OPTIMIZATION OF A GOOD GOVERNANCE SYSTEM THROUGH SYNERGY AND COLLABORATION BETWEEN LEADERSHIP AND BUREAUCRACY IN INDONESIA

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Abstrak

Good governance is a crucial foundation for sustainable development in Indonesia. Its implementation, however, faces various challenges, including weak coordination between leadership and bureaucracy. This article aims to examine the role of synergy and collaboration between visionary leadership and professional bureaucracy in achieving effective, transparent, and accountable governance. This research employs a qualitative approach based on literature studies and policy analysis, focusing on case studies of bureaucratic reform in several regions of Indonesia. The findings indicate that a harmonious relationship between leadership and bureaucracy can enhance public service effectiveness, accelerate policy implementation, and minimize corruption. Responsive leadership serves as the primary driver of change, while professional bureaucracy acts as an efficient policy executor. The challenges include resistance to change, political influence, and overlapping bureaucratic authorities. Addressing these challenges requires strategic measures such as strengthening leadership training, performance-based bureaucratic reforms, and the adoption of digital technology to enhance transparency and efficiency. Strong synergy and good governance can be optimized to meet societal needs and global challenges.

Keywords*: Good Governance, Leadership, Synergy, Collaboration, Bureaucracy, Indonesia*

Introduction

The rapid development of globalization has had a significant impact on various aspects of life, including governance and development implementation. The government perceives development as a planned effort to bring about change for a better society. However, in its implementation, there is often public resistance to such changes. This resistance is influenced by various factors, one of which is the deeply rooted values and norms in society.

The concept of good governance is rooted in the governance paradigm, which embodies the principles of the rule of law and democracy. In realizing clean and good governance, understanding the fundamental principles of Administrative Law is essential. These principles serve as a guideline for effectively carrying out governmental duties, as stipulated in Law No. 28 of 1999 concerning the administration of a clean state free from corruption, collusion, and nepotism (KKN). General principles have been designed to ensure that every governmental

activity is conducted in accordance with guidelines that support good governance. Therefore, good governance can only be achieved if it is implemented consistently and in compliance with applicable regulations (Hardiansyah, 2019).

The implementation of good governance is inseparable from the role of strong leadership, which commands authority and influences the progress of organizations and society. Leadership is the ability to influence subordinates' behavior to work cooperatively and productively to achieve organizational goals (Hasibuan, 2007). Leadership is comprehensively studied to understand how to direct, influence, and supervise others in carrying out assigned tasks (Fahmi, 2017). From these theories, it can be concluded that leadership is an art that shapes individuals to be strong and resilient, enabling them to motivate a group of people without coercion, pressure, or threats, to work together towards mutually agreed goals.

Leadership is a crucial factor in the development of employee competence and plays a determining role in achieving organizational goals. According to Nawawi (1999) leadership style is defined as the behaviors, attitudes, and emotions of organizational members or subordinates. Each leader may have a leadership style that is either more effective or less effective than others. Leadership plays a role in guiding, influencing, and evaluating subordinates toward achieving organizational objectives.

Globalization presents new challenges for the public sector in providing high-quality public services. To create high-quality public services, professional government officials are needed in its implementation. To meet these challenges, government human resources must inevitably enhance their competencies to optimize service delivery to the public. The development of employee capacity requires new approaches or patterns that align with current public needs, particularly for officials holding strategic positions, where competent government personnel are essential. Officials with good competencies are better equipped to perform their duties and address the continuous changes in their environment. Therefore, the development of government human resources must be conducted systematically and based on organizational needs to improve public service delivery. Hence, leadership plays a vital role in managing governance so that the primary objective of providing public services to society can be effectively realized.

The government system operated by civil servants adheres to a hierarchy and rank structure, referred to as bureaucracy. From an institutional perspective, particularly in governance schemes, administrative processes flow from the executive to administrative policies, then to administration, and finally to the electorate. This means that every national policy issued by the executive is translated into state administrative policies, which are then executed by bureaucratic institutions. We are familiar with agencies such as ministries, regional offices, village offices, and Samsat offices, which are all bureaucratic bodies implementing state policies and directly engaging with the public (Risnawan, 2017).

Peraturan Presiden (Perpres) No. 81 of 2010 on the Grand Design of Bureaucratic Reform 2010-2025 provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the substance of reform, covering its vision, goals, areas of change, and implementation strategies. This regulation emphasizes the role of bureaucracy as the driving force behind development and public services, aiming to achieve excellent governance and public service delivery.

However, in Indonesia, several issues hinder the optimal implementation of bureaucratic reform, such as bureaucrats' mindset and leadership commitment. Public ownership of bureaucratic reform policies remains low because the public is not involved, and public interest is not the main focus of bureaucratic reform. Bureaucratic reform appears to be limited to internal bureaucratic concerns, often seen as a government project rather than a social movement (Lestari, 2019).

Common issues in leadership-bureaucracy relations in Indonesia include overlapping roles and conflicts of interest, which affect government effectiveness. Overlapping roles arise when the boundaries of authority between leaders such as regional heads or ministers and bureaucrats as technical policy implementers are unclear. This results in slow decision-making and suboptimal policy implementation. Conflicts of interest frequently occur, particularly when bureaucracy is politicized to serve personal or group interests. This situation may lead to deviations from the primary goal of public service, such as corruption, collusion, and nepotism (KKN). Additionally, the rigid hierarchical culture within bureaucracy often complicates coordination between visionary leaders and professional bureaucrats. Resistance to change also poses a challenge, as many bureaucrats tend to maintain the status quo for job security or convenience. This issue is further exacerbated by the lack of effective communication between leaders and bureaucracy, causing the leader's vision to be poorly translated into technical implementation.

Research Methodology

This study uses a qualitative approach, focusing on literature studies and policy analysis to examine the synergy and collaboration between leadership and bureaucracy in achieving good governance in Indonesia. Data sources include scientific references, such as journals, books, government regulations, and reports on bureaucratic reform. Additionally, case studies in several regions that have implemented bureaucratic reforms are analyzed to understand the challenges and opportunities in implementing effective governance. The descriptive analysis method is employed to identify key factors affecting leadership-bureaucracy relations, such as overlapping authorities, conflicts of interest, and communication barriers. The analysis provides insight into the patterns of interaction between visionary leadership and professional bureaucracy in policy implementation.

Result and Discussion
The Importance of Synergy Between Leadership and Bureaucracy

Effective leadership is the ability to integrate strategic vision with results-oriented management. A leader who can establish collaborative relationships with the bureaucracy can enhance synergy in policy implementation (Jackson and Parry, 2018). The importance of an adaptive leadership approach lies in the leader's ability to respond to dynamic environmental changes while maintaining productive working relationships with subordinates (Northouse, 2019). In the context of governance, this approach ensures that bureaucracy can support public policies efficiently and effectively. This highlights that good collaboration between leaders and the bureaucracy not only strengthens policy implementation but also improves the efficiency of government resource management.

An effective leader also plays a role in creating an innovative work culture in which the bureaucracy is capable of responding to the dynamic needs of society. Adaptive leadership must be solution-oriented in addressing complex challenges. For instance, in Indonesia, strengthening coordination between central and regional bureaucracies remains one of the major challenges that require a collaborative approach from leaders. The challenges in building a harmonious relationship between leaders and the bureaucracy include a lack of clarity in the distribution of authority, a hierarchical bureaucratic culture, and the politicization of bureaucracy, which hinders efficiency. Additionally, ineffective communication between leaders and bureaucrats often leads to suboptimal policy implementation. Therefore, leadership is required to bridge these gaps through a participatory and transparent approach.

Challenges in Building Leadership and Bureaucracy Relations
Several challenges hinder effective synergy between leadership and bureaucracy, including:

1. Overlapping Roles and Authorities – The lack of clarity in defining roles between leaders and bureaucrats often leads to confusion in task execution. In many cases, leaders attempt to take over technical duties that should fall under the responsibility of the bureaucracy, while bureaucrats sometimes fail to fully support the leader's vision. This overlap in authority hinders decision-making processes.

2. Conflict of Interest – The politicization of bureaucracy is one of the major obstacles. When bureaucracy is exploited for political or group interests, policy implementation tends to deviate from its original objective, which is to provide quality public services. This politicization often leads to practices of corruption, collusion, and nepotism (CCN). In this context, the implementation of a meritocratic system is crucial to ensure that the bureaucracy is staffed by competent and integrity-driven individuals

3. Rigid Hierarchical Culture – The bureaucratic system in Indonesia remains highly rigid, with a hierarchical culture that hampers flexibility in decision-making. This rigidity complicates coordination between visionary leaders and professional bureaucrats. Argyris (1964) in his theory of adaptive organizations, stated that an excessively hierarchical structure can obstruct innovation and responsiveness to change. Therefore, reforms are necessary to create a more flexible structure.

4. Resistance to Change – Many bureaucrats tend to maintain the status quo for the sake of their comfort or job security. This resistance serves as a barrier to bureaucratic reforms aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of public services. According to Kotter (1996), resistance to change is often caused by a lack of urgency, poor communication, and insufficient support from leadership in fostering a climate of change.

5. Lack of Effective Communication – Weak communication between leaders and bureaucrats often results in the leader's vision and policies not being properly translated into technical implementation. This creates a gap between planning and execution of implementation. Robbins dan Judge (2019) emphasize that effective communication is key to building strong coordination within an organization.

Strategies to Overcome Challenges

Efforts to overcome these obstacles require the implementation of appropriate strategies to ensure optimal synergy between leadership and bureaucracy. One of the key steps that can be taken is strengthening bureaucratic reform to create a more responsive and accountable government system. This reform must include the simplification of procedures, the elimination of bureaucratic barriers, and the enhancement of human resource capacity. According to Osborne (1993), an effective bureaucracy must be results-oriented and provide added value to society. Leaders must also develop the ability to listen, understand, and adapt to the needs of both the public and the bureaucracy. Leadership training based on the principles of good governance can help cultivate leaders who are capable of effectively guiding the bureaucracy. Yukl (2010) states that an effective leader must be able to communicate clearly, build trust, and provide strategic direction that can be implemented by subordinates.

The implementation of digital technology is also a key solution for improving transparency, efficiency, and accountability in governance. Digitalization systems allow leaders and bureaucracies to monitor policy implementation in real time and reduce the potential for abuse of authority. This technology also helps streamline administrative processes, making public services faster and more efficient. Furthermore, more intensive communication between leaders and bureaucrats is essential to ensure that policy visions and objectives are fully understood. Discussion forums, coordination meetings, and feedback mechanisms can be utilized to strengthen these relationships.

Effective communication also helps minimize potential misunderstandings in policy implementation. Additionally, bureaucracy must be kept free from political interference. This can be achieved by implementing a meritocratic system in appointments and promotions, ensuring that the bureaucracy is staffed by individuals with high competence and integrity. This approach also guarantees that bureaucracy remains focused on public service without harmful political intervention.

Case Studies of Bureaucratic Reform in Several Regions

This study also analyzes several regions in Indonesia that have successfully implemented bureaucratic reform through innovative approaches.

The first city is Surabaya, where, under the leadership of Mayor Tri Rismaharini, bureaucratic reform was focused on increasing transparency and efficiency in public services. The Surabaya City Government adopted information technology in various services, including a digital-based public complaint system. This digitalization not only enabled citizens to access services more easily but also reduced the potential for broker practices and improved the accountability of government administrators. Furthermore, a participatory approach that involved the community in decision-making and development planning was also a key factor in the success of bureaucratic reform in Surabaya.

In Yogyakarta, the synergy between regional leaders and bureaucracy was evident in the implementation of policies in the education and tourism sectors. The Yogyakarta City Government applied a participatory leadership model that engaged the public, academics, and business actors in the policymaking process. This approach ensured that the policies formulated aligned with the needs of the community and strengthened the legitimacy of the

local government. Bureaucratic reform in Yogyakarta also included enhancing the capacity of civil servants through continuous training and transparent performance evaluations. Additionally, the local government developed a technology-based public service system to expedite licensing processes and improve the quality of services provided to the community.

In Makassar, bureaucratic reform was centered on more professional and efficient management of human resources within the civil service. The Makassar City Government implemented various training programs to improve bureaucrats' competencies and ensure that each employee possessed the skills required for their respective duties. Furthermore, a performance-based evaluation system was introduced to enhance the accountability of government officials. To increase transparency, Makassar also developed an e-government system that enabled the public to access various government services online. The success of bureaucratic reform in Makassar not only improved the quality of public services but also created a more accountable and results-oriented governance system.

These three regions demonstrate that successful bureaucratic reform requires a combination of visionary leadership, a strong meritocratic system, and the adoption of appropriate technology. Through innovative and sustainable approaches, bureaucratic reform can serve as a solution to enhance government effectiveness and the quality of public services in Indonesia.

The Importance of the Principles of Good Governance in Government Governance

Good governance serves not only as a framework for government management but also as the underlying principle for every decision-making process. In the context of leadership and bureaucracy synergy, these principles include transparency, accountability, participation, and efficiency. The application of these principles can create a conducive working environment, where each actor in government can work harmoniously to achieve common goals. Good governance must take into account the active involvement of the community and performance-based evaluation mechanisms to ensure the effectiveness of public policies (Bovaird, Löffler and Loeffler, 2003), For example, transparency in budget preparation allows the public to understand how resources are allocated in government policies.

Accountability ensures that every government action can be justified to the public, while public participation provides legitimacy to the policies taken. Efficiency within bureaucracy can also be achieved by eliminating unnecessary procedures and focusing on achieving tangible results. Meanwhile, Fukuyama (2014) argues that good governance must be supported by strong regulations, transparent public financial management, and broad community participation to ensure that the implemented policies are effective.

Good governance is also closely related to the use of digital technology in government management. Mergel, Edelmann dan Haug (2019) emphasize that the implementation of digital governance can enhance transparency and accountability by providing easy access to public policy information. Therefore, the implementation of an e-government system becomes one of the strategic steps to improve the effectiveness of government governance in the digital era.

Implications of the Research and Recommendations

The results of this research show that the synergy between leadership and bureaucracy is the key to optimizing good governance in Indonesia. Therefore, various strategic steps need to be taken to ensure that government governance can operate effectively and efficiently.

Strengthening the Meritocracy System – This system must be applied consistently in recruitment, promotion, and performance evaluation processes within the bureaucracy to ensure that only competent and integrity-driven individuals occupy strategic positions. The implementation of meritocracy within the bureaucracy can reduce nepotism practices and enhance the professionalism of civil servants in carrying out their duties. (Oliveros and Schuster, 2018).

Enhancing Training and Human Resource Development – Continuous training is necessary to improve the capacity of bureaucrats and leaders in facing the challenges of globalization. These development programs must be designed to meet the specific needs of modern bureaucracy. OECD (2019) emphasizes that competence-based training and mentoring programs can improve the effectiveness of civil servants in delivering quality public services.

Implementing Integrated Technology – The government must utilize digital technology to create more efficient systems, such as e-government, to enhance the quality of public services. Technology integration can also help reduce overlapping authority at various levels of bureaucracy. Wirtz dan Birkmeyer (2018) reveal that digital transformation in bureaucracy can improve operational efficiency and accelerate responses to the needs of the public.

Strengthening Regulations and Policies – The government needs to issue more stringent regulations to regulate the relationship between leadership and bureaucracy, including clarifying the division of roles and authorities. These regulations should support efforts to eliminate transactional political culture within bureaucracy. Pollitt dan Bouckaert (2017) emphasize the importance of adaptive, evidence-based policy reforms to ensure that the bureaucracy can work effectively in addressing social and economic challenges.

Building an Inclusive Work Culture – Leaders must create a work environment that encourages the active participation of all parties, both bureaucrats and the public, to ensure that the policies taken reflect the needs and aspirations of society. In line with Denhardt dan Denhardt (2015), have stated, a public service approach based on democratic values and transparency can strengthen public trust in the government and improve the effectiveness of public policies.

These strategic steps are expected to transform governance in Indonesia to become better and more responsive to changes over time. The consistent application of good governance principles will serve as the foundation for a transparent, accountable, and public-interest-oriented bureaucracy.

This study concludes that synergy between leadership and bureaucracy is essential for optimizing good governance in Indonesia. Strategic steps such as strengthening meritocracy, leadership training, digitalization, and regulatory reform can create a more accountable and efficient governance system. The principles of good governance—transparency,

accountability, participation, and efficiency—must be consistently upheld to foster an effective governance system that meets public needs and global challenges.

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