Completing the criteria for evaluating the governance effectiveness of commune-level People's Committees in Vietnam today

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Abstract: From July 2025, Vietnam will reform the administrative apparatus under the two-tier local government model, fundamentally changing the position and role of commune-level People's Committees in the governance system. In this context, perfecting the criteria for evaluating governance effectiveness at the commune level becomes an urgent requirement to ensure transparency, accountability, and efficient governance. Based on modern public governance theory and international experience, the paper proposes two complementary evaluation models: (1) A composite index model consisting of 5 groups of criteria with 15 weighted sub-indicators, allowing quantification of governance effectiveness; (2) A Balanced Scorecard model with four pillars: citizens - organizations, internal processes, learning - development, and finance, aimed at transforming strategic objectives into specific measurable indicators. The novelty of the study lies in integrating quantitative and qualitative evaluation, emphasizing citizen satisfaction, innovation capacity, and digital transformation of commune-level governments as core elements of modern local governance.

Keywords: *Evaluation criteria; organizational reform; administrative apparatus; governance effectiveness; commune-level People's Committees.*

1. Introduction

Since July 1, 2025, Vietnam has officially operated under the two-tier local government model (provincial and commune levels). This change is not only an institutional reform but also repositions the commune level as a foundational administrative entity, directly organizing policy implementation and delivering public services to citizens. With the abolition of the district level, the scope of functions, tasks, and accountability of commune-level governments expands significantly, requiring corresponding adjustments in governance methods and performance evaluation mechanisms.

In this context, the demand to enhance governance effectiveness at the commune level is urgent, with a focus on building a scientific,

objective, and locally appropriate evaluation system. However, current evaluation practices remain largely formalistic, lack clear quantitative measurement tools, and fail to fully reflect citizen satisfaction with the direct beneficiaries of public services. Existing indices such as the PAR Index, SIPAS, and PAPI primarily focus on the provincial level and, to a lesser extent, the former district level, without establishing a specialized framework for communes with expanded functions.

Moreover, although Party and State policies emphasize the need to improve governance effectiveness, there is still no specific set of criteria for comparing and quantifying fundamental relationships, such as results-costs, results-capacity, and results-objectives. With the implementation of the two-tier local government model, this gap becomes more evident, necessitating a comprehensive evaluation framework that integrates quantitative and qualitative dimensions.

Based on modern public governance theory and international experience, this paper proposes a new approach to evaluating the effectiveness of commune-level People's Committees, suitable for Vietnam's conditions during the transition to the two-tier local government model, and to promote digital transformation in the public sector.

2. Research overview

In public governance science, governance effectiveness is approached multidimensionally, not only focusing on outputs but also on outcomes and public value for citizens and sustainable local development. Principles such as effectiveness-efficiency, transparency-accountability, citizen participation, and innovation capacity are considered universal standards for evaluating public sector performance.

Since the late 19th century, Woodrow (1920) laid the foundation for public administration science by emphasizing the role of state management and the need to establish criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of implementation. By the 1980s - 1990s, the New Public Management (NPM) movement strongly promoted the use of performance indicators to measure results and enhance accountability in the public sector. Works by Wholey (1983), Matzer (1986), and Morley (1986) developed evaluation methods based on objectives, costs, and impacts, forming the basis of modern performance measurement systems.

Entering the 2000s, comprehensive evaluation models were further refined. The Common Assessment Framework (CAF), developed by the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA) in 2000 and subsequently updated, integrated both enablers and results, becoming a widely used quality management tool in many countries. Experiences from some nations operating under the two-tier local government model, such as China and Singapore, show that designing a system of quantitative indicators combined with qualitative evaluation is a key condition for maintaining management effectiveness, controlling power, and fostering healthy competition among administrative units.

In Vietnam, Thanh (2012) proposed various methods for evaluating administrative management effectiveness, ranging from direct outcome measurement to integrated system models. Van (2020) approached evaluation through CAF to assess the quality of public agencies, emphasizing the role of quantitative indicators in improving governance effectiveness. In addition, indices such as PAR Index, SIPAS, and PAPI have initially formed a database for evaluation at the provincial level and, previously, at the district level.

However, most current studies focus on organizational or program-specific levels or

the provincial government level, while a framework of evaluation criteria specifically for commune-level People's Committees, especially in the context of operating under the two-tier local government model, has not yet been systematically developed. This gap is evident in the lack of integrated models that combine quantitative and qualitative measures, the absence of mechanisms to compare results, costs, and capacity, and insufficient linkage to digital transformation requirements and to citizen satisfaction at the grassroots level.

This research gap highlights the need to build an evaluation framework tailored to the characteristics of commune-level governance under the new conditions, ensuring scientific rigor, quantifiability, and practical applicability within Vietnam's two-tier local government system.

3. Research methodology

The study is conducted using a comprehensive approach that combines theoretical analysis, international experience, and empirical surveys of administrative management in Vietnam. Relating to the theoretical basis, the paper builds upon public sector evaluation models such as the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), the Balanced Scorecard (BSC), and principles of New Public Management (NPM), then adjusts, integrates, and develops criteria suitable for commune-level state management under the two-tier local government model.

3.1. Data sources

The study uses both secondary and primary data. (1) *Secondary data:* Includes state management reports, policy documents, and existing indices such as PAPI, SIPAS, and PAR Index, used to reference the structure of criteria and measurement methods; (2) *Primary data:* Collected through surveys, in-depth interviews, and citizen opinion polls, reflecting satisfaction levels, implementation

effectiveness, and actual governance capacity at the commune level.

3.2. Building criteria and measurement scales

Evaluation criteria are selected based on the principle of comprehensively reflecting governance effectiveness, including five main groups: (1) Effectiveness of law enforcement; (2) Quality of public service delivery; (3) Transparency and accountability; (4) Local development management capacity; and (5) Innovation and digital transformation capacity.

Each sub-indicator is designed on a 0-5 scale to ensure quantifiability, comparability, and aggregation. The system combines quantitative factors (e.g., percentage of cases resolved on time, cost of task execution) and qualitative factors (e.g., citizen satisfaction, assessment of leadership capacity).

3.3. Method of determining weights

To ensure objectivity in the distribution of indicators' weights, the study uses the inverse correlation matrix method rather than subjective assignment. The process includes:

(1) Standardizing indicator data using the z-score method to eliminate measurement unit effects.

(2) Calculating the correlation matrix R among indicators to determine information linkage.

(3) Computing the inverse matrix R^{-1}.

(4) Determining the weight vector using the formula:

$$w = \frac{R^{-1}1}{1^T R^{-1}1}$$

where 1 is the unit vector, and the sum of weights equals 1 (100%).

This method assigns higher weights to indicators with greater independent information, thereby enhancing the objectivity and reliability of the composite index model.

4. Proposed criteria for evaluating the governance effectiveness by commune-level People's Committees

Based on the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), the principles of New Public Management, and the organizational characteristics and functions of commune-level authorities within the two-tier local government model, this study proposes two models for evaluating the governance effectiveness of commune-level People's Committees: (1) The Composite Index Model and (2) The Balanced Scorecard Model (BSC).

While the composite index model allows quantification of management effectiveness at an overall level and facilitates comparisons among administrative units, the Balanced Scorecard model focuses on strategic governance and internal management, translating strategic objectives into specific indicators linked to the practical operations of commune-level People's Committees.

4.1. The composite index model

The composite index model comprises five main groups of criteria that comprehensively reflect governance effectiveness at the commune level under conditions of expanded functions and increased accountability.

(1) Criteria group on management effectiveness and law enforcement

This group reflects the degree of legal compliance, policy implementation, and the ability to maintain administrative order within the locality.

(2) Criteria group on the effectiveness of public service delivery

This group evaluates the quality, timeliness, costs, and level of citizen satisfaction with public administrative services.

(3) Criteria group on transparent governance and accountability

This group reflects the degree of information disclosure, mechanisms for receiving and addressing citizen feedback, and the ability of local authorities to explain and justify their decisions before the public.

(4) Criteria group on development management and coordination capacity

This group assesses the capacity for planning, resource coordination, inter-sectoral collaboration, and mobilizing community participation in local development.

(5) Criteria group on innovation and digital transformation capacity

This group reflects the level of information technology application, process innovation, governance initiatives, and adaptability to the digital environment.

The total weight of all criteria groups equals 100%, and the weight of each indicator is determined using the inverse correlation matrix method, as presented in the research methodology section.

The composite index of each commune-level People's Committee is calculated using the following formula:

$$CI = \sum_{i=1}^{5} w_i \left(\sum_{j=1}^{3} w_{ij} \cdot S_{ij} \right)$$

where S_{ij} is the standardized score of each component indicator.

This model enables the quantification of governance effectiveness, supports ranking and comparison across commune-level administrative units, and provides a scientific basis for resource allocation and improving governance quality.

Each criterion group comprises three component indicators, with weights presented in *Table 1*.

Table 1. Proposal for the composite index model for evaluating the governance effectiveness of commune-level People's Committees

Criteria group	Specific indicator	Evaluation description	Score scale (0-5)	Weight
Management effectiveness and legal enforcement	Percentage of documents issued with proper authority and on time	≥95% = 5; <40% = 1	5	8%
	Level of legal compliance in processing administrative procedures (APs)	No violation = 5; >10% = 1	5	7%
	Annual reduction in the number of complaints and denunciations	Decrease >10% = 5; sharp increase = 1	5	5%
Public service delivery effectiveness	Citizen and organization satisfaction index	≥90% = 5; <60% = 1	5	10%
	Rate of fully online administrative procedures processed	≥70% = 5; <10% = 1	5	5%
	Case processing time compared to regulations	≤90% of deadline = 5; late >20% = 1	5	5%
Transparent governance and accountability	Public disclosure of budget, planning, and plans	Full, periodic = 5; not public = 1	5	8%
	Number of citizen reception/dialogue sessions per year	≥12 = 5; <3 = 2	5	7%
	Mechanism for feedback and handling citizen petitions	≥90% response rate = 5; <70% = 2	5	5%
Development management and coordination capacity	Socio-economic development plan implemented on schedule	≥90% targets met = 5; <50% = 2	5	8%
	Effectiveness of resource mobilization and utilization	≥90% of plan = 5; <60% = 2	5	7%
	Infrastructure and social welfare development index	Steady increase = 5; decrease = 1	5	5%
Innovation and digital transformation capacity	Application of digital technology in management and public services	Synchronous = 5; not implemented = 1	5	8%
	Percentage of citizen files managed using digitized databases	≥90% = 5; <50% = 2	5	7%
	Number of successful innovation initiatives/models	≥3 models/year = 5; 0 = 1	5	5%

Source: Author's synthesis (2025).

Table 1 presents the composite index model for evaluating the governance effectiveness of commune-level People's Committees, structured into five criteria groups with 15 component indicators and specific weights. The total weight allocation is 100%, with each group assigned an equal proportion of 20%. This balanced distribution reflects the importance of legal compliance, service quality, accountability, development capacity, and innovation capability in modern public governance.

The indicators are quantified on a standardized scale from 0 to 5 with clearly defined thresholds, ensuring comparability and practical applicability. Notably, the model emphasizes the role of citizen satisfaction and digital transformation in governance, reflecting the orientation toward modern public administration. However, to enhance reliability, it is necessary to standardize data collection methods and empirically test the stability of the weighting system.

Composite index for evaluating the governance effectiveness of commune-level People's Committees

The composite index for evaluating the effectiveness of commune-level People's Committees is constructed by aggregating criteria groups using weights. In statistics, weights are typically denoted as f_i, reflecting the relative importance of each indicator in the evaluation structure.

Suppose the measured value of each indicator is denoted as x_i ($i=1,2,...,n$), then the composite evaluation index is determined through coefficient X, representing a weighted average that reflects the overall level of achievement of the evaluation system.

This coefficient is calculated using the weighted arithmetic mean formula in statistics:

$$X = \frac{x_1 f_1 + x_2 f_2 + \cdots + x_n f_n}{f_1 + f_2 + \cdots + f_n} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n} x_i f_i}{\sum_{i=1}^{n} f_i}$$

Where:

$i = 1,2,...,n$

X: Composite evaluation Index

x_i: Value (score) of each component indicator

f_i: Weight of the corresponding indicator

Component indicators are scored using standardized scales (e.g., 0-5 or 0-100). After converting scores and determining weights, the above formula is applied to calculate the composite evaluation coefficient X. The resulting value is then compared with a predefined classification scale (e.g., excellent, good, average, weak) to determine the level of governance effectiveness of the commune-level People's Committee.

Evaluation methods: the evaluation of governance effectiveness is conducted based on a combination of methods to ensure objectivity and comprehensiveness.

Goal-based evaluation: comparing planned objectives and targets with actual results achieved. This approach helps determine the level of task completion and managerial effectiveness.

Combination of qualitative and quantitative methods: quantitative methods include surveys, sociological investigations, administrative statistics, and measurable indicators such as on-time dossier processing rates, satisfaction levels, and digitalization levels. *Qualitative methods* include in-depth interviews, group discussions, and public opinion surveys to capture citizens' perceptions, trust, and evaluations of officials and civil servants.

This combination ensures that the composite index reflects not only administrative outputs but also governance quality and citizen satisfaction, which are key elements of modern public governance.

Evaluation criteria must aim at substantive, accurate, and objective assessments. Evaluation results should be publicly disclosed to ensure transparency. The effectiveness rating scores are shown in *Table 2.*

**Table 2. Classification of governance effectiveness
of commune-level People's Committees**

| Composite score X	Rating level	Management implication
4.5 - 5	**Excellent**	Effective, transparent management, good digital transformation
4.0 - < 4.5	**Good**	Stable operation of the apparatus, significant improvements
3.5 - < 4.0	**Fair**	Relatively effective management, needs increased innovation
3.0 - < 3.5	**Average**	Limited effectiveness, requires rectification
< 3.0	**Weak**	Poor governance, requires restructuring and superior support

Source: Author's synthesis (2025).

Table 2 presents the classification framework for evaluating the governance effectiveness of commune-level People's Committees based on the composite score X. The scale ranges from "Weak" to "Excellent" and has clearly defined score intervals. Each level corresponds to a specific governance implication, from the need for restructuring and support to the achievement of effective, transparent, and digitally advanced management. This classification system enables the quantification of evaluation outcomes and provides a basis for monitoring, comparing localities, and improving governance performance.

In addition, the dynamics of evaluation criteria can be visualized using radar charts across different measurement periods *(Figure 1).*

Figure 1. Radar chart illustrating the composite index model
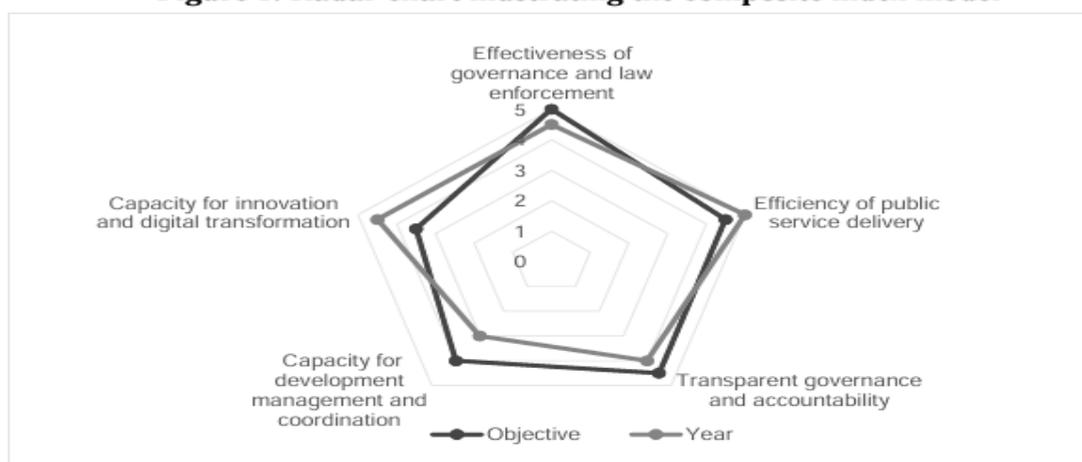
Source: Author's synthesis (2025).

The radar chart illustrates the level of achievement of commune-level People's Committees across the five criteria groups, comparing the "target" and the "evaluation year." Overall, the evaluation-year values approach the targets relatively closely, indicating a fairly positive level of governance effectiveness. The criteria groups "Management effectiveness and law enforcement" and "Public service delivery effectiveness" show high completion levels with small gaps between targets and actual results. However, the groups "Development management capacity" and "Innovation and digital transformation capacity" still exhibit noticeable gaps compared to targets, indicating areas requiring further improvement. The criterion of "Transparency and accountability" achieves a moderate level but has not fully met expectations. Overall, the results demonstrate balanced development trends but highlight the need to prioritize innovation and coordination capacity to achieve more comprehensive objectives.

4.2. The Balanced Scorecard model

The Balanced Scorecard (BSC) is a strategic management tool proposed by Kaplan and Norton, consisting of four fundamental perspectives: (1) Customer, (2) Internal processes, (3) Learning and growth, and (4) Finance. This model can be flexibly applied at various organizational levels, including the public sector and grassroots government.

In the context of the two-tier local government model, commune-level People's Committees are repositioned as foundational administrative institutions directly responsible for public service delivery and policy implementation. Applying the Balanced Scorecard at the commune level enables strategic objectives, governance values, and management requirements to be translated into measurable indicators that can be monitored, evaluated, and adjusted during implementation.

Table 3. Proposal for the Balanced Scorecard Model in evaluating the governance effectiveness of the People's Committee

Perspective	Objective	Metric
Citizen, organization	Enhance customer satisfaction with the commune - level People's Committees Commitment to standardized, professional service	Citizen satisfaction with public service quality Satisfaction with governmental capacity Satisfaction with the service attitude of officials/civil servants Satisfaction with the CPC's reform efforts
Learning and growth	Develop the capacity of commune officials/civil servants Incorporate feedback Learn from internal and external experience	Capacity for job resolution Rate of complaints regarding administrative decisions Level of incorporation of feedback Percentage of citizens/organizations believing the government has effectively learned from practical experience
Internal processes	Reform internal work processing procedures Apply quality management standards	Administrative procedure processing time Whether citizens must move between specialized departments Quality management standards help shorten job processing time
Finance	Reduce administrative costs Apply appropriate financial management mechanisms Implement incentives for administrative cost savings	Average administrative cost per administrative procedure resolved Effectiveness of applying fixed budget allocations Mechanism for promoting financial initiatives; Learning about cost savings from public and non-state sectors

Source: Author's synthesis (2025).

Consequently, strategic objectives are no longer merely general orientations but become operational indicators linked with accountability and continuous improvement.

Table 3 presents the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) model for evaluating the governance effectiveness of commune-level People's Committees, structured around four perspectives: Citizens - organizations, Learning and development, Internal processes, and Finance. Each perspective clearly defines strategic objectives and the corresponding performance measures, ensuring alignment between the governance orientation and implementation activities. The Citizens - organizations perspective emphasizes enhancing satisfaction and promoting a commitment to standardized, professional service delivery; its measures focus on satisfaction with public services, governmental capacity, and public servants' attitudes. The Learning and development perspective reflects the long-term capacity of the administrative apparatus through indicators related to problem-solving capability, responsiveness to feedback, and public trust. The Internal processes perspective focuses on administrative reform, shortening processing times, and applying quality standards. Meanwhile, the Financial perspective highlights the efficient use of resources and mechanisms for reducing administrative costs. This model helps translate the strategic objectives of commune-level authorities into a set of specific indicators, ensuring a balanced approach across citizen services, process improvement, human resource development, and effective financial management.

Similar to the composite index model, evaluation under the Balanced Scorecard model is conducted by scoring each component criterion within each pillar on a 0-5 scale.

The score of each pillar is determined by calculating the arithmetic mean of the criteria

that constitute that pillar. Denoting the score of the k-th pillar as B_k, we obtain:

$$B_k = \frac{1}{m_k} \sum_{j=1}^{m_k} x_{kj}$$

where:

x_{kj} : the score of the j-th criterion under the k-th pillar;

m_k: the number of component criteria within the k-th pillar.

The evaluation results of the four pillars can be visualized using a radar chart (spider chart), as illustrated in *Figure 2.* Each pillar is represented along a separate axis, and the achieved score is reflected by the length of the corresponding axis.

The concept of a "balance score" refers to the degree of uniformity among the pillars, that is, a condition in which no pillar is significantly lower than the others. From an analytical perspective, the balance score can be examined through:

(1) The overall average value of the four pillars; or

(2) The degree of disparity (standard deviation) among the pillars - the smaller the difference, the higher the level of balance.

The governance objective of commune-level People's Committees is not merely to increase the score of each individual pillar but to improve all four pillars simultaneously and harmoniously, thereby enhancing the overall balance score. This implies that the governance effectiveness is improved comprehensively: enhancing citizen satisfaction, optimizing internal processes, strengthening institutional capacity, and ensuring the efficient use of financial resources.

This approach helps avoid unbalanced development (for example, improving public service delivery while remaining weak in transparency or innovation capacity) and aligns with the principles of modern public governance, which emphasize integrated and sustainable development.

Figure 1. Radar chart illustrating the composite index model
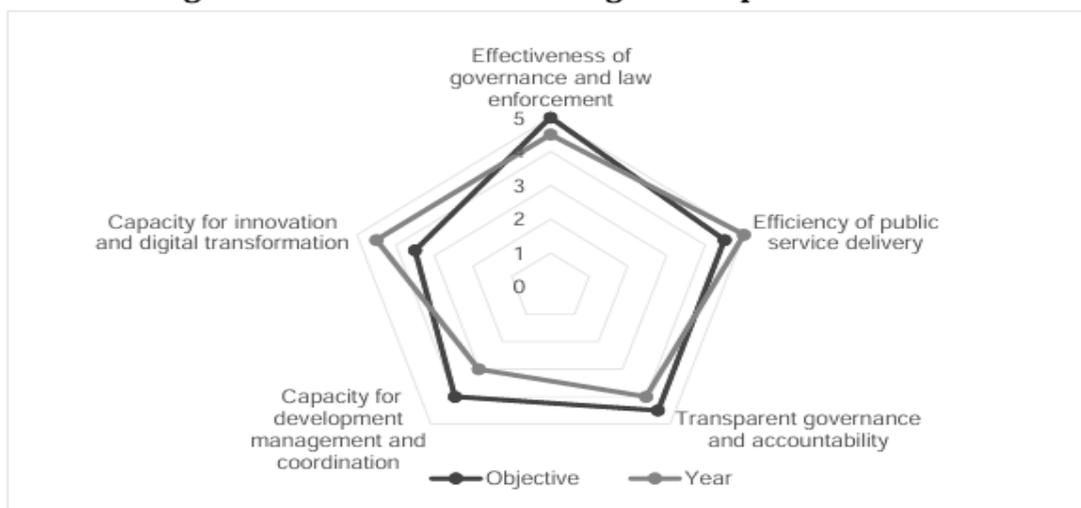
Source: Author's synthesis (2025).

Figure 2 illustrates the evaluation results of commune-level People's Committees based on the Balanced Scorecard model during the period 2022 - 2024, corresponding to four perspectives: Customer, Internal processes, Learning and development, and Finance. The data indicate a clear improvement trend in the Learning and development perspective, rising from 2 points in 2022 to 5 points in 2024, reflecting significant investment in enhancing public officials' capacity and incorporating social feedback. The Customer perspective also shows a gradual increase from 3 to 5 points, indicating improved citizen satisfaction.

Meanwhile, the Internal processes perspective reached its peak in 2023 (5 points) but declined to 3 points in 2024, suggesting the need for further stabilization and standardization of operational procedures. The Financial perspective remained at a moderate level (3-4 points), indicating that resource utilization remains efficient but has room for improvement.

Overall, the diagram demonstrates a positive shift in long-term development capacity, while also highlighting the need to maintain a balance between process reform and financial efficiency to ensure sustainable governance effectiveness.

5. Discussion

Evaluating the governance effectiveness of commune-level People's Committees in the context of the two-tier local government model should be based on a comprehensive, clear, and quantifiable framework of criteria. An evaluation system can only truly generate value when its indicators are designed transparently, easy to apply, and allow comparisons over time and across different localities. At the same time, the criteria set should be periodically reviewed and updated to ensure alignment with governance objectives and development orientations at each stage.

The application of evaluation models such as the composite index and the Balanced Scorecard not only enables commune-level authorities to self-assess and adjust their management activities but also assists central agencies in monitoring performance, allocating resources, and formulating policies tailored to the characteristics of different localities. However, it is necessary to consider differences in socio-economic conditions,

geographical features, and population structures among regions (urban, rural, and mountainous areas), thereby ensuring the uniformity of the indicator system while maintaining flexibility for contextual adjustments.

International experience shows that public sector performance evaluation should be institutionalized within the legal system. Therefore, in Vietnam, it is necessary to promulgate mandatory regulations on performance evaluation for state administrative agencies, including commune-level People's Committees. Such regulations should clearly define the evaluation objectives and indicators; the subjects and authorities responsible for evaluation; the implementation methods; mechanisms for receiving and processing evaluation results; and sanctions for violations during the evaluation process. Institutionalization will help ensure objectivity, accountability, and continuity in evaluation activities.

In addition to the legal framework, the evaluation personnel's capacity also plays a decisive role. Experience across many countries indicates that the presence of a professional corps of civil servants specializing in evaluation is an important condition for ensuring the system's professionalism and sustainability. Therefore, attention should be paid to training and capacity building for officials and civil servants involved in evaluation, equipping them with knowledge of quantitative and qualitative methods, data analysis techniques, and the use of modern measurement tools. At the same time, professional ethics and independence must be emphasized in order to prevent the formalization of evaluation activities.

From a methodological perspective, governance effectiveness should be examined through the relationships among results, costs, and capacity, and among results, objectives, and capacity. An approach based on the input-output-outcome chain, combined with measuring citizen satisfaction, enables a comprehensive evaluation of both effectiveness and efficiency. Among these elements, citizen and organizational satisfaction serve as crucial indicators of the quality of public service and the responsiveness of grassroots authorities.

Finally, an evaluation system is meaningful only when the reliability of the model, instruments, and implementation procedures is ensured. The stable, continuous, and transparent operation of evaluation criteria systems not only improves governance quality at the commune level but also strengthens accountability, enhances social trust, and moves toward a modern, service-oriented, efficient, and sustainable administrative system.

The model for evaluating governance effectiveness can be understood as a logical structure that expresses the relationships among fundamental elements: evaluation objectives, a system of criteria, implementation procedures, and measurement methods. These elements do not exist independently; they are closely interconnected, ensuring consistency between the strategic orientation and the implementation tools.

For commune-level authorities operating under the two-tier local government model, the construction of an effectiveness evaluation model should satisfy several basic requirements:

(1) Strategic alignment: the evaluation must reflect the developmental orientation of commune-level governments within the current two-tier local government system, where their functions, responsibilities, and workload have significantly increased compared to the past.

(2) Balanced criteria: evaluation criteria should incorporate both quantitative and qualitative measures, covering input factors,

output results, and the entire process of state administrative management.

(3) Methodological flexibility: a variety of evaluation methods should be applied depending on the purpose, subject, and specific requirements of the assessment.

Thus, an effectiveness evaluation model for commune-level People's Committees must simultaneously ensure strategic orientation, a clear structure of criteria, and scientifically grounded measurement methods, thereby providing a foundation for transparent governance, accountability, and continuous improvement under the two-tier local government system.

6. Conclusion

The study develops and proposes a system of criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of governance by commune-level People's Committees in Vietnam, operating under a two-tier local government model starting in 2025. Its notable contribution lies in the design of two complementary evaluation models: (1) A composite index model comprising five groups of criteria and fifteen weighted component indicators, enabling the quantification of management effectiveness; and (2) A Balanced Scorecard model structured around four pillars citizens, internal processes, learning and development, and finance which helps translate strategic objectives into concrete operational measures.

The study simultaneously integrates quantitative and qualitative elements into the evaluation process, emphasizing the central role of citizen satisfaction and the innovation and digital-transformation capacity of commune-level authorities. Applying an inverse correlation matrix to determine indicator weights, rather than subjective assignment, enhances the objectivity, reliability, and scientific validity of the proposed index system.

The study helps fill a gap in the framework for evaluating governance effectiveness at the commune level, an essential administrative tier within the two-tier model. In practical terms, the system of criteria and evaluation models can serve as tools to support monitoring, resource allocation, and policy adjustment tailored to local conditions. Flexible application and periodic updating of this criteria system will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of grassroots government operations, moving toward a modern, transparent, and citizen-oriented public administration in the new stage of development.

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