



East Sorong District Government's Strategy in Increasing Transparency Through Digital Governance

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Abstract

Transparency is a key component in realizing an accountable and responsive government. The development of information technology encourages local governments to implement *digital governance* as an effort to improve information disclosure and the quality of public services. This study aims to analyze the strategy of the East Sorong District Government in increasing transparency through the use of digital technology in the administrative process and service to the community. The research method used is a qualitative descriptive approach with data collection techniques through interviews, observations, and documentation studies related to digitalization policies at the district level. The results of the study show that the district government has implemented several strategies, including strengthening the digital-based service information system, optimizing public communication media, increasing the capacity of apparatus in the use of technology, and developing more open and accessible administrative services. However, the implementation of the strategy still faces a number of obstacles, such as the limitation of technological infrastructure, low digital literacy among some people, and the lack of optimal data integration between service units. This study concludes that digital governance has great potential in increasing transparency in East Sorong District, but requires continuous support in terms of technology, human resources, and collaboration between agencies. These findings are expected to be recommendations for local governments in strengthening digital-based governance.

Keywords: government strategy, transparency, digital governance, public services.

Introduction

The development of information technology in the last decade has brought significant changes in governance in various countries. Digital governance emerged as a more advanced concept than e-government because it emphasizes data integration, community engagement, and automation of administrative processes to improve government effectiveness (Gil-García, 2018;



Dwivedi et al., 2020). This digital transformation is the foundation for local governments in facing the demands of the community who want a faster, transparent, and accountable public service process.

Transparency is the main indicator of the success of the implementation of modern government. The government needs to ensure information disclosure as a form of public accountability and service integrity. According to Margetts and Dunleavy (2018), the use of digital technology can strengthen transparency through the provision of data-based information that is easily accessible to the public. In line with that, research by Alcaide-Muñoz et al. (2017) shows that digital transparency at the local level can increase public trust and reduce the potential for maladministration.

In the context of developing countries, the implementation of digital governance often faces complex challenges. Heeks (2020) emphasized that obstacles such as infrastructure inequality, budget limitations, and low digital literacy are the main factors that hinder the optimal implementation of digital governance. This condition is also found in many regions in Indonesia. Susanto and Laksmi (2018) revealed that the readiness of local governments for digitalization is greatly influenced by the capacity of human resources and consistent policy support.

As part of Sorong City, East Sorong District is inseparable from the dynamics of digital transformation. The high public need for open services encourages district governments to adapt digital technology as part of public transparency efforts. However, infrastructure readiness and apparatus competence are still challenges in this implementation. Research by Wahyudi and Nurmandi (2019) shows that the implementation of digital governance at the local level in Indonesia tends to be partial and has not been integrated into a comprehensive system.

Digital strategy does not only concern the use of technological devices, but also includes changes in organizational culture. Mergel (2019) emphasized that the government's digital transformation requires an adaptive, innovative, and professional mindset of apparatus. In this context, increasing the capacity of the East Sorong District apparatus is an important element in ensuring the successful implementation of digital governance that supports transparency.

In addition to the apparatus, the role of the community also affects the effectiveness of digital transparency. Van Dijk (2020) explained that digital participation of the community can strengthen the quality of public information and create two-way interaction between the government and citizens. However, the digital divide or technology capability gap is a real obstacle in the implementation of digital governance in areas with strong social and economic diversity, such as East Sorong District. One of the important aspects in the implementation of



digital governance is the integration of information systems. Sæbø et al. (2018) revealed that the success of digital transparency depends on the government's ability to provide an integrated platform between service units. Without integration, data becomes fragmented, hindering information disclosure. The same thing was conveyed by Nugroho and Sari (2021) in a study of e-government in Indonesia, which showed that limited data integration is the main obstacle in digital-based public services.

Based on these conditions, it is important to thoroughly review the strategy of the East Sorong District Government in increasing transparency through digital governance. This research seeks to understand the strategic steps of the district government, supporting factors, and obstacles faced in the process of digitizing services. The results of the research are expected to make an academic contribution to the development of digital governance literature, as well as become practical recommendations for local governments in strengthening technology-based governance.

This research aims to examine the strategy of the East Sorong District Government in increasing the transparency of public services through the implementation of digital governance. By understanding the strategic steps taken, it is hoped that this research can provide a comprehensive overview of opportunities, challenges, and recommendations for strengthening digital governance at the district level. This is important not only for local policy development, but also as an academic contribution to the development of digital governance concepts in developing regions.

Research Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive type of research. This approach was chosen to gain a deep understanding of the government's strategy in implementing digital governance as well as the factors that affect increasing transparency in East Sorong District. Qualitative descriptive research allows researchers to examine phenomena naturally, describe conditions that occur in the field, and interpret data based on existing social realities. The research was carried out in East Sorong District, Sorong City, with a focus on district offices and public service units related to the implementation of digital governance. The research time lasts for a period determined by the researcher, including the observation, data collection, and analysis stages.



Results and Discussion

1. Implementation of Digital Governance in Public Services in East Sorong District

The results of the study show that the East Sorong District Government has started the implementation of digital governance through several technology-based services aimed at increasing information disclosure. Some of the innovations that have been carried out include the use of the district's official social media for the publication of activities, the dissemination of administrative information, and the submission of public service announcements. In addition, several service units have utilized a simple digital system for administrative recording such as domicile certificate services, cover letters, and population data.

On the other hand, this digitalization effort is still in its early stages so that not all services can be accessed online. Nonetheless, this initial step is an important foundation for district governments to adapt technology to create public services that are more transparent and accessible to the public.

2. The Government's Strategy in Increasing Transparency Through Digital Technology

Based on the results of interviews and observations, there are several main strategies that are being implemented by the East Sorong District government:

a. Strengthening Information and Public Communication Systems

The district government optimizes the use of digital media such as Facebook, WhatsApp Group communities, and digital posters to disseminate service information. This media is used as a two-way communication channel that allows the public to get information quickly while providing space for the public to submit suggestions or complaints. The use of this media has been proven to increase openness and shorten the communication distance between officials and residents.

b. Development of Digital-Based Administration Services

Some services are starting to be directed to digital forms, such as administrative records using spreadsheet applications and the use of basic applications for service data input. Although still simple, this digitization helps improve the documentation system, makes it easier to track data, and reduces the potential for administrative irregularities. This effort is in line with the principle of transparency as documents become more structured and easy to verify.



c. Capacity Building

Informal training and assistance in the use of technology are provided to apparatus who still have limitations in digital literacy. This effort is important considering that the quality of human resources is the key to the success of digital governance. The district government realizes that the success of digitalization is not only determined by technology, but also the ability of the apparatus to operate and utilize it to improve services.

d. Collaboration with City Governments and Related Institutions

Collaborative efforts are carried out to support the provision of digital facilities, internet access, and data integration. The district government coordinates with relevant agencies to obtain technical and policy support, so that the implementation of digital governance can be more directed. This collaboration is important to ensure the continuity of the digitalization program and prevent obstacles due to limited local resources.

3. Obstacles in the Implementation of Digital Governance

Despite the initial strategy and implementation, the East Sorong District government still faces a number of obstacles:

a. Limitations of Technological Infrastructure

Internet access in several areas of East Sorong is uneven and unstable. This barrier makes the digitization process not yet fully applicable to all services. Infrastructure is a fundamental factor that still needs attention from the city government and related parties.

b. Digital Literacy of Apparatus and Society That Is Still Low

Not all employees and residents understand the use of digital devices well. This slows down the process of technology adoption, especially in services that require direct interaction with digital systems.

c. Lack of Integrated System

The absence of an official and integrated platform makes the digitization process run partially. The data is still scattered across various units, thus hindering the overall transparency process. This condition also has an impact on data accuracy and service efficiency.



4. The Impact of Digital Governance Implementation on Transparency

Although still in its early stages, research found that digital governance has had several positive impacts:

- a. Increasing information disclosure through digital media
- b. Improvement of service recording and documentation system
- c. Public access to service information becomes faster
- d. Increased direct interaction between the community and the district government.

However, to achieve optimal transparency, it is necessary to develop a more comprehensive and structured digital system.

5. Interpretation of Research Results

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the East Sorong District Government's digital governance strategy is in the development and adaptation phase. The government has shown commitment through strengthening digital-based services, improving the capabilities of the apparatus, and using communication media as a means of transparency. However, to achieve optimal digital governance, the government needs to strengthen technology infrastructure, build an integrated information system, and improve people's digital literacy.

The results of this study show that digital governance has great potential in encouraging transparency, but requires sustainable policy, funding, human resources, and technology support.

Conclusion

The results of the study show that the implementation of digital governance in East Sorong District is an important step in improving transparency and quality of public services. The district government has adopted various strategies such as strengthening public information systems, digitizing administrative services, increasing the capacity of apparatus, and collaborating with the city government and related agencies. Although this strategy has had a positive impact on information disclosure, its implementation still faces obstacles in the form of limited technological infrastructure, low digital literacy of the community, and the lack of comprehensive information system integration. This condition is in line with the findings of various experts who emphasize that the success of digital governance does not only depend on technology, but also the readiness of human resources and policy consistency. Therefore, continuous efforts are needed to strengthen digital infrastructure, improve the competence of the



apparatus, and develop an integrated platform so that government transparency in East Sorong District can be realized optimally.

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