

## THE KEY DRIVING FORCES OF THE FUTURE MALAYSIAN PUBLIC SERVICE

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### ABSTRACT

Looking at today's shifts in need of tomorrow's society urged public service worldwide to assess the current services and charting policy responses to cope with the new changes of public interest. Literature shows major shifts were identified in areas of context in structure & size of public service, governance systems and engagement & the management of public administration. The public service reform should not merely targeted for cost-cutting; satisfying fiscal needs but also should be echoed across government, putting the emphasis on transformation that match the expectations of the next modern & sophisticated society, diverse community networks, rise of new economy and multidimensional future risks. Additionally is to ensuring a better quality of life for all civil servants through improved and accelerated service delivery by the Public Service. Governments are now operating in a new environment. Delivering a high-quality public services such as education and healthcare are found integral to create healthy, skilled and productive society that enabled socio-economic development, better quality of life and sustainability. In addition, with the rapid change in citizen expectations, issues of building public trust and an increased development of technology and modernisation of social values, it had revolutionised the way citizens interact with government; individuals and organisations across society and forming new kinds of partnerships. Issues on public experience and perception towards fragmented public services with outdated offerings and limited transparency had created a gap between the increasing public expectations and service delivery capabilities. Understanding the past and gaps appeared in the current landscape as well as uncertainties posed by the future fabric interwoven in social, economy, political and technological factors subsequently have led to a new wave of reforms in the public sector organizations. This research used foresight methodologies and identified key drivers that affects the future of Malaysian Public Service. These drivers provides starting point for deliberation on the scenario of the future Public Service in Malaysia.

Keywords: Public Service, Foresight, Scenario, Drivers of Change, Transformation

### INTRODUCTION

The environment's changing. Workforce demographics are shifting, new technologies are emerging and budgets are shrinking. Although there're many thing that uncertain operating in a complex environment, the one thing that is certain, public sector will continue have to deal with budget cuts at all levels of government, while on the other hand citizens demand more value for each of tax ringgits. As a result, the need for change will remain constant and may even intensify to cope with future needs.

New public service delivery model consists of operations integration, citizen-centered services, adoption of new technologies, partnership and outcome based. It recommended to public organizations getting support from civil society and private sector organizations in fulfilling their functions, allowing flexible structures to eliminate negative dimensions of bureaucracy, with a more market-based model. For governments, enabling such a capability without dramatically increasing costs will come from shifts in technology, process, culture, leadership and accountability that move public services toward a more integrated; holistic service.

Models in public management is frequently being adopted and adapted in various countries. However, there is no agreement in the scholarly community about the effects of increasingly complex and hybrid structures, as a result of combining Weberian, NPM and post-NPM features. The challenge remains when emergence of complexity in public service posed by the external and internal pressure has questioned the effectiveness of the current public service to cater increasing demand driven by sophisticated communities and changes happenings in the surrounding.

The need for public service transformation has been constantly mentioned by the Prime Minister, Datuk Sri Najib Razak. In the 2011 Budget speech he said, '*To attain developed nation status, we cannot remain complacent. Success demands drastic changes, not incremental. It requires a quantum leap. Change is not an option, but an imperative. We must change or risk being left behind.*' This brought new challenges to the Malaysian Public Service. It has to transform and be excellent, especially in its service delivery in order to meet the demand from the public. The transformation should be able to response to the future needs, trends and challenges; and delivering services in an efficient and productive manner with high quality of leadership, trust, integrity and accountability.

## KEY DRIVERS OF CHANGE IN PUBLIC SERVICE

Trends are nothing more than mere behaviors without activation. In this foresight activities, those trends will be discovered and subsequently activated in a form of 'drivers of change'. The trends are grouped under various areas such as demographics, environmental, technological, economic, workplace and governance. Those categorisations is based on the collective literatures gathered.

Five broad categories of trends have predominated in discussion on the future of Malaysian public service namely leadership, organisation structure, people/training/capacity, strategy and culture.

**Key Trends Influencing the Future of Malaysian Public Service**

1.	Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The way public service is managed by leaders of public service organisation. How they perform their roles and responsibilities or how they interact.</li></ul>	Digital Leadership Global Shifts Network Governance Public Engagement
2.	Organisation Structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Includes structure that refers as the way units or departments or agencies are organized and who is accountable to whom. Besides, it also includes systems that encompass processes and procedures for decision making and in carrying-out their responsibilities.</li></ul>	Agencification Downsizing Satellite Offices Work-Life Balance
3.	People / Training / Capacity <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- This includes capabilities and competencies of people in public service, talent management, skills and knowledge required to effectively deliver their jobs. In addition, what type and how many employees an organization will need and how they will be recruited, trained, motivated and rewarded.</li></ul>	Collaborative Learning Digital Capacity New Public Passion Public-Sector Mobility
4.	Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Plans and policies developed to effectively perform its roles and responsibilities to its stakeholders in line with national aspirations. For example in performance improvement and process reform, aided by technology.</li></ul>	Citizen Centric Digital Government Fiscal Rationalisation Foresight Driven Gain Sharing Outcome-based Approach Post-Transaction (Service) Productivity and Innovation Social Innovation

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5.	<b>Culture</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The norms and standards that guide civil servants behavior and organisation actions and thus, are the foundation of public service organization. This includes among others ethics, codes &amp; standards, work environment and values.</li> </ul>	Cultural Fit Enterprising Inter-generation Quality and Innovation Shared Ownership
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The Driver of Change (DoC) approach takes as its starting point that public service know ‘what’ is necessary to realise the Public Service Transformation Plan and also on ‘how’ to bring about the necessary to make this happen. It therefore advocates an assessment and analysis of country contexts in a specific focus on how change is occurring within the country or in other words, ‘what is driving change’. With a wide environmental scanning and deep analysis on the current development and future trends in public service, the research identified twelve key drivers of change in which forces are noted as from internal and external perspectives.

### Key Drivers Influencing Public Service Transformation

1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Communication and Networking Build rapport and continuous communication is vital to cater changes in public demand. A capable public service is essential to create favourable environment in facilitating people’s participation in various areas particularly socio-economic development. Wide use of the internet has made citizens more aware and impatient and that puts public servants under greater public scrutiny.</li> </ul>	<b>Implications:</b> Advances in ICT helps to improve participation of citizens in public programs. It also enhanced the way to deliver higher accountability, awareness of the citizens to the pressing issues and reduces repression as well as exploitation. Participatory development program aggressively take place nowadays to ensure citizens continuously being engaged.
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Demographic Change Demographic transition is by far the most significant challenge face by most country in the world. Population growth is slowing, but the age structure of the population is changing, with the share of the young falling and that of the elderly rising. Globalization also sees rise of urbanization as well as talent competition to improve country’s competitiveness.</li> </ul>	<b>Implications:</b> Demographic shifts had changed the household dynamics. Government has to make robust decisions on a range of issues such as employment, wages, pensions and improving quality of life. Social and physical infrastructure has to be integrated and improved in order to ensure balanced development and sustainable growth.
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Financial Sustainability Era of austerity has arrived. Public services need to emphasize on broad and long term vision and mind set. At the same time, resources need to be managed efficiently through prioritization and collaborative approaches between organizations and communities. This to enable more effective public management, ensuring future financial sustainability assisted by policy development, effective implementation &amp; service delivery.</li> </ul>	<b>Implications:</b> Public financial management is an essential part of good governance. Financial sustainability affects public service ability to manage resources prudently while helps to foster the socioeconomic levels. KPIs were used as a yardstick to measure outcomes and performances of good management and tracking of spending.
4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Global Competitiveness Global events such as globalization, liberalization, regional policy, trade, interoperability with regional &amp; global,</li> </ul>	<b>Implications:</b> Global competitiveness impacts quality of life. Public service can be further improved by developing an integrated

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	<p>harmonization of standards / regulation and climate change create various challenges to the nation to compete globally. Since the competitiveness of the nation is depend on its nation's capability, pressure are being put on public service to give support to influent the industry development and at the same time creating core values and needs for the citizens wellbeing towards quality of life.</p>	<p>services that focus towards consistencies in policy development and financial sustainability and enhanced accessibility of resources and information. Influx of foreign direct investment and mobility of talents and skill workers indirectly create pressure in education system to produce better talent and skilled workers to fit in the various sectors. Accountability and transparency in public service increased public participation towards better service delivery towards ensuring safe and prosperous environment for the citizens.</p>
5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Governance Transparency and accountability are reflected in a democratic institutions to ensure good governance are well practice. Good governance is needed to sustain development momentum and ensure the benefits of growth are widely shared. In today's global world, governance undergoing a 'paradigm shift' in its roles and structures from inflexible control and procedure orientation, towards result orientation, flexibility, facilitation and a citizen-centric approach.</li></ul>	<p>Implications:</p> <p>Good governance is paramount to ensure it fulfils its overall purpose, achieves its intended outcomes for citizens and operates in an effective, efficient and ethical manner. Good governance brings great professionals in procurement, prudent financial &amp; public management, policy planning &amp; implementation, delivering in open and accountable manners with focused on citizen engagement assisted by innovative &amp; integrated solutions to overcome institutional problems.</p>
6.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Equalities Income distribution has become increasingly unequal in the majority of developed countries and some large developing countries in the last twenty years. However for developing countries such as Malaysia, there are several improvement trends particularly in a dimensions of well-being, namely in health sector (e.g. life expectancy at birth, child survival &amp; nutrition) and education sector (e.g. attainment). Meanwhile, this positive progress is driven by public services based on the research conducted by OECD.</li></ul>	<p>Implications:</p> <p>By improving the quality of services across the board, hence it equalizing potential of benefits from public services to citizens will be increased. Thus it conclude that public services is a crucial method in reducing socio-economic inequalities.</p>
7.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Integrity &amp; Values The rapid transformation of the society and the digital revolution, along with budgetary pressures pose challenges for governments and the future of public services. Integrity is the cornerstone of good governance.</li></ul>	<p>Implications:</p> <p>Technological innovations such as open data and take up of social media lead to more information and knowledge exchange as well as enhanced connectivity, openness and transparency of society. Public today are more aware of their rights, have better access to information on public services and consequently have higher expectations of service levels.</p>

### Key Drivers Influencing Public Service Transformation

Key Drivers Influencing Public Service Transformation		
		Economic pressures force governments to be more efficient, reduce costs and being more transparent in a multi-polar world. These challenges, coupled with the financial crisis have created momentum for the modernization of public administration.
8.	- Leadership  Given the understandable level of risk aversion in public services, hence building and maintaining rapport with public at large is vital. Acting in a desired behaviour in any public professions helps to build professionalism in delivering public services.	Implications: More open and integrated public services focusing on the people centric and business-friendly environment can be enhanced with efficient and clear policy guidelines together with good leadership. Successful leaders must go beyond established parameters and institutional strictures, working across organizational boundaries in pursuit of multilayered, networked approaches tailored to a specific challenge.
9.	- Public Perceptions  Public Services strongly believes in a future shaped democratically through inclusion of the public with expectation of what a public services should provide, including need, previous experience, values and reputation of a service and government.	Implications: Indicators of public value, perceptions and expectation tend to behave differently, as well as having their own complex inter-relationship. The context for each situation is crucial when considering the direction in which expectations need to be managed. Satisfaction is not the only indicator of what the public values. Other indicators such as public expectations of a service before it is delivered could help public service providers see where expectations are likely to exceed available provision or lead to an under-supply of that service.
10.	- Safety and Security  The new risks and opportunities such pandemics and crimes posed greater impacts which most fundamentally happened at the citizens, families and communities level. It is critical to building resilience society that possessed an abilities to cope with external and internal shocks either by adapting to, or transforming with the rapid change. Ensuring improvement of lives of the citizens and societies can be done via collaboration with communities and non-state actors e.g. NGOs. Given with huge diverse demand in the future and today's behavioral challenges (e.g. social ignorance), existing public services should be reformed taking into consideration focusing more on the bottom-up approach.	Implications: Communities' empowerment and co-production <sup>2</sup> of public services aims to achieve social productivity instead merely focusing on social outcomes. Public services must be more closely shaped around people.
11.	- Technology Advancement	Implications:

### Key Drivers Influencing Public Service Transformation

		Implementation of new technologies increased accessibility for information and knowledge exchange as well as enhanced connectivity, openness and transparency among public service and citizens. Internet of things, digitalization and automation create new work environment that change the organization system and structure as well as behaviour. New talent and skilled set are required to utilize and work on the new technologies for engaging the citizen to encourage research & development (R&D) and creating new business opportunities.	Policy reform and investment is required to increase education and training system in order to develop talent and skill set towards high skilled and IT-literate workers. Creation of new working environment that are flexible and mobile embedded with smart technologies, well integrated and greatly accessible. Existence of digital society and digital governance helps to create better transparency and adaptability.
12.	- Work Environment	New public management aims to make a public service more accessible, result oriented, high adaptability to changes alike private sector. Innovations then will be the key in creating the necessary institutional culture and good practices for new service delivery models to succeed.	Implications: Shifts in demand and roles of technology had changed the way of delivery in public services as well as career development (workforce capability & capacity) in this sector. Meanwhile, work-life balance and behavioral change is important too.

The public service is the core component of the government and the civil servants are the key success factor for public service for the future. Apart from the internal and external key drivers of change that could shift the way forward of the Malaysian Public Service; high level of professionalism, neutrality and competency with core values such high spirit of patriotism, loyalty and love for the country will determine the future of the country.

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