

## IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SABILULUNGAN APPLICATION REPLICATION POLICY IN BANDUNG CITY IN CENTRAL MAMUJU REGENCY

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### Abstract

This study aims to analyze the implementation of the Sabilulungan Application replication policy, a digital grant management platform from Bandung City to Central Mamuju Regency, using George C. Edwards III's policy implementation model, which includes aspects of communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure. The research method uses a descriptive qualitative approach with data collection techniques in the form of in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation studies. Informants were selected through a purposive sampling technique involving the Regional Development Planning Agency (BPKAD), the Communication and Information and Sandi Agency, the Social Welfare Division, and grant implementation staff. Data analysis was carried out through data reduction, presentation, and drawing conclusions using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña model. The results show that the implementation of the application replication policy has not been running optimally. The main obstacles lie in the lack of comprehensive policy communication, limited technical human resources, the lack of alignment between regional regulations and application business processes, and a bureaucratic structure that still relies on manual mechanisms. Although the implementer's disposition shows a positive attitude and high commitment, technical and regulatory readiness is not yet adequate to support the digital transition. These findings indicate a *design-reality gap* between the application design and the actual conditions of the organization. This study confirms that successful digital application replication requires regulatory harmonization, increased human resource capacity, and business process integration as important prerequisites for electronic-based public service transformation.

**Keywords:** Policy Implementation, E-Government, Application Replication, Sabilulungan, Regional Grants.

### 1. Background

The development of information technology has become a crucial pillar of government transformation in the digital era. Governments across the globe face demands to provide faster, easier, more transparent, and more accountable public services through the use of integrated digital systems. *The United Nations E-Government Survey* (2022) report shows that government digitalization can improve bureaucratic effectiveness by streamlining services, increasing budget transparency, and expanding public access to government information. Countries such as Denmark, Singapore, and South Korea have even demonstrated that successful digital governance directly contributes to increased public trust, as services become more open and responsive (UN, 2022). In a global e-government study, Heeks (2006; 2008) emphasized that the success of public sector digitalization is influenced by the alignment between technology, bureaucracy, and the social characteristics of the organization. Technology is not the sole determining factor for success; human resource readiness, organizational adaptability, and policy consistency are key elements. Meanwhile, the OECD (2020) emphasized that digital transformation in the public sector must be accompanied by business process reform, data integration, and increased staff capacity to optimally benefit from digitalization. This global context is relevant to the situation in Indonesia, which is currently accelerating digital transformation through the Electronic-Based Government System (SPBE), as stipulated in Presidential Regulation Number 95 of 2018. Nationally, government digitalization is a strategic effort to address various public service issues in Indonesia, such as lengthy bureaucracy, weak transparency, inefficient manual processes, and the high potential for budget misappropriation. Indonesia Corruption Watch (ICW, 2020) noted that one sector prone to misappropriation is the management of grants and social assistance funds. Lack of document transparency, manual verification processes, and unclear administrative processes open up opportunities for misdirected spending and even corruption. This is reinforced by a report from the Supreme Audit Agency (BPK, 2021), which identified various findings related to

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weak grant accountability in several local governments. In response to these issues, digital innovations have begun to develop in the regions. The Bandung City Government has become a pioneer in developing a digital system for managing grants and social assistance through a transparency application. This system provides public access to grant information, from application to verification to disbursement. This innovation has attracted the interest of several other local governments, including Central Mamuju Regency, to replicate it through inter-regional collaboration.

Central Mamuju Regency, as a newly autonomous region, faces challenges in structuring its grant management system. The current manual process has slowed service flows, led to unstandardized documentation, and made it difficult for the public to obtain comprehensive information about regional grants. Limited technological infrastructure and technical human resources also hinder the development of an independent system. Therefore, replicating applications from other regions, such as the one developed by the City of Bandung, is an efficient strategic option for Central Mamuju to accelerate service digitization and improve grant governance.

However, the process of replicating innovation is not only about transferring technology, but also involves organizational readiness, policies, and increasing the capacity of the apparatus. Janssen and Estevez (2013) stated that e-government adoption will be successful if there is policy coherence, leadership support, resource availability, and organizational structure readiness. Clarity of business processes and technical capabilities of the apparatus are key factors in implementing digital applications at the local level. In the context of Central Mamuju, so far there have been various indications of obstacles such as minimal understanding of the apparatus regarding application flows, a lack of technical resources, unprepared server infrastructure, and the lack of alignment of manual SOPs with digital mechanisms. From a policy implementation perspective, Edwards III (1980) explained that successful implementation is influenced by four variables: communication, resources, implementer disposition, and organizational structure. Applied to the application replication case in Central Mamuju, these four variables need to operate harmoniously for the application to function optimally. For example, policy communication must be clear and accepted by all regional government agencies (SKPD); human resources and technology must be adequate; officials must be committed and ready to adapt; and the bureaucratic structure must have standard operating procedures (SOPs) that are compatible with digital mechanisms.

This phenomenon demonstrates that implementing a digital application replication policy is a complex process that requires internal readiness, regulatory support, technical capacity, and changes in work culture. Dwiyanto (2015) emphasized that quality public services can only be achieved if the bureaucracy is able to transform and move away from a rigid administrative approach toward a more adaptive, transparent, and technology-based service system. Considering global developments, national dynamics, and the specific conditions in Central Mamuju Regency, research on the implementation of the Sabilulungan application replication policy in Bandung City in Central Mamuju Regency is relevant and important. In addition to addressing the gap in research on the implementation of digital innovation replication across regions, this research also provides an empirical overview of local governments' readiness to adopt technology as an instrument to improve accountability and transparency in public services. Numerous studies have been conducted on e-government and policy implementation, but there remains a gap in research related to the replication of digital innovations across local governments, particularly regarding applications for transparency in grant distribution. Cordella and Tempini (2015) highlight the need for organizational adaptation as ICT transforms bureaucratic processes.

However, their study focuses more on structural changes and does not explore the mechanisms of innovation diffusion across regions. Heeks (2006) explains that many e-government projects fail due to a mismatch between technology and local contexts, but their study does not provide an empirical overview of application replication practices across resource-constrained local governments. Janssen and Estevez (2013) discuss the importance of process and platform integration in digital governance, but their study is conceptual in nature and does not examine the dynamics of interregional replication practices. Meanwhile, Zuiderwijk et al. (2015) examine technology adoption factors in the context of open data and digital services, but their study does not specifically address the issue of grant distribution through replicated applications. Thus, a significant research gap remains: a lack of empirical studies examining how application replication policies (as a form of interregional innovation diffusion) are implemented, particularly in new autonomous regions like Central Mamuju Regency, including how regulations, human resource readiness, infrastructure, and policy communication influence the process. This research seeks to fill this gap.

## 2. Theoretical basis

Policy implementation is a crucial process in realizing government program objectives, and its success is largely determined by factors influencing the policy's course. Edwards III (1980) emphasized four key variables in successful implementation: communication, resources, implementer disposition, and bureaucratic structure. These variables interact and determine the extent to which policies can be effectively implemented in the field. In the context

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of service digitalization, policy implementation becomes more complex because it not only changes administrative procedures but also demands institutional and technical readiness, as well as the ability of officials to adapt to new work systems. In addition to implementation theory, this study is also based on the diffusion of innovation theory proposed by Rogers (2003). Diffusion of innovation explains how an innovation spreads through a social system and how the innovation's characteristics influence the rate of adoption. The replication of the Sabilulungan application from Bandung City to Central Mamuju Regency can be understood as a form of public sector innovation diffusion that involves not only technology transfer but also adaptation to the local context. Factors such as organizational readiness, leadership support, bureaucratic social structure, and inter-agency communication patterns are important elements in determining the successful adoption of this digital innovation. Theories of e-government and public services also strengthen this research analysis. Heeks (2006) emphasized that e-government implementation often fails due to a gap between system design and organizational reality ( *design–reality gap* ). Therefore, digitalization must be accompanied by changes in business processes, human resource capacity, and organizational culture. Janssen and Estevez (2013) also emphasized that business process integration and procedural simplification are key requirements for successful digitalization of public services. Meanwhile, Dwiyanto (2015) emphasized that the quality of public services is determined by accountability, responsiveness, and transparency, all of which can be improved through the use of well-designed digital systems. Thus, the combination of theories of policy implementation, innovation diffusion, and e-government provides an important framework in analyzing the implementation of the Sabilulungan Application replication policy in Central Mamuju Regency.

### 3. Research Methods

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to understand the implementation of the Sabilulungan Application replication policy in Central Mamuju Regency in depth through the experiences, perceptions, and organizational dynamics of policy implementers. This approach was chosen because it is appropriate for exploring complex policy phenomena (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Informants were selected using purposive sampling (Etikan et al., 2016; Palinkas et al., 2015), including the Head of the Regional Financial and Asset Management Agency (BPKAD), the Secretary of the BPKAD, the Head of the Budget Division, the Head of the Budget Sub-Division, the Accounting Staff, the Communication and Information Service (Kominfosandi), and the Social Welfare Division. Data collection techniques included semi-structured interviews (Kallio et al., 2016), observation of the manual grant distribution process, and analysis of documents such as grant SOPs, Regent Regulations, and the application's business processes. Data validity was strengthened by triangulation of sources and methods and *member checking* (Noble & Smith, 2015). The research locations were determined at the agencies directly involved in the application replication, namely the BPKAD, the Communication and Information Service (Kominfosandi), and the Social Welfare Division.

Data analysis was conducted using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014) model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The analytical framework employed George C. Edwards III's policy implementation theory, encompassing communication variables, resources, implementer disposition, and bureaucratic structure (Purwanto & Sulistyastuti, 2012; Hamid, 2020). The research findings were further interpreted using e-government theories such as *the design–reality gap concept* (Heeks, 2006), business process integration (Janssen & Estevez, 2013), and Rogers' (2003) diffusion of innovation theory. The use of public service theory also strengthened the analysis of grant governance quality (Dwiyanto, 2015). Thus, this method provides a strong basis for evaluating organizational readiness, implementation barriers, and the effectiveness of the digital application replication process in the context of local government.

### 4. Research Results

#### 4.1 Communication in the Implementation of Sabilulungan Application Replication

Interview results indicate that communication regarding the replication of the Sabilulungan application is still not running optimally. Information regarding the replication stages, business processes, and application readiness has not been conveyed evenly to all SKPDs. This is evident from the statement of the Head of the Budget Sub-Division of BPKPAD: *"The dissemination of information through socialization has not been carried out because we are waiting for the completion and adjustment of business processes until the installation of the server for this application replication."* BPKPAD as the coordinator is still in the stage of intensive communication with the Bandung City Ministry of Communication and Information, but internal communication within the local government itself is still limited. In addition, the absence of an embedded server in Central Mamuju Regency has resulted in the application implementation not being able to be operated, so that the flow of technical and administrative communication has not

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run as it should. This obstacle has an impact on the lack of understanding of other SKPDs regarding the function and mechanism of the application.

## 4.2 Resources

Interview data indicates that resources are a significant obstacle. In terms of human resources, there is a limited availability of technical personnel familiar with application management, both at the Regional Development Planning Agency (BPKPAD) and the Communications and Information Technology Agency (Kominfosandi). The Head of BPKPAD explained: *"The resources available in Central Mamuju Regency... in terms of personnel are still limited."* Although facilities such as laptops, networks, and printers are adequate, human resources and regulatory readiness do not fully support the digital transition. BPKPAD still uses Regent Regulation No. 3 of 2022 concerning manual grant mechanisms, while the Sabilulungan application requires revisions to regulations and grant SOPs. The Head of BPKPAD emphasized, *"After reviewing the application's business processes, there are several differences that require changes to the Regent's Regulation and grant SOPs."* Budget limitations for providing technical personnel also slow down the application replication process.

## 4.3 Disposition or Attitude of the Implementer

Policy implementers generally support the use of the Sabilulungan application. Officials at the Financial and Development Supervisory Agency (BPKPAD), the Social Welfare Division, and the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (Kominfosandi) have demonstrated a commitment to improving grant governance. The Head of the Budget Sub-Division stated: *"A sense of responsibility and commitment to ensuring that grants are implemented effectively."* However, this positive attitude has not been matched by technical readiness to operate the application, thus hindering the desire for change to accelerate the implementation of grant digitization. Furthermore, implementers' disposition can only be maximized once the application is launched, as budget staff hope for accelerated business processes to facilitate faster adaptation.

## 4.4 Bureaucratic Structure

The bureaucratic structure for grant management in Central Mamuju still uses a manual mechanism based on outdated SOPs. The manual grant business process is not fully aligned with the flow in the Sabilulungan application, necessitating revisions to the SOP and the Regent's Regulation. The Head of the Agency for the Assessment and Application of Financial and Development (BPKPAD) emphasized: *"The SOP related to grants... must be revised due to differences with the grant distribution process in the Sabilulungan application."* Meanwhile, the Communications and Information Technology Agency stated: *"Every application must go through the Communications and Information Technology Agency... and annually collects application data from Regional Government Agencies (SKPD)."* However, the bureaucratic flow is still not integrated into a clear coordination framework between BPKPAD (coordinator), the Communications and Information Technology Agency (technical), and the SKPD grant users, resulting in slow and uneven implementation.

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1 Communication: Problems of Information Transmission and Consistency

According to Edwards III, policy communication must be clear, consistent, and communicated to all implementers. Research findings indicate that the process of transmitting information related to the application is suboptimal. The lack of socialization is due to incomplete business processes and server installation. This condition aligns with Heeks' (2006) findings that e-government projects often fail due to a *design-reality gap*, the gap between the ideal system and the organizational reality.

In the case of Central Mamuju, the gap occurred at:

- ready application design,
- versus the reality of organizations that are not ready to make adjustments.

Without adequate communication, implementers cannot understand the new workflow, thus delaying policy implementation.

### 5.2 Resources: Availability of Human Resources and Unaligned Regulations

Edwards III emphasized that resources are a fundamental element in policy implementation. Field findings indicate:

- Limited technical human resources
- regulations are not yet in line with application business processes
- adequate infrastructure facilities but not sufficient for application operations

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Cordella & Tempini (2015) stated that digitalization requires the support of adequate organizational structures and human resources. Otherwise, digitalization will simply become an "added burden" without increasing public value. The revised Regent's Regulation and grant SOPs indicate that local governments are only in the early stages of adaptation. Regulatory unpreparedness prevents implementation from proceeding as intended.

## 5.3 Disposition: Implementer's Attitude is Supportive, but Not Sufficient

The implementers' positive attitudes, as found in interviews, indicate a mental readiness for change. This aligns with Rogers' (2003) theory on the diffusion of innovation, which states that individual disposition significantly influences technology adoption.

However, attitudinal support alone is not enough because:

- The implementer does not have the tools (ready-to-use applications)
- The implementer does not have special training in using the application
- There are no new SOPs that can be used yet

Thus, despite positive dispositions, structural and resource factors significantly hinder digital transformation.

## 5.4 Bureaucratic Structure: SOP Mismatch as the Main Obstacle

According to Edwards III, an overly rigid or inappropriate bureaucratic structure can hinder policy implementation. Manual grant SOPs don't align with the application process and therefore require revision. This finding aligns with Janssen & Estevez (2013), who emphasized the importance of *business process integration* for e-government success. Without such integration, applications will fail due to the lack of supportive administrative structures. Dwiyanto (2015) emphasized the importance of governance changes to improve accountability. In this context, the Sabilulungan application is capable of improving accountability, but an unprepared bureaucracy prevents these benefits from being realized. The integration of field findings and theory indicates that the implementation of the Sabilulungan application replication in Central Mamuju Regency has not been effective due to structural, technical, and regulatory barriers. Despite dispositional support from implementers, communication, resources, and bureaucratic structure are the main obstacles. Overall, the research results indicate that successful implementation depends not only on the availability of the application, but also on organizational readiness, adaptive regulations, and strong inter-regional coordination.

## 6. Conclusion

This study concludes that the implementation of the Sabilulungan Application replication policy in Central Mamuju Regency has not been effective because the four main indicators according to the Edwards III model: communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure have not been optimally met. Policy communication is still hampered by the lack of socialization and the unprepared server infrastructure, so that information related to the application's business processes is not properly conveyed to the Regional Government Work Units (SKPD). Resource limitations in the form of a lack of technical human resources, the need to revise regulations such as the Regent's Regulation and grant SOPs, and reliance on manual mechanisms make implementation difficult to implement immediately. Meanwhile, although the attitudes and commitments of policy implementers tend to be positive, this has not been able to accelerate implementation because it is not supported by technical and regulatory readiness. This finding is in line with Heeks' (2006) *design–reality gap theory* that digital projects will be hampered if organizational reality does not match the system design. From a bureaucratic structural perspective, the study found that the existing manual mechanisms require fundamental adjustments to grant governance before the application can be used, including business process integration and inter-agency workflow alignment. This situation demonstrates that the successful replication of digital applications depends not only on technology, but also on organizational readiness, inter-unit integration, and effective coordination. Referring to the views of Janssen and Estevez (2013) and Dwiyanto (2015), the digitalization of public services can only be successful if supported by bureaucratic reform, increased human resource capacity, and adaptive regulations. Therefore, the implementation of the Sabilulungan Application will run optimally if local governments harmonize policies, strengthen technical capacity, and ensure more targeted and comprehensive policy communication.

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