THE EFFECTIVENESS OF E-GOVERNMENT IN IMPROVING THE PERFORMANCE OF PUBLIC SERVICES IN THE AIR BATU DISTRICT GOVERNMENT

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Abstract: This research aims to analyze the effectiveness of implementing e-government in improving public service performance in the Air Batu District Government. The research method used is a descriptive qualitative approach with data collection techniques through interviews, observation and documentation studies. The research results show that the implementation of e-government in Air Batu District has had a positive impact on improving the quality of public services, which is reflected in several aspects: (1) increasing the efficiency of service time, (2) transparency of administrative procedures, (3) easy access to information for the public, and (4) reducing operational costs. However, several obstacles are still found in its implementation, such as limited technological infrastructure, human resource readiness, and the uneven level of digital literacy in society. This research recommends the need to strengthen digital infrastructure, increase apparatus competency, and continue outreach to the community to optimize the use of e-government in Air Batu District.

INTRODUCTION

The development of information and communication technology (ICT) has brought significant changes in various aspects of life, including in the administration of government. One of the implementations of ICT in government is electronic government (e-government) which aims to improve the quality of public services through the use of digital technology. E-Government is one of the manifestations of the answer to the current development of information technology. This is an influence on the change in the management pattern of government administration which is more inclined to the use of technology in carrying out its performance (Juliarso, 2019).

The application of information and communication technology in the public sector has become an urgent need in order to improve the efficiency, transparency,

and accountability of public services. E-Government, or electronic government, is one of the initiatives that aims to utilize this technology to improve the quality of services to the community (Rifdan et al., 2024).

In general, e-government can be defined as computer and internet-based applications that are used to improve government relations and services to the general public, or commonly referred to as G2C (Government to Citizen). In addition, there is also a relationship between the government and business, which is commonly referred to as G2B (Government to Business). This relationship can even extend to other governments or local governments, commonly referred to as G2G (Government to Government). "The use of information technologies by government agencies, such as mobile computing, the Internet, and wide area networks, has the potential to revolutionize interactions with businesses, citizens, and other branches of government. This is known as e-government" (Indrajit, 2006).

In line with Presidential Instruction Number 3 of 2003 concerning National Policies and Strategies for E-government Development, various government agencies, including at the sub-district level, have begun to implement the e-government system. The term e-government gives meaning that the use of technology today is the main means that replaces conventional media. E-government applications have become known since the advent of the internet and have become a phenomenon that affects all aspects of human life (Abu-Shanab, 2017). This system is expected to make it easier for the public to access various administrative services, such as the management of ID cards, family cards, moving letters, and various other public services. However, in its implementation, there are still various challenges and obstacles that need to be evaluated comprehensively.

Some of the problems that often arise in the implementation of e-government at the sub-district level include: limited technological infrastructure, readiness of human resources, digital gaps in the community, and the lack of optimal system integration between government agencies. Air Batu District, as one of the public service units that deals directly with the community, has also implemented e-government in its administrative services. In Air Batu District itself, it is necessary to conduct a study on the extent of the effectiveness of the implementation of e-government in improving the quality of public services. The goal is to improve the services used in the automation of the community service administration process at

the Village Office in a fast, accurate and easy way (Ramdani, 2018).

Evaluation of the effectiveness of e-government is important to ensure that the technology investment made by the government really provides real benefits for improving public services. This is also in line with the public's demand for faster, easier, and more transparent services in the digital era. In addition, the results of the evaluation can be the basis for the improvement and development of a better e-government system in the future.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative descriptive method with a case study approach. According to (Sugiyono, 2018), the qualitative descriptive method is a research method based on the philosophy of postpositivism used to research on the natural condition of objects (as opposed to experiments) where the researcher is the key instrument of the data collection technique is carried out in a trigulated (combined) manner, data analysis is inductive/qualitative, and the results of qualitative research emphasize meaning rather than generalization. Data collection was carried out through interviews with sub-district officials and service users, direct observation of the e-government system used, and documentation studies on related policies and reports.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Utilization of Information Technology for Public Services

The transition of the conventional government system to electronic-based is certainly nothing but to be able to provide changes for the better in public services. The increase and advancement of technology with the existence of internet media is one of the government's efforts to improve the quality of public services in Indonesia. The government creates changes in the system electronically to focus on public services in Indonesia, the government really hopes that the existence of electronic services or online media using the internet can make it easier for people to use government service facilities.

The use of information technology (IT) in public services, especially through e-government, has become the main focus in improving the performance and quality of services provided by the government to the community. E-government refers to

the use of information technology to support interaction between the government and the community, as well as improve efficiency and transparency in public services.

The benefits of government carried out through electronic government (e-government) include:

a. Increases Efficiency: E-government enables the automation of administrative processes, reduces bureaucracy, and speeds up the completion of services. This has an impact on reducing the time and cost required to obtain public services.

b. Increase Transparency: With digital systems, information regarding public policies, programs, and budgets can be easily accessed by the public. This helps reduce the potential for corruption and increase public trust in the government.

c. Better Accessibility: Technology allows people in remote areas to access services that were previously only available in large cities. This helps reduce the gap between urban and rural areas.

d. Community Participation: E-government increases community participation in decision-making and policy-making, through an online platform that allows for direct feedback from citizens.

A study conducted by Nugraha and Santika revealed that the implementation of e-government, which utilizes electronic platforms in government administration, is able to significantly improve the quality of public services, both in terms of effectiveness and efficiency (Nugraha & Santika, 2020). Therefore, information technology plays an important role in facilitating various work activities and helping agencies achieve their goals (Sakir, 2024).

According to (Buchari, 2016) the use of information technology in the management of public services can improve the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of public services. Information technology can help people more easily access public services, make governments more transparent and more accountable for what they do, and make public service processes faster. In this case, the development of mobile applications is very important because it is a public service medium that can make it easier for the public to access information and public services quickly and efficiently. In addition, it is very important to improve the ability and skills of human resources in the use of information technology in the management of public services.

Challenges of Implementing E-Government for the Community

The e-Government Development Index (EDGI) survey released by the United Nations (UN) in 2020 ranked Indonesia 88th out of 193 countries. This position is still lagging behind other ASEAN countries. One of the factors is that because e-government or electronic-based government systems (SPBE) have not been integrated, thousands of data are still scattered on the islands. National e-government is difficult to realize because there are thousands of data centers, thousands of applications, and databases whose applications and databases are finally spread across thousands of data centers or server rooms (Alinea.id, 2021).

There are many challenges that must be faced by the Indonesian government in order to implement e-government to the fullest. The points below are identified based on the findings above, with reference to data from all eight publications of the UN E-Government Survey.

a. Infrastructure Availability

The availability of infrastructure is the main factor hindering the implementation of e-government in Indonesia. Based on the analysis of data obtained from the UN E-Government Survey, it is known that of the three indices that determine the amount of Indonesia's EGDI, the TII index is the lowest index.

b. The Digital Divide

The digital divide is related to the dynamics of problems in the demographics of Indonesian society. Based on age, adults are the primary target of e-government products. However, in general, young people are a group that is more fluent in using technology. In addition, the level of education is another factor that affects the implementation of e-government. According to Hargittai and Hinnant, the tendency of e-government users comes from people with a high level of education, because they have a greater interest in government issues than groups with lower secondary education levels.

c. Differences of Interest between the Community and the Government

The government and society have different goals when using e-government. The government takes a managerial point of view, and emphasizes the e-government communication function in its

implementation.   However, the community expects an increase in interaction (two-way communication) with the government through e-government. In other words, the development of e-government technology has not been in line with the government's control over the technology concerned.

CONCLUSION

The application of information technology through e-government is a strategic step in improving public service performance. By utilizing IT, the government can provide services that are more efficient, transparent, and responsive to the needs of the community. However, to achieve optimal results, it is important for governments to address existing challenges, including improving human resource competencies and strengthening IT infrastructure. This success will not only increase public trust in the government but also contribute to improving the overall quality of life

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