Management to assess their knowledge of the area in which they operate.

It was found that the interviewees had difficulties defining the terms and explaining their scopes. Additionally, there was confusion regarding the terminology and limitations in their explanations: “Human resources is more about payroll, right? Whereas personnel management focuses more on training and hiring” (E3).

This situation once again results from the inappropriate assignment of employees to departments that do not correspond with their academic backgrounds, knowledge, or professional experience.

When asked whether there were limitations in Human Resources practices due to the public sector context, it was concluded that public administration must strictly follow the Principle of Legality. This means all procedures carried out by the department must comply with legal requirements. Moreover, most processes depend on authorization from and coordination with other related departments, causing delays or blockages in execution.

According to a manager: “Because of this necessary bureaucratic aspect, public administration indeed has stronger constraints than those found in the private sector today” (E2). This occurs due to excessive formalism and the internalization of rules, making personnel management in the municipal government rigid, as mandated by public sector legislation.

Regarding the description of the Personnel Department in the Municipality, employees pointed out that the city does not truly have a Human Resources Department, but rather a Personnel Department focused exclusively on bureaucratic aspects of employees’ professional lives. According to one interviewee who has worked in the department for over 10 years: “We’re basically payroll processors” (E4). Another employee shared their experience upon starting work in the public agency: “When I joined, they didn’t ask about my background or work experience. They just placed me in a certain department, and I didn’t even go through an interview” (E5).

Given the above, it is concluded that the department lacks concern for training, developing, motivating, and ensuring the well-being of its employees. Furthermore, there is a difficulty in assigning individuals to appropriate roles based on their profile analysis, required skills, and professional experience. These circumstances once again highlight the public sector’s minimal emphasis on employee performance, with little interest in employee development or training.

Regarding Competency-Based Management, when asked about the potential implementation of this model in the Municipality, it became clear that employees in the Personnel Department have limited or no knowledge of the term. On the other hand, a manager mentioned that an administrative reform is already underway: “We are already implementing a complete administrative reform in the city, which includes career plans, performance evaluations, all based on this principle” (E1).

As mentioned by Lopes & Silva (2020), it is essential that a cultural change takes place within the public service. For this to happen, the commitment and an action plan from both managers and public servants are indispensable, in order for competency-based management to be truly implemented. However, based on the interviews conducted, it was concluded that the interviewed public servants showed no interest in this change, resulting in yet another dysfunction of bureaucracy.

Shifting the focus to processes, most are still conducted manually, with some exceptions listed by the employees in their respective departments, such as the Electronic Bidding process conducted by the Procurement Department, and the payroll calculation carried out by the Personnel Department.

Conversely, one manager stated that document digitization is crucial, but obstacles hinder modernization, resulting in excessive paper accumulation: “Today, without a doubt, I have a department that is still very manual, focused on paper and physical documents. I believe this is due to attachment and a sense of security” (E2).

This accumulation happens for two main reasons: the need to archive documents due to legal responsibility for a certain period, and resistance from employees who believe that physical documents offer more security. This reflects another bureaucratic dysfunction: excessive paperwork. This inhibits the innovative stance of public employees, as noted by Pantoja et al. (2010). It is worth emphasizing that innovation only occurs in a favorable environment that encourages change and creativity.

Public sector employee recruitment typically occurs through public examinations, a right guaranteed by Article 37, Section II of the 1988 Federal Constitution:

“Appointment to public office or employment depends on prior approval in a competitive examination of tests or tests and titles, according to the nature and complexity of the role, as established by law, except for appointments to commission positions freely appointed and dismissed by law.” (Constitution, 1988).

Almost all interviewees emphasized this point. Most agreed that public examination is the fairest option, “I believe that the public exam is the fairest route. Fair in the sense that it applies to everyone” (E5). Before the 1988 Constitution, recruitment was based mainly on political appointments and personal recommendations, excluding much of the population. However, concerns were raised about the quality and difficulty level of the exams, suggesting that better-structured evaluations with more in-depth questions could improve the recruitment process and the quality of the approved candidates. Once again, the lack of concern for employee performance is evident, a result of the bureaucratic model.

Another issue raised was the Probationary Period. In theory, newly hired public servants should undergo a three-year probation during which their abilities and performance are evaluated to determine whether they gain tenure or are dismissed. However, according to the interviewees, this process does not occur in practice, despite being mandated by Article 28 of the Statute of Public Servants of Passos. Proper evaluations would lead to improved performance. Yet again, a dysfunction of the bureaucratic model is evident, due to the rigid structure of positions and salaries, which in turn results in employee demotivation and underperformance.

Regarding employee motivation and potential improvements, two types of responses were obtained. Managers believe that employees are mostly motivated and that any lack of motivation likely stems from external factors: “So, I do believe that most employees feel motivated. Those who aren't might have personal reasons outside the City Hall...” (E1). However, most employees reported not feeling motivated and doubted whether the organization even cares: “Since I joined, I've never felt motivated, and it's not just me; many employees feel the same...” (E6).

There is a lack of organizational initiative to explore ways to motivate employees. There are no performance-based incentives, nor is there a focus on skill development, which is exacerbated by resistance to change and excessive adherence to routines and bureaucratic processes.

Interviewees pointed out several demotivating factors, such as management positions being filled by politically appointed personnel, leading to high turnover, since their permanence is tied to political interests:

“Our coordinators are politically appointed. It's hard to feel excited and motivated when the person leading, giving orders, and making decisions has no experience and was chosen politically, not based on merit. That's where the lack of motivation starts.” (E6)

This results in employee misalignment with the leadership's methods due to the brief time such managers spend in the role. Moreover, these leaders often lack experience and technical expertise. This also reflects the absence of a career plan, leading employees to feel stagnant.

It is important to note that the Statute of Public Servants of Passos includes the option of assigning effective employees to leadership roles through gratified functions. According to Article 22: “Gratified functions are intended for performing leadership and advisory duties for which no commission position has been created, as specified in the law establishing the administrative structure.”

Therefore, while there are legal ways for employees to reach higher positions, these are rarely utilized by the administration. This represents another dysfunction—impersonal relationships—which discourages employees from aspiring to higher roles.

Another issue raised was the physical infrastructure of workspaces, which often lack adequate conditions and quality equipment: “Computers and municipal buildings—only a few are in good condition. Where I work is borderline unhealthy” (E6). Again, this reflects impersonal treatment of employees, viewing them as mere parts of a system rather than individuals with needs and subjectivity.

However, one interviewee gave an interesting response, noting that a training course had recently boosted their motivation: “[...] I felt motivated when they started investing in us” (E5).

Training is another evident issue in the City Hall’s people management. When asked about it, it became clear that training is largely absent. The few training sessions that do occur are limited to specific sectors, such as the Procurement Department, which must remain updated on legal changes. Consequently, training is limited and does not reach other departments. This was emphasized by all employees: “You provide structure and technical training, and from there, you can demand results, right?” (E6).

From the managers’ side, it is evident that training is part of the current administration’s plans, including scheduled courses and partnerships, such as with IFSULDEMINAS. They seem aware of this need. Employees acknowledge that the current management appears committed to improvement, but these projects are still in the planning stage.

When asked why they chose to work in the public sector, most of the civil servants cited job stability and the sense of security it provides. Managers, on the other hand, cited dreams, vocation, and the challenge of the role—since job stability does not apply to commissioned positions.

When asked whether the organization is open to change, most interviewees said that the City Hall appears to be open but faces numerous bureaucratic barriers, such as strong hierarchy, excessive conformity, and resistance to change due to fear of losing standardization and predictability. Other limiting factors include legal constraints and budget limitations: “We are limited by budgets and general incentives. [...] Sometimes we hit a wall of limitations...” (E3). Although the institution appears open to change, many things are hindered by the system. This reveals another bureaucratic dysfunction: resistance to change.

Finally, when asked about possible changes in people management to improve overall organizational functioning, several points were raised that demonstrate how bureaucracy affects municipal operations.

Employees suggested implementing periodic evaluations to place individuals in roles that match their skills and capabilities, effectively applying the Probationary Period (which currently only exists on paper), and creating a career plan to enable merit-based promotions. This would reduce turnover in leadership roles and enhance long-term operations. This again shows the lack of concern for performance and related incentives, a result of bureaucratic structures.

Another suggestion was the creation of a dedicated People Management department, which does not currently exist, to improve employee well-being and make them feel motivated and essential to the organization—not just another tool used by it.

To conclude, the managers mentioned three key pillars they consider crucial for improving organizational development and employee management at the City Hall. These were: first, employee training to enhance skills and boost motivation; second, increased digitization to reduce paperwork and improve process speed

and quality; and finally, broad bureaucratic simplification: “[...] a major streamlining of the whole system, to make it faster, safer, and legally compliant” (E2).

While managers understand the changes needed for a more effective administration, these are often focused only on process efficiency rather than employee well-being and personal/professional development.

## **CONCLUSION**

The study in question was based on a reflection on the influence of the bureaucratic model, as advocated by Max Weber, as a limiting factor in people management within a municipal public sphere. It is noted that the Human Resources sector of a public institution presents aspects that directly interfere with the work environment, hinder the satisfactory progress of processes, prevent the efficient flow of operations, and cause problems in public administration as a whole.

Thus, the article aimed to analyze how bureaucracy influences people management in the Municipal Government of Passos — MG. To achieve this objective, theoretical foundations from Weber and other authors on the topic and its predominance in the public sector were used, with a focus on people management. In addition, interviews were conducted with civil servants and managers in order to report their experiences on the subject.

Therefore, by analyzing the results of the research, it is evident that the proposed objective was achieved, as it was possible to understand the bureaucratic model and its dysfunctions and to investigate its limitations in the people management of the Municipal Government. Some characteristics of bureaucracy—unlike the perception of common sense—are important for the public sphere; however, the direct influence of its dysfunctions is evident, as they negatively affect both the execution of procedures within departments and the motivation and professional development of employees.

For this reason, administrative changes are necessary to bring improvements to the Personnel Department, helping it to understand the real needs of the civil servants in this institution and, consequently, to promote their recognition and appreciation.

Finally, due to time constraints, the research was focused and deepened only on a single municipality's city hall. Therefore, considering the importance of people management for Public Administration, it is proposed that future studies expand the scope to include other city halls and agencies at the municipal, state, or federal levels, in order to assess more broadly and accurately the impacts of using the bureaucratic model in people management within public sectors.

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