

Adaptation of Village Government Management in the Digital Era: Phenomenographic Study

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Abstract: This research aims to create a change in the model of village government management in accordance with the community needs in this digital era. The study was conducted in two villages: Kalisampurno Village and Kludan Village, located in the Tanggulangin Subdistrict, Sidoarjo Regency, East Java. As the rural community needs in this digital era have changed, village governments have to change their management systems as the form of updated strategy. However, such a brand-new strategy often fails due to the lack of institutional capacity and the abilities of village government officials. In addition, the community's knowledge of technology influences their ability to adapt to technological advancements. This study employs a qualitative approach and with phenomenological methodology. Research data were collected through observations, interviews, and Focus Group Discussions. The study has indicated that the governance of Kalisampurno and Kludan villages showed poor result of change management strategy implementation as their officials display ineffective functions, unefficient organization, and poor village policy management.

Keywords: individual, organizational, importance of system capacities

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1. Introduction

The Republic of Indonesia Law Number 6, 2014 regulates the territorial boundaries of a village. As a matter of fact, village governments have the authority to regulate and manage governmental affairs, community interests based on community initiatives, ancestral rights, and/or traditional rights recognized and respected within the governance system of the Republic of Indonesia. Villages have autonomous rights to manage policies at the village level. Therefore, the village government must possess managerial capabilities.

Information technology has changed, and therefore the life structure and the needs of society have also changed. Thus, to provide good public services, the village government must undergo management changes, one of which is through updating information technology for further advancement as well as showing more efficient and effective public services [1]. Previous research has shown a considerable number of studies with the theme of village government management. Koniswara [2] investigated the strategy of public policy management in Pujon Kidul Village with a focus on local revenue improvement suggesting sustainability and importance of report management. Nevertheless, research conducted by Pahlawan et al. [3] found that the accountability of Village fund management is not necessarily influenced by information technology and control systems. In addition, studies conducted by Aprilia [4] and Wuri [5] indicating significant difference from other research, suggested how village government officials,

especially the performance of village heads in public service, can ultimately improve public service performance. On the contrary, this study focuses on how the institutional management of village government can change as the community needs in relation to public services have also changed.

1.1. Adaptive management

The village government has the main duty in providing public services to the community. However, due to technological advances, community needs have changed, so the village government has to change and change its management. Bowles [6] said that adaptive governance is an idea in Institutional theory that focuses on how formal and informal institutions develop to manage and utilize shared assets. The evolution or change in formal institutions in this case is village government. It shows how the government can change the way it manages and uses its assets to meet society's needs. For the first time, adaptive management was created as an attempt by sociological and ecological systems to adapt to rapid environmental changes. This concept can also be used to respond to enormous environmental changes caused by technology and societal demands [7].

1.2. Street-level bureaucrats

In his book entitled *Street-Level Bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Services*, Michael Lipsky [8] provides a definition of what is meant by a street-level office. Several writers in Indonesian have changed the term "street level bureaucrat" to "street level bureaucrat", "field level executive officer", and "frontline bureaucrat". In Lipsky's terms, bureaucrats at the lowest level are those who carry out government duties in direct contact with citizens. Apart from that, he also stated that "the characteristics of frontline bureaucracy (public services) are working with inadequate resources in several situations where demand (public service demands) will always increase to meet the supply of services/services [8]." According to Lipsky, the increasing demand for public services will have an impact on changes in the types of services provided to the community. If supply cannot meet community needs (demand), there will be dissatisfaction in village government management in terms of providing public services.

1.3. Capacity building

Capability is well explained as "the ability to carry out stated goals" [9]. The process of improving the ability of a person, group, organization, or system to achieve goals or perform better is known as capacity development. Capacity construction is multifaceted and ever-changing. This should improve performance at all levels and support sustainability. Capacity building is also influenced by the external environment. An agency or institution shows the capacity to develop three aspects: individuals, organizations, and systems. Capacity building can help develop collective capabilities within an organization to expect better results. Morison [10] states that development capacity is the process of carrying out a number of movements and changes at various levels within individuals, organizational groups and systems to support individual and organizational adjustments so that they can be responsive to environmental changes that are occurring. Morison added that the goal of capacity building is learning that starts from the need to experience something, reducing ignorance in life, and building the ability to adapt to changes that occur at any time. However, Grindle [11], a government capacity expert, more specifically emphasizes three dimensions of capacity: 1) human resource development process; 2) organizational improvement; and 3) institutional reform.

2. Method

The phenomenographic method is used as a qualitative descriptive research design. The goal of phenomenography, an empirical approach, is to discover qualitative variations in the way people experience, conceptualize, perceive, and understand various phenomena. Conceptualizing phenomena and gaining an understanding of different ways of thinking are general goals of phenomenographic studies [12]. This type of qualitative descriptive research uses individual or group experiences or events to describe, explain, explain and answer questions about village government management problems in responding to changing community needs in the digital era. Researchers collected data in this study in the following way:

- (1) A literature study was carried out to collect various information and data regarding changes in village government management.
- (2) Comprehensive interviews were conducted with important sources from Kalisampurno and Kludan villages who provided reliable information to find out their opinions.
- (3) At the research location, observations and research were carried out to observe and study activities related to the implementation of village government management adaptations in the digital era. The purpose of this observation is to find evidence and answer questions.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Implementation of the Village Government Management System

The research results show that the match between supply (village government institutional capacity) and demand (community needs) can be tracked by the ability of village government management to adapt to the provision of public services in the digital era. These results are in accordance with Lipsky's [8] theory, which states that management adaptation is formed from the suitability of meeting community needs and fulfilling government services.

3.2. Community Level Adaptation

The process of community adaptation to technological advances in public services is still uneven. This can be seen from the differences in societal adaptation patterns: some societies can adapt quickly, while others are very slow. The social structure of different societies causes this adaptation pattern to be different. Age, education level, economic class, and cultural strength still exist in society. The results of interviews with Kalisampurno village officials stated that, "...not all village residents can accept the use of technology in public services provided by the village government, especially our village residents who are old, have low education, and villagers who have low-income levels." In addition, cultural factors make it difficult for people to adapt, because most people are more comfortable with conventional services.

The research results show that digitalization of public services at the community level is carried out in the following ways:

- (1) Digital literacy for the community is carried out because of the community's lack of ability, which makes it difficult to run system-based public service applications.
- (2) Cultural barriers are one of society's challenges when adapting to the digitalization of public services. One of these problems is village leadership support. To provide ideas about the transition from conventional public services to digital-based public services, the village head and community members in the village must be involved.

3.3. Village Government Level Adaptation

Village governments must adapt to increasingly rapid advances in information and communication technology to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of public services. The research results show that the adaptation process of village officials is not going well. *"Not all village officials can carry out digital-based public services, the resources of village officials who master technology are still few, so the work only relies on a few people,"* said the results of interviews with members of village officials. Apart from resource constraints for village officials, adaptation at the village government level is also hampered by the readiness of communications technology infrastructure such as internet access. According to the data provided, researchers found that adaptation to digitalization of village government public services was carried out in the following ways:

- (1) To increase the resources of village officials, the village government provides training to officials who are less proficient in technology.
- (2) This adaptation process, which is an improvement in infrastructure, is carried out by providing more equal internet access to everyone.
- (3) Changing the service system is one way for village governments to change conventional public services to be based on information technology.

The research results show that obstacles to elements of village government management include:

- (1) The research results show that regional government policies have not given village governments responsibility for most public service tasks. By assigning several tasks to the village government, service delivery units at the village level are expected to be able to develop their own service delivery patterns. This will help them find and develop innovations to improve public services.
- (2) The research results show that there are no procedures or service standards that have been formally established as an assessment of performance quality in the delivery of public services that must be adhered to by service providers or recipients.
- (3) The results of the research, Administrative Requirements, show that the requirements set for services cannot be easily understood by the public. This is because the requirements that must be met by the community differ according to the type of service.
- (4) Research conducted by authorized and responsible officials found that the resource capacity of village officials to carry out public services is related to how officials or officers who handle public services have a positive image of the provision of public services.

3.4. Strategies for Handling Change in Village Governance

The results of the research show that Kludan village and Kalisampurno village as a whole have made improvements and village government management strategies to provide public services. The results of interviews with village officials stated that *"...actually the village government has implemented a strategy so that public services can run well."*

Individual, organizational, and system building are three components that are function to increase institutional capacity [11]. The change management strategy used in the research location focuses on four pillars of change management to increase the institutional capacity of the village government.

- (1) To increase the knowledge, skills and perspective of village officials, five strategies are used: training appropriate to their task capacity, revitalizing the role of sub districts as strategic institutions to increase the capacity of

- village officials, strengthening the role of districts as planning centers, developing and preparing standardization of the quality of education for village officials, and the creation of innovative educational materials.
- (2) To improve the organization and organization of village government, four strategies are used. The first is to develop internal regulations and procedures, the second is to develop policies and regulations regarding organizational structure and design, the third is to implement standards and service quality regulations, and the last is to develop a performance assessment system for village government officials.
 - (3) Strengthening Village Government Support Systems and Procedures is carried out in four ways. Harmonization of village government development institutions and structures, formulation and harmonization of policies and regulations at various levels of government, provision and mobilization of budgets from various sources, and research and development of systems that provide incentives and incentives to village officials.
 - (4) Development of Information Systems and Public Service Coordination is carried out with three strategies: databases and information systems for public services, development and implementation of periodic monitoring and evaluation for public services, and development of communication, coordination and cooperation platforms.

4. Conclusion

In the point of increasing demands for public services in the era of digitalization, effective village government management must be adapted. Technological developments that allow everything to be done online or system-based encourage the community to build change management for public services in village government. Therefore, management and human resources must be adaptable. As a result, demand stands on community demands for village government institutions.

Community demand factors and village government readiness (supply) determine each existing change management. Therefore, adaptability requires various elements that need to be adjusted so that change management rejuvenation can run optimally. The problems faced by Kalisampurno and Kludan villages when implementing adaptive village government management in the digital era are the lack of capacity of village officials and institutions, as well as the inability to manage regulations related to village government. On the other hand, the problem faced by society is the lack of public literacy regarding technology, which has an impact on their skills in using technology to meet service needs as well as people's insight into not understanding how technology can improve welfare.

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