The impact of digital transformation on public service culture in state administrative agencies in Vietnam: opportunities, challenges, and policy implications

M.A. Ngo Anh Tri

Tan Thuan Industrial Promotion Company Limited

Abstract: This article provides a comprehensive and systematic analysis of the impact of digital transformation on public service culture within state administrative agencies in Vietnam. Based on a research methodology combining document analysis and synthesis with comparative approaches, the study highlights the dual nature of the digital transformation process. On the one hand, digital transformation creates important opportunities to establish a progressive digital public service culture that promotes transparency, accountability, professionalism, a service-oriented mindset, collaboration, and innovation. On the other hand, it also presents significant challenges, including the digital divide, limited direct interactions, potential inequalities in access to digital services, risks of information insecurity, and psychological pressures facing civil servants. On this basis, the article proposes several policy recommendations to maximize the positive impacts while mitigating the negative effects of digital transformation, thereby contributing to the development of an effective and sustainable digital public service culture in the current context.

Keywords: *Digital transformation; public service culture; state administrative agencies; digital government; Vietnam.*

1. Introduction

In the context of deepening globalization and the Fourth Industrial Revolution, digital transformation has become an inevitable trend and a vital requirement for all countries. In Vietnam, digital transformation has been identified by the Party and the State as one of the key pillars of the national development strategy. This orientation is clearly reflected in major policy documents, such as the Politburo's Resolution No. 52-NQ/TW dated September 27, 2019 on a number of policies and guidelines for proactively participating in the Fourth Industrial Revolution (Politburo, 2019), and the Prime Minister's Decision No. 749/QD-TTg dated June 3, 2020 approving the "National Digital Transformation

Program to 2025, with a vision to 2030," which aims to simultaneously develop digital government, digital economy, and digital society while fostering Vietnamese digital technology enterprises with global competitiveness (Prime Minister, 2020).

However, a noteworthy paradox emerges in practice: many state administrative agencies have received substantial investment in digital infrastructure and technology, yet operational efficiency and citizens' satisfaction have not improved proportionately. The underlying causes of this situation often do not originate from the "hardware" component (i.e. technology itself) but rather from the "software," namely human factors and public service culture. Public service culture, understood as the system of values, norms, attitudes, and behavioral patterns of public officials in the performance of their duties, is a foundational element that largely determines the success or failure of administrative reforms and digital transformation initiatives.

The relationship between digital transformation and public service culture is dialectical and interactive. On the one hand, digital transformation creates a new environment and reform pressure that compels public service culture to evolve toward greater transparency, professionalism, and citizen-centeredness. On the other hand, a public service culture grounded in core values such as accountability, service orientation, integrity, and innovation is itself a critical condition for ensuring that digital transformation is implemented substantively and sustainably. On this basis, the article analyzes the two-way impacts of digital transformation on public service culture in state administrative agencies in Vietnam, identifies both the opportunities and challenges, and proposes several solutions to help realize a professional, modern, and citizen-oriented public administration in the new context.

2. Theoretical foundations of digital transformation and public service culture

2.1. The concept of digital transformation

In contemporary public administration research, digital transformation is not merely understood as the application of information technology to administrative activities. Rather, it represents a comprehensive restructuring of governance methods, organizational arrangements, and the delivery of public services, grounded in data and digital technologies. According to the Ministry of Information and Communications of Vietnam (now the Ministry of Science and Technology), digital transformation refers to the use of data and digital technologies to create comprehensive changes in how individuals and organizations live, work, and produce. Within the public sector, digital transformation aims to improve the experience of citizens and businesses in accessing public services, while also innovating administrative procedures, organizational models, and operational methods of state management agencies (Ministry of Information and Communications, 2020).

Beyond domestic definitions, numerous international scholars and organizations approach digital transformation as a process of transforming governance models and public value creation, extending far beyond the simple application of technology. According to the OECD (2020), digital transformation in the public sector is the process of using digital technologies and data to redesign policies, processes, and public services, thereby enhancing the state's capacity to generate public value while strengthening transparency, accountability, and citizen participation. This approach highlights the importance of data utilization, system interoperability, and evidence-based governance in modern public administration.

From a public management perspective, Mergel et al. (2019) conceptualize digital

transformation as a strategic organizational change process in which digital technologies act as catalysts for changes in organizational structures, institutional culture, and the competencies of public officials. These authors argue that digital transformation can succeed only when accompanied by changes in managerial thinking, leadership styles, and public service values, rather than focusing solely on technological infrastructure investments. Janowski (2015) approaches digital transformation in the public sector as an advanced stage in the evolution of e-government, where the focus shifts from process automation toward data-driven governance, cross-sector integration, and the co-creation of public value with citizens and businesses. From this perspective, digital transformation is closely linked to a shift in the state's role - from a "service provider" to a "digital ecosystem orchestrator."

From an organizational and institutional perspective, Vial (2019) defines digital transformation as a process by which organizations employ digital technologies to drive significant changes in business models, operational processes, and value-creation mechanisms. When applied to the public sector, this definition implies that digital transformation cannot be separated from institutional reform, organizational restructuring, and innovation in public service culture.

From the standpoint of modern public governance, digital transformation in the public sector should therefore not be understood merely as digitization of administrative procedures or automation of processes. Rather, it represents a transition from traditional administrative management toward data-driven governance that emphasizes efficiency, transparency, accountability, and public value. The core of digital transformation lies in redesigning processes and public services around end users' needs, placing citizens and businesses at the center of governance systems.

Accordingly, digital government can be viewed as an open, flexible governance platform capable of adapting to the rapid changes of the contemporary socio-economic environment.

Synthesizing these perspectives, digital transformation in the public sector is widely recognized by international scholars as a comprehensive transformation process that integrates technology, institutions, organizational structures, and human factors. This theoretical foundation provides an important basis for analyzing the two-way relationship between digital transformation and public service culture within the context of modern public governance.

2.2. The concept of public service culture

In modern public administration, public service culture is a fundamental component that shapes organizational behavior, decision-making processes, and the quality of public service delivery. It reflects the ethical values and professional norms of public officials while simultaneously signaling the administrative system's commitment to public values such as serving the public interest, accountability, transparency, and integrity.

According to Denhardt & Denhardt (2015), modern public service should be guided by the philosophy of "serving the public" rather than by a focus on control or administrative command. This perspective aligns with Kenneth Kernaghan's (1994) approach, which views public service culture as a set of values, ethical norms, and behavioral orientations that govern the overall functioning of public administration (Hoan & Van, 2018). From this perspective, public service culture can be viewed as the "soft operating system" of the administrative apparatus, shaping how laws and policies are implemented in practice.

In Vietnam, public service culture is understood as the system of spiritual and material values that has developed alongside the public administration system, exerting a long-term influence on the perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors of public officials in

performing public duties (National Assembly, 2008). From an organizational perspective, public service culture can be analyzed at three levels: the surface level, which includes working style, codes of conduct, and behavioral norms; the level of shared values, such as professionalism, integrity, and a service-oriented spirit; and, the level of underlying assumptions that shape how individuals within organizations think and act (Schein, 2004).

From the perspective of modern public governance, public service culture should not be viewed as a static element but rather as a dynamic value system that must continuously adapt to new contexts. In the era of digital transformation, public service culture needs to be redefined to emphasize a service-oriented mindset, innovation, the capacity to work in digital environments, and the readiness to collaborate across sectors and administrative levels. These elements constitute the soft institutional foundation necessary to ensure that digital transformation in state administrative agencies is implemented effectively, sustainably, and substantively.

2.3. The impact of digital transformation on public service culture in state administrative agencies in Vietnam

From both theoretical and practical perspectives of public governance, digital transformation has exerted profound impacts on the entire structure of public service culture, ranging from its visible manifestations to its underlying core values. *First,* in terms of outward manifestations, digital transformation fundamentally changes the working environment and communication methods within state administrative agencies. Public service activities are gradually shifting from traditional face-to-face environments to digital ones, which is characterized by electronic office platforms, online meetings, and integrated work management systems. This transformation has led to the emergence of new communication norms, in which conciseness, timeliness, transparency, and standardization have become essential requirements for official exchanges conducted via email systems, digital administrative portals, or internal platforms. As a result, the image of cadres and civil servants is no longer assessed solely by their demeanor or professional appearance, but also by their ability to use digital tools, manage electronic records, and demonstrate responsible conduct in cyberspace.

Second, digital transformation directly affects the operational mechanisms and administrative processes of the public sector. The implementation of shared information systems and integrated data platforms has gradually reduced information fragmentation among administrative units, replacing vertically fragmented working models with collaborative mechanisms based on data interoperability. In this context, decision-making processes in public administration increasingly shift from reliance on individual experience toward data-driven analysis, evidence-based policymaking, and decision-support tools. At the same time, digital systems create "digital footprints" throughout the entire workflow, enhancing monitoring capacity, improving process transparency, and strengthening accountability. This contributes to the development of public service discipline grounded in transparency and self-regulation rather than purely administrative control.

More importantly, digital transformation reshapes the substantive values and ethical standards embedded within public service culture. The expansion of online public services and contactless administrative procedures encourages a shift in administrative thinking - from a model centered on "management and authorization" to one focused on "service and facilitation," with citizens and businesses placed at the center of governance. Core values such as integrity, transparency, and accountability are reinforced as digitalized procedures significantly reduce opportunities for

discretionary interference and bureaucratic harassment. At the same time, the digital environment introduces new requirements for cadres and civil servants, including innovation, adaptability, and the ability to work effectively with digital technologies and data. This transformation represents a qualitative shift in public service culture, contributing to the development of a modern civil service that is not only technologically proficient but also deeply committed to a service-oriented approach to governance in the digital era.

3. Opportunities arising from the positive impacts of digital transformation on public service culture in state agencies

First, digital transformation creates important opportunities to enhance transparency and accountability in public service activities. Unlike the traditional administrative model, which is often characterized by limited information openness, digital transformation enables the disclosure of administrative procedures, processing timelines, and results through electronic information portals and the National Public Service Portal. In particular, every administrative dossier processed in a digital environment leaves a real-time digital trace, allowing citizens and businesses to monitor the entire processing procedure online. This mechanism helps address situations in which administrative files are delayed without clear explanations, while also establishing a continuous and informal monitoring mechanism that compels cadres and civil servants to strictly comply with established procedures, deadlines, and professional standards. As a result, accountability is no longer merely a legal principle but is operationalized through technological systems.

Improvements in transparency and accountability are also reflected in international governance indicators. Vietnam's Open Budget Index (OBI) reached 51 out of 100 points in 2023, surpassing the global average of 45 points and increasing by 13 points compared to 2019. In addition, Vietnam's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) has shown an upward trend, rising from 36 points in 2020 to 42 points in 2022, contributing to an improvement of approximately 30 positions in the international rankings during the period 2016 - 2024. These results indicate that digital transformation has created a favorable foundation for strengthening the values of integrity and transparency within public service culture.

In addition, digital transformation contributes to improving professionalism, efficiency, and administrative discipline in the execution of public duties. The adoption of digital platforms, work management software, and electronic administrative systems provides cadres and civil servants with modern working tools while simultaneously imposing higher requirements for standardization, procedural compliance, and administrative discipline. As administrative processes are automated and standardized in digital environments, cadres and civil servants are required to adopt workflows based on structured procedures, data, and clearly defined timelines, rather than relying on individual habits or discretionary practices. Consequently, implementing public duties through digital platforms enhances adaptability, professionalism, and accountability among cadres and civil servants.

Practical implementation demonstrates significant impacts of digital transformation on strengthening administrative discipline. The operation of the National E-document Exchange Platform has significantly reduced the time to send, receive, and process official documents among state agencies - from several days to only a few minutes or hours. As of May 2024, the system had processed more than 35.8 million electronic documents, thereby not only improving inter-agency coordination but also fostering a working style characterized by efficiency, punctuality, and responsibility - core values of public service culture in the context of modern public governance.

Chart 1. Number of electronic documents sent and received through the National E-document Exchange Platform
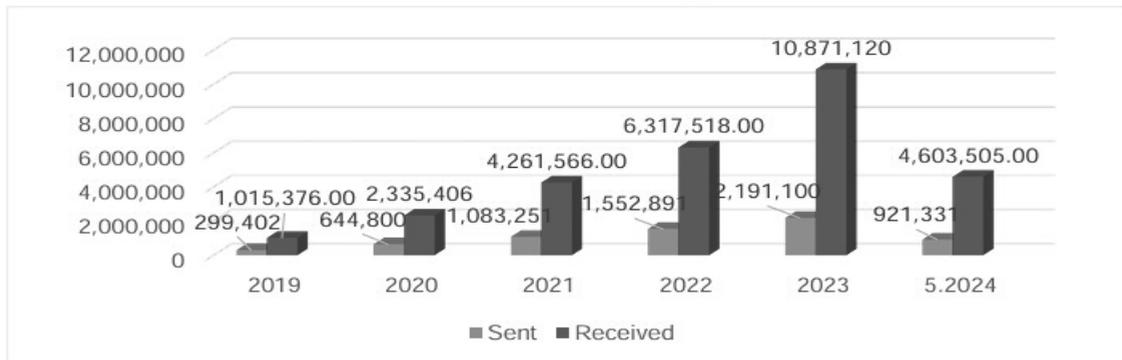
Chart 1 indicates that the number of electronic documents sent and received through the National E-document Exchange Platform has increased steadily over the years. By 2023, the volume of electronic documents had increased nearly tenfold from 2019 and approximately 1.7 times from 2022. This upward trend provides clear evidence of the positive impact of digital transformation on public administration, particularly in fostering and reinforcing core values of public service culture such as professionalism, discipline, and accountability among cadres and civil servants. The processing of administrative tasks in a digital environment - characterized by clearly defined procedures, deadlines, and electronic records - has transformed working habits, strengthened compliance awareness, and enhanced individual responsibility in the execution of public duties.

Second, digital transformation creates important conditions for building and developing digital competencies among cadres and civil servants. Recognizing the critical role of digital human resources, the Prime Minister issued Decision No. 146/QD-TTg dated February 23, 2023, approving the Project on "Raising awareness, popularizing digital skills, and developing national digital transformation human resources to 2025, with a vision to 2030" (Prime Minister, 2023). On this basis, the Ministry of Information and Communications (now the Ministry of Science and Technology) has implemented numerous training programs to build a core team of digital transformation experts, while encouraging higher education institutions to improve their digital models of governance, organization, and data infrastructures. As a result, hundreds of thousands of cadres and civil servants and public employees have participated in digital skills training programs, while online courses on digital literacy have attracted a large number of participants. In addition, the establishment of the National Digital Transformation Portal, the organization of the National Digital Transformation Day, and the operation of massive open online learning platforms have contributed to creating a continuous learning environment, encouraging cadres and civil servants to proactively enhance their digital thinking and skills in performing public duties. In practice, they have increasingly adopted multi-channel communication methods, digital working environments, and flexible interactions with citizens and businesses.

Third, digital transformation contributes to establishing a value foundation for public service culture that emphasizes discipline and efficiency, grounded in objective data,

gradually replacing evaluation methods based on subjective judgment or traditional administrative relationships. Digital work management systems, electronic dossier processing platforms, and public service portals allow automatic recording, aggregation, and analysis of performance data at both individual and organizational levels. Indicators such as the number of processed dossiers, average processing time, on-time completion rates, and citizen satisfaction levels have become transparent and verifiable criteria for performance evaluation. On the National Public Service Portal, the entire dossier-handling process is recorded in detail, providing leaders at different administrative levels with a reliable basis for assessing public officials' competence, responsibility, and performance. This approach helps minimize bias, enhance fairness in performance evaluation, reward, and disciplinary processes, and foster self-discipline and healthy competition within the public sector.

In addition, digital transformation plays an important role in shaping and reinforcing a service-oriented mindset that places citizens and businesses at the center of public administration. The provision of 24/7 online public services has eliminated the limitations of traditional "office hours," allowing citizens to complete administrative procedures anytime and anywhere. The National Public Service Portal has gradually become a continuous digital administrative space where citizens can submit applications, make payments, and conveniently track their application status. After more than four years of implementation, the system has been integrated with hundreds of information systems and databases of state agencies, publicly disclosing administrative procedures and providing the majority of online public services. User accounts, administrative dossiers, and online transactions have grown rapidly in number each year. These achievements clearly demonstrate a shift from a governance approach centered on "management and authorization" to one focused on "service and facilitation," consistent with the orientation toward building a modern, citizen-centered administration.

In particular, the principle of "once-only declaration" has been implemented through the development and interconnection of national databases on population and enterprises, creating a fundamental shift in the relationship between the state and citizens. By reducing the requirement for individuals and organizations to repeatedly submit the same information and documents, administrative procedures have been simplified, compliance costs reduced, and user experience improved. In this way, digital transformation not only enhances the effectiveness of state management but also deepens the service-oriented values of public service culture, contributing to the realization of a citizen-centered administrative model in the context of national digital transformation.

Digital transformation has also strongly encouraged state administrative agencies to increase the application of digital technologies in the provision of public administrative services, thereby ensuring both the quantity and quality of services delivered to citizens in a timely and effective manner. The National Public Service Portal has established a multi-dimensional feedback mechanism that enables citizens to directly evaluate service satisfaction levels and provide detailed comments immediately after using public services. These feedback data are systematically collected, aggregated, and analyzed, becoming an important source of information for administrative agencies to promptly adjust procedures, identify bottlenecks, and gradually improve service quality. This feedback-improvement mechanism creates a continuous governance loop based on data and user experience. In practice, the effectiveness of this mechanism is reflected in the Satisfaction Index of Public Administrative Services (SIPAS), which increased from 80.08% in 2023 to 83.94% in 2025, indicating positive progress in the service culture of state administrative agencies.

Chart 2. Satisfaction Index of Public Administrative Services as perceived by citizens and organizations
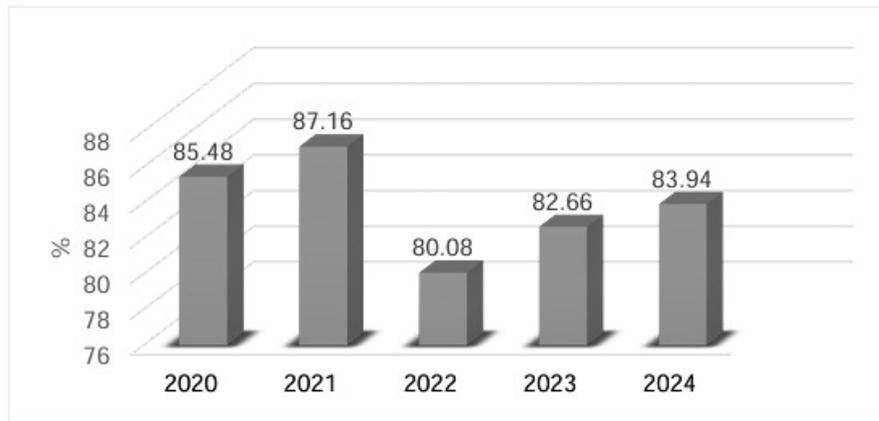
Source: Compiled by the author (2025).

Digital transformation has significantly strengthened collaboration, interoperability, and interconnectivity within the state administrative system, gradually overcoming the closed and fragmented operating mechanisms that characterized the traditional administrative model. Through digital working platforms and internal governance systems, cadres and civil servants from different departments, agencies, and sectors - and even across different localities - can coordinate work processes, conduct online meetings, and share or edit documents in real time. In particular, the establishment of national databases and the National Data Integration and Sharing Platform (NDISP) has created a major breakthrough in administrative interoperability, enabling state agencies to proactively connect, access, and verify information automatically and instantly, thereby replacing the previously slow and cumbersome exchange of paper-based documents. In recent years, the program to develop and promote the use of national digital platforms has been implemented in a coordinated manner, with participation from multiple ministries and sectors, contributing to the expansion of connectivity and use. Such interoperability not only enhances inter-agency coordination but also fosters a new public service culture grounded in cooperation, information sharing, and transparency, ultimately aimed at providing unified, effective services to citizens and businesses.

In addition, digital transformation strongly promotes innovation and enhances the public administration system's capacity for data-driven forecasting and decision-making. The application of data analytics systems and intelligent operations centers enables managers to monitor governance indicators in real time, identify emerging trends, and evaluate policy impacts using objective data. In the field of administrative procedures, analyzing data on processing times, overdue applications, and requests for additional documentation helps identify specific bottlenecks within administrative processes, enabling more targeted and effective reforms.

At the same time, digital environments facilitate the creation of experimental spaces for innovation, encouraging cadres and civil servants to propose and implement new public service initiatives. In this way, digital transformation not only improves the effectiveness of state management but also gradually fosters a public service culture characterized by innovation, proactiveness, and accountability, grounded in evidence-based governance and measurable outcomes.

4. Challenges arising from the impact of digital transformation on public service culture in state agencies

First, digital transformation increases the digital divide and reveals limitations in the digital capacity of cadres and civil servants. In practice, there is a clear disparity between younger civil servants, who are generally more adaptable to technology, and older civil servants, who are accustomed to manual working methods and often encounter difficulties with software systems, digital signatures, and electronic transactions. Although numerous training programs aimed at improving digital skills have been implemented, some cadres and civil servants still fail to meet the requirements for working effectively in a digital environment. This limitation not only affects the efficiency of public service delivery but also directly influences experience of citizens and businesses when accessing online public services, particularly when guidance and technical support are insufficient or unclear. Survey results indicate that the capacity for collaboration and communication in digital environments currently reaches only 55.6%, while the ability to create and develop digital content remains at 31.4%. At the same time, up to 26.5% of citizens and businesses reported receiving no guidance or unclear instructions when performing online administrative procedures (Hau, 2025). These figures highlight significant challenges in ensuring the inclusiveness and effectiveness of digital transformation in the public sector.

Second, digital transformation poses the risk of weakening community cohesion within state administrative organizations. Increasing prevalence of online work environments and communication via email, messaging platforms, or virtual meetings may reduce the role of direct interpersonal interaction - an important factor in building trust, empathy, and collective spirit. The absence of non-verbal communication elements, such as body language, eye contact, and face-to-face interaction, may lead to misunderstandings and reduced coordination efficiency, particularly among newly recruited officials or those working remotely. Consequently, the "organizational cohesion" emphasized in Decision No. 1847/QD-TTg dated December 27, 2018, of the Prime Minister on public service culture risks being weakened, replaced by technically mediated, yet potentially fragmented, forms of interaction among individuals (Prime Minister, 2018).

Third, digital transformation increases the risks related to information security and data protection, while also creating new challenges for public service ethics. State administrative agencies currently manage large volumes of sensitive data, which are attractive targets for cybercrime. According to the author's statistics, in 2024, Vietnam recorded approximately 13,900 cybersecurity attacks, an increase of 9.5% from 2022. Among these incidents, hundreds of government and educational websites were compromised, and tens of thousands of computers and servers were targeted by ransomware attacks. The leakage of personal data has become increasingly complex, leading to numerous online fraud cases and seriously affecting public trust (Ncsgroup, 2025). In addition, new forms of misconduct such as "digital

corruption," data manipulation, unauthorized prioritization in electronic dossier processing, or the creation of unnecessary technical barriers are becoming increasingly sophisticated. Practical experience indicates that digital technology alone cannot automatically prevent unethical behavior without effective monitoring mechanisms, control systems, and appropriate ethical standards in public administration (Ly, 2025).

Fourth, digital transformation may increase inequalities in access to public services. Vulnerable groups - including residents in remote and mountainous areas, elderly citizens, people with disabilities, and low-income households - often encounter difficulties due to limited access to digital infrastructure, devices, and digital skills. Without appropriate support policies and inclusive solutions, these groups risk becoming "digitally excluded citizens," which would contradict the principle of social equity in the provision of public services.

5. Solutions for fostering public service culture in the context of digital transformation

First, raising awareness and fostering strong commitment from organizational leaders. Leaders of state administrative agencies should be recognized as key actors in shaping and disseminating digital public service culture. This requires a shift from a "directive leadership" mindset to a model of "leadership through guidance and accompaniment," in which leaders act as both chief architects of digital transformation and pioneering role models in use of digital platforms and new working methods. Through consistent internal communication, leaders should clarify the vision, objectives, and benefits of digital transformation, and demonstrate commitment through concrete actions, such as prioritizing resource allocation and establishing mechanisms to encourage and reward digital initiatives. Such

measures will create strong incentives for cultural transformation across the entire organization.

Second, improving institutions and policies to encourage and facilitate the development of digital culture. It is necessary to conduct a comprehensive review and restructuring of internal administrative procedures to ensure that they are streamlined and optimized for digital environments before being digitized, thereby avoiding the phenomenon of merely "digitizing outdated processes." At the same time, mechanisms should be established to encourage innovation, including creation of "tolerance zones" that allow experimentation with new digital models and solutions while accepting a reasonable level of risk. In addition, promulgating a code of conduct for digital public service culture is necessary to establish standards of behavior, responsibility, and professional ethics for cadres and civil servants in the digital environment, particularly in cyberspace.

Third, strengthening training, capacity building, and digital competency development for cadres and civil servants. The core of this solution lies in designing differentiated training pathways tailored to various groups, including leaders, professional staff, and senior officials, thereby ensuring that training programs are aligned with their respective needs and learning capacities. Training methods should be diversified through the use of digital platforms such as e-learning systems, massive open online courses (MOOCs), and webinars, alongside on-site and continuous training approaches. Importantly, topics related to digital public service culture and ethics - such as information security, communication in digital environments, and ethical decision-making in cyberspace - should be systematically integrated into

training curricula in order to establish a sustainable value foundation for digital public service culture.

Fourth, developing a flexible, humane, and secure digital working environment upon three pillars: a secure technical infrastructure, flexible working mechanisms, and a human-centered organizational culture. First, digital infrastructure must ensure stability, interoperability, and protection through multi-layered cybersecurity systems that comply with legal regulations on information security. Second, flexible working models - such as remote work or hybrid arrangements - should be implemented where appropriate, shifting from time-based management to results-based management. At the same time, attention should be paid to fostering a culture that promotes mental well-being, prevents occupational burnout, and strengthens organizational cohesion through collective activities. These measures will help create a working environment that is both effective and respectful of human values.

Fifth, integrating digital public service culture into the performance evaluation system of cadres and civil servants. To ensure the sustainability of public service culture in the digital transformation era, cultural values should be translated from qualitative norms into measurable criteria that can be evaluated in practical governance contexts. Accordingly, state administrative agencies should incorporate indicators of digital public service culture into their annual evaluation and classification systems for cadres and civil servants. Indicators such as compliance with digital procedures, efficiency in handling electronic dossiers, collaborative behavior across agencies, use of data in decision-making, and level of citizen satisfaction should be quantified and used as the basis for commendation, promotion, and accountability mechanisms. This approach

helps transform digital public service culture from a "declared value" into a "mandatory behavioral standard," consistent with modern public management practices based on results and evidence.

Sixth, establishing data governance and data ethics mechanisms within state administrative agencies. Given that data has become a core resource of modern public governance, robust frameworks for data governance and data ethics should be considered a central component of digital public service culture. Administrative agencies should issue clear regulations regarding the collection, sharing, exploitation, and use of public data, while also defining the accountability of cadres and civil servants in handling data and applying emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI). Establishing internal oversight mechanisms or advisory bodies on data ethics at ministerial or sectoral level would help prevent information manipulation, abuse of power, and forms of "digital corruption." In this way, digital public service culture will be built not only on technological foundations but also on strong ethical standards and professional accountability within the public sector.

Seventh, developing a network of "digital change agents" within state administrative agencies. In addition to improving institutions and digital infrastructure, formation of internal leadership forces capable of driving change plays a decisive role in transforming public service culture. Accordingly, it is necessary to cultivate a group of "digital change agents" within administrative agencies, comprising cadres and civil servants with technological competence, innovative thinking, and the ability to disseminate digital public service values. These individuals act as bridges between leaders and professional staff, facilitating the adoption of digital working methods, promoting inter-agency

collaboration, and supporting colleagues in adapting to new working environments. Institutionalizing the role of digital change agents through appropriate selection, training, and incentive mechanisms will generate endogenous momentum for digital transformation while ensuring that the transformation of public service culture within state administrative agencies is both sustainable and substantive.

6. Conclusion

Digital transformation is generating comprehensive and structural impacts on public service culture within state administrative agencies in Vietnam. The findings indicate that this process not only alters the working methods and the delivery of public services but also reshapes the value system, behavioral norms, and professional ethics of cadres and civil servants. On the positive side, digital transformation offers significant opportunities for the development of a digital public service culture grounded in core values such as transparency, accountability, professionalism, service-oriented thinking, inter-agency collaboration, and innovation. At the same time, the process also reveals a number of emerging challenges, including disparities in digital capacity, the risk of weakening organizational cohesion, inequalities in access to public services, and increasing concerns related to information security and public service ethics in the digital environment.

The research findings affirm that digital transformation in the public administrative sector should not be understood merely as a process of technological adoption; rather, it fundamentally represents a transformation of people, organizational culture, and governance practices. Technology can only realize its full potential when embedded within an appropriate public service culture, characterized by strong leadership commitment, coherent institutional frameworks, and a civil service workforce that demonstrates competence, responsibility, and a genuine service-oriented spirit.

On this basis, the article highlights the necessity of adopting an integrated approach in which development of digital public service culture is closely linked with reforms in public governance, data governance, and human resource management within state administrative agencies. Implementation of key solutions - such as aligning public service values with performance evaluation systems, ensuring ethical standards and accountability in data utilization, and cultivating internal change leaders - will be crucial for transforming challenges into drivers of development. More broadly, building a digital public service culture not only contributes to enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of public administration but also strengthens citizens' trust in the state, promotes transparent and integrity-based governance, and supports sustainable development in the digital era.

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