

**Adaptation of Finland Modal of Governance and Its Influence on Improving Social Service Delivery in Uganda**

**By**

**Kajoba Abdul Rahim Abdallah**

**International Islamic University Malaysia**

**Kajoba2018@gmail.com**

**Abstract**

This paper examines the adaption of Finland's modal of governance and how it can influence change in social service delivery in Uganda. The researcher aimed at three values which are how adaptation of e-government can foster improvement in social service delivery in Uganda. How can adaptation of digitalization foster transparency and accountability in social service delivery in Uganda? And how the adaptation of the feedback survey system can enhance inclusion and responsiveness in social service delivery in Uganda. The researcher used secondary data as his source. The study acquired literature from the Finland Global Data Mapping, the Ugandan Gazette on policies, research reports, articles, UNDP reports, and other online sources. The author used content analysis as a means of analysing data. A critical analysis has been drawn at the end of the study and analysis has drawn that for Uganda to advance and acquire transparency, accountability, inclusion, responsiveness, and other good governance practice principles, it should adapt to e-government, digitalization, and feedback survey system. A conclusion has been reached that with the adaption of Finland's modal of governance, the challenges Uganda faces in social service delivery can be mitigated.

**Keywords:** Finland modal of governance, e-government, digitalization, feedback survey system, leadership code act, service delivery.

**Introduction**

Many scholars and international institutions of governance and democracy have defined good governance from different perspectives. According to Gisselquist (2012) argued that good governance is the process of evaluating public institutions' ability to manage resources, conduct public affairs, and ensure the implementation of human rights in a way that is largely free from abuse and corruption and with proper regard for the rule of law.

Putting good governance into practice has become a new norm and one of the principles that all nations that want to transform their countries must adhere to. Once a state neglects or does not respect governance principles, it stands to be against universal set standards of democracy and leadership. Application of these good governance principles assures a country of prosperity, development, peaceful power transition, and an uplift in standards of living in urban centers (Solomon, 2020).

According to Salminen (2010) argues that Finland has become one of the Western countries that have appreciated the application of good governance into practice in the administration of affairs by establishing a governance system built on e-government. This type of government has given life to service delivery in Finland as it renders efficiency and effectiveness in social service delivery. This has led to the achievement of sustainable transformation in its social service delivery. Governance to make a meaning it must be set as a people-centered approach where it becomes easy for people to acquire and access social services and easy for people to assess the performance of their government (Beshi, 2020). The E-government system in

Finland has helped in building trust where the government engages communities online in agenda setting, planning, policy formulation, implementation, monitoring, and feedback. Finland has built its system by ensuring that dialogue between communities, civil society organizations, and the state. This has bridged the trust gap citizens have over their government. E-government has made the government of Finland, and the Finn people believe that success in governance can only be achieved once everyone does his part without fail through digital means (Oliveira, 2020).

According to Pérez-Morote (2020) argues that public administration of affairs in Finland is always appreciated internationally for its quality output. This has fostered trust in public institutions, reduction in corruption, transparency in administrative decision-making, increased accountability towards the public, and improved access to justice and social resources. These principles serve their purpose. They have to be implemented hand in hand and not selectively. This has led to the establishment of a unique system of governance that is people-based.

In the context of Uganda, there is a disparity between the size of the government and the services provided. The size of the government is big, and the quality of social service are poor. Adaptation of E-government as applied in Finland can answer the question of service delivery in Uganda. The quest for improving on the quality-of-service delivery, Uganda should learn from Finland and acquire a system of government that is cost-effective and efficient in delivery of services. Night (2020) argues that there is need for adaptation of government that can reduce on the size of public service, increase transparency, accountability, equality, equity, participation, responsiveness, efficiency, and effectiveness brings a need for Uganda to adapt e-government system as applied in Finland. This will help to reduce on expenditure in salaries, cut bureaucracy and improve delivery of social services. For Uganda to build an effective public service, it has to adhere to building an e-government that is transparent enough not like the prevailing democratic system (Sadik, 2022).

According to Osiebe (2020) argue that ever since Uganda got her independence in 1962, it has never acquired a peaceful transition of power. All the eight (8) governments have been coming to power in form of a couple detour. This explains the political atmosphere Uganda as a country is always in. ever since the current president came to power in 1986, the quality-of-services delivered has been lacking behind as it is evidenced in most of sub-Saharan countries. The current president has always promised improvement in social services but all in vain little has been put into practice and achieved (Hitchen, 2016).

As a result of lack of e-government, service delivery is facing challenges such as tribalism and nepotism that comes from one-party dominating almost all political positions as exhibited in the parliament of the country being dominated by three quarters of the representatives coming from one party, inadequate result in decentralization efforts, government-controlled media, weak civil society that lacks a favorable environment to operate, lack of respect for rule of law, lack of transparency, insufficient administrative capacity of government is also established in poor human resource planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, corruption, poor financial management, and weak coordination and perpetual reorganization of institutions (Nabafu, 2012).

In addition, Baez (2020) argues that corruption is perceived to be a growing and a worrying problem in Ugandan service delivery according to the 2019 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) results that indicate, that more than two-thirds of countries across the globe, including Uganda, are not progressing in their anti-corruption efforts. The report ranks Uganda with a 28% score on a scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean) in fighting corruption among its public

institutions as per the Corruption Perception Index of 2019. Traditional values of loyalty, honesty, obedience, and respect for authority are giving way to breach of trust and dishonesty which is contrary to what is prevailing in Finland as a modal country that has applied these good governance practices (Saxton, 2022).

### **How adaptation of e-government from Finland modal can foster improvement in social service delivery in Uganda?**

According to Kamolov (2017) argued that e-government is a system of governance where the government delivers information and data through ICT support systems and digital platforms. Other scholars like Adam (2020) have defined e-government as a system where government uses the internet to deliver services to its citizens and communities.

E-government has become the new norm in countries and their governments have adapted. Countries are switching from old forms of government and administration to new wave of managing countries through systems. This shift is meant to ensure that governments render social services that are cost effective and efficient. Shifting government from manual filling system to e-government is a process that requires infrastructures to be in place (AbdulKareem, 2020).

For countries like Finland, to register success in e-government, they built support infrastructure like internet in all places and regions to ensure that e-government is made a success. The aim of Finland to acquire this system was tied on ensuring improvement in social service delivery in its public service. The system of e-government is tied on internet as one of the support infrastructures. For a country to ensure that they shift to e-government, they have to build internet infrastructures (Abubakr, 2021).

According to Mukuni (2019) argue that for countries in sub-Saharan Africa, governments are trying hard to see that all citizens and regions can access internet. Uganda as one of these countries in sub-Saharan Africa trying to ensure internet reaches all regions, many efforts and measures are being put in place to ensure this becomes a success. For countries like Uganda to achieve success in the implementation of e-government, they have to ensure that there is stable data and internet in the country. This can be evidenced in the national budget of financial year 2020 and 2021. There is an increment in vote allocation to development of ICT infrastructures (Basajja, 2022).

Efforts are being put in place by the government of Uganda to ensure that its citizens can have access to internet. As of 2022, there is an increment in internet usage by citizens. Although there is an increase in internet usage, some regions that are remote because of their geographical locations are lacking behind. internet in Uganda is a bit expensive compared to its neighbouring countries because government nationalized UTL company that would render cheap data to citizens. Privatizing UTL left government with only one role of regulating data prices. For government in Uganda to build a stable e-government, such challenges have to be addressed. Government has developed commission to ensure that e-government is achieved in Uganda. National Information Technology Authority was enacted as a support unit for the development of this system (Balgobin, 2022)

According to Akman (2005) argue that e-government system brought a magnificent change in the governance of Finland and its economy. This brought change in Finn cultural norms, values, and economic transformation where people make transactions and businesses via ICT support systems. The central role of e-government is not only to automate access of information to public servants but also to ensure that there is ease for the public to access government

information and data to ensure transparency. Once citizens can have access to information and data, they will be in position to know what government is planning towards addressing issues of concern societies are facing. This will create accountability and also increase on political trust.

Finland through e-government have made banking system accessible, tax payment, court summons, community policing, security monitoring, traffic control, crime detection, policy awareness, crime reporting and monitoring of public servants. This has made life of Finns improve and uplift in standards of living. E-government has increased in government output and reduction in social challenges like crime and insecurity. Finland police has a centralized alarm system that every home and business can report in case of danger or fire outbreak.

Mayega (2019) denotes it that in Uganda, many people operating business don't pay tax to Uganda revenue authority because of lack of centralised system that tracks business done by different entities. And those that pay tax under declare their earnings. This puts implementation of fiscal policies at risk. For government to address such tendencies, it has to adapt the Finland modal of monitoring businesses through the centralized data command. Uganda has installed camera on roads, but they are only used to record circumstances they don't report live feeds to police headquarters for police to reduce crimes. Uganda police should adapt camera system that can detect and report crime. In Uganda many businesses and homesteads get fire outbreak but there is no centralized alarm system that can report fire outbreak for police to respond in time to save lives, businesses, and properties. Government should build fibre cables where all entities should connect. With adaptation of this, police and fire department will be in position to fight any fire outbreak (Nyabola, 2018).

### **How adaptation of digitalization of public service from finland modal influence transparency and accountability in service delivery in Uganda?**

For the government of Finland to achieve accountability and transformation in decision making, government opted for digitalization of its public service. Digitalization of roles makes decision making productive. In return, finland acquired meaningful transition in development of its public sector. Digitalizing roles made decision making and service delivery effective for the Finn. Among the many benefits of digitalization are data protection and reducing number of public servants which contributed to cost benefit and efficiency (Kuziemski et al, 2020).

Digitalization has helped Finland in information flow within the streams of its public service. This has greatly contributed to transformation of service delivery with effectiveness and efficiency. Data governance is central to development and transformation of economies. According to Okello (2010) argues that countries like Uganda that are still using manual filling system have to transform to management information system (MIS). Manual filling system Uganda is using in its public service has many challenges. Manual filling system is characterized with misplacement of files due to shift in offices and arrangements, damage by water and disasters like fire outbreak, lack to security since they can be accessed and duplicated by anyone and high cost of maintaining them. Adaptation of digital file management can help alleviate all these stated challenges (Luyombya, 2010).

Digitalization of data as a resource for running public service makes data central in one place where all entities and government agencies can access it. Also, this helps to give civil servants and civilians easy access to government data. This implies that once civil servants and civilians can access government services online, this will reduce on the burden of lining up for services in government facilities (Hilbert, 2016).

Ugandan government has established a centralized database for its population. This exercise started in 2015. Government started massive registration of all its nationals. By end of 2021, government registered almost 35 million people. Government registered people and captured their locations, ethnicity, phone numbers, address, employment status, marital status, education, and health. Government through the Uganda communication commission instructed telecommunication companies to register all their clients. But since this policy was poorly brought, citizens thought government wanted to track them down for their political affiliations and ideologies. Uganda has a population of 47 million people. Of these, over 35 million people have registered and have national identity cards. Government has data of this population. This makes planning easier for government. And also, delivery of services. Building a firm e-government data on all population is key for proper planning and delivery of services (Tusubira, 2021).

According to Green (2010) argue that government of Uganda by 2030 wants to ensure that size of its government reduces through merging of departments. This can only be possible if they adapt to means that can put data together. This will make national planning, data access, automation of tasks and cyber security easier. For Ugandan public service to ensure transparency in its services, it has to adhere to Finland modal of governance. This modal has made access to social facilities like medical consultation, insurance, medical loans, and security easier for the Finns. Digitalization has enhanced development and growth in the Finland economy.

Among the challenges agricultural sector is facing is limited access to integrated digital market. Uganda is one of the countries that take agriculture as their backbone. The need to promote agriculture requires digitalized e-market platforms. This implies that government has to build internet infrastructures that support digitalization. Giving farmers access to digital market will create access to world market. This will increase exports hence leading to transformation of agriculture (Deichmann et al, 2016).

According to Ezeomah (2019) argue that the need for improving on agricultural products to compete at world market is another reason that calls for adaptation of this modal in Uganda. Many countries that have been exporting agricultural products to the West have opted to process them in their mother land as a mean to provide jobs for their people. Uganda instead of exporting raw agricultural products, it should adapt digital and technological means of processing these Agri-products. This will increase on farmer's income, create jobs for fellow Ugandans and also increase on the price of exports.

### **How adaptation of feedback survey system from Finland modal influence inclusion and responsiveness towards service delivery in Uganda?**

Many countries in the West have built their democracy and administration of national affairs with an inclusion mode of governance. This allows those steering governance and decision making for policies to act, design, implement and monitor government programs and services delivered based on feedback they get from their citizens through e-survey systems set by governments (Nemčok, 2021).

Finland through its online based feedback system known as The Citizen's Pulse, gets opinions of its citizens in relation to its performance, implementation of set agendas, monitoring and evaluation. This has led to increase an increase in the quality of social services given to the Finns. Government utilizes citizen's pulse to inquire and also collect opinions before making political decisions. This has increased on the level of political trust citizens of Finland have in their government. Once citizens have more trust in their government also confidence in delivery of services increases (Hiidenhovi, 2002).

According to Salminen (2010) argues that one of the ways through which Finland government assess its performance is through this online feedback system of governance. This system of government helps to generate opinions and attitudes of citizens towards designing policies, making regulations, rules, political inquiries, referendums and passing laws. Getting online opinions of the grassroots in Finland makes the policy formulation cycle complete. Inclusion of citizens in policy formulation and [public agenda helps government of Finland to design right policies towards addressing wicked problems of the society. Such inclusion of public through feedback-based systems in policy design will help government in implementation of these set policies and laws since the public is part of the agenda setting.

Government of Finland uses data and feedback survey reports to check on performance of public servant, public institutions and also capture changes demanded by the public. This has helped the government of Finland with relevant information on code of conduct of public servants and quality of service they render to the Finnish citizens. This has helped to shape service delivery of the country. Feedback survey system has enhanced high performance and increased trust, high quality service delivery and improved digital economy. For a government to get principle of checks and balance between the three arms of government, feedback must be one of the prerequisites for proper analysis of their performance. E-survey system in Finland has enhanced transformation in education, business, social working conditions, infrastructural development sectors.

Responsiveness is one of the goals of the good governance practices. Finland government has made way out on how to effectively reach to needs of its citizens through the e-feedback survey system. The use of this system is easier since the government has made extra efforts in ensuring all its citizens have access to internet. Responses in all survey done on Finland service delivery show that Finns are fairly satisfied in relation to how effective government attends to their needs raised in the feedback system. Government making citizens survey increases on the relationship between people and their local government agencies that run day to day service delivery. This will foster increased transparency, accountability, and justice in the delivery of social services (Catterberg, 2006).

According to Nhlapo (2020) argues that World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and great powers from the West have proposed and implemented different development models with the aim of alleviating poverty, extreme hunger, terrorism, and environmental degradation. But all these policies have failed to achieve success in Uganda because of poor feedback survey system. Implementing policies without proper feedback, leads to stagnation of policies and failure. In delivery of social services in Uganda, little attention is given to feedback by autonomous agencies of government. Once citizens in Uganda don't communicate with their government, it widens the gap between government and its citizens hence creating issues of political trust.

### **Critical analysis**

Analyzing the field of social service delivery, Uganda made rules of procedure that shape conduct of all public servants towards being transparent in rendering social services. But little attention has been given to publicizing these principles on all platforms of government agencies because of poor management of ICT resources. Uganda needs to put much emphasis in the development of ICT support systems as this will render solution to transparency issues related to poor service delivery. Uganda needs to adapt to e-government. This will make citizens and government departments all connected. This will smoothen democratic procedures of formation of laws and policies that are bias free and transparent in a sense that citizens and government departments are not left out. E-government ensures that all officials and

department are equal before the rules and laws there is no supremacy in designing policies where one department can obstruct exercise of duty by another department since all department have access to information and data. Adaptation of e-government will grant Ugandans their lost rights to access data and information. Article 27 of the Ugandan constitution gives all citizens right to access government data since it's a public information. Citizens of Uganda have been deprived of their right to access data since much of this data is not digitalized. It is still kept in manual files. Uganda adapting e-government will foster data transformation hence leading to easy access through ICT support systems. This will create ease for the public to know what government is doing and where their government is heading in terms of development and transformation.

Government that overstays in power one of the tactics and political systems they use in controlling their population, is denying their citizens access to public information. In 2019, government of Uganda through its parliament where it has majority seats passed a data protection and privacy act. This act ensures that people should be given right to access government information. And this act commends government agencies to publicize their information on internet so that citizens are not deprived of their right to information. This will solve issues related to those behind corruption and causing delay in delivery of social services to communities and citizens.

Adaptation of e-government will help in publicizing of public servants that pay taxes, declare their wealth and those in embezzlement of public funds. According to the leadership code act that was introduced in 1992, enacted in 2002 and seconded by both parliament and president, this act calls for public officers to declare their wealth and source of income to the public and to the government auditors. This is done to ensure that public is aware of the wealth their leaders have and to deter embezzlement and misuse of public resources. Through this act, the inspector general of government (IGG) requires all officials holding public offices, members of parliament, legislative council, members of the executive council and judiciary to declare their wealth to the public. Such support policies and laws, help government in establishing an effective e-government once such data is publicized on internet infrastructures.

Accountability is another sphere that Uganda should make sure that is in place before adapting e-government system. One of the vast means through which digitalizing governance can be seen is through absence of corruption in the e- system. Public officers and the citizens of Uganda are all accountable of their actions towards serving national interests. Presence of accountability will make Ugandans trust each other from their neighborhood to their government. Establishing an e-government requires a country to have public service force that is accountable of their decisions and actions.

Inclusion and responsiveness are two fundamental principles of good governance practices. For such principles to be achieved, support systems like feedback survey that give citizens chance to communicate, criticize and evaluate government service delivery must be in place as a country shift to adaptation of e-government. This increases on rate at which people trust their government, makes policy formulation easy and helps government to eliminate officials that public is complaining about.

Some places in Uganda like Kapchorwa, Kibaale and Rwenzori Mountain areas are remote and hard to be accessed. Such areas are neglected in service delivery. They tend to get limited services compared to other areas that have road access. These regions tend to have limited growth, development, and transformation. For government to establish a meaningful and inclusive development, it has to adapt a development modal that accommodates all regions

regardless of their geographical locations. Feedback survey system is the only way government can come to know the quality of services such areas get and what are the concerns of those areas in relation to needs and services?

**In conclusion**, for government of Uganda to improve on social service delivery, Uganda has to adapt a system can hold public servants accountable, grant citizens access to information and data for them to know what their government is planning for them, transparent in information flow between government and its citizens, respond to needs of citizens in a timely manner, a system that makes citizens part of the agenda formulation process through feedback survey, and a system that doesn't render gender discrimination in development and transformation. Adaption of e-government will render a governance process that is efficient and effective which in return will foster and improve service delivery as witnessed in Finland. Once government adapt to such system, citizen's political trust in Ugandan public institutions will increase.



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