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KETAHANAN ORGANISASI PUBLIK DALAM MENGHADAPI TRANSFORMASI DIGITAL DI INDONESIA

PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONAL RESILIENCE IN FACING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

Digital transformation has become a strategic agenda in public sector reform; however, its success largely depends on the organization's ability to adapt to change. This study aims to analyze organizational resilience in the context of digital transformation and to identify the factors influencing it. A qualitative approach with a case study design was employed, with data collected through in-depth interviews, document analysis, and observation. The findings reveal that organizational resilience is shaped by the interaction of adaptive leadership, innovation-oriented organizational culture, digital capability, and institutional support. Leadership plays a critical role in guiding transformation and reducing resistance, while a flexible organizational culture promotes continuous learning and adaptation. Furthermore, digital competencies and technological infrastructure are essential in supporting the implementation of digital transformation, reinforced by adequate policies and resources. This study highlights that digital transformation is not merely about technology adoption but also requires strengthening organizational resilience, particularly in developing countries facing resource constraints and digital divides.

Keywords: organizational resilience, digital transformation, public sector, adaptive leadership, digital capability

ABSTRAK

Transformasi digital telah menjadi agenda strategis dalam reformasi organisasi publik, namun keberhasilannya sangat bergantung pada kemampuan organisasi dalam beradaptasi terhadap perubahan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis resiliensi organisasi publik dalam menghadapi transformasi digital serta mengidentifikasi faktor-faktor yang memengaruhinya. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus, di mana data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, analisis dokumen, dan observasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa resiliensi organisasi dibentuk oleh interaksi antara kepemimpinan adaptif, budaya organisasi yang mendukung inovasi, kapabilitas digital, dan dukungan institusional. Kepemimpinan berperan penting dalam mengarahkan perubahan dan mengurangi resistensi, sementara budaya organisasi yang fleksibel mendorong pembelajaran dan adaptasi berkelanjutan. Selain itu, kompetensi digital dan infrastruktur teknologi menjadi faktor kunci dalam mendukung implementasi transformasi digital, yang diperkuat oleh kebijakan dan sumber daya yang memadai. Penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa transformasi digital tidak hanya berkaitan dengan adopsi teknologi, tetapi juga memerlukan penguatan resiliensi organisasi secara menyeluruh, khususnya di negara berkembang yang menghadapi keterbatasan sumber daya dan kesenjangan digital.

Kata kunci: resiliensi organisasi, transformasi digital, sektor publik, kepemimpinan adaptif, kapabilitas digital

INTRODUCTION

Digital transformation has become a strategic priority in the reform of public sector organizations, driven by increasing public demand for services that are faster, more transparent, and more responsive. The integration of digital technologies into public governance has been shown to enhance efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability, while also strengthening governments' capacity to respond to complex and dynamic challenges (OECD, 2023; United Nations, 2024). However, digital transformation extends beyond mere technological adoption; it involves fundamental changes in organizational processes, culture, and decision-making structures. Consequently, public organizations are required to develop resilience, defined as the ability to adapt, absorb, and thrive amid continuous digital disruption (Denyer, 2017).

Despite its potential benefits, the implementation of digital transformation in the public sector faces several urgent challenges, including resistance to change, limited digital competencies among human resources, uneven digital infrastructure, and increasing concerns over data security and privacy (Vial, 2019; Mergel et al., 2019). These challenges are particularly pronounced in developing countries, where limited resources, low institutional readiness, and persistent digital divides hinder the effective adoption of digital technologies (World Bank, 2021). As a result, digital transformation initiatives often fall short of expectations and may even exacerbate inequalities in access to public services.

Existing studies on digital transformation in the public sector have largely focused on improving service delivery, fostering technological innovation, and reforming governance through digital means (Mergel et al., 2019; Vial, 2019). More recent discussions have begun to emphasize the importance of organizational adaptability and sustainability in the face of digital disruption. Nevertheless, research that explicitly links digital transformation with organizational resilience in the public sector remains limited, particularly in the context of developing countries, where institutional environments and constraints differ significantly from those in developed economies.

A comparison between developed and developing countries reveals a significant gap in the maturity of digital transformation. Developed countries have generally progressed toward advanced stages characterized by system integration and service optimization, whereas developing countries are still focused on building basic infrastructure and enhancing digital literacy (United Nations, 2024; World Bank, 2021). This disparity places additional pressure on public organizations in developing countries to simultaneously pursue digital transformation while addressing internal capacity limitations.

In this context, examining organizational resilience becomes crucial to ensure that digital transformation efforts lead to meaningful and sustainable improvements in public sector performance. Organizational resilience serves as a key enabler that allows public institutions to continuously adapt, manage risks, and leverage opportunities arising from digital change (Denyer, 2017).

Therefore, this study aims to analyze organizational resilience in the context of digital transformation in public sector organizations, identify the key factors influencing adaptive capacity, and formulate strategies to strengthen resilience, particularly within developing country contexts.

METHOD

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a **qualitative research design** with a case study approach to examine organizational resilience in the

context of digital transformation within public sector organizations. A qualitative approach is suitable for understanding complex organizational phenomena, including adaptive capacity, institutional change, and responses to digital disruption (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The case study strategy enables an in-depth exploration of real-life contexts and provides rich insights into how resilience is developed within public organizations (Yin, 2018).

3.2 Data Collection

Data were collected using multiple methods to ensure depth and triangulation. First, **semi-structured interviews** were conducted with research informants who are directly involved in digital transformation processes, including public officials, IT personnel, and policymakers. These informants were selected based on their roles, expertise, and involvement in organizational decision-making related to digital initiatives.

Second, **document analysis** was carried out on relevant materials such as policy documents, strategic plans, and digital transformation roadmaps to provide contextual and institutional understanding. In addition, **non-participant observation** was conducted, where possible, to capture organizational practices and interactions related to digital implementation.

3.3 Research Informants

The research informants consist of individuals who play strategic roles in the implementation of digital transformation within public sector organizations. These include senior managers, technical staff, and policy actors who possess direct knowledge and experience regarding organizational change and digital initiatives. The selection of informants was based on their relevance to the research objectives and their ability to provide rich, detailed information. Data collection was conducted until **information redundancy** was reached, where no substantial new insights emerged.

3.4 Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using **thematic analysis**, following the procedures proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). The analysis involved several stages, including data familiarization, coding, theme development, and interpretation. This approach allows for the identification of key themes related to organizational resilience, such as leadership, organizational culture, digital capability, and institutional support.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The findings of this study indicate that organizational resilience in the context of digital transformation within public sector organizations is shaped by a combination of interrelated factors, including leadership, organizational culture, digital capability, and institutional support. These factors do not operate independently but interact dynamically in influencing how organizations respond to digital change.

Leadership emerged as a central element in fostering resilience. The study found that leaders who demonstrate adaptability, openness to innovation, and a clear strategic vision play a significant role in guiding organizations through digital transformation processes. Such leaders are able to reduce resistance to change and promote collaboration across organizational units. Informants emphasized that leadership commitment is a determining factor in whether digital transformation initiatives are successfully implemented or remain merely symbolic.

In addition to leadership, organizational culture was identified as a crucial factor influencing resilience. Organizations that

cultivate a culture of learning, innovation, and flexibility tend to be more capable of adapting to digital transformation. Conversely, rigid bureaucratic structures and resistance to change hinder the adoption of new technologies. The findings reveal that deeply embedded routines and a lack of willingness to experiment with new approaches often slow down transformation efforts. However, organizations that encourage continuous learning and knowledge sharing demonstrate greater adaptability.

Digital capability also plays a significant role in shaping organizational resilience. The study shows that the availability of technological infrastructure, as well as the digital competencies of employees, directly affects the effectiveness of transformation initiatives. Limited digital literacy and insufficient technical expertise remain major challenges, particularly in developing country contexts. Informants highlighted that a lack of training and capacity-building programs often results in slow and fragmented implementation. In contrast, organizations that invest in developing digital skills and strengthening technological infrastructure are better equipped to respond to change.

Furthermore, institutional support was found to be a critical enabling factor. Clear policy frameworks, adequate resource allocation, and strong government commitment contribute significantly to the success of digital transformation. The findings indicate that well-defined regulations and coordinated efforts across institutions enhance organizational capacity to adapt and sustain transformation initiatives. On the other hand, weak institutional support leads to fragmented implementation and reduces the effectiveness of digital initiatives.

Overall, the results suggest that organizational resilience is a multidimensional and dynamic construct that emerges from the interaction between leadership, culture, capability, and institutional context. Public sector organizations that are able to align these elements tend to demonstrate stronger adaptive capacity and are more successful in navigating the challenges of digital transformation.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that organizational resilience in the context of digital transformation is shaped by the dynamic interaction between leadership, organizational culture, digital capability, and institutional support. These results reinforce the notion that digital transformation in the public sector is not merely a technological shift but a complex organizational change process that requires adaptive capacity at multiple levels (Vial, 2019).

The central role of leadership identified in this study aligns with the concept of **adaptive leadership**, which emphasizes the ability of leaders to navigate uncertainty, mobilize resources, and facilitate organizational learning (Heifetz et al., 2009). The findings confirm that leadership commitment is a key determinant of successful digital transformation, as also highlighted by Mergel et al. (2019), who argue that public sector innovation is highly dependent on leadership support and strategic direction. In this study, leaders who encouraged collaboration and openness to innovation were found to significantly reduce resistance to change, supporting previous research that positions leadership as a critical driver of digital transformation success.

Furthermore, the importance of organizational culture in shaping resilience is consistent with the theory of **organizational resilience**, which views resilience as embedded in shared values, norms, and learning processes (Denyer, 2017). The findings suggest that cultures characterized by flexibility, innovation, and continuous learning enhance an organization's ability to adapt to digital disruption. This is in line

with studies by Hartley et al. (2013), which highlight that public sector innovation is strongly influenced by cultural readiness and openness to change. Conversely, bureaucratic rigidity and resistance were found to hinder transformation, confirming earlier findings that traditional administrative cultures often impede digital reform (Mergel et al., 2019).

Digital capability also emerged as a crucial factor, particularly in relation to human resource competencies and technological infrastructure. This supports the **resource-based view (RBV)**, which posits that organizational capabilities, including technological and human capital, are key determinants of performance and adaptability (Barney, 1991). The findings are consistent with previous studies indicating that limited digital skills and inadequate infrastructure remain major barriers to digital transformation in the public sector, especially in developing countries (World Bank, 2021). Organizations that invest in capacity building and digital literacy are therefore more likely to develop resilience and sustain transformation efforts.

In addition, institutional support was identified as an enabling factor that strengthens organizational resilience. This finding aligns with **institutional theory**, which emphasizes the role of formal structures, policies, and regulatory frameworks in shaping organizational behavior (Scott, 2014). The study shows that clear policy direction, resource availability, and inter-agency coordination significantly enhance the effectiveness of digital transformation initiatives. This is consistent with OECD (2023), which highlights that strong governance frameworks are essential for the successful implementation of digital government strategies.

The findings also reveal important insights when viewed in the context of developing countries. The challenges related to limited resources, digital divides, and institutional constraints confirm previous research that highlights structural barriers to digital transformation in such contexts (United Nations, 2024; World Bank, 2021). Compared to developed countries, where digital transformation has reached more advanced stages, public sector organizations in developing countries face greater pressure to simultaneously build foundational capacity and implement digital innovations. This reinforces the argument that resilience is particularly critical in environments characterized by uncertainty and resource constraints.

Overall, this study contributes to the literature by integrating organizational resilience into the discourse on digital transformation in the public sector. While prior research has largely focused on technological and service-related aspects, this study highlights the importance of adaptive capacity as a foundational element for sustainable transformation. The findings suggest that strengthening leadership, fostering an adaptive culture, enhancing digital capabilities, and ensuring institutional support are essential strategies for building resilient public sector organizations in the digital era.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that organizational resilience is a critical determinant of successful digital transformation in public sector organizations, particularly within developing country contexts characterized by resource constraints and institutional challenges. The findings demonstrate that resilience emerges from the dynamic interaction of adaptive leadership, supportive organizational culture, strong digital capability, and robust institutional support, all of which collectively enhance an organization's ability to adapt to and sustain digital change. Leadership plays a pivotal role in driving transformation and mitigating resistance, while a learning-oriented culture fosters innovation and flexibility. At

the same time, adequate digital competencies and infrastructure are essential for effective implementation, supported by clear policy frameworks and coordinated institutional efforts. Therefore, this study emphasizes that digital transformation should not be viewed solely as a technological initiative but as a comprehensive organizational process that requires the development of resilient systems. Future research is encouraged to further examine the measurement of organizational resilience and its impact on public sector performance across diverse institutional settings.

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