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THE IMPACT OF BUREAUCRATIC REFORM ON INDONESIAN GOVERNANCE: A PERSPECTIVE REVIEW OF ACADEMIC LITERATURE

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Abstract

This scholarly publication analyses the influence of bureaucratic reform on government governance in Indonesia, focusing on academic literature. Indonesia, a nation characterised by intricate administrative intricacy, has undergone substantial transformations in its governmental structure since the reform era in the late 1990s. Prior to the reform, the primary challenges in the public sector were inefficiency, overlapping authority, and a sluggish bureaucracy. The objective of this research is to examine the tangible effects of bureaucratic reform initiatives, ascertain alterations in government governance, and present a thorough overview of these modifications. The literature review method is employed to comprehend the evolution of established concepts, theories, and empirical discoveries. This article provides an overview of bureaucratic reform, including its historical background, essential components, effects on efficiency, accountability, public services, and community involvement. It also discusses the challenges and obstacles encountered during its implementation.

Keywords: Bureaucratic Reform, Governance, Efficiency, Accountability, Public Service, Community Participation

Abstract

Jurnal ilmiah ini mengkaji dampak reformasi birokrasi terhadap tata kelola pemerintahan di Indonesia dari perspektif literatur akademik. Indonesia, sebagai negara dengan kompleksitas administratif yang tinggi, telah mengalami perubahan signifikan dalam sistem pemerintahannya sejak era reformasi pada akhir tahun 1990-an. Sebelum reformasi, isu-isu ineffisiensi, tumpang tindih kewenangan, dan birokrasi yang lambat menjadi permasalahan utama dalam sektor publik. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis dampak konkret dari upaya reformasi birokrasi, mengidentifikasi perubahan dalam tata kelola pemerintahan, serta memberikan gambaran komprehensif mengenai perubahan ini. Metode kajian literatur digunakan untuk meresapi perkembangan konsep, teori, dan temuan empiris yang telah ada. Artikel ini juga mengulas sejarah reformasi birokrasi, elemen-elemen kunci dalam reformasi, dampak terhadap efisiensi, akuntabilitas, pelayanan publik, dan partisipasi masyarakat, serta tantangan dan hambatan dalam implementasinya.

Kata Kunci: Reformasi Birokrasi, Tata Kelola Pemerintahan, Efisiensi, Akuntabilitas, Pelayanan Publik, Partisipasi Masyarakat

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, as one of the most populous countries globally, experiences significant administrative intricacy. Given the vast number of islands, as well as the diverse ethnic, linguistic, and cultural characteristics, the task of governing becomes inherently challenging. Indonesia has implemented several substantial reforms to its government system, including the decentralisation of authority to the provinces, during the reform phase in the late 1990s.

Prior to the initiation of bureaucratic reform, the public sector was plagued by several prominent issues, such as inefficiencies in government administration, overlapping authority among departments and institutions, and a bureaucracy that was frequently perceived as sluggish and convoluted (Zainuddin & Mustapa, 2017; Dwiyanto, 2022). The existence of inefficiency in government administration is not merely an allegation, but a tangible reality that is frequently lamented by numerous stakeholders. The inefficiency is evident in the numerous processes and procedures that are frequently unneeded, yet are still executed due to their status as traditions or written regulations (Thoha, 2017). This inevitably leads to a squandering of resources, whether it be time, energy, or dollars. In addition to that, this inefficiency also leads to public discontent with the public services that they are entitled to.

An issue of great concern in our

bureaucracy is the presence of overlapping jurisdiction across many departments and entities. The absence of a clear delineation of responsibilities and decision-making power frequently leads to suboptimal collaboration within departments or institutions. Consequently, there is frequently a repetition of tasks, ambiguous allocation of duties, and prolonged internal disputes (Prastyanti, 2015). When bureaucracy is perceived as sluggish and intricate, society bears the brunt of this system. Customers have extended waiting times and occasionally encounter unnecessarily complex procedures without a discernible rationale (Rahman & Bakri, 2019).

Similarly, instances of corruption, collusion, and nepotism frequently intertwine with the bureaucratic discourse in Indonesia, gradually undermining the confidence of the public in governmental establishments. The extensive proliferation of corruption cases exposed in Indonesia indicates the continued prevalence of unhealthy practices inside the state bureaucratic system (Sen & Hill, 2007). Government institutions at different levels, ranging from municipal to central, frequently attract media attention as a result of reported instances of corruption. This indicates deficiencies in oversight and a susceptible system that is prone to the misuse of power. Consequently, state resources, which should be administered for the benefit of the general public, are frequently misappropriated for personal or specific group purposes (Haliim & Purba, 2023).

In addition, collusion and nepotism contribute to the extensive array of bureaucratic issues in Indonesia. The quality of public services is jeopardised when people or organisations receive preferential treatment based on personal connections or political affiliations, rather than their competence or qualifications. Consequently, this adversely affects the efficacy and efficiency of government services (Simanjuntak, 2022). Corruption not only has a negative impact on the financial resources of the state, but it also undermines the credibility of the system and undermines the fundamental faith that the public has in government institutions (Parama & Al-Fatih, 2021). Bureaucratic reform is an essential priority in order to address these difficulties and establish public trust. The objective is to establish a government that is very receptive, open, responsible, and effective (Winarno, 2008).

Implementing bureaucratic reform is a crucial means of fostering public confidence in governmental organisations. In the present digital epoch, individuals require expeditious and effortless access to information, along with highly responsive services. The slowness and complexity of bureaucracy lead to a deterioration in people's trust in the government (Tanti, 2015). Through the implementation of reform, the complexities of bureaucracy can be streamlined, resulting in enhanced clarity of procedures and a heightened sense of value among individuals. The government's provision of prompt service,

along with a transparent and accessible process, demonstrates its genuine commitment to serving the populace (Ristiani, 2020).

Simultaneously, accountability and efficiency are vital components of a contemporary bureaucracy. In the absence of accountability, deviations from established standards and norms can take place, posing potential harm to the general population. Efficiency refers to the optimal use of all government-owned resources for the benefit of society (Dwiyanto, 2021). By implementing bureaucratic reform, we can guarantee that all decisions are made in accordance with the public interest and that there is no unnecessary expenditure of resources. Hence, reform is not merely a symbolic objective, but rather the essential element for constructing an improved governance framework (Sawir, 2020).

Bureaucratic reform is regarded as a means to enhance the calibre of public services and guarantee the appropriate utilisation of state resources for the betterment of society (Saggaf et al., 2018). Bureaucratic reform is crucial for enhancing the efficiency of government entities. Efficient and transparent management of bureaucracy simplifies procedures and speeds up response times to public requests. By adopting this approach, public services can enhance their ability to address community needs promptly and minimise the risk of errors or delays that may adversely affect the community.

In addition, the proper and responsible utilization of state resources is the fundamental

principle of effective government. By implementing bureaucratic reform, the internal monitoring system can be enhanced, so guaranteeing that funds and other resources are allocated towards projects and initiatives that genuinely provide societal advantages (Riniwati, 2016). Undoubtedly, this will enhance public confidence in the government and guarantee that state resources effectively contribute to the well-being of the society.

Considering the significance of bureaucratic reform within the framework of government governance in Indonesia, it is vital to analyse the consequences and outcomes of reform initiatives. This project aims to make valuable contributions to academic discourse and enhance governance practices in the future.

By examining the consequences and outcomes of bureaucratic reform initiatives, we can ascertain the degree to which the measures implemented have successfully accomplished their objectives. Conducting this type of research is crucial to guarantee that any actions taken in the context of reform genuinely result in a beneficial influence on society. In addition, the findings of this study can provide valuable insights to the government and relevant stakeholders for enhancing government governance in the future. This would ensure that policies and their execution align more effectively with the desires and requirements of the populace.

The objectives of this research are significant and essential in the context of

enhancing governance in Indonesia. The primary objective of this research is to provide a comprehensive examination of the tangible effects of the bureaucratic reform initiatives that have been implemented. The research will analyse the impact of bureaucratic reform on government governance, aiming to provide a thorough understanding of the changes that have taken place.

Purpose of Literature Review

1. Academic Literature Review

When conducting research on a specific subject, such as bureaucratic reform in Indonesia, it is crucial to examine pertinent scholarly literature. This literature encompasses many formats such as journals, essays, theses, and novels authored by knowledgeable specialists. Through an examination of this body of literature, researchers can gain insight into the prevalent conceptual framework employed in prior study, the methodologies or procedures utilised, and the primary findings or outcomes discovered by previous researchers. Gaining comprehension of this will establish a strong foundation for novel research endeavours and facilitate the identification of deficiencies or voids in prior research that may be addressed.

Some academic literature possesses equal levels of quality and dependability. Hence, it is crucial to evaluate the chosen literary references (Kerlinger, 1979). Various criteria can be employed to evaluate the quality of a source, including the author's expertise (their strong academic background in the

subject matter), the publishing reputation (whether the article or book is published by a reputable publisher or journal), and the validity and reliability of the data or methods used (Finlay & Ballinger, 2006). Furthermore, the presence of references and citations in the literature might serve as indicators of the thoroughness and excellence of the research conducted (Levine-Clark & Carter, 2013). It is essential to ensure that the literature utilised as a reference is of high quality and dependability. This ensures that the analysis is based on trustworthy and relevant material related to the researched issue.

2. Impact of Bureaucratic Reform

Implementing bureaucratic reform within the government sector is a crucial measure to promote enhanced operational efficiency. Through the identification and elimination of superfluous administrative expenses, the government not only preserves the budget, but also guarantees the optimal management of current resources. By reducing these expenditures, it enables a more efficient distribution of funding for crucial government programmes that are vital to society. As an illustration, funds that were previously squandered on complex administrative processes can now be redirected into enhancing infrastructure, education, or the healthcare industry (Abdullah, 2009). Hence, bureaucratic reform entails not only reducing expenses, but also enhancing the efficient allocation of resources for the benefit of the public (Dunn, 2015).

Enhancing accountability and openness in government is an essential component in guaranteeing equitable and impartial public policy (Shafritz et al., 2015). By conducting the decision-making process in a transparent manner, the public is afforded a greater chance to participate and offer their views, resulting in policies that better align with their desires. Transparency serves to enhance public confidence in government institutions and acts as a deterrent against corrupt or nepotistic behaviours that may compromise the public interest (Ranney, 1996). Hence, a responsible and open government guarantees that each decision made is grounded in data, evidence, and the desires of the community, rather than personal agendas or certain factions.

The implementation of bureaucratic reform has resulted in an enhancement of the quality of public services. The government exhibits enhanced responsiveness in addressing community needs, leading to expedited and more precise provision of services. Bureaucratic reform promotes the engagement of the community in the process of making decisions. This guarantees that the perspectives of the community are acknowledged and considered during the development and execution of government initiatives. Consequently, the implementation of bureaucratic reform has resulted in some beneficial alterations in the functioning of the government, enhancing its efficiency, transparency, and inclusivity.

3. Alterations in the Governance System

The implementation of bureaucratic reform in Indonesia has had a substantial and far-reaching effect on the governance of the country. Essentially, this reform has shifted the prevailing model from a centralised, corrupt, and less effective bureaucracy to a bureaucracy that is more decentralised, transparent, and focused on providing community services (Sawir, 2020). Administrative decentralisation has granted local governments increased authority in the management of local resources and policies, enabling them to better address the specific requirements of their communities (Fauzi, 2019).

The implementation of reforms has resulted in increased openness and accountability in the administration of public funds and oversight of government institutions (Nurdin, 2018). This has led to substantial enhancements in public services, characterised by a more streamlined and customer-centric bureaucracy, evident in critical areas like as education, healthcare, and infrastructure. Administrative decentralisation is a highly beneficial measure for enhancing the authority of local government and empowering communities (Mujiwardhani et al., 2019).

Granting greater autonomy to local governments enables the customisation of public policies and programmes to suit the distinct requirements of individual regions. This not only leads to the creation of more pertinent policies, but also enhances citizen

engagement in the process of making decisions. Enhancing individuals' perception of their involvement in policy making fosters a heightened sense of accountability and engagement in endeavours aimed at enhancing their overall well-being.

Transparency and accountability, implemented through administrative reform, are crucial pillars in establishing a reliable and trustworthy government (Iqrom, 2013). Implementing more rigorous oversight of the utilisation of public funds not only prevents the improper allocation of resources, but also enhances the level of confidence that the public has in government institutions (Nurdin, 2018). When individuals are aware that their financial resources are being utilised effectively and efficiently, they are more inclined to endorse the government and collaborate harmoniously in order to accomplish shared objectives. Administrative decentralisation, transparency, and accountability are crucial components in constructing an empowered, equitable, and sustainable society.

METHOD

This study used a literature review methodology to gather, evaluate, and synthesise material from several literature sources pertaining to the bureaucratic reform process in Indonesia. This methodology enables researchers to assimilate the progression of established concepts, hypotheses, and empirical discoveries without the necessity of conducting on-site investigations, hence facilitating a thorough

comprehension of the subject matter.

To examine bureaucratic change through the process of literature source selection, several primary criteria have been established. First and foremost, our main concern is ensuring the utmost relevancy, namely by emphasising literature that directly pertains to this particular subject matter. Furthermore, the inclusion of sources will prioritise those from esteemed publications, reputable journals, or authors who are widely acknowledged in their respective professions, since their legitimacy is of utmost significance. Furthermore, the relevance of the literature is also considered, giving preference to works released within the past decade. However, significant literature from older periods will also be incorporated to provide a comprehensive historical framework. During the literature search, multiple scholarly databases including Google Scholar, JSTOR, and university databases will be utilised. The search will involve the application of specific keywords such as "Indonesian Bureaucratic Reform," "Governance," "Impact of Bureaucratic Reform," and other relevant combinations to identify suitable sources.

In addition, the literature analysis and synthesis process contains several parts, including an analytical phase where one reads and compiles summaries from multiple literature sources. Next, ascertain the primary themes or subjects that commonly emerge in the literature and evaluate the parallels, discrepancies, and inconsistencies among the

literary works. Following the completion of the analysis phase, the synthesis phase commences, wherein material from diverse sources is amalgamated to construct a cohesive narrative concerning the ramifications of bureaucratic change in Indonesia. In addition, the synthesis of information from many literature sources leads to the formation of novel conclusions or insights pertaining to the subject matter.

Nevertheless, during this evaluation, it is crucial to recognise various methodological constraints that require attention. It is important to recognise that the literature review method might be influenced by the bias of the original authors or the limited scope of the available material, which can restrict the range of perspectives included in the study. Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge that analyses and interpretations derived from existing literature may not comprehensively depict the present state of the field, as the literature may not encompass the most recent advancements in the subject matter. Hence, comprehending these constraints will aid in meticulously assessing research findings.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. History of Bureaucratic Reform in Indonesia

Bureaucratic reform in Indonesia encompasses a range of initiatives aiming at modifying and modernising the government's bureaucratic framework, primarily with the objective of enhancing efficiency, transparency, and accountability in the

provision of public services. The process include reorganising, streamlining, and updating the government machinery, with an emphasis on developing a more efficient bureaucracy and improving the quality of public services (Yasa et al., 2021). The implementation of this reform was prompted by the public's discontent with the sluggish, corrupt, and ineffective bureaucracy under the New Order regime. It commenced following substantial political transformations that took place in 1998. The overarching objective was to establish a government that exhibited more professionalism, trustworthiness, and responsiveness to societal demands. Improving society (Meiwanda, 2017).

a. The Beginning of Reform (Year of 1998-2004)

The early phase of bureaucratic reform in Indonesia (1998-2004) was a time marked by numerous obstacles, as the country endeavoured to address a range of issues inside the government bureaucracy that were inherited from the previous New Order regime.

The downfall of the New Order regime, led by Suharto, in 1998 facilitated the implementation of bureaucratic reform. President B.J. Habibie's new government initiated significant measures by removing several crucial personnel in the bureaucracy (Dwiyanto, 2021). Various government entities, like BAKIN (State Intelligence

Coordinating Agency) and BPK (Financial Audit Agency), which were perceived as having an unclear mission or being susceptible to corruption, were either dissolved or reorganised (Hakim & Giovani, 2012).

In 2001, the Ministry of State Apparatus Empowerment and Bureaucratic restructure (MenPAN-RB) was established to oversee and guide efforts to restructure the bureaucracy. This ministry plays a crucial role in formulating and executing diverse reform plans¹.

Under the New Order administration, bureaucracy was frequently utilised as a tool for political manipulation, which involved the unfair treatment of individuals who were perceived as being in opposition to the government (Fittrya, 2013). The reform aims to eradicate politically discriminatory practices and guarantee the preservation of justice, ensuring equal rights for all citizens under the law.

The government also initiated efforts to enhance governance. This includes initiatives aimed at enhancing openness, accountability, and public engagement in the processes of governmental decision-making. Furthermore, the policy-making process has become increasingly transparent and receptive to feedback from many stakeholders².

The initial phase of reform is crucial as it establishes the foundation for subsequent

¹ Hakim, A., & Giovani, G. (2012). Perbandingan Perekonomian Dari Masa Soekarno Hingga Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (1945-2009). *Journal of Innovation in Business and Economics*, 3(2).

² Hakim, A., & Giovani, G. (2012). Perbandingan Perekonomian Dari Masa Soekarno Hingga Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (1945-2009). *Journal of Innovation in Business and Economics*, 3(2).

advancements in endeavours to enhance the calibre of public services and foster a more proficient and autonomous bureaucracy. The transition of government and the formation of MenPAN-RB marks a crucial initial phase in the extensive journey towards enhancing bureaucratic reform in Indonesia, with a focus on modernization and efficiency.

b. Reform Planning and Implementation (2005-2014)

During this period, the Government prioritised the development of policies, laws, and the implementation of bureaucratic reform in order to bring about tangible and substantial changes in the Indonesian bureaucratic system. An essential measure towards accomplishing this objective was the introduction of the Employee System of Key Performance Indicators (SKP) in 2010³. The SKP is a crucial milestone in the process of bureaucratic reform as it offers a well-defined and organised framework for assessing and enhancing the effectiveness of government personnel. SKP enhances transparency and accountability in evaluating staff performance, with a focus on developing competencies and enhancing the quality of public services. The ultimate objective is to make the bureaucracy more efficient and outcome-driven⁴.

Throughout this period, the government diligently formulated bureaucratic reform plans that encompassed a wide range of areas, including enhancing government governance

and optimising human resource management. The policy formulation is conducted via consultation with diverse stakeholders, including academia, NGOs, and civil society, to guarantee that the resultant policies align with societal demands and are grounded in exemplary methodologies⁵.

In addition to formulating policies, this timeframe also encompasses the creation of regulations and procedures that facilitate the execution of administrative change. The objective of this regulation is to establish a robust legislative framework for implementing reforms in the bureaucratic system, encompassing legislation pertaining to employee performance management, government governance, and human resource management within the public sector⁶.

This second period of bureaucratic reform is an important step in the long journey towards providing public services that are more efficient and results-oriented, as well as in creating a more professional and transparent bureaucracy in Indonesia. Through designing policies, drafting regulations, and implementing SKP, the government is trying to create a strong basis for more modern and effective bureaucratic reform.

c. Reform Consolidation (2015-2022)

An important objective during the consolidation phase of reform is to enhance the execution of different policies and reforms that have already been formulated. This entails

³ Unnes. (2013). Tahun 2014 DP3 Berubah Jadi SKP. <https://unnes.ac.id/tahun-2014-dp3-ganti-jadi-skp/>

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Hakim, A., & Giovani, G. (2012) Hlm. 24

⁶ Ibid

ensuring the efficient implementation of numerous reform programmes, such as SKP, Civil Servants, and improved governance, across all levels of government.

Efforts are being made to improve governance better. This includes steps to strengthen internal and external oversight, as well as providing greater authority and autonomy to independent oversight institutions, such as the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) and the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia (Kuntadi, 2023).

Bureaucratic reform encompasses the cultivation of high-caliber human resources inside the bureaucracy. This encompasses training and development initiatives aimed at enhancing the proficiency of civil servants in delivering superior public services.⁷

One of the key objectives of this reform is to eliminate corruption in the public sector. These endeavours encompass enhanced law enforcement and measures taken against instances of corruption, alongside the reinforcement of integrity and ethics among public officials.⁸

Furthermore, the consolidation of reforms encompasses expediting the process of digitising governmental services. The objective is to enhance the accessibility and effectiveness of government services through the utilisation of information and

communication technologies⁹.

In general, this stage aims to enhance the calibre of public services by adopting more effective, responsible, and transparent approaches. The objective is to enhance the quality of services offered to the community, streamline administrative processes, and increase the responsiveness of the bureaucracy to community demands¹⁰.

The reform consolidation stage is a crucial phase in the endeavour to modernise and enhance the efficiency and quality of public services in the Indonesian bureaucracy. This demonstrates the government's dedication to addressing the public's need for a more efficient and transparent government, while also ensuring that prior reforms are not merely talked about, but actually implemented in government operations¹¹.

The history of bureaucracy in Indonesia spans multiple periods. The pre-Reformation era commenced with the attainment of independence in 1945, during which the primary obstacle in solidifying the national bureaucracy was the endeavour to construct a post-independence governmental framework. The Old Order era, which persisted until 1966, was characterised by President Soekarno's overwhelming influence, with the bureaucracy assuming a significant part in the political system known as "Guided Democracy"

⁷ Mulyana, Y. M. Y. (2022). Penggantian Aparatur Sipil Negara (ASN) dengan Robotik Dalam Mewujudkan Digitalisasi Birokrasi di Era Revolusi Industri 4.0. *JISOS: JURNAL ILMU SOSIAL*, 1(7), 485–496.

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Nurhakim, M. R. S. (2014). Pengaruh Implementasi E-Government Terhadap Perubahan Budaya Birokrasi Untuk Mewujudkan

Transparansi Dan Akuntabilitas Dalam Sistem Pemerintahan Modern. *Jurnal Ilmu Administrasi: Media Pengembangan Ilmu Dan Praktek Administrasi*, 11(3), 403–422.

¹⁰ Hartati, S. (2020). Penerapan Model New Public Management (NPM) dalam Reformasi Birokrasi di Indonesia. *Jurnal MSDA (Manajemen Sumber Daya Aparatur)*, 8(2), 65–84.

¹¹ Ibid

(Iryana, 2022; Hisyam, 2003).

1) New Order Era

Under the leadership of President Soeharto from 1966 to 1998, significant transformations occurred in the history of Indonesian bureaucracy. The New Order government prioritised political stability and economic progress, resulting in the strengthening of central government authority over the bureaucracy (Adiwilaga et al., 2018). Nevertheless, this period was characterised by widespread corruption and misuse of authority by numerous bureaucratic personnel. Individual preferences frequently take precedence over societal concerns, leading to public discontent with bureaucratic systems (Muhajir & Wulandari, 2023).

Following the downfall of the New Order administration in 1998, bureaucratic reform emerged as a primary objective in Indonesia. The political changes that resulted in democratisation reform raised expectations for a bureaucracy that would exhibit greater transparency, accountability, and a focus on community service (Thoha, 2016; Purbaya, 2019). Subsequently, several measures have been implemented, encompassing endeavours to diminish corruption, update government administrative systems, and enhance the calibre of public services. Nevertheless, there are still obstacles to overcome in order to establish a bureaucracy that is both effective and free from corruption. The ongoing reform effort is aimed at achieving this objective (Kurniawan, 2007).

2) Initiation of Bureaucratic Reform

Under the New Order government, bureaucracy played a crucial role in upholding the stability of President Soeharto's regime (Muhajir & Wulandari, 2023). The bureaucracy's position as a weapon of political control was reinforced by exerting control over the majority of the public and commercial sectors. The success of national economic and infrastructure development is heavily reliant on the efficacy of a well-regulated and efficient bureaucracy. Nevertheless, an excessive level of bureaucratic control also fosters conditions that facilitate corruption and nepotism, ultimately leading to significant challenges in the future (Danugroho, 2022; Rusfiana & Supriyatna, 2021).

In the late 1990s, there was a growing wave of severe criticism towards the bureaucratic system of the New Order (H. Hidayat, 2008). The primary catalysts for calls for reform include widespread public discontent with the extent of inefficiency, pervasive corruption within the bureaucracy, and a dearth of government accountability. Amidst worldwide political shifts and civil society pressure, the Indonesian government recognised the necessity for alterations in the current bureaucratic structure (Komara, 2015). The New Order era concluded in 1998, facilitating the implementation of bureaucratic reform initiatives that prioritised transparency, efficiency, and community-oriented services (Setijanangrum, 2009).

The government that succeeded the previous regime placed significant emphasis on implementing bureaucratic reform during the post-New Order era. The objective of this reform process is to address persistent issues within the bureaucracy, such as corruption, nepotism, bureaucratic inefficiency, and public discontent with public services (Daraba, 2019). Several specific measures were implemented, including the establishment of a merit-based system for appointing officials, enhanced openness and accountability in the management of public finances, and regulatory reforms to promote investment and sustainable economic development (Abdussamad, 2020). Despite encountering obstacles, bureaucratic reform in Indonesia is crucial for establishing a more robust framework for a transparent and effective government.

Main Phases of Bureaucratic Reform. This phase can be divided into two main eras. The Early Reform Era (1998-2004) was a period of government response to demands for reform after the fall of the New Order (Lev, 2009). During this period, initial steps were taken to change the structure and function of the bureaucracy, with important influences from the amendments to the 1945 Constitution and the implementation of regional autonomy (Rawinarno, 2017). On the other hand, the Era of Reform Consolidation (2004-present) includes further initiatives to increase the capacity, integrity and accountability of the bureaucracy (Nurhakim, 2014). This period was also marked by evaluation of reform

implementation and improvement efforts based on feedback and emerging challenges, confirming the government's commitment to establishing a more efficient and transparent bureaucracy.

The Early Reform Era (1998-2004) also marked a substantial shift in bureaucratic culture. According to Saptohadi (2011), there has been a significant change from authoritarianism and systemic corruption to improved and participatory government norms. The government is endeavouring to eradicate the entrenched practices of nepotism and collusion that have permeated the previous bureaucratic structure. Nevertheless, the implementation of these reforms has encountered challenges, including opposition from the established bureaucracy and insufficient resources (Sepriano et al., 2023). The Reformation Consolidation phase, which began in 2004 and continues to the present, acknowledges the necessity of ongoing enhancement. The government is dedicated to enhancing bureaucratic integrity and accountability through the implementation of several policies and evaluation procedures (Huda, 2017). In Indonesia, bureaucratic reform is a continuous process that seeks to establish a more proficient, effective, and accountable bureaucracy.

In addition, there is a growing emphasis on enhancing the quality of human resources (HR) in the Reform Consolidation Era, as part of the ongoing efforts to overhaul the bureaucracy (Hartati, 2020). Enhancing the

education and training of government employees is of utmost importance in order to enhance their ability to effectively address the intricate requirements of public services. In addition, the government is also endeavouring to leverage information and communication technology to enhance efficiency in diverse bureaucratic procedures. Transparency and accountability are enhanced by implementing measures such as granting public access to information and establishing autonomous oversight bodies (Subekti, 2015). The primary objective of these endeavours is to enhance the fundamental aspects of Indonesia's bureaucratic reform and enable the government to effectively address the needs of society, while simultaneously advocating for good governance and corruption-free administration.

2. Essential Components of Bureaucratic Reform

a. Modifications in the structure of government organisation.

Within the framework of structural changes in government organisations, certain factors are frequently highlighted. Entity rationalisation refers to the process of consolidating or merging government units with the aim of minimising duplication and enhancing the effectiveness of government administration (Febriani & Suryandari, 2019). Later on, decentralisation gained attention as the central government transferred control to regional administrations, granting them more independence in addressing their local

requirements. The establishment of specialised units, such as digital reform bodies or anti-corruption units, is a crucial approach to address specific concerns more efficiently within the framework of bureaucratic reform.

Within the framework of structural changes in government organisations, certain topics are frequently emphasised. Firstly, entity rationalisation refers to the process of diminishing or consolidating government entities with the aim of minimising duplication and enhancing efficiency in government administration (Hariyani & Agustin, 2020). This stage often entails a thorough examination of different government departments and agencies to ascertain if there is any duplication in their activities and responsibilities. This approach frequently leads to the consolidation of comparable businesses or the removal of unproductive elements. By adopting this approach, resources and labour can be allocated with greater efficiency, enabling a sharper focus on well-defined goals and priorities.

Secondly, decentralisation plays a crucial role in the process of government reform. Through the delegation of authority from the central government to regional governments, the latter acquire increased autonomy in determining public policies and providing services. This can enhance the government's ability to address local needs and goals, taking into account the geographical, cultural, and social disparities that exist throughout different regions. In addition,

decentralisation can effectively mitigate the issue of excessive bureaucracy at the central level and foster a deeper connection between the government and the people it serves (Nuradhawati, 2019).

Furthermore, the establishment of specialised divisions within the government is progressively being employed as a prevalent approach to tackle particular concerns. Specialised agencies or units, such as digital reform agencies or anti-corruption units, have a specific and concentrated focus on addressing particular issues that demand special consideration (Nugroho, 2019). These institutions can thereafter enhance their efficacy in addressing crucial matters such as digital transformation in public services or endeavours to eliminate pervasive corruption. These units typically possess distinct resources, mandates, and expertise that can enhance the attainment of specific objectives within the realm of government. By employing these tactics, implementing structural changes within government organisations becomes a crucial means of enhancing efficiency, responsiveness, and accountability in the realm of effective government administration.

b. Innovation in Workplace Protocols and Systems.

Enhancing bureaucratic performance necessitates innovation in work methods and mechanisms. Service efficiency and accessibility can be maximized by automating procedures through the use of technology like digital platforms for public services and e-

governance systems (Choirunnisa et al., 2023). Furthermore, standardizing work practices and supporting bureaucratic efficiency through regulatory changes can help to streamline tasks and lower the chance of errors, making the bureaucratic environment more efficient and responsive (Hartanto, 2016).

Technology's ability to automate work procedures is one innovative strategy that is crucial for raising bureaucratic productivity. For instance, the e-governance system saves time for administrative procedures, prevents long lines at public service offices, and enables the government to offer services online. As a result, accessing a range of government services—from business licenses to tax payments—is quick and simple. Additionally, mundane jobs can be automated with the use of technology, freeing up human resources to concentrate on more difficult and strategic work.

Another essential element in the quest to increase bureaucratic effectiveness is regulatory change. Regulations must be pertinent and up to date with the demands of the modern bureaucracy. Thus, it is crucial to amend existing regulations or create new ones that are more in line with modern social and technological advancements. Efficient and unambiguous regulations can reduce the likelihood of rule infractions and assist prevent misunderstanding in the performance of duties. Therefore, regulatory reforms not only modernize governance but also lay the groundwork for an all-around more modern

and effective bureaucracy.

c. Enhancing civil servants Capability.

Several strategic initiatives have been put in place by the government to enhance the Civil Servants (ASN)'s capabilities. First, civil servants are given the chance to keep growing personally through a range of educational and training opportunities that address technical proficiency, leadership, and work ethics. Second, modifications to the hiring process have been made to guarantee that suitable candidates are chosen in compliance with government requirements (Utami, 2019). In an effort to promote improved performance and uphold integrity, the government has also implemented a system of rewards and penalties that recognizes and rewards exceptional workers while penalizing infractions. Similarly, in order to enhance civil servants' productivity, efforts have also been made to increase employee welfare through health facilities, benefits, and other programs.

The government has aggressively supported sustainable education and training to enhance the skills of the civil servants (SI & Satrya, 2020). Technical training pertinent to their roles and responsibilities is provided by this educational program, including competency development in subjects like public administration, information technology, and human resource management. Moreover, a major emphasis is on providing civil servants with leadership training, which enables them to comprehend the various facets of leadership that are necessary for them to perform their

jobs well. In order to guarantee that public officials maintain the principles of honesty and community service in addition to having strong technical abilities, work ethics are also a crucial component of training.

Additionally, the way civil servants are chosen has changed significantly as a result of revisions to the recruitment process (Ginting & Haryati, 2011). The government has made an effort to guarantee that civil servants candidates are selected in a transparent, objective manner, and in compliance with government demands in terms of skills and competencies. This covers the application of pertinent performance assessments, selection interviews, and competency testing. It seeks to guarantee that those admitted to civil servants are the greatest in their industries and have the capacity to significantly impact the provision of public services. The aforementioned reforms foster inclusivity and diversity among civil servants by providing avenues for people from many backgrounds to engage in public service.

3. Bureaucratic Reform's Effect on Governance

The governance system will be impacted by the effective and efficient management of bureaucratic transformation. The application of bureaucratic reform has a favorable effect on public services, accountability, efficiency, and community involvement.

Effectiveness. Government efficiency is greatly enhanced by bureaucratic reform (Prasojo & Kurniawan, 2008). This is

accomplished by streamlining expenditures and cutting down on tasks that overlap between agencies in order to save money. Additionally, the use of information technology, such as e-Government platforms, has decreased formerly high administrative expenses while increasing the accuracy and speed of public service delivery. By eliminating pointless procedures, cutting red tape, and shortening the chain of command, the changes also improved processes and sped up decision-making in government settings.

The good impact of the government's bureaucratic changes is evident in the notable improvement of Indonesia's worldwide competitiveness rating, as indicated by the IMD worldwide Competitiveness Index 2023. According to quantitative statistics, Indonesia's standing improved significantly in terms of economic competitiveness, moving up from 44th to 34th place. The 13-rank jump in economic performance ratings, from 42nd to 29th¹², was one notable feature.

The government's efficiency has improved as a result of the successful implementation of bureaucratic reforms, as evidenced by the rise in rank from 35 to 31. This is a reflection of the government's initiatives to streamline administrative procedures, cut back on pointless red tape, and boost accountability. The business environment in Indonesia has improved, as seen by the notable improvement in business

efficiency, which moved up 11 spots from 31st to 20th¹³.

Saving resources is a key component of bureaucratic reform. The government sector in many nations is often made up of different agencies and departments with overlapping roles and responsibilities. Reducing job overlap between agencies is one way that bureaucratic reform detects and resolves these issues (Rakhmawanto, 2011). Certain nations, for instance, have combined departments with similar goals of minimizing duplication of effort and increasing productivity (World Health Organization, 2013). Budget rationalization, which involves rerouting wasteful spending to more crucial sectors like public services and urgent development initiatives, is also a significant component of this change (Dwiyanto, 2021). The goal of all of this is to guarantee the best possible use of public resources.

To increase the effectiveness of public services, information technology adoption is crucial while bureaucratic reforms are being implemented. One significant step in lowering administrative costs and improving accuracy across a range of administrative processes has been the use of e-Government systems (Reissig et al., 2022). Citizens can save time and effort by accessing government services online instead of having to manually handle paperwork and applications. Streamlining the process, or cutting out pointless steps and

¹² setkab.go.id. (2023). *Peringkat Daya Saing Indonesia Naik ke Posisi 34*. <https://setkab.go.id/peringkat-daya-saing-indonesia-naik-ke-posisi-34/>

¹³ Ibid

reducing the length of the government's chain of command, is another common aspect of bureaucratic reform (Nasir, 2021). This facilitates quicker decision-making and allows for responsiveness to both the requirements of people and the environment's rapid changes. In general, the utilization of technology and enhancement of administrative procedures are essential components in attaining the intended level of effectiveness via bureaucratic restructuring.

1) Accountability

Regarding accountability, this reform comprises various essential elements, such as: First, the government must enhance transparency in managing budgets and public funds by making financial information publicly accessible to the public. Secondly, tools like REPORT! By giving individuals the chance to voice their concerns and offer suggestions for improving public services, you may make government organizations more responsive to the demands of the general public. Third, organizations like the BPK (Audit Agency) have a more significant responsibility in guaranteeing the responsible and effective use of public funds by auditing and monitoring state finances and government agency performance.

Financial transparency is a crucial element that requires specific attention in order to meet the objectives of accountability reform. As a result, the government is required to routinely provide the public with transparent and freely accessible information on budgets,

spending, and other financial resources (Sitepu, 2022). This lessens the possibility of corruption and financial mismanagement while enabling the general public and oversight groups to efficiently monitor government financial management. Furthermore, the public can receive faster and more accurate information by using information technology, such as online platforms, to publish financial data. This can also enable monitoring, increase transparency, and decrease bureaucracy.

Another essential component of this accountability reform is public supervision (Sumantri, 2022). Encouraging public participation through methods like LAPOR! is crucial in enabling citizens to voice grievances about public services and offer feedback on government performance. By using this platform, citizens can proactively address problems that arise in the provision of public services and actively ensure that government entities are held responsible for their activities. As a result, people's needs can be met more quickly, and the relationship between the public and the government is strengthened, both of which are critical for accomplishing the objectives of accountability reform in the public sector.

2) Public Service

In this context, public services have improved dramatically in a number of ways, including: First, tight training and standardization have raised the caliber of public services considerably, guaranteeing that

the community receives better and more reliable services (Amin, 2020). Furthermore, initiatives to enhance accessibility through the implementation of web-based services have enabled citizens to obtain government services without physically visiting government offices, so saving them time and effort (Choirunnisa et al., 2023). Similar to this, measures of public satisfaction with public services have emerged as a crucial tool for assessing how well government organizations are performing and making sure that the requirements and expectations of the public are met.

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Initiatives for online services that improve accessibility also have a major

positive impact (Rijal et al., 2023). The time and physical obstacles to obtaining government services are decreased by online-based services in an increasingly digitally linked society. In the end, citizens save time and money by having easier access to information, submitting applications, and monitoring the status of those applications. Additionally, it aids in cutting down on lengthy lines and wait periods at government offices, maximizing the effectiveness and productivity of public services. Therefore, programs like this one that promote accessibility aid in the realization of a more contemporary, inclusive, and adaptable government to the demands of the digital age.

3) Community Participation.

A public discussion forum mechanism that permits public involvement in decision-making processes is one of the efforts that have improved public participation at the government level. Furthermore, the FOI Law has increased transparency by guaranteeing the public's access to government information. Programs for community empowerment are also put into place to support their active involvement in overseeing and carrying out government initiatives, enhancing public participation in the process of development (Mokobombang et al., 2023).

Creating an inclusive democracy requires first increasing public engagement through open debate forums. Through this platform, the public can offer suggestions, voice opinions, and engage in direct dialogue

with decision-makers. By doing this, the government is better able to comprehend the wants and goals of the populace, resulting in more appropriate policies that take into account a variety of viewpoints. Furthermore, open forums for discussion foster communication and cooperation between the public and the government, which can improve social cohesion and public confidence in the administration of justice.

Apart from facilitating public discourse, the Freedom of Information Law also plays a pivotal role in promoting increased levels of public involvement. Citizens now have greater access to government information thanks to this statute. This improves public oversight of government actions and the management of public expenditures, while also making the government more accountable (Selvia & Arza, 2023). Therefore, FOI laws facilitate openness while also giving citizens greater knowledge and enabling them to take part in more intelligent decision-making.

4. Challenges and Barriers in Putting Bureaucratic Reform into Practice

a. Internal Resistance

A number of factors might impact an organization's internal reluctance to change. The outdated bureaucratic culture is frequently a significant barrier since many personnel are hesitant or opposed to accepting suggested changes because they are accustomed to the status quo. Similar to this, employees may get fearful or concerned about changes due to the uncertainty around them, as they are unsure of

how the changes will impact their job and future. However, even when reform calls for new skills, there isn't always enough training to provide apparatuses with these skills, so they may feel unable to deal with such changes. This is where a serious problem with lack of training arises (F. Hidayat, 2020).

A number of other elements, in addition to the previously discussed internal resistance factors, might contribute to a deeper understanding of the difficulties associated with organizational transformation. First, resistance is frequently set off by inadequate communication. Rumors and conjecture might arise if information about the change is not shared transparently and explicitly with every person of the organization, which can lead to mistrust and uncertainty and increase opposition to the change (Ahdiyana, 2009). As a result, it's critical that organizational leaders communicate clearly and effectively throughout the transformation process.

Second, major change may also be hampered by a lack of backing from the highest levels of an organization's leadership. Change can send a message to the entire organization that it is not significant if the top leader does not support it or does not actively participate in the process. Because workers often imitate their bosses, resistance will inevitably increase in such a setting (Al-azhar et al., 2014). As a result, executives need to take the lead in encouraging and enabling team members to embrace change in an honest and upbeat manner.

Political Issues

Political interference, whereby political interests might obstruct the intended change because they are seen to harm particular interests, is one political issue that frequently comes up throughout the reform process (Sutirman, 2005). Reform projects that have already commenced may also be stopped, slowed down, or even reversed by unsteady leadership dynamics or political unrest. Then, current regulatory limitations, which might take the shape of laws or rules that do not currently support certain desired components of reform or even contradict them, can also be a barrier to change.

Stable leadership dynamics are another political issue that frequently impedes the reform process, in addition to political meddling (Kunkunrat et al., 2021). Politics, particularly in democracies, can undergo frequent leadership turnover, which can alter the course of previously adopted policies. This could lead to the cancellation or delay of the previous government's planned reform initiatives. Massive protests or internal party strife are examples of political turmoil that can divert governments' attention from reform and cause them to become more concerned with preserving political stability than pursuing necessary change.

Initiatives for reform may also run into problems because of restrictions on regulations. There may be too many laws and regulations in force, or they may contradict the goals of the reform. Modifying laws or rules

can be a difficult and protracted process, especially if interest groups affected by the new limits oppose the changes. This could make it more difficult to achieve broad reform goals and possibly slow down the pace at which reforms are implemented (Nadif, 2017). Governments and other stakeholders must therefore carefully analyze these concerns and create practical plans of action in order to overcome regulatory impediments in their reform endeavors.

b. Resources

One of the primary challenges in putting reforms into practice is resource scarcity. Financial limitations may provide a significant challenge, impeding or even stopping the execution of significant reform programs. Modern reforms that require digitization may be hampered by inadequate information technology infrastructure. Similarly, there is a difficulty with few human resources because reforms need skilled and seasoned personnel, who might not always be accessible in large enough quantities (Yusriadi & Misnawati, 2017). Any of these elements may impede the implementation and success of intended changes.

Apart from the resource limitations already indicated, cultural and political resistance can also impede the change process. Internal opposition may arise when reform measures clash with the company culture already in place. Furthermore, political variables like a shift in the administration or powerful political interests may have an

impact on the direction of reform. Reforms that have been planned can also be thwarted by other leaders with conflicting visions. Reform initiatives must therefore take political dynamics and cultural shifts into account (Arifin & Akhiruddin, 2022).

Additionally, it is critical to take into account the communication component of the reform process. Uncertainty and mistrust of the reform can occasionally result from ineffective communication with all pertinent parties, including staff, stakeholders, and the general public. Therefore, it can be helpful to overcome uncertainty and lessen resistance to build a strong communication plan that informs all parties involved of the goals, advantages, and progress of reform. Increasing support for the intended change can also be facilitated by raising awareness of the rationale behind reform. Therefore, one of the most important elements in guaranteeing the success of changes is effective communication.

c. Interaction and Interpretation

One of the primary obstacles in the reform process is ineffective communication, which frequently results in a lack of clarity regarding the objectives and advantages of reform for all parties concerned (Susanto, 2017). This may cause misunderstandings or false impressions about the goals and effects of the reforms, which may then cause resistance or uncertainty among the process's stakeholders.

The success of the reform itself may be greatly impacted by ineffective

communication during the process. It may be challenging for all parties concerned to adjust to suggested changes if the aims and advantages of reform are not fully communicated to them, leaving them unclear about the necessary actions. Additionally, this may give room for different rumors and conjecture, which could impede the reform process (Suparno, 2012). As a result, it's critical that individuals spearheading the reform engage in active communication with all parties involved, deliver information on time, and make it abundantly evident why the change is necessary and how it will benefit everyone.

Erroneous beliefs or misinterpretations concerning the intention and consequences of changes are significant issues that have the potential to compromise the cooperation and backing required for the transformation process. People often become resistive to change when they don't fully comprehend the rationale behind reform or when they think it might negatively affect them. It is crucial that those spearheading the reforms provide a thorough explanation of the changes that will occur as well as how they will benefit the various persons and organizations. Reducing misconceptions and fostering the support required to successfully implement reforms can be accomplished by fostering an open discourse and responding to any questions or concerns that may surface.

CONCLUSION

This essay examines, from the standpoint of scholarly literature, how bureaucratic reform has affected Indonesian governance. Indonesia, one of the nations with the most complicated administrative structures, has experienced substantial modifications to its political structure since the late 1990s reform movement.

Prior to the implementation of bureaucratic reforms, governance inefficiency developed become a significant issue. The reality of slow bureaucracy, convoluted processes, and resource waste becomes unsettling. The goal of bureaucratic reform is to solve these issues and boost governance's effectiveness.

According to this study, attempts to restructure the bureaucracy have improved Indonesian governance. Enhanced effectiveness, responsibility, improved public services, and enhanced community involvement in decision-making are some of these effects.

The purpose of the literature review is to give a thorough examination of the scholarly literature, pinpoint the true effects of bureaucratic reform, and present a complete picture of governance changes. The findings demonstrate how bureaucratic reform has improved a number of facets of governance. Fourth, despite the benefits of bureaucratic reform, the study also identifies a number of difficulties and roadblocks in its application. These difficulties include political issues,

resource limitations, bureaucratic internal resistance, and barriers to understanding and communication.

The necessity of ongoing research and monitoring about the effects of bureaucratic reform is another crucial factor to remember. This is required to guarantee that reform initiatives carry on benefiting society and to support governments and stakeholders in future attempts to enhance governance. All things considered, this academic publication offers insightful information about the effects of bureaucratic reform in Indonesia and emphasizes the significance of continuously observing, assessing, and enhancing reform procedures in order to attain better and more effective governance.

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