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Providing public services in the context of digital transformation from the theory of the citizen-centered local governance model

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Abstract

The article research article on the citizen-centered governance model, proposed by Anwar Shah and his colleagues, is focused on analyzing the current state of local governance in developing countries. The author emphasizes the importance of public sector reform to solve problems and "diseases" in the government apparatus. By proposing a citizen-centered governance model, Shah and his colleagues emphasize people's participation and supervision in public management. In this way, they believe that the problems of weak capacity of civil servants, centralized and rigid apparatus, monopoly in public service delivery and lack of people's participation and supervision can be minimized. Combining public service provision in a citizen-centered governance model is considered an effective approach to improve the performance and transparency of local governance. In this way, we can build a local governance system that responds more quickly and effectively to community needs, while promoting sustainable development and improving the quality of life for the people.

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1. Introduction

Citizen-centered governance model, the theory proposed by author Anwar Shah and his colleagues, mentioned in the articles "The new vision of local governance and the evolving roles of local governance" and "Citizen -centered governance: A new approach to public sector reform", is a promising approach in improving the efficiency and transparency of local governance. Anwar Shah, a leading expert in the field of local governance research, has focused on analyzing the current state of local governance in developing countries and emphasized the importance of promoting participation. People's participation in public management.

In developing countries, a number of "diseases" of local governance have been identified and criticized by Shah. First, the weak capacity of civil servants coupled with an objective internal incentive mechanism has led to a lack of motivation in changing work and service attitudes. Second, centralized and rigid structures not only slow down innovation but also reduce flexibility and bottom-up impact. Third, monopoly in public service provision has caused a lack of transparency and increased the risk of corruption. Fourth, lack of people's participation and supervision has created an environment of non-transparency and limited visibility of the state apparatus.

Although these negative manifestations may vary from country to country, reality has shown that the traditional governance model has reached its limits. To overcome these challenges, Shah proposes a shift from a governance model focused on machinery and processes to one focused on people, with their active participation and oversight. Combining public service provision in a citizen-centered governance model is an effective method to create a flexible, transparent and responsive governance system to community needs. By combining public service delivery with citizen participation and oversight, we can build a more effective local governance environment, promote sustainable development and improve the quality of life. live for everyone.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. Overview of the citizen-centered local governance model

a) Theoretical basis of the model

The citizen-centered governance model is a theory proposed by author Anwar Shah and his colleagues, presented in the articles "The new vision of local governance and the evolving roles of local governance" (roughly translated: New perspective on local governance and its roles) and "Citizen-centered governance: A new approach to public sector reform" (roughly translated: Citizen-centered governance: An approach to public sector reform). away from the public sector). Anwar Shah is an expert in the field of local governance research, especially the current state of local governance in developing countries. He affirms that public sector reform in developing countries is invaluable. important because there are too many weaknesses and "diseases" of governments in the current period (Shah, 2003) ^[6]. Those diseases include: First, the weak capacity of civil servants, in addition to the internal incentive mechanism that does not show objectivity, leads to a situation where civil servants have no incentive to change their working and service attitudes; Second, the apparatus is centralized, imposed from

above, rigid processes, lack of impact in the opposite direction (from the bottom up), lack of flexibility, slow innovation; Third, monopoly in providing public services leads to a lack of transparency and accountability and is the cause of corruption and a series of other negative manifestations; Finally, narrow vision, lack of transparency, and lack of people's participation and supervision mechanisms. Lack of people's supervision has made "diseases" become more severe and more difficult to "treat". These "diseases" have caused the public sector apparatus in developing countries to become cumbersome, rigid and ineffective. Shah emphasized that the main reason is due to not focusing on people's participation in the operation of the state apparatus.

The main causes of the above diseases are

First, most governments in developing countries build bureaucratic state apparatuses according to M. Weber's theory, focusing excessively on strict control processes of input management (Shah, 2001) ^[7]. This makes a difference with the need to pay attention to the outputs and impacts that government policies and services bring (see Figure 1).

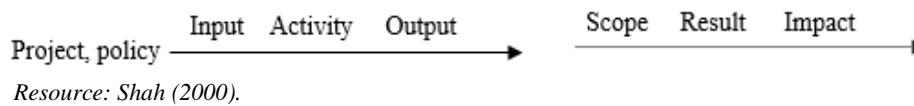


Fig 1: General trends in the policy promulgation process

Instead of providing a mechanism to shift the driving force of government's focus from left to right, governments actually do the opposite. Desai and Imrie (1998) concluded that this practice is characterized by de-democratization tendencies and the imposition of professional and procedural processes. Second, the mechanism works from the top down. Policies that have great influence (related to the macro economy, the capacity of the apparatus) are all part of the planning and management of the central government. Even the promulgation of process and procedure reforms is imposed from the central government. Citizens and their direct representative agencies only contribute support and ideas, or even many countries are not allowed to interfere in the activities of the central government. This limits opportunities for citizen-centered and results-oriented governance (Shah, 2003) ^[6].

Third, conducting assessments of the effectiveness and development of governments is still new. Promoting and strengthening evaluation will create favorable conditions for institutional and structural changes necessary for bottom-up organizational reform, enhancing people's participation, and perfecting the economic model. Citizen-centered governance model.

Finally, the causes come from the world historical context: public finance crisis in developed countries, the impact of the scientific and technological revolution, the process of globalization and international integration. Requires an effective, flexible and appropriate management model for the current situation.

Scientific theories of economics and politics emphasize the importance of people's participation in the governance process, specifically: Tiebout (1956), Hirschman (1970) said that when people's participation is Permissible access to government processes (through "petition" and "waiver"

mechanisms) has made governments increasingly efficient, flexible, and accountable.

The scientific theory of Public Administration, typically the New Public Management model, is a phrase from a group of administrative reform trends within the reform program of OECD countries in the 1970s. This idea is Margaret Thatcher - British Prime Minister and US President Ronald Reagan. The basic contents of the new public management model include: Socialization of public services; adjust the relationship between central and local levels; decentralization and deregulation in management; organize the administrative apparatus to operate according to needs; reform of the civil service and civil servant regime; apply business management principles and methods to public sector management; reform public finance and increase people's participation in state administrative management activities.

Besides, there are a series of other theories about the importance of people in governance activities such as: "participation is the solution for development" sees potential benefits in terms of citizen participation in evaluation processes and better participatory governance decisions; Oates (1969) ^[34] makes the point that effective citizen participation is difficult to achieve in centralized governments, so Oates recommends that the citizen-oriented model should be conceptualized at the level of local, that is, focusing on promulgating a legal basis in the direction of decentralization to localities.

b) Overview of the main content of the citizen-centered governance model

The content of this model is presented and described by Shah (2003) ^[6]:

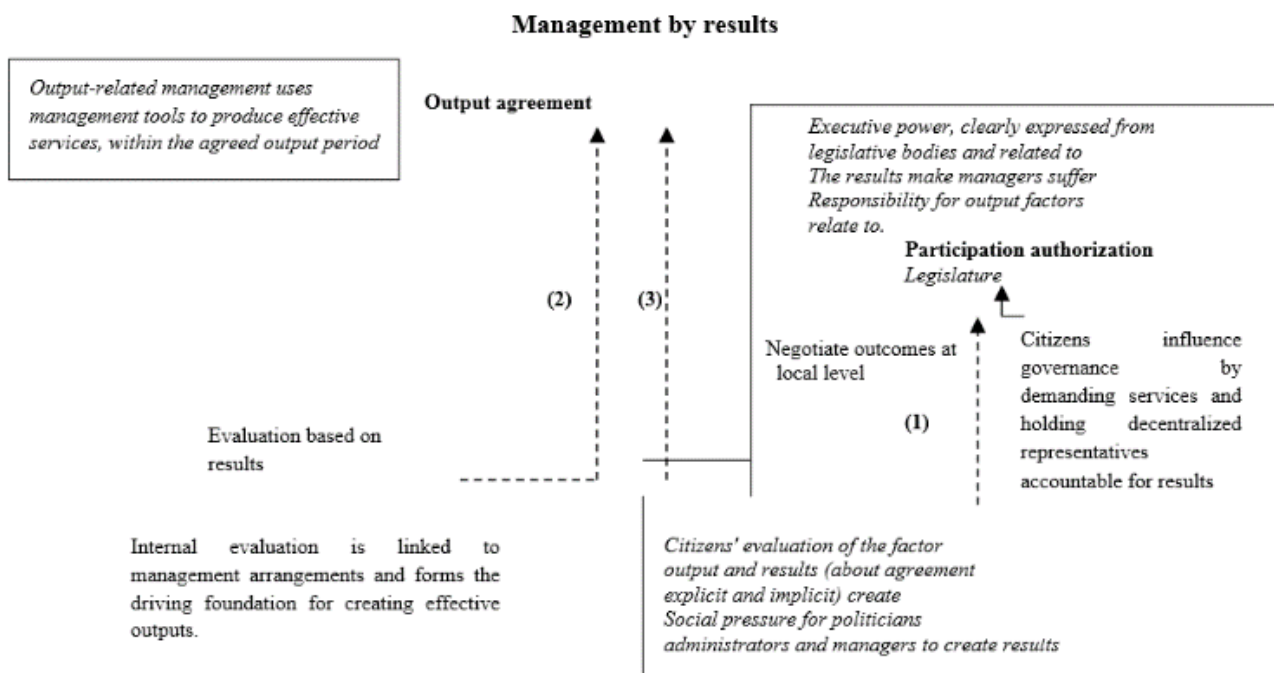
First, citizen-centered reform must be bottom-up, emphasizing the role of local governments (where results are

negotiated).

Second, the decentralization of people's participation must ensure direct interaction between people and legislative bodies through the election of their representatives. Decentralization of people's participation, evaluation based on results and management based on results, although seen in the model as overlapping, this shows that these elements are related to the components of decentralization of participation. Third, management by results arises from citizen-centered reforms because people's participation demands mainly derive results from their political representatives and when people have methods or The agreement document concerns the responsibilities of politicians assigned to operate and manage (executive power) and these representatives will be put under pressure for the results of management activities. In developing countries, the pressure is difficult to consider

resolving, however, as management processes focus on inputs rather than results (as described above), the management model based on resulting in participation in citizen-centered reforms to solve this problem.

Finally, results-oriented evaluation plays an important role in strengthening incentive-oriented measures for politicians and managers in the governance process. This factor is associated with decentralization and is directly related to results-based management and government structure. Evaluation is critical for the ongoing analysis of outcomes-based agreements, between citizens and political leaders (where there is a focus on outputs) and between leaders politics and managers (where output is concentrated). These assessments constitute accountability and transparency tools for behavior in a citizen-centered reform system, while also creating better working incentives for civil servants.



Resource: Shah (2003) [6]

Fig 2: Citizen-centered local governance model – Overview

An example of the above model (figure 2) could be an elected mayor, required by law, to make a promise to voters into a “performance and management agreement” – explained clarify what citizens can “expect” to solve problems of water resources, education, roads, electricity supply and promote citizen participation in evaluating the above work performance. Necessary tools for results-based management: budget planning, standards, costs.

From the model content, Shah gives the results achieved when applying the model to the governance activities of the state apparatus: people participate in the governance activities of the state apparatus at the local level, changing the top-down governance mechanism, making the activities of the centralized apparatus meet the needs of the people - the key “leadership” players and customers; People's participation focuses on the output of products and services that state agencies create, while creating an objective monitoring mechanism for public service activities of the public. position; Supervise the process of evaluating the internal performance results of the apparatus, avoiding subjective evaluation and internal incentives; form a

mechanism to regularly and continuously evaluate the effectiveness of people's governance of the state apparatus; result-based agreement mechanism between the state and the people; the state's accountability mechanism to the people; civil servants have incentives to optimize operational efficiency through policy mechanisms and tools; he management and administration of the state apparatus will gradually and automatically develop according to output orientation (products and services provided by the state), meeting the people's requirements; the operations of the state apparatus will be more “competitive” and more effective; the provision of public services is independent (local self-governance), not dependent on top-down mechanisms and self-responsible for the effectiveness of public services; create motivation for civil servants to constantly develop their own capacity to meet management according to output results and initiative capacity, integrating with the community; evaluate according to results and increase openness and transparency in the activities of the state apparatus.

2.2. Digital Transformation and digital government

Presently, there's no extensively accepted description for the term "digital transformation" (Schallmo *et al.*, 2018) ^[44]. According to varied studies, this term is generally used within the private sector, most specially by business organizations, where it generally entails altering how organizations use digital technology and business models to enhance organizational performance and customer experience (Anna Alvarenga *et al.*, 2020) ^[3]. In this author, the term "digital transformation" can be regarded as synonymous with "e-government," which encompasses the integration of information technology into internal government processes, the provision of state products and services to both citizens and industries, and the application of electronic tools and information technology for relations between the government and its citizens. Viewing e-government as a means to optimize resources seems to be associated with an older and broader perspective on the modern conception of digital government. To comprehend the term "digital transformation," it may be beneficial to synchronize conceptions such as "Digital Government," "Knowledge Management," and "Public Sector."

According to Ines Mergel *et al.* (2019) ^[25], literature of fundamental transformation processes might be constrained by generally fastening on terms like "e-government," "digital government," or "transformational government," thereby missing essential aspects of varied transformation methodologies. Although these conceptions are interrelated and partake a common foundation, they all explore how the public sector employs information and communication technology to enhance service delivery, restructure organizational fabrics and cultures, and understand the impact of these changes on value creation.

Digital transformation within the public sector refers to establishing novel relationships with relevant partners, constructing frameworks for new service transactions, and cultivating innovative forms of relationships (European Commission, 2013). However, despite the availability of advisory reports (such as Deloitte's report by Eggers & Bellman, 2015) ^[51], there remains a lack of comprehensive empirical substantiation regarding how current administrative agencies define and approach digital transformation in their daily operations, as well as the anticipated issues of such digital transformation initiatives. In practice, terms like digitization, digitalization, and digital transformation are frequently interchangeably used in documents.

The primary aim of digital transformation suggests an expansion in the scope and direction of government digitalization: while experts are striving to implement a comprehensive approach to government digitalization that goes beyond simply digitizing existing offline processes, researchers are also seeking a better understanding of how and why these initiatives succeed or fail. The digitalization endeavors represent significant improvements for organizations in the public sector to become more efficient and effective in their organizational structure and products. However, it's crucial to focus not solely on the advancement of available technology.

Two influential theoretical frameworks that lay the foundation for this research are Fountain's technology enactment framework and Dunleavy *et al.*'s Digital Era Governance approach. Fountain's approach (2004) delves into the organizational impact of technologies from an

institutional perspective, distinguishing between objective and enacted technologies. Objective technology encompasses innovations like the Internet, while enacted technology encompasses the utilization, design, and perception of these technologies by individuals within the organization. Notably, the institutional context shapes how technology is perceived and utilized, yet enacted technology also exerts influence on the organization itself. Thus, the role of technology varies depending on the organization and the interpretations of its members.

Another significant framework that examines the transformative effects of technology on organizations is the "Digital Era Governance" approach developed by Dunleavy, Margetts, Bastow, and Tinkler (2006) as well as Dunleavy, Margetts, Tinkler, and Bastow (2006). These authors contend that within the context of the new public management paradigm, technological advancements facilitate changes in public sector organizations through various mechanisms. Central to their argument is the notion that technology alone doesn't inherently reshape organizations; rather, it's the alteration in how organizations operate and employ technologies that drive shifts in work practices. Moreover, Dunleavy *et al.*'s approach encompasses a broader examination of the implications of technological change. They focus not only on organizational change and culture, but also on the evolving societal approaches to information and the increased demands for government services.

2.3. Citizen-centric approach in public services

Delivery of government services centered on citizens has emerged as a prevailing trend for most governments. Governments are realigning their attention towards service provision from their citizens' perspective, with citizens' needs and expectations as the primary concern. In essence, the citizen-centric model is a burgeoning concept that situates citizens at the heart, providing them with a unified interface to access all (or a range of) government services. Given the paramount importance of citizen-centeredness in this study, the research delves into this concept. Various researchers (Alshawi and Alalwany, 2009) ^[2] underscore the necessity of evaluating e-government services from a distinct citizen-centric viewpoint.

This study, founded on a citizen-centric concept, aims to illuminate citizens' expectations, given the pivotal role of this information in driving the adoption of e-government services. Citizen-centric e-government functions as a transformative tool, generating new government models founded on feedback from citizens. Some scholars contend that for e-government capabilities to be fully realized, governments must shift entirely from an agency-centric to a citizen-centric approach. Instead of starting with what services government agencies can provide, governments must initiate their endeavors based on citizens' genuine needs. In simpler terms, a marked transition from an "agency-centric" to a "citizen-centric" model is necessary.

Citizen-centric e-government services are designed not only to provide increasingly cost-effective, personalized, and relevant services to citizens but also to foster a more democratic relationship and facilitate better dialogue between citizens and their government. This, in turn, strengthens the practice of citizenship (cc: eGov, 2007). The citizen-centered approach advocates for citizen-oriented services, meeting citizens' demands and expectations. In essence, governments will furnish tailored services and resources that cater to the

actual needs of citizens, including government employees and others (Bertot *et al.*, 2008)^[9]. Robust government service delivery systems yield economies of scale, cost reductions, and technology-enabled user services. Citizen-centered service is viewed as the ultimate embodiment of e-government, necessitating seamless information integration across departments, government units, and even organizations spanning various sectors (Chen, 2010)^[16]. It's worth noting that citizens need not comprehend the governmental structure or its divisions; instead, the government should interconnect its various departments to bolster efficiency and effectiveness of services for citizens (Chen, 2010)^[16]. The efficiency of service is facilitated through citizen engagement, while its effectiveness is the outcome of efficient processes that construct service portfolios providing individual and public value. Converting efficiency into effectiveness requires organizational behavior and adept management of citizen relationships (cc: eGov, 2007). Customized services addressing individual needs can enhance public satisfaction while minimizing expenses. Contemporary citizens anticipate transparent, accessible, and responsive government services. Most governments highly value their citizens' contentment with electronic government services (Eggers & Bellman, 2015)^[51].

The focus lies in revitalizing and fortifying relationships between citizens and the government, encompassing e-Participation, social partnerships, ethics, to empower citizens to evaluate their roles and responsibilities in service delivery (EU, 2007). "GovTech," a relatively new term in advanced e-government and digital transformation, was coined by the World Bank based on OECD digital transformation research in 2019. This term encapsulates citizen-centric public services that are universally accessible, an across-the-board governmental approach to digital transformation, and streamlined, efficient, and transparent government systems.

2.4. The relationship between people-centered local governance and public service delivery in the context of digital transformation

The relationship between the citizen-centered local governance and digital transformation in public service delivery is one of the most important factors in improving the quality and efficiency of public services. The citizen-centered local governance emphasizes community interaction and participation in decision-making and implementation of public services. This can be achieved through creating strong communication mechanisms between local authorities and residents, as well as by facilitating community feedback during project decision-making and development policy.

Putting people at the heart of the governance process not only facilitates community participation and consensus but also helps local governments better understand people's needs and desires. One way to practice citizen-centered local governance is through organizing public meetings, workshops and interactive sessions to listen to opinions and feedback from the community. This helps ensure that decisions made reflect the real needs and desires of people, from urban planning to improving specific public services such as transport, healthcare and education.

Digital transformation in public service provision is the process of using digital technology to optimize processes, provide online services and enhance interaction between government and residents. Digital transformation projects often include building digital platforms such as websites and

mobile applications, improving information and data management systems, and creating opportunities for interoperability online between government agencies and the community.

Digital transformation not only enhances the efficiency and transparency of management processes, but also creates opportunities for convenience and access to services for citizens. By providing online services such as vehicle registration, tax payment, and building permit requests, local governments can reduce the burden on citizens and facilitate quick interaction and more convenient.

When combined with digital transformation, local governance can create an environment that promotes positive interactions between government and communities. Digital technology can be used to gather feedback from the community, provide information and services online, and create opportunities for online participation and interaction. This not only helps improve the quality of public services but also promotes community trust and satisfaction with local government.

In fact, the relationship between local governance and digital transformation is not only an opportunity, but also a requirement to improve the quality and efficiency of public services in modern society. The combination of these two elements can create a local governance environment that is effective and responsive to community needs.

3. Opportunity and challenge

3.1. Drivers of Digital in Public Service

The bedrock of public administration reform is influenced by a model derived from the private sector, with the aim of establishing a citizen-centered and business-oriented public administration. This ensures the consistent provision of public services while adhering to quality benchmarks and upholding collective welfare. To achieve effective public administration reform, comprehensive transformations across diverse contexts are imperative.

In the sphere of technology adoption, various models have been conceptualized to uncover the primary catalysts behind adoption. This discourse delves into the Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) framework, a triad of interrelated contexts. This framework excels at investigating contextual factors that sway the assimilation of digital transformation.

a) Technological Context

Within the technological domain, the aspects encompass technology infrastructure and IT human resources. Technology infrastructure encompasses the technologies that facilitate internet-linked operations, whereas IT human resources pertain to proficient IT specialists capable of implementing internet-related applications. Technology infrastructure stands as a pivotal factor in digital transformation, with the potential to either hinder or facilitate the government's capacity to deliver efficient e-governance services and transactions.

b) Organizational Context

The organizational context focuses on management support and financial preparedness. Management support plays a pivotal role in cultivating an environment conducive to change and innovation, aligning with an organization's core mission and vision. Research consistently emphasizes the affirmative influence of management support on various

digital transformation domains. Simultaneously, financial readiness is a critical determinant in innovation literature, playing an instrumental role in providing the resources essential for bolstering e-governance functionalities.

c) Environmental Context

The environmental context introduces two constituents influencing digital transformation within the public sector: regulatory environment and consumer readiness. The regulatory environment emerges as a pivotal factor impacting the diffusion of innovation. Businesses operating under restrictive governmental policies exhibit lower IT adoption rates. Concurrently, consumer readiness functions as a barometer for digital transformation success, encapsulating market potential and anticipated performance. It can be defined as the amalgamation of consumer willingness to embrace digital services and internet penetration, reflecting the populace's internet usage. This amalgamation shapes consumer readiness to engage in online transactions, thus significantly impacting the digital transformation adoption of public organizations.

3.2. Barriers to Digital Transformation in the Public Sector

Recognizing the intertwined relationship between success factors and impediments, barriers to digital transformation can be bifurcated into two categories: organizational and managerial barriers. Organizational barriers encompass political, regulatory, authoritative, and administrative constraints. Administrative hindrances center on inadequate IT governance by the central government, as noted by Liu and Hwang (2003). Additionally, managerial support emerges as a distinct obstructive force. Collaborative elements like IT proficiency and cross-departmental coordination underpin the classification of authoritative and administrative barriers. Overcoming these challenges necessitates robust change management tools to promote unified organizational growth, harmonizing technology and business processes. Predicting and addressing these challenges are paramount, as the evolution toward data-driven knowledge underscores the impending paradigm shift. The amalgamation of challenges and successes underscores the integral role of appropriate support, technological expertise, and change management. In essence, digital transformation barriers underscore organizational diversity, mandating stakeholder commitment. In the public sector, a stakeholder-focused perspective guides project considerations, reflecting its impact on stakeholders. Notably, existing literature predominantly focuses on digital transformation in transitioning service delivery to an online format, sidestepping a reevaluation of service delivery's essence and style.

At the organizational level, it identified behavioral and structural barriers stemming from the organization's mindsets, which are reflected in its operational systems. Institutional theory suggests that this pattern could be more pronounced in public institutions due to the institutionalization of both mindsets and systems. Furthermore, empirical findings indicate challenges for organizations in integrating innovation with day-to-day operations within a single organizational framework. In the public sector, strategy is often formed at the government level and this may be a challenge for the public organization that has to implement the strategy they have not created internally.

Lastly, at the individual level, research highlights the impact of different leadership styles on digital transformation. This

is particularly evident in the interaction between top-level strategic management and IT departments. In public organizations, a distinction is often made between administrative and political leadership, potentially complicating the relationship with IT due to this dual nature. However, limited research has been conducted in this specific domain.

The identified issues have long-standing relevance. Janowski (2015) ^[47] concludes that digital transformation reshapes internal dynamics while altering external relations. Meijer and Bekkers (2015) ^[1] spotlight incremental shifts propelled by new technologies, while Tassabehji *et al.* (2016) ^[39] assert digital transformation's aim to amplify service delivery effectiveness. Fundamental shifts manifest through institutional changes enabled by technological progress. The evolution of public sector service delivery is evident, transitioning from paper-based to digital via policy-driven transitions, often tied to ideological waves in public policy and management. Yet, a considerable share of efforts remains transitional, entailing the digitalization of administrative acts without fundamental service rethinking. Terms like digitization, digitalization, and digital transformation are often used interchangeably, primarily focusing on the initial phases.

Findings suggest that the external barriers are most common in the stages of ideageneration and selection. These barriers are linked to regulations, financial models, lack of system integration and lack of technical standardization. The external barriers are less evident in the test stage and the promotion stage, but more apparent after the organization has matured digitally and digitalization becomes the norm. Some of the identified external barriers are likely to be similar in any organization in digital transformation. However, there are some that are distinctively related to the public sector. These barriers provide insight into why the initial phases of this public digital transformation are so slow. The funding and resource allocation remains a problem also at the organizational level. On the other side, the social system (culture and structure) is less affected by this transformation. This evidence corroborates the validity of the socio-technical theory also in a digital setting. The social system is the one with a slower reaction time: change the organizational culture and the entire structure of a public administration it's a longer and more difficult process.

4. Conclusion and recommendations

Based on the content of the Shah model presented, the author proposes a number of recommendations to improve the friendly government and friendly workplace model for central and local governments as follows:

First, increase people's participation in the activities of the public apparatus, specifically: people have the right to contribute opinions on policies and administrative procedures according to regulations. In Shah's citizen-centered model, he also emphasized decentralization of people's participation through interaction with the legislature through its representatives. Therefore, the role of listening and absorbing people's opinions needs to be strengthened through the activities of local elected representatives and socio-political organizations. At the same time, state power agencies must play a role in monitoring and questioning the activities of state administrative agencies and reporting the results to the people.

Second, a friendly government model to achieve high efficiency requires establishing a results-based management

mechanism. Management by results, according to Shah's theory, arises from citizen-centered reforms. Therefore, this is an important mechanism that contributes to creating a dynamic and flexible friendly government model, moving from a management state to a service state, from an executive state to a developmental state.

Managing by results means relying on the agreed results that local governments have committed to the people. From there, elected representatives representing the will and aspirations of the people monitor the activities of local state administrative agencies and evaluate whether management effectiveness is in accordance with commitments and satisfactory results. Initial approval or not, thereby forming a mechanism for people's close supervision of the activities of the public apparatus. Shah's theory emphasizes that management by results must be implemented at the local level and through the supervision of elected representatives. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen operations by clearly decentralizing management between central and local levels. Third, form an evaluation mechanism based on the work results of public servants. Public servants are the ones who carry out the requests and aspirations of the people, so to implement results-based management, evaluating the work results of the public servants is extremely important. This evaluation must be done seriously, objectively and must be based on specific criteria, which means that the evaluation criteria must be associated with agreements on the results of administrative procedures that people must agree on requirements (according to the Shah model), thereby evaluating the level of meeting people's requirements and people will evaluate public officials based on the results they receive.

This evaluation mechanism is a tool for people to monitor the activities of public servants, to overcome the survey of people's satisfaction with the quality of public services, and the service quality of public servants is purely formal knowledge, with temporary results that do not reflect the quality of management and administration activities. At the same time, this evaluation mechanism, according to Shah, will help motivate civil servants to optimize the effectiveness of their service activities.

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