

Local Government Strategy in Improving the Quality and Capabilities of Civil Servants in the Digital Era

Dwian Hartomi Akta Padma Eldo¹, Diah Wulansari²

¹Universitas Sains Al-Qur'an, Jl. Kyai Hasyim Asy'ari KM 3, Wonosobo Regency, Indonesia

²Civil Servants at Regional Secretary, Wonosobo Regency, Indonesia

e-mail: dwianhartomieldo@unsiq.ac.id

Abstract

The digitalization era demands local governments to be resilient and prepared to face various challenges. Improving the quality of public services becomes a necessity to meet the needs of the community. The competence of civil servants should be continuously enhanced, enabling them to adapt to the changing times. This paper aims to examine the strategies employed by the local government to enhance the quality and competence of civil servants in addressing challenges in the digital era. The research location is Wonosobo Regency, Central Java Province. A qualitative descriptive research method is utilized, involving data collection through interviews, analysis of news from the Wonosobo government website, and literature review on similar studies. The research findings indicate the necessity of specialized training for civil servants to improve their quality and competence, considering the unavoidable progress of the digital era. The Wonosobo government has implemented the Government Transformation Academy (GTA) as a training facility for civil servants to enhance their quality and competence in the current digital era. The program aims to equip civil servants in Wonosobo Regency with the skills to effectively utilize technology and information in fulfilling organizational duties and providing excellent services.

Keywords: Bureaucratic Reform, Local Government, Digitalization, Government Transformation Academy

INTRODUCTION

Bureaucracy is one of the important things in the process of organizing a country, without bureaucracy, it will have an impact on the obstruction of all government processes in a country. Bureaucracy has been understood as a procedure in service, and bureaucracy not only has an impact on the direction and condition of the country that will be realized, but bureaucracy is a service to all interests and also society. Bureaucracy is a routine administrative system that is carried out with uniformity, organized in certain ways, based on written rules, by people who are competent in their fields (Pratiwi et al., 2022).

As the implementing element of state administration, the bureaucracy has the responsibility of creating good governance. As an important component in a country's government system, the bureaucracy has a crucial role in carrying out government functions, such as public services, decision-making, supervision, and policy implementation. Bureaucracy (in the sense of government) is one of the elements that received more attention for change during the 1998 reform in Indonesia to improve public services. So it is not surprising that the quality of existing services will affect how the performance of the bureaucracy itself.

The government's seriousness in improving the quality of the existing bureaucracy can be seen in the ongoing bureaucratic reform process both at the central and regional

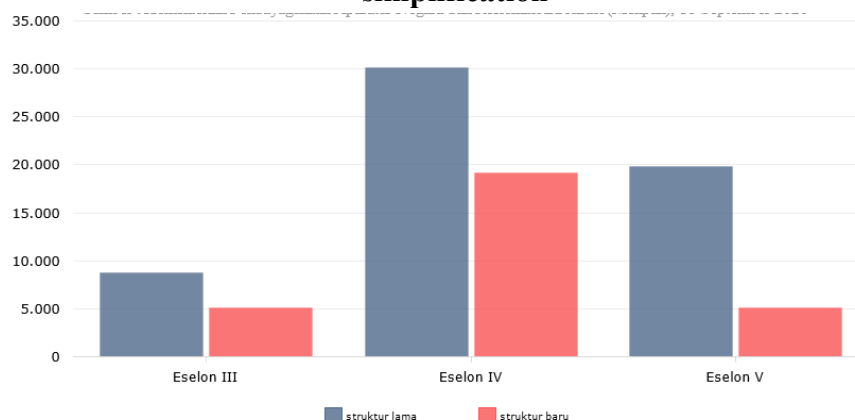
levels. Bureaucratic reform in Indonesia is an integral part of efforts to improve the performance of the bureaucracy (Bernia & Supriyadi, 2017). If we look at foreign countries such as the United States, for example, which have carried out bureaucratic reforms by implementing New Public Management through the Reinventing Government doctrine, the New Public Management paradigm has also influenced countries such as Canada, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom. (Muhammad, 2008).

The implementation of bureaucratic reform in reality has challenges that are not easy. At least there are types of challenges that come from domestic and international sources. (Putri, 2016). The domestic challenges themselves include First, demographic challenges where the bureaucracy is faced with an increasing population that causes an imbalance in the ratio between the number of bureaucrats and the population that must be served. Second, economic challenges where the bureaucracy is faced with free trade and the bureaucracy is required to be able to meet all the basic needs of the growing community. Third, political challenges where the bureaucracy must be faced with complicated political dynamics, and changing leaders who do not know the time which causes the bureaucracy to quickly adjust to the policies of the leaders.

Challenges do not only come from within the country but from the international realm, such as; First, globalization where the impact of globalization demands changes and readiness for the changes themselves on the bureaucracy at the central to regional levels. Second, cooperation between countries will have its own impact on performance which must adjust to the needs of the results of the cooperation agreed between the two countries. Therefore, in the implementation of bureaucratic reform in Indonesia, it is necessary to work harder together so that it is in line with existing expectations.

If we look at the efforts made by the Indonesian government, several efforts have been made ranging from simplifying the existing bureaucracy to increasing the capacity and capability of each state's civil apparatus by the needs of society.

Diagram 1. Comparison of civil servant administrative positions after structure simplification



*Sources: Ministry of State Apparatus Utilization and Bureaucratic Reforms
Indonesia, 2020*

Based on the data above, it can be seen that the government has cut 29,466 civil

servant positions for Echelon III as many as 3,680, Echelon IV 10,993, and Echelon V 14,793 from 2019 to 2020. This is the seriousness of the central and regional governments in carrying out bureaucratic reforms for the state civil apparatus. Bureaucratic reform until now is still running gradually so that someday it can help better performance and also be able to accelerate the effectiveness and efficiency of every job in the government.

Changes in public sector management are not only aimed at modernizing state institutions and reducing the cost of public services but are also expected to produce the expected performance outcomes and will be able to support bureaucratic reform (Yusriadi, 2018). Implementation of bureaucratic reform must be strengthened in terms of institutionalization (Wollmann, 2016) and also from the human resources side (Pallangyo, 2010). These two sides must be a common concern so that they can be implemented in a measurable manner.

Human resources in the public sector are decisive in the implementation of bureaucratic reform, especially regarding the development of the current era that utilizes technology in daily activities. Technology is now inseparable from human life, including in work activities in the public sector (Suehiro, 2014). The state civil apparatus is required to be able to utilize technology in carrying out its work which aims to improve public services to the community. As explained by (Jauhari et al., 2015) The digital era has proven to affect how governance must be carried out so that it has benefits including 1) Enhanced Improved relations between the government, the private sector, and the general public; 3) Community empowerment through information; and 5) More efficient government operations.

Changes in people's desire for public services to be better by utilizing digitalization must be *balanced* with the ability of public institutions and organizations. (Zulfia & Frinaldi, 2022). The state civil apparatus is a determining factor in bureaucratic reform and also the demands of digitalization in the current 4.0 era. Strengthening and developing the competence of the state civil apparatus is important because as bureaucrats organizing public services must be able to immediately adapt to the rapid development of the times.

Central and local governments must be able to see the opportunities that exist and also be ready to adapt accordingly. Capacity and capability development of the state civil *apparatus* is a must nowadays. It is intended to increase competence in services to the community that have high complexity. The digital era also affects the preparation Because if you look at the substance of bureaucratic reform in Indonesia, it also requires knowledge management in providing services to the community by applicable regulations and according to the needs of the community itself (Purwasih & Sensuse, 2014).

The *current* digital era has changed many activities and service models in the government, so there needs to be a good adaptation for bureaucrats so that they can carry out their duties properly. Therefore, this article will look at how local government strategies in improving the quality and capability of the state civil apparatus. The case study in this research is Wonosobo Regency, Central Java Province. This issue becomes very important in how to accelerate bureaucratic reform in the digital era because the digital government does not only talk about technology issues nowadays (Lips, 2019).

However, it has become a fundamental necessity to be resolved immediately, one of which is increasing the capacity and capability of the state civil apparatus in the current digital era.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative method with a single-case design approach. The Wonosobo *Regency* local government is the object to be studied, with a single case design approach, researchers hope to make in-depth observations and also be naturalistic (Moleong, 2013). This research will discuss what efforts have been made by the Wonosobo Regency Government in increasing the capacity and capability of the state civil apparatus in facing the digital era.

Data collection techniques are carried out in several stages, including observation. As for *supporting* data, deep interview techniques were carried out with stakeholders. And finally, it is also supported by secondary data such as books, activity reports, and also the Internet to strengthen the arguments obtained by researchers. As explained by (Abbas & Sadat, 2020) techniques taken to maintain data validity are carried out by; 1) Doing observation diligence; 2) Performing triangulation; 3) Organizing peer review through discussion; 4) Presenting a detailed description of the research. The data analysis technique used is an interactive model qualitative descriptive analysis technique which includes the process of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The digital era has had a significant impact on various fields of life and formed a comprehensive transformation in human life activities such as interacting, working, and living. Social and culture is one of the fields affected by digitalization by changing interaction patterns and various information. This will also be a concern for the government to transform the existing developments and needs in society. There needs to be preparation starting from infrastructure and readiness of human resources. This research focuses on the efforts that have been made by the Wonosobo Regency local government in increasing the capacity and capability of the state civil apparatus within the framework of bureaucratic reform and answering the challenges of digitalization.

Development of State Civil Apparatus in the Digital Era

Development is any effort to improve current or future work, by providing information, influencing attitudes, or increasing skills. (Takapente, 2015). In today's digital era, improvements in governance and public services must be balanced with the development of the state civil apparatus. The digital transformation that occurs today has affected several aspects of life (Yasa et al., 2021), including in the context of fundamental changes related to the workings of the bureaucracy at the regional level.

Local government efforts in the process of improving service quality, including accountability, effectiveness and efficiency, and transparency have now focused on developing a digitally-oriented state civil apparatus. This involves various steps and

initiatives to utilize digital technology to empower government employees and improve public services. One form of state civil apparatus development that the current government focuses on is relevant technology skills, such as digital literacy, data analysis, cybersecurity, and applications that support the improvement of public services (Wastuhana & Werdiningsih, 2021). It is specifically aimed at strengthening digital competencies and technological knowledge for state civil apparatus.

The utilization of electronic systems and application-based technology makes public services faster, more efficient, and easily accessible to the public. One example is licensing services, tax filings, and health services that can be accessed online, reducing complicated bureaucracy so as to increase comfort for citizens. However, the development of the state civil apparatus in the digital era will also encounter several challenges. The protection of data privacy and cybersecurity is something that needs to be considered, because when openness and connectivity also carry the risk of privacy violations and cyber-attacks. Therefore, awareness of the risks that will occur is an important concern for the development of a digitally-oriented state civil apparatus.

Relevant information and data that can be accessed openly by the public will create conditions for active participation in open government decision-making, which is becoming increasingly important. (Ingrams, 2020). Utilizing the potential of technology in the development of state civil apparatus in the digital era can bring a positive direction for the government both at the central and regional levels. This is the basis for how local governments should improve the quality and capability of their state civil apparatus in the digital era.

The Wonosobo Regency Government has the same responsibility regarding how to improve the digital competency capabilities of the state civil apparatus in the Wonosobo Regency Government area, especially in accelerating the digital transformation from three aspects, namely government, society, and business. (Katharina, 2021). One of the forms that the Wonosobo Regency Government has taken is increasing the capacity and capability in the field of communication and informatics that is superior and competitive so that it can help in improving the quality of digital public services.

Human resource development in the Wonosobo Regency Government is aimed at state civil apparatus who are included in the Millennial group in terms of age. This is intended so that state civil apparatus who are young and included in the Millennial group can immediately adapt to the digital transformation that is being carried out. As one of the instruments in accelerating bureaucratic reform, the development planning of the state civil apparatus must be achieved by the existing targets. The implementation of the development of state civil apparatus carried out in the Wonosobo Regency Government aims to produce quality human resources, have fundamental values, professional competence, be free of political intervention, and be ready to adapt to the times such as the current digital era (Yasa et al., 2021).

The individualized training model in the form of workshops for state civil apparatus is a method used by the Wonosobo District Government in developing its resources. Workshops that aim to develop the capacity and capability of the state civil apparatus are

carried out by adjusting the needs of the current digital era. One of the programs in the development of the state civil apparatus is the Government Transformation Academy (GTA).

Government Transformation Academy Wonosobo Regency

The transformation to the digital era also affects the public policy-making process, from agenda setting, policy formulation, and implementation, to evaluation. (Hening & Kumara, 2019). Government Transformation Academy (GTA) is one of the initiatives run by the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology of the Republic of Indonesia.. The main objective of the GTA is to improve the capabilities, skills, and knowledge of government employees in dealing with digital transformation and facing challenges in the digital era. GTA is designed as a training institution that provides various programs and courses to develop digital skills and technical capabilities for State Civil Apparatus (ASN) working in the government sector. The training and development offered cover a wide range of areas, including digital literacy, cybersecurity, data analysis, information technology management, e-government, and other current technologies relevant to technological developments and demands in modern government.

The GTA program aims to (Kominfo, 2023); 1) Improve the competence of ASN/Non-ASN working in Central, Regional, and Village Government agencies, as well as TNI/Polri in the use of ICT to carry out organizational tasks towards excellent service; 2) Accelerating digital transformation within government agencies in the context of institutional strengthening. In addition, several themes were given about the GTA in 2023 including;

- 1) IT Essentials
- 2) Business Process Engineer
- 3) IT Business Analyst
- 4) Digital Public Relations
- 5) Social Media Analyst
- 6) Digital Learning Facilitator
- 7) Data Science Fundamental
- 8) Data Science Fundamental
- 9) Junior Network Administrator
- 10) Junior Graphic Design
- 11) Junior Office Operator
- 12) Project Management
- 13) Cybersecurity Essentials
- 14) SPBE Risk Management
- 15) Information Security Management System Based on SNI ISO/IEC 27001: 2013
- 16) Internal Audit of Information Security Management System Based on SNI ISO 19011:2018
- 17) IT Service Management System ISO 20000
- 18) SPBE Architecture
- 19) Video Production for Government Campaign
- 20) Basic ICT for Information Media

21) Python Essentials

By supporting the improvement of ASN human resources in government, GTA seeks to optimize the use of information and communication technology in governance and public services. By improving the understanding and digital skills of government employees, it is hoped that they can be more effective and efficient in carrying out their duties and responsibilities and provide better public services to the community. In addition, through GTA, Kominfo also seeks to create a culture of innovation and collaboration among government employees. This initiative can encourage them to think creatively and find innovative solutions to challenges faced in the digital era. In addition, GTA also provides an opportunity for government employees to learn from best practices and successful experiences from various regions and government agencies.

Wonosobo Regency itself always participates in every program organized by the Ministry of Communication and Informatics, it aims to provide experience and knowledge regarding the use of technology that is always developing. It is hoped that after attending the GTA training, the state civil apparatus in Wonosobo will be able to implement it in existing public service activities. Because online-based public services are now considered as one of the solutions that must be improved in providing satisfaction and convenience to the community (Ningtyas, 2017).

GTA training is expected to be able to produce state civil apparatus in Wonosobo Regency who have more abilities as the training program is followed so that it can be applied to daily government business processes, this is beneficial for increasing the capacity of Wonosobo state civil apparatus resources in accelerating the Electronic Basic. Currently, the implementation index of the Electronic-Based Government System of Wonosobo Regency has only reached 2.32%. For this reason, several strategies and actions are needed to increase it, one of which is through the Government Transformation Academy for the state civil apparatus, including governance, Electronic Based Government System management, and Electronic Based Government System services.

CONCLUSION

The digital era makes a big change in daily life activities, including in governance and also the public service model when it is now needed. The government both at the central level has provided all the infrastructure so that public services can run optimally, the goal is to accelerate the implementation of an electronic-based government system. The implementation of an electronic-based government system will help accelerate bureaucratic reform in Indonesia, by expectations after the past reform.

The Wonosobo Regency Government after obtaining authority in decentralization must prepare all existing needs, one of which is the development of state civil apparatus oriented towards digital transformation. Government Transformation Academy is one of the government programs related to the development of state civil apparatus in the field of digital transformation. Government Transformation Academy is a policy that applies to state civil apparatus both at the central and regional levels, in the use of technology and

information to carry out organizational tasks towards excellent service. Wonosobo Regency always conducts this program every year, the goal is how later the state civil apparatus can increase the capacity and capability of the current digital era service delivery.

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