

# INNOVATION IN GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP: STRENGTHENING PUBLIC SERVICES IN THE DIGITAL AGE

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## ABSTRACT

Leadership is a very important dimension in the quality of public services. With innovation from the government or regional heads, it can improve the quality of public services in the area. The quality of public services is the main parameter in the success of an autonomous region in implementing decentralization. This study aims to examine the role of innovation in strengthening public services in the digital era in the context of government leadership. The research method used in this research is descriptive research with a qualitative approach. The data collection technique was carried out by means of in-depth interviews with a number of informants related to the research problem as well as secondary data collection from various literature that supports the research. The results of this study explain that the government leadership model consists of democratic, bureaucratic, laissez faire, and autocratic leadership models. Leadership Government itself is influenced by variables of the situation and conditions of government, the people as followers, and the rulers as leaders. Government leadership innovations in improving public services include the use of information technology, open government, a citizen-centric approach, development of leadership competencies and Data-Driven Decision Making.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In an organization, both formal and non-formal, the presence of a leader who is able to encourage his subordinates is very important. This leader is also a role model for his subordinates. Leadership plays a key role in differentiating the characteristics of an organization from other organizations (Marliani, 2017; Achmad, 2023). The success of an organization is largely determined by the ability of a leader. Leaders have a significant influence on the performance of their subordinates. Leadership style is also an important factor when associated with the managerial performance process of an organization (Wijono, 2018; Soeari et al., 2023). Leadership has the potential to run effectively and has a high level of success if a leader has three advantages, namely advantages in the rational/intellectual aspect, advantages in the spiritual aspect, and advantages in the physical aspect (Soliha & Hersugondo, 2008; Mariane et al., 2022).

In addition, leadership also reflects the nature of a leader in carrying out his duties, obligations and responsibilities formally morally and legally towards the implementation of the authority that has been delegated to his subordinates (Sufriadi, 2018). To produce quality leaders, all of these leadership concepts must be applied to all the resources involved, especially those involved in administering the country. This does not only apply to elites who occupy the highest leadership positions, but also applies to all bureaucrats within the organization (Kurniawan, 2022).

In many cases, government organizations tend to maintain a leadership style that does not always support an organizational culture that encourages the growth and development of employees (Dzulkifli, 2013). Therefore, the leaders needed in the future are those who have leadership integrity. Leadership with integrity is very important to achieve a democratic government (Syamsuadi, 2018). Efforts to strengthen the integrity of leadership must be carried out optimally. Integrity is not only about ethics, but is a complete individual character. Integrity that creates trust in the individual is a characteristic of people who are consistent in considering compassion, attitude, transparency, honesty, and ethics. The characteristics of trust have a close relationship with integrity (Suwito, 2014).

Public service is the most visible measure of government performance. The community directly assesses government efficiency based on the quality of public services provided, and the quality of public services is felt by all levels of society, where achievements in building public service performance are competent, reliable, efficient and accountable. That way, in the eyes of the public, it will raise a positive image of the government in the eyes of its citizens (Ferdinandus, 2014).

Leadership has an important role in efforts to improve the quality of public services. The effectiveness of the implementation of regional autonomy in various autonomous regions can be seen from the existing public service standards in each of these regions (Mahsyar, 2011). Nonetheless, the success of each autonomous region in improving the quality of public services still varies. This diversity is strongly influenced by creativity in the leadership of regional heads or autonomous communities (Haris, 2005). In facing the opportunities that exist in the regions, each regional manager or regional head has different characteristics in improving service standards. This has led to an increase in the level of public services in various countries. The creativity of a leader also has a strong influence on the efficiency of public services in an independent society (Suaedi, 2010).

Effective and responsive public services are one of the main pillars in maintaining public trust in government. In the digital era that continues to develop, information and communication technology has had a significant impact on various aspects of life, including public services (Putra, 2018). Technological developments have provided new opportunities for the government to improve the quality and efficiency of public services, as well as expand community involvement in decision-making processes. However, the challenges faced by the government in utilizing the potential of this technology are also increasingly complex (Ramadhan & Muhyadi, 2021).

In this context, innovation in government leadership becomes very important. Progressive and adaptive leadership is the key to strengthening public services in the digital era. Innovation in leadership does not only include the use of technology, but also involves changes in organizational culture, risk management, strategy development, and active community participation (Katharina, 2021). Effective leadership is able to direct digital transformation with a clear strategic vision, strengthen involvement and collaboration with related parties, and manage change well (Tanaamah et al, 2021; Muliawaty et al., 2022).

However, even though there is a lot of potential offered by innovation in government leadership, its implementation still faces certain challenges and obstacles. Several government agencies have tried to implement innovation in their public services, but not all of them have succeeded in achieving the expected results (Lenak et al, 2021; Sulastrri & Achmad, 2022). Therefore, it is necessary to conduct in-depth research to understand government leadership and its impact on public services.

This research aims to fill this knowledge gap by examining the role of innovation in strengthening public services in the digital era in the context of government leadership. By identifying what government leadership is and what forms of innovation from government leadership affect the success of public services, this research is expected to make an important contribution to the development of guidelines and strategies for government leaders in dealing with challenges and opportunities related to digital transformation. Through this research, it is hoped that it will also provide deeper insight into how innovation in government leadership can improve public services and generate greater benefits for society.

## 2. METHODS

In this article the author uses a qualitative descriptive analysis method, a qualitative descriptive research with more emphasis on the power of analysis of sources and data that depend on existing theories and texts to be translated based on writings that lead to the main discussion (Moleong, 2014; Yulianah, 2022). The foundation above is obtained from works written by competent intellectuals and experts. This article uses library research or library research. Library research is a series of research activities related to the appropriate ways and methods in collecting study data. Interpret, register and prepare the composition of the studies discussed. This is a study that utilizes library resources to obtain research data (Mustika Zed, 2004).

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Government Leadership

The leadership model is a behavioral norm that is used by someone when that person tries to influence the behavior of others. Leadership model is also defined as a term about how a leader looks in the eyes of his subordinates. Nawawi (2006) describes several models of governmental leadership from leadership to subordinate-centered leadership. These governance leadership models include:

- a. Democratic Leadership Model. Democratic leadership in government is the way and rhythm of a government leader in dealing with subordinates and their people by using the method of dividing tasks with subordinates, as well as between subordinates dividing tasks evenly and fairly. then the selection of tasks is carried out openly, among subordinates it is recommended to discuss their whereabouts to discuss their duties, even the lowest subordinates may submit suggestions and their rights are recognized, thus having agreement and consensus on a mutual agreement.
- b. Bureaucratic Leadership Model. The bureaucratic model in government leadership is the way and rhythm of a government leader in dealing with subordinates and their people using indiscriminate

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- methods, meaning that each subordinate must be treated equally with discipline, special task specialization, strict work on rules so that subordinates become rigid and simple.
- c. The Laissez Faire Leadership Model. The Laissez Faire model in government leadership is the way and rhythm of a government leader in dealing with subordinates and their people by using the method of giving the widest possible liberties to subordinates. That way, every subordinate is free to compete in various economic, political, legal and administrative strategies. So government leaders provide great opportunities for organizational activities.
  - d. Autocratic Leadership Model. The autocratic model in government leadership is the way and rhythm of a government leader in dealing with subordinates and their people by using the method of coercion of power.

Leadership has an important role because the leader is a management function, which can influence subordinates at work so that they can achieve organizational goals. Therefore the success of government leadership is influenced by several variables or things that can change. There are at least three variables that greatly influence, namely:

- a. Government Situation and Condition Variables . There are seven situations and conditions that cause government leaders to be autocratic or democratic, namely: factors of the nature and form of the state, geographical factors, citizen factors, historical factors, efficiency and effectiveness factors, political factors, regime factors in power. Situations and conditions can determine how a government leader should act, even in certain situations and conditions can give birth to leaders.
- b. Crowd Variables as Peganut . The people known as the common people have always been known to be silent, it's just that the number is very large, meaning that if a demonstration occurs, the anger of the crowd is difficult to contain and can overthrow the power of a tyrannical leader. Therefore, even the period in our country must be decanalized, it is necessary to know its demands, to know its daily culture, to know how strong its mobilization is and to predict its positive and negative excesses.
- c. Ruler Variable as Leader . The government leader is the ruler, but it should be remembered that no matter how powerful he is, he still has a soul as a human being.

Arifin Abdurrahman (1990) explains that there are six governmental leadership techniques, namely:

- a. Follower Maturation/Preparation Techniques: Consists of informational techniques aimed at providing clear and factual explanations to people so that they understand well and have the desire to follow leaders based on their understanding and awareness. Propaganda techniques, on the other hand, try to impose the leader's will or desires on followers with the threat of punishment if they do not comply.
- b. Human Relations Techniques: Processes or series of activities that aim to motivate people to want to move. This motivation involves meeting physical and psychological needs. The drive to satisfy these needs drives people to follow leaders who are expected to satisfy those needs.
- c. Modeling Technique: Using examples is an effective way in today's Indonesian culture that tends to respect and follow leaders. By setting an example, those who are to be influenced will follow what they see. This example is given in the form of prohibitions and recommendations to direct the actions of followers. Leaders must be able to limit and control themselves, avoid violating prohibitions and always comply with recommendations to set a good example.
- d. Persuasion and Ordering Techniques: Persuasion techniques are carried out in an atmosphere where there are no clear boundaries between the positions of leader and follower. Through persuasion, the leader invites people gently so that they are willing to follow the leader on their own accord and responsibility. Command-giving techniques, on the other hand, involve using power to order someone else to do something. Giving orders is often combined with persuasion.
- e. Techniques for Using Appropriate Communication Systems: Communication in the context of leadership means conveying intentions to other parties through various directions, both top-down, bottom-up and horizontal communication. An effective communication system must be adjusted to factors such as the condition of the recipient of the message and the means of communication used. In addition, it is important to establish clear communication channels according to the organizational structure.
- f. Techniques for Providing Facilities: If a group of people is ready to follow the leader's invitation, they must be given the necessary facilities or facilities. Some of the facilities that can be provided include skills, financial support, and adequate time allocation.

## **B. Government Leadership Innovation in Improving Public Services**

Improving public services in the digital era is everyone's dream, but this has not changed drastically. Responses from a variety of public opinion usually indicate that various forms of public service have

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declined in the country, with various anomalies in the public service. The low quality of public services provided by various officials or elected government administrators in carrying out their roles and functions. Various kinds of innovations are needed through government leadership in every government in improving public services. Several government leadership innovations that can improve public services include :

**a) Utilization of Information technology**

The use of information technology is one of the governmental leadership innovations that can significantly improve public services. By adopting information technology, the government can increase the efficiency and accessibility of public services, as well as provide a better experience for the community. The use of information technology in government leadership has a significant impact on improving public services. By adopting information technology, the government can provide easier and faster access, increase transparency, and improve interaction between government and society. The more advanced the information technology used, the more efficient and responsive the public services that can be provided by the government, so as to create a society that is more satisfied and actively involved in the country's development process.

**b) Open Government**

Open government allows the public to actively participate in the decision-making process. One form of leadership innovation in this context is through public consultation and dialogue between government and society. In the process of formulating policies, the government can involve citizens in discussions and consultations to obtain diverse inputs and perspectives. This not only increases the legitimacy of the policy, but also gives the community an opportunity to contribute and feel ownership of the decision-making process. In addition, an open government also encourages accountability and improves the quality of public services. By providing transparent information about government budgets, policies and performance, citizens can monitor the use of public resources and assess whether public services are meeting their expectations. This transparency also allows room for independent oversight from oversight agencies and civil society, thereby reducing the risks of corruption and abuse of power.

**c) Citizen-Centric Approach**

The Citizen-Centric Approach is a government leadership innovation that places citizens (community) at the center of all policies and public services provided by the government. This approach recognizes that the primary goal of government is to meet the needs, hopes and aspirations of the people it serves. In the Citizen-Centric Approach, government leaders direct all policies and strategies for public services based on an in-depth understanding of the needs of the community. They seek to understand the challenges, problems and preferences faced by the communities they serve, and seek to create relevant and sustainable solutions. The application of the Citizen-Centric Approach involves the active participation of the community in decision-making processes, policy development and public service planning. Government leaders encourage citizen participation in various forms, such as through public consultations, dialogues, discussion groups, or other participation mechanisms. This allows the public to provide input, express problems faced, and contribute to formulating policies that are more targeted.

**d) Leadership Competency Development**

Leadership competency development is an innovation in government leadership that aims to improve the capabilities and skills of leaders in dealing with the demands and complexities of their roles. Development of leadership competencies aims to strengthen leadership qualities, broaden horizons, and improve leaders' abilities in managing organizations and providing effective public services. The development of leadership competencies involves various aspects, including improving managerial skills, strategic leadership, effective communication, making the right decisions, conflict management, service-oriented leadership, and so on. The aim of developing leadership competencies is to prepare leaders with in-depth knowledge, a broad understanding of issues related to public services, as well as the skills needed to deal with complex changes and challenges.

The government can carry out leadership competency development programs through various methods, such as training and development, special education courses or programs, mentoring, and collaboration with educational institutions or other institutions that are competent in leadership development. In this case, leaders are given the opportunity to develop and improve their leadership knowledge, skills and attitudes through continuous learning and practical experience.

#### e) Data-Driven Decision Making

Data-Driven Decision Making (data-driven decision-making) is a leadership approach that uses relevant data and information as a basis for making decisions. In the context of public services, this means that government leaders collect, analyze, and use available data to inform their decisions regarding the planning, policy, and management of public services. With Data-Driven Decision Making, government leaders can make more objective, accurate and effective decisions. They collect data from various sources, such as community surveys, public service statistics, performance analysis, and other related data. Then, the data is analyzed to gain a deeper understanding of people's situations, needs, and preferences. In the digital era and the development of information technology, data becomes more accessible and easier to process. Therefore, the use of data in decision making is becoming increasingly important. Government leaders who adopt Data-Driven Decision Making can optimize the use of resources, increase efficiency, and provide better public services according to the needs and expectations of the community.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Government Leadership has a very strategic position in implementing government policies in the context of realizing state goals and national ideals. The government leadership model consists of democratic, bureaucratic, laissez faire, and autocratic leadership models. Leadership Government itself is influenced by variables of the situation and conditions of government, the people as followers, and the rulers as leaders. There are several government leadership innovations that can improve public services. Utilization of information technology provides the possibility to increase the accessibility and efficiency of public services. Open government promotes transparency, public participation and accountability in government decision-making. The Citizen-Centric approach directs government leaders to focus on the needs and expectations of the community in the provision of public services. Leadership competency development assists government leaders in leading effectively and strengthens their capacity to deal with complex changes in the public environment. Finally, Data-Driven Decision Making enables government leaders to make decisions based on accurate data and information, improve the quality of decisions, and ensure better public services according to the needs of the community.

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