



## **BUREAUCRATIC REFORM TOWARDS A TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE GOVERNMENT IN THE DIGITAL ERA**

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### **Abstract**

This study aims to analyze the process and challenges of bureaucratic reform in achieving a transparent and accountable government in the digital era. A qualitative approach was employed using a case study method on government institutions that have implemented digital public services. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis. The findings indicate that digitalization of bureaucracy positively contributes to enhancing transparency and accountability, particularly in public information access, service efficiency, and internal supervision. However, several obstacles were identified, including employee resistance, limited digital infrastructure, and inconsistent policies. Digital-based bureaucratic reform requires strong political commitment, human resource capacity development, and synergy between central and local governments. These findings highlight that digital transformation in bureaucracy is not merely a technological change, but also a shift in work culture and governance systems.

**Keywords:** bureaucratic reform, transparency, accountability, digitalization, government.

### **Abstrak**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis proses dan tantangan reformasi birokrasi dalam mewujudkan pemerintahan yang transparan dan akuntabel di era digital. Pendekatan kualitatif digunakan dengan metode studi kasus pada instansi pemerintah yang telah menerapkan layanan publik digital. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi, dan analisis dokumen. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa digitalisasi birokrasi berkontribusi positif terhadap peningkatan transparansi dan akuntabilitas, khususnya dalam hal akses informasi publik, efisiensi pelayanan, dan pengawasan internal. Namun, terdapat beberapa kendala yang teridentifikasi, antara lain resistensi pegawai, keterbatasan infrastruktur digital, dan inkonsistensi kebijakan. Reformasi birokrasi berbasis digital membutuhkan komitmen politik yang kuat, pengembangan kapasitas sumber daya manusia, dan sinergi antara pemerintah pusat dan daerah. Temuan ini menggarisbawahi bahwa transformasi digital dalam birokrasi bukan sekadar perubahan teknologi, melainkan pergeseran budaya kerja dan sistem tata kelola.

**Kata kunci:** reformasi birokrasi, transparansi, akuntabilitas, digitalisasi, pemerintahan.

### **Introduction**

Entering the current digital era technology has developed very much and brings changes to aspects of life for the community and government, this technology is also growing very quickly demanding adaptation to support daily activities. The government as a public service provider also needs to use technology to improve service efficiency.

Humans as users also always want the convenience for running various activities to make it easier and save time and energy. Head of Strategy and Planning at the Asia Pacific PhD quoted from (Mariyam, 2024), explains the five stages of interrelated future technology technology. This stage includes the emergence of technology, organizing, data extraction, needs, and improvement. In the era



of development which lasted from 1950 to 1995, information was obtained through computers connected to the Internet.

The bureaucracy is the backbone in the administration of government. The quality of bureaucracy determines the extent to which public services can be given effectively, efficiently and equitable. In Indonesia, the bureaucracy still faces various challenges, such as non-transparent practices, weak accountability, and slow adaptation to technological change. This condition encourages the government to carry out bureaucratic reform as an effort to build better governance.

Entering the digital era, the transformation of bureaucracy becomes a necessity. Utilization of information technology is not only intended to accelerate the administrative process, but also to open up transparency space and increase the accountability of state organizers. E-Government and various digital public service platforms are important instruments in modern bureaucratic reform.

However, the process of transparent and accountable bureaucracy through digitalization is not easy. In addition to requiring adequate infrastructure, this change also requires the readiness of human resources, visionary leadership, and adaptive supervisory systems. Therefore, this study aims to explore how bureaucratic reform can be directed effectively towards open and responsible government in the digital era, by examining the challenges and strategies faced in the process.

Bureaucratic reform has become a strategic agenda that continues to be encouraged in Indonesia since the 1998 reform era. This step aims to create a better system of government, serving the community with transparency, efficiency, and distance from corruption. Although there has been a lot of progress, the road to the ideal goal is still long and challenging. In this opinion, we will discuss the efforts that have been made, the obstacles faced, and concrete steps that need to be taken to accelerate the creation of a better bureaucracy in Indonesia. Since the start of the bureaucratic reform, a number of important achievements have been achieved. One of the most prominent is the application of e-government. The use of digital technology in public services, such as e-KTP systems, online tax applications, and electronic auction systems, has increased transparency and efficiency

According to Article 23 paragraph (1) of Law Number 25 of 2009 concernin Public services, mentioned that "to support the implementation of public services, a national information system needs to be held." In Article 23 paragraph (4) of the same law, it is explained that the organizers of the public service must manage information systems, both electronic and non-electronic-based, which include: Profile of organizers, implementing profiles, service standards, service, complaints, and performance appraisal (Bappenas, 2004).

Technological advances have a direct influence on administrative activities in government agencies. Because technology continues to change and sometimes it is revolutionary, these offices need to continue to adjust and adopt new technologies to support the operation. The government is increasingly driven by the needs of its citizens, in accordance with the development of state administration to provide good and high-quality service. Providing adequate comfort and services to the community aims to help them meet the needs in a more effective, efficient and economical way.

## **Method**

The method of this study aims to analyze the processes and challenges of bureaucratic reform in realizing transparent and accountable government in the digital era. The approach used is qualitative with case study methods on government agencies that have implemented digitizing public services. Data is obtained through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation studies. Pertama internal supervision.



## **Discussion**

### **Bureaucratic reform Bureaucratic**

Reform is interpreted as a major change in the paradigm and governance that leads to organizations (institutions), the implementation, human resources, service, accountability and legislation and mindset of government.

Bureaucratic reform Daera reform of government bureaucracy in the reform era marked the change in government order towards decentralization which began in 1999. The consequences of adhering to the decentralization of the implementation of regional autonomy have changed the entire order and function in the Bureaucracy of the New Order period to Reformation era governance is the desire to enforce democracy correctly.

The main problem with bureaucratic reform is on the problem of human resources (HR) as the executor of the bureaucracy both concern the commitment of leaders and the quality and morality of HR including bureaucratic behavior including bureaucratic performance, many strategies that have been launched but the results have not been satisfactory, For example, the culture of the Innovation of the Good Governance.

Program aimed at making government governance updates in fact displays on two opposing reality. In the area which was named Best Practice because it was able to reform governance and could realize several transparent, accountable, and responsive public institutions, it turned out that on the other hand was still found poor governance.

### **Bureaucratic reformation in the digital era**

It is an effort to change the structure of the government's process and work culture so that the government's process and culture of work to be more informed of. In the middle of the rapid transformation in Gital, the bureaucracy can no longer survive with a pattern of lambaat, closed and convoluted turns, Mrs. Credit of the fast public service, easy to access and transferring this can only be a bureaucracy that can be a clear bureaucracy with digital progress.

In the digital era, bureaucratic systems began to replace manual procedures with various applications and electronic services and platforms. More than that digital bureaucratic reform also concerns changes in the way their country's apparatus no longer acts as a service ruler, but as a community servant. Therefore, new competence is needed, including digital literacy, ethics of technology use, and the ability to adapt to continuous innovation. Overall, bureaucratic reform in the digital era is a strategic step to build more modern, transparent and accountable governance. With the right technology support and competent human resources, the ideals towards the bureaucracy serving and trusted by the community can be realized.

Bureaucratic reform in the digital era shows that information technology utilization has a strategic role in shaping better governance. These changes not only touch the technical aspects, but also target fundamental values such as transparency, efficiency, and accountability.

Digitizing the bureaucratic process through online services, management information systems, and public service applications have accelerated the administrative process and reduces corruption practices. Information previously difficult to access is now open to the community, so as to encourage the culture of openness and social supervision.

In addition, the accountability of government institutions increases along with the transparent and measurable technology-based performance assessment system. Civil servants do not only work based on instructions, but are also bound to performance indicators that can be monitored directly.

However, this reform process faces challenges such as the readiness of human resources, technology infrastructure that is not evenly distributed, and resistance to changes from some apparatus. Therefore, a holistic approach that includes training, reinforcement of regulations, and integration of the inter-generation system.



Public participation through digital canals is a significant support factor. The government and society can interact with each other in policy making, budget supervision, to service evaluation. It strengthens the legitimacy of the government and makes bureaucratic reform more meaningful.

The digital era brings significant changes in governance, demanding the implementation of good government governance principles more transparent and accountability and the value for money for money to ensure efficient, effective and economical resource use. Therefore, the accountability of state institutions is considered as part of the concept of good governance.

Thus, the performance of public institutions based on facilities will be able to determine wholeness/wholeness, purpose/resolution, choice, promotion and accountability, as well as the provision of tools and sanctions on the performance of public institutions based on the budget, and the use of state spending (shopping) to achieve the desired results that can be taken into account and is known by residents Countries and citizens to determine have achieved (standard). Mardiasmo (2005) states that the budget plays an important role in encouraging good governance in terms of transparency and accountability because the budget functions as a means of control, planning, fiscal policy, politics, and coordination of communication tools, management tools.

### **Digital transformation in the bureaucracy**

Digital transformation in bureaucracy is a fundamental change process in the work of government agencies through the use of information and communication technology. The main objective of this transformation is to create public services that are faster, transparent and efficient, while strengthening the accountability of the state apparatus.

The government began to replace manual processes and physical files with digital systems, such as e-government, e-budgeting, e-office, and application-based public services. This step is not only cutting down a convoluted bureaucracy, but also opens space for data integration between institutions, so the decision-making process is faster and accurate-based information.

Through digitization, the community can access various public services online without having to come directly to the government office. In addition, digital transformation also facilitates monitoring the performance of agencies and individual civilian apparatus through an automatic reporting system and real-time.

### **Apparatu performance accountability.**

Accountability refers to the obligation of government agencies and apparatus to explain and account for the work of the public. Digital transformation has brought significant changes to the performance and reporting system performance in the bureaucratic sector.

With the existence of an electronic-based performance management system (e-Performance), each activity and achievement of apparatus can be recorded and evaluated objectively. This assessment is not only used for internal administration, but can also be accessed by the community as a form of public accountability.

In addition, a digital reporting system allows the submission of activities and budget reports quickly, accurately, and well documented. This mechanism minimizes data manipulation opportunities and increases bureaucratic efficiency.

However, the increase in accountability requires professional, honest, and open human resources support. Therefore, integrity training, the use of clear performance indicators, as well as the application of Reward and Punishment-based achievements is needed in strengthening the accountability of digital bureaucracy.



### **Transparency and accountability**

Mahmudi (2016) reveals transparency refers to the openness of an organization to provide information relevant to the administration of public resources to interested parties. Additional transparency means that the public sector management explains activities, programs and policies that have been, moderate and will be implemented as well as the resources used for it. Transparency is a principle in managing public financial governance that needs to be done by public sector organizations

According to Ritonga and Syahrir (2016), transparency is not only limited to the availability and accessibility of information to the public, but also on the presentation (publication) that is on time. It cannot be denied that the information released in a timely and influential and influential for public decision making regarding public administration, especially management.

In Mahmudi (2016) research, public accountability is the task of fiduciary giver (agent) to account for, presenting, and reporting all activities and activities that are the responsibility of the fiduciary holder to provide the event to do so and the obligation to demand this accountability. Creating a good public accountability process requires a well-structured and well-coordinated public accountability channel

### **Conclusion**

Bureaucratic reform in the digital era has an important role in realizing a transparent and accountable government. Bureaucratic digitalization is proven to increase the efficiency of public services, strengthen internal supervision, and expand access to information to the public. However, this process faces various challenges, such as resistance from the apparatus, limited technology infrastructure, and policy inconsistencies. To overcome these obstacles, strong political commitment is needed, increasing the capacity of human resources, and synergistic system integration between the central and regional governments. Digital transformation is not only technical changes, but also the transformation of work culture and a fundamental governance system, which makes the state apparatus more adaptive, professional, and responsible to the public.

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