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Improving the Mechanisms for Evaluating the Performance of Civil Servants in Uzbekistan

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Abstract: *This article examines the effectiveness of civil service performance evaluation systems in Uzbekistan. It focuses on the role of KPI-based governance in public administration reform. The study highlights the importance of transparency and accountability in evaluation mechanisms. It also analyzes the transition from process-oriented to results-based governance models. The research concludes that modern evaluation systems improve public trust and service quality.*

Keywords: *civil service, performance evaluation, KPI system, public administration, Good governance, New public management, digitalization, accountability, Uzbekistan reform, public trust.*

Introduction

In the context of contemporary globalization and the modernization of public administration, the effectiveness of the civil service system has emerged as one of the key factors determining national development. The efficiency of state bodies, the quality of public services provided to the population, and citizens' trust in public authorities directly depend on the professional competence of civil servants and the effectiveness of mechanisms used to evaluate their activities [1]. From this perspective, the establishment of a modern and transparent system for assessing the performance of civil servants has become one of the priority directions of public administration reform.

In recent years, large-scale reforms aimed at fundamentally transforming the civil service system, introducing modern human resource management mechanisms, and implementing results-based evaluation criteria for civil servants have been carried out in Uzbekistan [2], [3]. In particular, the adoption of the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On State Civil Service" on August 8, 2022; the Presidential Decree No. PD–5843 of October 3, 2019 "On Measures for the Radical Improvement of Personnel Policy and the State Civil Service System in the Republic of Uzbekistan"; the Presidential Resolution No. PD–5189 of July 22, 2021 "On the Introduction of a System for Evaluating the Performance Efficiency of Deputy Heads of Ministries, State Committees, Other State Administration Bodies and Economic Associations"; Presidential Decree No. PD–49 of March 13, 2024 "On Measures for Improving the System for Evaluating the Effectiveness of Republican and Local Executive Authorities and Economic Associations"; as well as the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 463 of July 31, 2024 "On Measures for Organizing the Evaluation of the Activities of Heads and Deputy Heads of Republican and Local Executive Authorities and Economic Associations Based on Key Performance Indicators," created the legal foundation for institutional reforms in this sphere [4], [5].

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At the same time, several challenges still persist within the current evaluation system, including the preservation of subjectivity, the formal nature of certain evaluation criteria, and the insufficient linkage between assessment outcomes and incentive mechanisms or career advancement opportunities [6]. These circumstances necessitate the further improvement of mechanisms for evaluating the effectiveness of civil servants' activities.

Methods

The article employs comparative-legal, systemic, logical, functional, and analytical research methods to examine the theoretical and practical aspects of evaluating the performance of civil servants. During the research process, normative legal acts of the Republic of Uzbekistan, foreign experiences in the field of public service, scientific concepts related to management and public administration, and contemporary methods for assessing civil servants were analyzed.

Furthermore, the study examined the essence and practical significance of international evaluation mechanisms such as KPI (Key Performance Indicators), "Management by Objectives," "Good Governance," "Assessment Centre," and "360-degree evaluation." National and foreign academic literature, as well as current legislation related to the assessment of civil servants, were comparatively analyzed.

Result and Discussion

The findings of the study demonstrate that the system for evaluating the performance of civil servants constitutes an essential institutional element of modern public administration. At present, the introduction of the KPI (Key Performance Indicators) system in public administration is regarded as a principal instrument for transitioning from the traditional procedural management model to a results-based governance model [6]. This approach enables the assessment of state bodies not merely through administrative processes but through concrete outcomes.

The analysis of foreign experience indicates that the effectiveness of the KPI system depends on four major factors. First, the KPI system must be legally закреπed within legislation. Second, it should be integrated into the budgetary process. Third, digitalized monitoring mechanisms should be available. Fourth, the system must be connected with accountability and responsibility mechanisms [7].

For example, in the United Kingdom, the "Public Service Agreements" (PSA) system implemented between 1998 and 2010 established specific quantitative indicators for ministries and public authorities. Within this framework, the allocation of state budget funds was directly linked to the achievement of predetermined results, while KPI indicators of each state body were regularly monitored. As a result, the efficiency of public expenditures improved significantly, and the quality of public services increased [8].

The analysis of academic literature demonstrates that no unified approach has yet been formed regarding the evaluation of public administration effectiveness. In numerous studies, categories such as "efficiency," "effectiveness," "labor productivity," and "cost-efficiency" are interpreted differently. Western scholars such as Harrington Emerson and Henri Fayol assessed the effectiveness of public administration as the relationship between achieved outcomes and the financial, material, and human resources utilized to attain them. According to their perspective, genuine efficiency in public administration is achieved when maximum social outcomes are obtained with minimal resource expenditure [9].

The research further revealed that the criteria for evaluating public administration efficiency vary depending on the characteristics of the management object. For instance:

First, in higher education institutions, the primary evaluation criteria include the quality of education, scientific publications, and academic activity.

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Second, in the healthcare sector, public satisfaction, the quality of medical services, and disease dynamics are considered significant indicators.

Third, for economic management bodies, the volume of investments, the rate of economic growth, and the level of support provided to the private sector constitute the principal evaluation criteria [10], [11].

Fourth, for local public authorities, the resolution of citizens' appeals, the condition of infrastructure, social stability, and the quality of public services serve as the main indicators of effectiveness.

Russian scholar K. V. Davidov classifies the criteria of public administration efficiency according to the composition of subjects into three levels. First, the effectiveness of a state body. Second, the effectiveness of structural subdivisions within a state body. Third, the individual effectiveness of a specific civil servant.

Additionally, the scholar distinguishes between "process efficiency" and "result efficiency." This classification demonstrates the necessity of evaluating not only adopted decisions within the civil service system but also their actual social impact [12].

The study identified that the concepts of "Good Governance" and "New Public Management" serve as important theoretical foundations for the formation of KPI systems in public administration. According to the "Good Governance" model, public administration should be based on democratic principles such as the rule of law, transparency, accountability, public participation, and the protection of human rights [13].

Under this model, public administration effectiveness is evaluated through the following criteria:

the existence of an effective legal framework;

the degree of citizen participation in decision-making processes;

the promptness and timeliness of managerial decisions;

the rational use of state resources;

the transparency and accountability of state bodies before society.

The "New Public Management" concept, in contrast, is based on the application of private-sector management methods within public administration. This model is widely implemented in countries such as United States, United Kingdom, Finland, Norway, and Singapore [14]. Within this framework, the KPI system is directly linked to concrete results achieved by civil servants, citizens' satisfaction, and the quality of public services.

The analysis also demonstrates that the effectiveness of public administration is directly associated with several additional factors. First, the strategic objectives and political course of the state. Second, the institutional stability of the system of public authority. Third, the professionalism of the state apparatus. Fourth, public trust in state authorities. Fifth, the level of economic and social stability.

In Uzbekistan, significant legal foundations for the implementation of the KPI system have been established in recent years. In particular, Presidential Decree No. PD–49 of March 13, 2024 "On Measures for Improving the System for Evaluating the Effectiveness of Republican and Local Executive Authorities and Economic Associations" approved the principal KPI indicators for heads and deputy heads of republican and local executive authorities [15].

Moreover, Article 36 of the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On State Civil Service" stipulates that the activities of civil servants shall be evaluated on the basis of key performance indicators. In practice, the evaluation process is implemented in a digitalized form through the "Unified Electronic Information and Analytical System of the State Civil Service."

The analysis of the current system revealed several existing problems in the evaluation of civil servants' performance:

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certain evaluation criteria possess a formal character;

subjective approaches remain preserved;

KPI indicators are insufficiently individualized across sectors;

the relationship between evaluation outcomes and incentive mechanisms remains weak;

public opinion and societal assessment are not sufficiently taken into consideration.

The conducted analysis demonstrates that the KPI system serves as an important instrument for modernizing the state apparatus in the process of evaluating public administration effectiveness. Under current conditions, the primary focus of public administration should be directed not toward processes themselves but toward concrete results. Effective public administration cannot be assessed solely through the adoption of normative acts; rather, it should be evaluated according to the extent to which citizens' needs are satisfied.

Foreign experience indicates that for the KPI system to function effectively, it must be closely integrated with legislation, budgeting, digitalization, and accountability mechanisms. For example, in Singapore, KPI indicators for civil servants are linked to the public satisfaction index. In Finland, environmental sustainability and social equality indicators are also taken into account when evaluating the activities of state bodies.

In Uzbekistan, the KPI system is still in the process of institutional formation, and several measures should be implemented for its further improvement.

First, it is necessary to strengthen the general legal foundations for evaluating the effectiveness of public administration bodies at the legislative level. At present, the KPI system is primarily regulated through subordinate normative acts, which is insufficient from the perspective of legal stability.

Second, KPI indicators should be developed in accordance with the functional responsibilities of state bodies. For example, in economic sectors, indicators such as investments, export volumes, and private-sector development should be prioritized, whereas in the social sphere, public satisfaction, service quality, and the level of social protection should serve as the principal criteria.

Third, it is essential to broadly implement the principles of "Good Governance" within the evaluation process of civil servants. In particular, the following criteria should be integrated into the KPI system:

openness of state bodies' activities;

ensuring public participation;

accountability before citizens;

transparency of decision-making processes;

reduction of corruption risks.

Fourth, digitalization should become one of the primary directions in evaluating the performance of civil servants. Through the use of artificial intelligence, Big Data technologies, and electronic monitoring platforms, opportunities should be created for evaluating civil servants' activities in real time.

Fifth, public opinion should be introduced as an important criterion in evaluating civil servants. The genuine effectiveness of public administration is ultimately determined by citizens' satisfaction with public services.

Furthermore, KPI indicators should not be limited solely to statistical figures. They should also incorporate qualitative indicators such as social impact, innovative approaches, initiative, and problem-solving abilities.

In our opinion, the future development of the public administration performance evaluation system in

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Uzbekistan should be based on the following priority directions:

development of individualized KPI models across sectors;

introduction of competency models for civil servants;

integration of KPI results with remuneration systems;

ensuring the participation of independent experts and the public in the evaluation process;

creation of a unified digital platform for evaluating civil servants;

harmonization of the KPI system with anti-corruption compliance mechanisms.

As a result, it will become possible to ensure professionalism, responsibility, and effectiveness within the public administration system.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the evaluation of civil servants' performance constitutes an important institutional mechanism for modernizing public administration, increasing the professionalism of the state apparatus, and improving the quality of public services provided to the population. Under the conditions of modern governance, the activities of state bodies should be assessed not only through administrative processes or formal reports but also through concrete outcomes, social effectiveness, and the level of public satisfaction.

The research findings demonstrate that the KPI (Key Performance Indicators) system represents an important instrument for transitioning public administration toward a results-based governance model. This system enables the assessment of civil servants on the basis of clear, measurable, and monitorable indicators.

However, for the KPI system to function effectively, it must be closely integrated with legislation, the budgetary process, digitalization, and accountability mechanisms.

The analysis revealed that significant legal and institutional foundations have already been established in Uzbekistan for reforming the civil service system and introducing KPI mechanisms. In particular, the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On State Civil Service," Presidential Decree No. PF–49 of March 13, 2024 "On Measures for Improving the System for Evaluating the Effectiveness of Republican and Local Executive Authorities and Economic Associations," and sector-specific normative legal acts have formed the legal basis for evaluating civil servants.

Nevertheless, several problems remain within the current system. Specifically, certain evaluation criteria retain a formal character, subjective approaches continue to persist, KPI indicators are insufficiently individualized according to sectoral characteristics, the relationship between evaluation outcomes and material incentives remains weak, and public opinion is not sufficiently reflected within the evaluation framework. These shortcomings negatively affect the effectiveness of the civil service system.

In our opinion, the following proposals should be implemented to improve the mechanisms for evaluating the effectiveness of civil servants' activities.

First, unified legal foundations for evaluating the effectiveness of public administration bodies should be established at the legislative level. Regulating these relations not only through subordinate normative acts but also through a separate law or special code would ensure legal stability.

Second, KPI indicators should be differentiated according to sectors and positions. Individual KPI models should be developed based on the functional responsibilities of each state body and position.

Third, it is advisable to introduce public satisfaction indexes and public evaluation as important criteria for assessing civil servants. The true effectiveness of public administration is determined by citizens' satisfaction with public services.

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Fourth, evaluation processes should be fully digitalized, and a unified electronic platform should be improved. It is necessary to create opportunities for real-time analysis of civil servants' activities through artificial intelligence, Big Data technologies, and digital monitoring tools.

Fifth, the KPI system should be integrated with the state budget and remuneration system. Clear mechanisms for material and non-material incentives for highly effective civil servants should be developed.

Sixth, contemporary methods such as "360-degree evaluation" and "Assessment Centre" should be gradually and widely introduced into the evaluation system. This would reduce subjectivity and provide opportunities for comprehensive competency assessment.

Seventh, anti-corruption compliance criteria should be incorporated into the evaluation process of civil servants. Indicators such as integrity, prevention of conflicts of interest, and adherence to professional ethics should be assessed separately.

Eighth, competency models for civil servants should be developed and integrated into the evaluation system. Competencies such as leadership, strategic thinking, analytical ability, stress resistance, and digital skills should become key assessment criteria.

Ninth, the results of evaluating the effectiveness of state bodies should be publicly disclosed, and public oversight should be strengthened. This would ensure transparency and accountability of state authorities before society.

Tenth, the principles of "Good Governance" and "New Public Management" should be broadly implemented within public administration. In particular, transparency, accountability, efficiency, public participation, and results-oriented governance principles should become the fundamental criteria of the civil service system.

Overall, the establishment of a modern and transparent system for evaluating the performance of civil servants represents an important prerequisite for increasing the effectiveness of public administration, reducing corruption risks, strengthening public trust, and ensuring the development of human capital. An effective KPI system, in turn, will contribute to transforming the civil service into a professional, competitive, and results-oriented institution.

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