

Governance in action: Aligning institutional performance with citizen-centric metrics

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Abstract: This study explores the dynamic interplay between citizen expectations and institutional performance in the public sector, emphasizing the imperative of citizen-centric governance to enhance service quality, trust, and accountability. As public services evolve in response to societal complexities and technological advancements, the demand for responsive, transparent, and equitable service delivery intensifies. Drawing on theoretical frameworks such as New Public Management, public value theory, and service-dominant logic, the paper underscores the need for a paradigm shift from bureaucratic models to participatory and performance-driven approaches. A mixed-methods research design integrates quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to assess citizen satisfaction, institutional responsiveness, and the impact of leadership, ethics, and innovation on service outcomes. The findings reveal that citizen trust hinges on ethical conduct, transparency, and effective performance management systems. Moreover, transformational leadership, employee engagement, and public service motivation emerge as critical drivers of institutional effectiveness. The study also highlights the role of technological innovation, particularly e-governance and e-procurement, in mitigating corruption and enhancing service delivery. Challenges such as bureaucratic inertia, poor ethical standards, and fragmented accountability mechanisms are addressed through strategic recommendations, including leadership development, continuous learning, and stakeholder collaboration. Ultimately, the research advocates for a holistic governance model that aligns institutional goals with citizen needs, fostering inclusive, accountable, and high-performing public sector organizations.

Keywords: public service quality, citizen-centric governance, institutional performance, transparency and accountability, public service motivation and transformational leadership

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Introduction

The quality of public services is increasingly recognized as a cornerstone of effective governance and a critical factor in shaping citizen satisfaction and trust in governmental institutions (Guenoun et al. 2015). This necessitates a comprehensive examination of the dynamics between citizen expectations and the performance of public sector organizations, particularly in the context of evolving societal needs and technological advancements (Salmon et al. 2021; Tuebou 2024). Understanding and managing these expectations, while simultaneously optimizing institutional performance, presents a significant challenge that requires a multi-faceted approach, incorporating elements of organizational strategy, human resource management, and technological innovation (Mahsyar 2011). The imperative for high-quality public services arises from their essential role in meeting fundamental societal needs and complementing various aspects of citizen life (Tuebou 2024). As societies progress and become more complex, citizen demands for efficient, transparent, and responsive public services intensify, thereby requiring government agencies to adapt and enhance their service delivery mechanisms (Pramita et al. 2014). Failing to meet these expectations can lead to public dissatisfaction, erosion of trust in government, and ultimately, hinder the overall progress and well-being of society. In many instances, citizens have voiced numerous complaints and criticisms against government agencies that provide services at both central and regional levels, with service delivery often perceived as cumbersome and merely fulfilling obligatory duties and regulations (Susanti & Rifany 2020).

This underscores the need for a paradigm shift in how public services are conceptualized and delivered, moving from a top-down, bureaucratic approach to a citizen-centric model that prioritizes responsiveness, accessibility, and continuous improvement. Public awareness of the right to receive high quality public services has increased considerably, and it is essential to transform the spirit of government to be customer-oriented, and focused on needs and satisfaction rather than bureaucracy (Trisakti & Djajasinga 2021).

Theoretical foundations and conceptual frameworks

The study of public sector service quality draws upon various theoretical foundations and conceptual frameworks from the fields of

public administration, management, and political science. It is critical to analyze the history of public services that are defined by legal frameworks (Tuebou 2024). Public services date back to the medieval period and the Revolution of 1789 (Ibid.). The concept of New Public Management which emerged in the late 20th century, emphasized the application of market-based principles and private sector management techniques to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public services (Virtanen & Jalonen 2023). This approach advocates for decentralization, performance measurement, and customer orientation, with the aim of making public sector organizations more responsive and accountable to citizens. However, critics of New Public Management argue that its focus on efficiency and cost reduction can sometimes come at the expense of equity, social justice, and the public interest. Another relevant theoretical framework is the concept of public value, which emphasizes the importance of creating value for citizens through the provision of public services that are aligned with their needs and preferences. Public value theory suggests that public sector organizations should strive to deliver services that not only meet efficiency criteria but also contribute to broader societal goals, such as social inclusion, environmental sustainability, and democratic participation. Furthermore, the service-dominant logic perspective highlights the importance of co-creation of value between service providers and users, emphasizing the active role of citizens in shaping the design and delivery of public services. Within public services, it is important to maintain citizen satisfaction and trust in the government (Pareek & Sole 2020). This perspective suggests that public sector organizations should engage with citizens in a collaborative manner to understand their needs, preferences, and expectations, and to co-design services that are tailored to their specific requirements.

Understanding the multifaceted nature of citizen expectations regarding public services is paramount for effective governance and institutional performance. These expectations are not static but rather evolve dynamically, influenced by a myriad of factors including socio-economic conditions, technological advancements, political discourse, and individual experiences. Citizens' expectations often encompass various dimensions, such as accessibility, timeliness, accuracy, responsiveness, and fairness of service delivery. Accessibility refers to the ease with which citizens can access public services, regardless of their geographic location, socio-economic status, or physical ability. Timeliness relates to the speed and efficiency with which services are

delivered, minimizing waiting times and bureaucratic delays. Accuracy pertains to the correctness and reliability of information and services provided, ensuring that citizens receive the right information and the right services at the right time. Responsiveness refers to the willingness and ability of public sector organizations to listen to citizens' concerns, address their grievances, and adapt their services to meet their changing needs (Tatawi et al. 2022). Fairness relates to the equitable treatment of all citizens, ensuring that everyone has equal access to public services and that no one is discriminated against based on their background or circumstances. Citizens also expect transparency in the public policy process, including the planning and evaluation of services, with easy access to information regarding costs, requirements, timelines, and procedures (Syam et al. 2021). Institutional performance in the public sector is a complex and multifaceted concept that encompasses various dimensions, including efficiency, effectiveness, accountability, and responsiveness. Efficiency refers to the optimal utilization of resources to achieve desired outcomes, minimizing waste and maximizing productivity. Effectiveness relates to the extent to which public sector organizations achieve their stated goals and objectives, delivering services that meet the needs and expectations of citizens (Lukman 2022). Accountability involves the mechanisms and processes through which public sector organizations are held responsible for their actions and decisions, ensuring transparency and preventing abuse of power. As Frederickson and Smith (Boyne et al. 2006) noted, governments across the globe are fixated on performance, emphasizing performance-based accountability in conducting public affairs rather than simply meeting policy goals within legal limits. Responsiveness pertains to the ability of public sector organizations to adapt to changing circumstances, address emerging challenges, and respond to the evolving needs and preferences of citizens (Tambunan 2020). Ultimately, performance encompasses a dedication to quality, efficient service delivery, and prudent resource management (Kleeff et al. 2023). It is also related to respecting rights by aggregating the principle definition of universal validity to the assessment of health systems (Mishima et al. 2016). Performance is difficult to define and measure, and is described using the terms efficiency, effectiveness, success, and growth (Tekka & Msangi 2020).

Transparency, as a principle, guarantees the right to access information about governmental administration for everyone (Trisakti

et al. 2022). Transparency ensures sound administration and impartiality within institutions, and is a key instrument for opening up public administrations (Brondoni & Bisio 2017). Transparency enhances trust and boosts public participation by moving away from government secrecy and allowing free access to information (Krah & Mertens 2020). Access to information fosters administrative democracy in modern states, counteracting the concealment of information for personal gain (Brondoni & Bisio 2017). Accountability, which is a cornerstone of good governance, encompasses the mechanisms and processes through which public sector organizations are held responsible for their actions and decisions (Matlala 2024). This includes financial accountability, ensuring that public funds are used effectively and efficiently, as well as performance accountability, ensuring that public sector organizations deliver the services and outcomes they have promised (Svärd 2017). Accountability is also related to organizational liability both internally and externally (Putra 2020).

Literature review

Citizen expectations are shaped by a complex interplay of factors, including past experiences, personal needs, word-of-mouth communication, and the service provider's own communications (Karunaratne et al. 2015). Citizens often evaluate public services based on their perceptions of reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles (Purnama et al. 2023). Meeting and exceeding these expectations is paramount for fostering citizen trust and ensuring the legitimacy of public institutions. Service quality is a critical determinant of organizational success, particularly in sustaining customer loyalty and fostering positive relationships (Chahal 2008). In today's competitive global landscape, delivering quality service is not merely an option but a fundamental strategy for survival and success, prompting even public sector organizations to enhance service quality and improve efficiency (Loyyl & Kumar 2018). The effective management of human resources plays a pivotal role in enhancing service quality, efficiency, and overall organizational effectiveness within the public sector (Bradbury et al. 2013).

Public sector performance measurement and evaluation is crucial for streamlining governments, enhancing efficiency, productivity, and transparency, and restoring public trust in governmental institutions (Caiden & Caiden 1998). Organizational leadership has a significant

impact on employee job satisfaction, influencing public sector effectiveness (Moslehpour et al. 2018). It underscores the importance of identifying and cultivating leaders who can inspire and motivate their teams to achieve organizational goals. Public agencies must prioritize employee engagement to retain talent and improve the public's perception of government (Crosby 2014). There is a need to encourage civil servant's performance to create excellent service (Hayat & Artisa 2019). Performance management within the public sector can be enhanced through a micro-level approach focused on the behavior of public employees, which is as vital as measurement aspects (Asif & Rathore 2021). Ethical values are very important in enhancing employee performance, fostering a productive work environment, and facilitating effective public service delivery (Mostafa & El-Motalib 2018). Ultimately, public sector motivation increases job satisfaction and subsequently improves the quality of public services (Nurung et al. 2020). Moreover, public service motivation can influence employee engagement through the quality of political and administrative leadership (Ugaddan & Park 2017). By prioritizing employee engagement, public sector organizations can cultivate a more motivated and productive workforce, leading to improved service delivery and increased public trust (Tioumagneng & Njifen 2019). The selection, training, and development of public employees should prioritize human resource processes that emphasize the skills and competencies required for their roles (Pérez et al. 2014). Additionally, leadership effectiveness and emotional competencies are crucial for quality service delivery (Matjie 2017). Effective human resource management plays a vital role in determining organizational progress, making it essential for managing and utilizing employees productively to achieve organizational goals (Burns 2022; Idris 2021). Public sector organizations should promote a culture of continuous learning and development, providing employees with opportunities to enhance their skills and knowledge. This investment in human capital can lead to improved service quality, increased efficiency, and greater innovation within the public sector. Moreover, ethical leadership and clear guidelines are essential for preventing unethical behavior and enhancing productivity. Transformational leadership and organizational culture play a vital role in performance management practices within public service organizations and service performance within public sector agencies (Abdullah et al. 2020; Chau et al. 2022).

The effectiveness of public service delivery is closely linked to the work ethics, values, and attitudes of public servants (Omisore, B. O., & A., O. A. 2015). Ethical behavior is crucial in public office, as any deviation can erode public trust and damage the reputation of the office (Mhlauli 2023). Organizations should develop training programs to promote ethical work behavior and hire leaders with a strong sense of ethics (Guo et al. 2023). Effective management of ethics is essential for preventing unethical behavior and enhancing productivity. Transparency ensures sound administration and impartiality within institutions, and is a key instrument for opening up public administrations. Access to information fosters administrative democracy in modern states, counteracting the concealment of information for personal gain. Accountability, which is a cornerstone of good governance, encompasses the mechanisms and processes through which public sector organizations are held responsible for their actions and decisions (Covell 2016; Kaleem 2017; Stavropoulou et al. 2023). This includes financial accountability, ensuring that public funds are used effectively and efficiently, as well as performance accountability, ensuring that public sector organizations deliver the services and outcomes they have promised. Good governance leads to good management, good performance, good investment of public money, good public behavior and good outcomes (Juiz et al. 2014). The bureaucracy is the executor of government administration, which has a big responsibility in managing public assets, providing public services, and establishing policies (Fauzi et al. 2022). Improving public service management and preventing corruption are the main goals of promoting ethical standards for civil servants (Matei & Popa 2010). However, efforts to uphold ethics and bureaucratic integrity continue to face numerous challenges, including high levels of disciplinary violations and abuse of authority (Fauzi et al. 2022). The increasing prevalence of phenomena reflects poor ethics and behavior of the apparatus in carrying out their duties as public servants, which warrants improvement (Hidayati 2022; Matei & Popa 2010).

Public trust in government hinges on ethical conduct, integrity, and the absence of corruption, collusion, and nepotism (Fauzi et al. 2022). Deteriorating integrity within the South African public sector has led to a loss of public trust due to maladministration, corruption, and nepotism (Mhlauli 2023). Establishing an integrity system, along with robust internal control systems and ethical leadership, is vital for enhancing accountability within the public sector (Aziz et al. 2015).

Corruption has numerous consequences for public service delivery in that the resources that are meant to assist the poor are diverted to benefit a few corrupt officials (Masenya & Mthombeni 2023). Therefore, it is very important to create a government in which all the citizens can have trust and satisfaction in public service. Effective anti-corruption measures are critical for promoting good governance in developmental states (Manyaka & Nkuna 2014). It is important to create effective ways to reduce corruption in the public sector, which can enhance service delivery. A strong relationship exists between governance and citizen trust, as governance is assessed based on citizens' perceptions of trustworthiness, impartiality, fairness, and responsiveness of public officials (Ramasamy 2020). Trust and confidence are considered critical elements in the relationship between citizens and governments, affecting compliance, cooperation, and overall satisfaction with public services. Furthermore, the establishment of bodies such as the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau and the enactment of the PCCB Act of 2007 are aimed at promoting integrity within public organizations (Makubi & Issa 2018).

Engaging public-private partnerships can play a crucial role in sustainable development at the local government level. However, historical issues of corruption in both sectors, coupled with limited trust between public and private sector professionals, can hinder collaboration (Ramolobe & Khandanisa 2024). Economic development is crucial for every country; however, the public sector faces an increasing number of corruption cases, posing a risk to the country's economy (Vorster & Nwosu 2024). Public sector corruption undermines government credibility, affects the economic balance of the country, and contributes to the spread of economic crimes (Heath 2000). Public procurement provides a fertile ground for corruption in the public sector (Achua 2011). The principles of good governance, such as transparency, accountability, and the rule of law, are essential for suppressing corruption and promoting efficiency in government operations (Handitya 2019; Laut et al. 2013). Corruption does not only undermine the development goals of the country, but also affects the poor the most (Manyaka & Nkuna 2014). Many developing countries need practical strategies to educate the public and gain support to combat abuses of government officials and private individuals (Lester 1999). Prioritizing governance reforms can conserve resources as initiatives to reduce poverty are undertaken (Grindle 2004). When

governments fail to adhere to these principles, the mismanagement of public resources ensues, leading to the misallocation of funds and the proliferation of substandard projects (Purnaweni et al. 2022). Effective corporate governance practices and standards are crucial in controlling and ensuring success in both business and government, with all stakeholders playing a role (Kabeyi 2019).

The creation of an openly competitive and transparent government procurement system has been slow in many Southeast Asian states (Jones 2009). Public procurement is vulnerable to corruption due to the large sums of money involved (Toebea 2018). Increased spending by governments implies that corruption and inefficiency may cost a considerable sum (Bosio et al. 2023). The utilization of ICT can play a crucial role in establishing new models of public governance that foster fairness and accountability, both of which are vital in combating corruption (Ferreira et al. 2014). The lack of transparency, fairness, and accountability in the procurement process has been a concern for governments, private organizations, and supranational entities (Chan & Owusu 2022). E-procurement is a potent tool for mitigating corruption in public procurement, as it enhances transparency, accountability, and integrity (Mohungoo et al. 2020). The Malaysian government spends a significant amount annually on procuring goods and services, indicating a high risk of corruption and lobbying in public procurement (Ishak & Said 2015). E-procurement systems enhance transparency by making real-time procurement information accessible to all stakeholders (Neupane et al. 2014). Thus, these systems allow tracking of processes and help in evaluation and monitoring. In South Africa, reforms in the public sector are viewed as a means of social development and transformation, despite ongoing supply chain management challenges that hinder efficient and effective delivery of government mandates (Gabela & Uzodike 2019).

The procurement process in the South African public sector has been used to address past discriminatory practices by empowering the previously disadvantaged, but corruption has undermined these good intentions (Munzhedzi 2016). Public procurement processes are said to have many red tapes and are highly rigid (Manyathi et al. 2021). South Africa's public procurement regime is progressively configured into a centrally steered but decentralized organizational form (Brunette et al. 2019). Public procurement constitutes above 15% of the GDP for most developing economies (Mwale 2020). Furthermore, there is no effective communication about plans of government procurement

except seeing a tender advert that normally closes in 21 days, giving no time for innovative suppliers to put together and submit a viable bid (Manyathi et al. 2021). Over 20% of the procurement budget is still misused by officials through the payment of exorbitant prices for goods and services (Nkwanyana & Agbenyegah 2020). The majority of challenges faced by public procurement in South Africa can probably be attributed to the implementation of the system, rather than to the system itself (Fourie & Malan 2020). Despite e-procurement emerging as a tool for reforming public procurement, its adoption remains a significant challenge (Maepa et al. 2023). The lack of consideration for local contexts when adopting policies can hinder the erosion of corruption in public procurement (Toebe 2018). Corruption is highly prevalent in public procurement in Lesotho, with cases handled by the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences in 2016 overwhelmingly related to public procurement (Ibidem).

Methodology

To investigate the interplay between citizen expectations and institutional performance in the public sector, a mixed-methods research approach is employed, integrating both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis techniques. Quantitative data will be gathered through large-scale surveys administered to a representative sample of citizens, designed to capture their perceptions and expectations regarding public services across various domains, such as healthcare, education, and infrastructure. These surveys will utilize validated scales and instruments to measure citizen satisfaction, perceived service quality, and trust in government institutions. The survey results will be analyzed using statistical methods, including regression analysis and structural equation modelling, to identify the key drivers of citizen satisfaction and to assess the impact of institutional performance on citizen perceptions (Huang & Feeney 2015). Qualitative data, on the other hand, will be collected through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with citizens, public sector employees, and policymakers. These qualitative methods will provide rich, contextualized insights into the lived experiences of citizens interacting with public services, as well as the challenges and opportunities faced by public sector organizations in meeting citizen expectations. The qualitative data will be analyzed using thematic analysis techniques to identify recurring themes, patterns, and

narratives related to citizen expectations, service delivery, and institutional performance.

Results

The delivery of public services is not merely a transactional exchange but a critical determinant of public trust and governmental legitimacy (Citra et al. 2021). Public institutions may not fully understand the economic pressures faced by private enterprises, and the size and dependence on public authorities or institutional actors can lead to organizational contradictions (Tuebou 2024). Effectively managing staff performance is crucial for efficient service delivery in public institutions, whose performance is scrutinized by a public with high expectations shaped by votes and taxes (Thusi et al. 2022). When public servants are highly motivated, they effectively handle job demands and are less likely to experience exhaustion. News of corruption and hypocrisy creates a perception of inferior performance (Bigley & Weniger 2020). Transformational leadership can harness the positive aspects of public service motivation to enhance employee and organizational performance. When employees have high public service motivation, person-organization fit, and needs-supplies fit, they exhibit greater job satisfaction.

The implications of these findings extend beyond academic discourse, offering actionable insights for policymakers and public sector managers seeking to enhance service quality and strengthen citizen trust. Public administration research increasingly critiques New Public Management reforms (Ritz 2009). This new paradigm emphasizes participatory governance, citizen engagement, and collaborative problem-solving, aiming to create a more responsive and accountable public sector. Citizen satisfaction is closely related to the standard of citizen services (Bhuiyan et al. 2017). Therefore, integrating citizen feedback into service design and delivery can lead to more effective and citizen-centered public services (Ibid.). Thus, it is important to improve nursing performance based on patient satisfaction level (Hartono et al. 2020). Americans are especially bothered by biased and self-serving politicians, partisan wrangling, and the power of special interests in the policy process (Ryzin 2011). Therefore, the aim is to offer a conceptual framework that illustrates the correlation among leadership style, organizational culture, organizational citizenship behavior, and performance indicators (Munir et al. 2020). The public service is expected to deliver quality service

and be more transparent and accountable. Accountability leadership demonstrates to employees the importance of being transparent and keeping stakeholders regularly informed of the decisions that they make (Schwarz et al. 2020). Therefore, governments must prioritize investing in employee training and development programs. Such initiatives should focus on equipping public servants with the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively address complex social problems and deliver high-quality services. (Nhede 2018).

Addressing persistent issues like service delivery inefficiencies and bureaucratic processes requires innovative strategies that align public services with citizen expectations (Harwani & Maheswari 2015). Public sector organizations face significant pressure to enhance efficiency while maintaining responsiveness to public constituents, translating into intense demands on employees and their collective performance (Jordan et al. 2012). Meeting these demands necessitates a robust performance management system that accurately assesses individual contributions and fosters continuous improvement (Thusi et al. 2022). It is therefore fundamental for public organizations to have proper performance management systems in place in order to formally assess individual performance (Ibidem). To successfully navigate this complex landscape, public sector organizations must prioritize continuous improvement, actively seeking feedback from citizens and employees to identify areas for enhancement. Through a focus on continuous improvement, public sector organizations can better align their services with citizen expectations, improve performance outcomes, and ultimately strengthen public trust and confidence (Arnaboldi et al. 2015; Cai & Ye 2012; Solé 2009; Troisi et al. 2016).

This can be done by institutionalizing performance reward systems and incentivizing ethical conduct, which can improve the professional behavior of officers (Nkala & Malataliana 2021). By supporting ethical behavior and punishing corruption, the public sector can promote a culture of integrity, accountability, and transparency. The public sector is now under pressure to justify the sources and utilization of public resources as well as improve performance in service delivery (Aziz et al. 2015). Transparency is essential to ensuring value for money and accountability in the use of public resources. As such, public entities are required to implement and maintain effective internal control systems. Furthermore, leadership development programs can equip managers with the skills and knowledge necessary to inspire and motivate their teams, foster a culture of innovation, and effectively

manage change within their organizations (Rahman & Ismail 2018). This can foster innovation within public sector organizations (Moussa et al. 2017). Organizations' performance relies on organization's innovation capability (Azmi & Suradi 2019). Innovation capability affects the organization's performance. Therefore, public sector organizations must embrace a culture of innovation, encouraging employees to experiment with new approaches and technologies to improve service delivery and address complex social challenges. Therefore, improving employee satisfaction and engagement is crucial for enhancing organizational performance and achieving strategic objectives.

To adapt to the challenges of increased globalization and to meet customers' expectations, public sector organizations need to reinvent themselves. The implementation of modern technology and digital solutions, in particular, can significantly enhance efficiency, streamline processes, and improve service delivery in the public sector (Huang et al. 2019). Innovation and creativity are particularly important for the Malaysian public sector (Hashim, 2021). One alternative that enhances the productivity of the public sector is to encourage innovative workers (Ibrahim & Tajuddin 2020). The Malaysian public sector has suffered from low public trust. This is because of poor outcomes, failure to deliver the needs of citizens, and also corruption (Kamaruddin & Abeysekera 2021). Consequently, there has been pressure from stakeholders to improve the image and service delivery of the public sector. Innovation enhances performance improvements, productivity, and improved outcomes (Ibrahim & Tajuddin 2020). Therefore, it is important to understand the determinants of public sector innovation (Azmi & Suradi 2019; Ibrahim & Tajuddin 2020). These determinants include factors such as innovative work behavior, culture, participative leadership and wider public sector condition (Ibrahim & Tajuddin 2020). Civil servants become a vital asset to the sector and nation when they can generate solutions and ideas and implement them accordingly (Vitapamoorthy et al. 2021).

Visionary leadership not only drives innovation but also plays a crucial role in cultivating and sustaining a strong organizational culture that fosters high performance and continuous improvement. Consequently, public sector organizations should prioritize the implementation of leadership development programs. Effective leaders must demonstrate strong communication with employees and actively support the development of an innovative organizational culture

(Rahman & Ismail 2018). A suitable leadership will always motivate their employees by encouraging, inspiring, and supporting them. Effective communication is essential for aligning employee efforts with organizational goals, fostering collaboration and knowledge sharing, and building trust and transparency. The transformational behaviors adopted by public managers will encourage and lead change within the public sector (Harb & Sidani 2019). Furthermore, collaboration and partnerships with external stakeholders, such as private sector organizations, non-profit organizations, and community groups, can provide access to new ideas, resources, and expertise, fostering innovation and improving service delivery (Hashim et al., 2020). This kind of collaboration creates an environment that supports improvements in the public sector.

Experimentation, responding to low performers, feedback loops, and motivation to make improvements enhance the likelihood of innovative activity within an organization (Demircioğlu & Audretsch 2017). Experimentation and motivation to improve performance are crucial for achieving innovation in the public sector (Ibid.). Confronted with a range of complex challenges, public administrations are faced with increasing pressure to improve their innovation capacity (Rizzo et al. 2020).

To effectively synergize citizen expectations and institutional performance, public sector organizations must adopt a holistic approach that encompasses several key strategies. This includes fostering a culture of citizen-centricity, where the needs and preferences of citizens are at the forefront of all decision-making processes (Ciobanu et al., 2019). Implementing robust performance measurement systems that accurately capture the quality and impact of public services is crucial for identifying areas for improvement and ensuring accountability (Speklé & Verbeeten 2013). Organizations can improve their performance by aligning individual and team efforts with organizational goals through effective performance management systems (Esu & Inyang 2009). Equally important is investing in employee training and development, equipping public servants with the skills and knowledge necessary to deliver high-quality services in an efficient and effective manner.

Furthermore, embracing technological innovation can significantly enhance service delivery, streamline processes, and improve citizen engagement. Performance management should be understood as an essential tool in achieving the vision and mission of an organization

(Tshukudu 2014). By establishing clear performance standards and expectations, providing regular feedback, and recognizing and rewarding high performance, public sector organizations can create a culture of continuous improvement and drive positive outcomes for citizens. Moreover, public agencies should help employees understand how their individual efforts contribute to the overall prosocial impact of the public service to improve work engagement (Mussagulova 2020). Furthermore, governmental efforts to increase civic engagement may lead to better public services (Andrews et al. 2008). Leadership plays a crucial role in employee engagement within the public sector (Sanneh & A.Taj 2015). When leaders champion public value actions, they protect public benefits and enhance citizens' trust in government (Huy & Phuc 2023). Participatory management is significantly linked to employee's performance in organizations (Njuguna et al. 2021).

The Tanzanian Public Service has implemented a performance management system that encompasses strategic and operational planning, client service charters, service delivery surveys, self-assessment programs, performance budgets, and monitoring and evaluation systems (Kinemo 2020). However, the implementation of strategic plans in Tanzanian public organizations, including municipalities, has not been consistently effective, as highlighted by audit reports (Ibid.). In South Africa, performance management systems require substantial revision to effectively support municipal development, with a focus on low-cost systems that align with the capabilities of existing administrations and prioritize governance roles (Curtis 1999). In Botswana, an integrated performance management model has been proposed to facilitate the effective management of performance in the public service, emphasizing the combined effort between supervisors and employees to achieve organizational goals (Tshukudu 2014). The reports of the Auditor-General on the financial statements and performance of municipalities implicitly manifest challenges in the implementation of performance management systems in municipalities, necessitating a model to strengthen implementation for growth, development, and effective service delivery (Mofolo 2012).

Moreover, embracing technological innovation can significantly enhance the efficiency and accessibility of public services, while also providing opportunities for greater citizen engagement and feedback. Investing in human capital, by providing employees with the necessary skills, training, and motivation to deliver high-quality services, is

essential for building a capable and responsive public sector workforce (Ciobanu et al. 2019). Attracting a motivated workforce is particularly important for the public sector, where performance is usually more difficult to measure (Tonin, 2015). It's important to increase opportunities for social welfare workers to directly interact with service beneficiaries and gain access to citizen feedback, which helps maintain and improve their level of public service motivation (Kim et al. 2015). The concept of public service motivation is crucial in understanding the commitment of public employees to serving the public good (Ciobanu et al. 2019). Individuals with a strong public service orientation are often drawn to government jobs, suggesting that pre-entry motivation can influence their attraction to public sector organizations (Carpenter et al. 2011). By aligning employee goals with the organization's mission, public sector organizations can tap into the intrinsic motivation of their employees, leading to increased productivity and improved service delivery (Wright 2007). Recent developments in public service have included higher levels of productivity, service orientation, and accountability (Perry & Hondeghem 2008). Transformational leadership can harness the positive aspects of public service motivation to enhance employee and organizational performance (Paarlberg & Lavigna 2010). When public servants are highly motivated, they effectively handle job demands and are less likely to experience exhaustion. However, they may experience reduced public service motivation if job demands are consistently high and job resources are consistently low (Bakker 2015). Furthermore, by understanding the motivational drivers of public employees, organizations can tailor their management practices to create a more supportive and engaging work environment, which in turn can lead to higher levels of job satisfaction and improved service quality (Wright 2001). When employees have high public service motivation, person-organization fit, and needs-supplies fit, they exhibit greater job satisfaction (Liu et al. 2013).

By focusing on the motivation of public employees, public sector organizations can cultivate a more engaged and committed workforce, ultimately leading to improved service delivery and increased public trust. Furthermore, private-sector workers are more likely to place a higher value on such extrinsic reward motivators as high income and short work hours, but those in public organizations value different motives (Houston 2000). These include the desire to serve the public, personal feelings of compassion, and commitment to helping others

(Kim & Vandenabeele 2010). There is evidence that public-service motivation in the federal sector is positively related to organizational commitment (Crewson 1997). Pay for performance is the main stream of private service motivation which is totally absent in public sectors (Hossan 2017).

Conclusion

Public service organizations have been facing immense pressure from structural, governance, and financial reforms, especially with the introduction of new public management theories across OECD countries (Chau et al. 2022). Public sector organizations should embrace strategic, goal-directed, and multidimensional models for performance measurement to enhance public service provision (Modell 2004). The relationship between the incentive-oriented use of performance measurement systems and performance is moderated by contractibility (Speklé & Verbeeten 2013). Many scholars show a growing interest in critical variables in managing public organizations (Troisi et al. 2016). The use of performance measurement systems can indeed have a positive effect on organizational performance in the public sector (Speklé & Verbeeten 2013). Organizations should encourage the participation of employees in the development of a strategic plan through communication and teamwork. The study provides useful information for both practitioners and researchers. Thus, it is important to have more staff training and development in new technologies to boost service delivery. By taking a proactive and responsive approach to performance management, public sector organizations can enhance service quality, strengthen citizen trust, and ultimately contribute to building a more effective and accountable government.

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