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Smart Governance For Civil Service Excellence



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CONCEPT PAPER

1 ސަރަޙައްދު

Enhancing Citizen-Centric Services in Local Councils through Digital Transformation

Uz. Mohamed Niyaz

Abstract

The demographic distribution in the Maldives, with a significant population spread across its atolls, necessitates decentralization for effective service delivery. Local councils, despite being tasked with providing essential services, face challenges due to limited resources and infrastructure. However, advancements in internet connectivity and digital technologies present opportunities to enhance these services through digital transformation. This paper explores the concept of citizen-centric digital transformation in local councils, examining the benefits and challenges of implementing digital tools to improve service delivery and citizen engagement.

By leveraging digital platforms, local councils can streamline administrative processes, increase transparency, and foster participatory decision-making, particularly in rural areas. The paper also discusses the sustainability and prospects of digitalizing municipal services, highlighting the importance of continuous investment in digital infrastructure and digital literacy programs. Emerging technologies such as 5G, IoT, blockchain, and AI are identified as potential drivers for further optimizing service delivery and supporting socio-economic development in the Maldives.

RESEARCH PAPER

Transforming a Nation: The Role of oneGov in Achieving Smart Governance and Transforming Public Services in the Maldives

Mohamed Ushau
 Mohamed Arushad
 Rana Ali
 Ana Nasym

Abstract

This paper examines the transformative role of oneGov, a digital platform for public service delivery in the Maldives, in achieving efficient, transparent, and cost-effective governance. Given the Maldives' national-level strategies on the use of modern technologies towards a digital government, advancement, this study investigates how oneGov modernized service provision and internal government processes. Employing a combined quantitative and qualitative approach, the research assesses oneGov's impact on system efficiency, agency satisfaction, user adoption, and policy alignment. An integrated framework, combining the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) which explores user perception of usefulness and ease of use, and the DeLone and McLean Information Systems Success Model (D&M IS Success Model) which evaluates system quality, information quality, and user

satisfaction, is used to analyze data collected through structured interviews, key informant interviews, usage data analysis, and document analysis. Findings reveal significant improvements in operational efficiency (e.g., reduced processing times), service delivery times, and service quality, with positive user perception among government agencies. However, challenges related to funding, political will, and fragmented digital initiatives persist. The study concludes by proposing policy recommendations for enhanced digital governance, including sustained political support, centralized funding, national-level strategies enabling interoperability, and comprehensive training programs. This research offers valuable empirical evidence on digital transformation efforts in the Maldives, contributing valuable lessons for similar initiatives worldwide.

Keywords:

Digital transformation, Public Service Delivery, Smart Governance, Interoperability, Efficiency, Transparency

Themes: Digital transformation

CONCEPT PAPER

Empowering Citizen Engagement: How Digital Platforms can Increase Council Impact and Inclusivity

Ifaadh Waheed
Mohamed Nasih

Abstract

This paper explores the potential of digital platforms to revolutionize citizen engagement in local governance. It argues that traditional methods often fall short in reaching diverse populations and fostering meaningful participation. By harnessing the power of digital tools, councils can bridge this gap, empowering citizens to contribute their ideas and experiences. The paper examines how digital platforms can increase council impact by facilitating informed decision-making processes that reflect the community's needs.

It also explores how these platforms can promote inclusivity by overcoming traditional barriers to participation and ensuring a wider range of voices are heard. Ultimately, the paper contends that digital engagement is key to strengthening local democracy and building a more responsive and effective council.

RESEARCH PAPER

Perceived Purposes of Performance Appraisal and Appraisal Satisfaction: Insights from the Maldives Civil Service

Ahmed Shathir
Aishath Leeza
Nuha Ismail Fulhu

Abstract

Research in the past decades has extensively explored performance appraisal and performance management. Numerous studies have delved into the various applications of performance appraisal (PA), resulting in diverse and sometimes contradictory findings and conclusions (Bosewell & Boudreau, 2002). This study focused on examining the relationship between the perceived purposes of the Performance Appraisal System (PAS) and appraisal satisfaction in the civil service of the Maldives. Previously, this aspect of PAS in the civil service had not been investigated. The target population for the research was the entire civil service workforce in the Maldives, comprising just under 24,000 employees. A structured questionnaire, developed from extensive literature and utilising a five-point Likert scale, was distributed to a stratified random sample of 380 employees from various civil service institutions, ensuring a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of

error. Data from the sample, analysed using Pearson correlation, revealed a significant positive correlation between the developmental purpose and satisfaction

($r = .563, p < .001$). Administrative purpose also showed a moderately positive correlation with satisfaction ($r = .528, p < .001$). The findings indicate that civil service employees' perceptions of the administrative and developmental purposes of PAS are positively associated with their appraisal satisfaction. The research suggests that improving the developmental aspects, in addition to addressing administrative functions, can enhance the PAS in use in the Maldives Civil Service. The study also recommends that future research should delve into additional implementation factors, such as managerial practices and organisational culture, to comprehensively enhance the implementation of the PAS.

Keywords:

Performance Appraisal System, Performance Appraisal Purposes, Administrative Purpose, Developmental Purpose, Appraisal Satisfaction, Maldives Civil Service.

Themes:

Responsive and Accountable Civil Service: Streamlined organizational processes

RESEARCH PAPER**The Interaction Effect Of Job Design And Public Service Motivation on the Job Performance of Maldives Civil Service Employees**

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 Dr. Jacqueline Tham³

Abstract

Previous research has shown that people select public sector jobs for meaningful work. In this regard, the meaning of work comes from the way work is conceived, as represented by the model given by Hackman and Oldham (1975), which can have important implications for work-related behaviour. Therefore, this research analyses how job characteristics would influence civil servants' Public Service Motivation and how this leads to the interaction between job characteristics and job performance of those working in the Maldives Civil Service.

This research used a quantitative design approach and a cross-sectional data collection approach. Data were collected from 370 employees from different public service offices in the Maldives Civil Service. The findings from this research indicate a positive association between job characteristics and job performance.

Similarly, job characteristics positively impact public service motivation (PSM), which also affects job performance. In addition, an interaction was observed; detailed findings are given in the research paper.

The findings of this research suggest significant implications to those who implement HR, thereby providing insights to improve the job design and human resource management functions of civil servants. In addition, the study presents essential findings on the importance of job characteristics on job performance from the context of the public sector of South Asian countries. It also highlights the need to improve job characteristics to increase the motivation of public sector employees.

Keywords:

Job characteristics, Job performance, Public Service Motivation (PSM)

RESEARCH PAPER

Localization of School Teachers: Challenges and Approaches in Public Schools of the Maldives

Abdullah Rasheed

Abstract

For years, approximately 2000 expatriate teachers have been working in Maldivian public schools. The formal teacher training program began over 40 years ago at the Institute of Teacher Education (ITE) to prepare teachers for Maldivian schools. The demand for teachers continued to rise as education expanded throughout the country. Despite the establishment of new colleges and universities in the last two decades, the number of expatriate teachers has not decreased. Currently, approximately 21% of teachers in government schools are expatriates. Additionally, certain subjects heavily depend on expatriate teachers from nearby countries. This study aims to explore the challenges and approaches to localizing teachers in the public schools of the Maldives. The study was based on a qualitative paradigm. Data were collected through an open-ended questionnaire from a sample of 25 eminent educationists,

and a focused group discussion was held with 4 experienced educational managers using purposive sampling methods. The findings of the study reveal challenges such as teachers' workload, lack of availability of teacher training programs for certain subjects, development of other appealing sectors, working conditions of schools including resources, and lack of career guidance for the young generation. Effective approaches to addressing these issues include creating awareness of nationalism, providing incentives, upholding the dignity of teachers, changing the school system to support work-life balance, proper planning, and creating a mentoring mechanism. At the same time, the study has highlighted some reasons favoring expatriate teachers such as commitment, rich content knowledge, and fewer leaves taken by expatriate teachers. Thus, it demonstrates the need for a long-term consistent plan to localize teachers.

Keywords:

Localizing teachers, Expatriates teachers, Challenges, Approaches

**The Significance of Procedural Fairness in Civil Service Employee Dismissal:
An Overview of Best Practices and the Legal Imperatives of
Procedural Fairness in Employee Dismissal Proceedings**

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Fathimath Shuau Ashraf
Uza. Aishath Areesha Najeeb
Uza. Nashma Waheed

Abstract

Ensuring procedural fairness throughout employee dismissal proceedings is paramount to upholding the principles of natural justice. The aim of this research is to determine the significance of procedural fairness in Civil Service employee dismissal proceedings by examining the best practices in establishing procedural fairness in the Maldivian Legal System, whilst also drawing an analysis with the current application of this principle in the Maldives Civil Service.

To achieve the objective of this research, doctrinal methodology was adopted, focusing on relevant statutory provisions, legislations, regulations, and case laws. Thereby, Employee dismissal cases decided by the Employment Tribunal and the Maldivian Courts in the past two years will be investigated further, to determine the grounds of unfair dismissal cases within the Civil Service. Additionally, this research also looks into an approximate number of employee termination cases that were submitted to the Civil Service Commission in the year 2023. The findings demonstrate that there was a significant rate

of unfair dismissal cases amongst the Civil Service Institutions in the year 2022, the main reason for it being the failure in the implementation of procedural fairness in dismissing employees within Civil Service Institutes. However, it is observed that the number of unfair dismissal claims raised at the Maldives Employment Tribunal decreased significantly in the year 2023, which can be deduced as Civil Service Institutes adhering more strictly to the prerequisites of procedural fairness following the January 2022 amendment to the Maldives Civil Service Regulation 2014.

This research concludes on the notion that it is imperative to uphold procedural fairness for organizational excellence as well as preserving foundational principles of natural justice in dismissing employees within Civil Service Institutes. By addressing the theory of procedural fairness, recommendations will be made on how to establish uniformity and consistency in dismissing employees in Civil Service Institutions.

Keywords:

Keywords: Procedural Fairness, Unfair Employee Dismissal, Maldives Civil Service

Themes:

Employment, Dismissal, Procedural Fairness

CONCEPT PAPER

Corruption Risk-Self Assessment Toolkit

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Fathimath Nazeefa Saeed

Summary

Corruption often goes undetected because it occurs secretly behind closed doors. Once committed, its damaging effects on the economy and the state are often irreversible. Therefore, it is crucial for preventive anti-corruption bodies to strengthen the integrity of public administration by identifying and addressing corruption risks. The objectives of Corruption Risk Self-Assessments are to prevent corruption by identifying and analyzing risks associated with the performance of public functions, and to uphold integrity by amending institutional policies and practices susceptible to corruption. This toolkit aims to ensure that public institutions operate with minimal corruption risks, adhere to the principles of integrity, and strengthen good governance. The toolkit identifies 12 key areas with 44 indicators of potential corruption risks within an institution.

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