

Improving The Accountability And Efficiency: A Study of Digital Transformation of Goods/Services Procurement In Gorontalo

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Abstract

Digital transformation has become one of the important phenomena in public sector management in this modern era. The development of information and communication technology has provided opportunities for the government to increase efficiency, transparency, and accountability in the provision of public services, including in the procurement of goods/services. This study examines digital transformation in government procurement of goods/services in Gorontalo Province, with a focus on efforts to improve efficiency, transparency, and accountability. The analysis was conducted on four main elements that influence the digital transformation process, namely human resources (HR), organizational structure, procurement process, and technology. The main findings of this study indicate that there are several significant challenges, including limited HR competency in the field of information technology and procurement, as well as an organizational structure that does not fully support the implementation of digitalization. In addition, the procurement process that still relies on manual procedures and limited technology adoption are also major obstacles. Recommendations resulting from this study include increasing HR capacity through training and certification, organizational restructuring to improve coordination between work units, and the development and integration of more advanced and connected technology. This study also emphasizes the importance of implementing ethical principles in every stage of procurement, in order to ensure transparency and public trust. With a comprehensive approach, it is hoped that digital transformation can improve the quality of public services and regional competitiveness in the digital era.

Keywords

Efficiency, Transparency, Ethics

Introduction

In Indonesia, government procurement of goods/services is one of the activities that has a strategic role, both in terms of managing the state budget and in supporting economic growth. Digital transformation in the procurement of goods/services aims to reduce bureaucracy, increase operational efficiency, and minimize the potential for irregularities, such as corruption and collusion.

Government procurement of goods/services in Indonesia has undergone various significant changes along with the implementation of an electronic procurement system or e-procurement. This system is expected to be a solution to various challenges that have so far hampered the conventional procurement process. The e-procurement system not only functions as an administrative tool, but also as a tool to increase transparency through open access to public procurement information (Utami & Sembiring, 2021). However, the implementation of this system in various regions, including in Gorontalo Province, still faces various obstacles that affect its effectiveness.

Digital transformation in procurement of goods/services includes various important elements, such as human resources (HR), organizational structure, processes, and technology. Each element has a significant contribution in supporting the success of this transformation. First, the HR aspect is often a major challenge. The lack of qualified experts in the field of information technology can hinder the optimal implementation of the e-procurement system (Lestari & Ramdhani, 2022). Second, an organizational structure that is less adaptive to change is often an obstacle to integrating new technology into the procurement process. Third, the procurement process that has not been fully standardized causes a lack of efficiency in the implementation of this activity. Finally, the technology used in e-procurement is often not well integrated, reducing the effectiveness and innovation in procurement of goods/services. In Gorontalo Province, digital transformation in procurement of goods/services has become one of the priorities in efforts to improve good governance. However, the various challenges faced indicate the need for an in-depth study to identify the factors that influence the success of this digital transformation. The lack of experts in the field of information technology, for example, is one of the main obstacles that hinders the effectiveness of the implementation of the e-procurement system. In addition, the organizational structure at the local government level often does not support the optimal implementation of this system. This problem is exacerbated by the lack of coordination and communication between work units, which results in low efficiency and accountability in the procurement process. In line with this, this study aims to explore and analyze the implementation of digital transformation in the procurement of goods/services at the Procurement Bureau of the Regional Secretariat of Gorontalo Province. This study focuses on four main elements of digital transformation, namely human resources, organizational structure, processes, and technology. Through a multidimensional approach, this study is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of the

actual conditions of digital transformation in the government procurement sector in Gorontalo Province (Omar, 2024).

In a global context, digital transformation has become one of the main indicators of the success of bureaucratic reform in various countries. Various studies show that the application of digital technology in the procurement of goods/services can increase operational efficiency by up to 30% and reduce the potential for human error (Widyastuti, 2023). In addition, digital technology also allows for better transparency, so that the public can directly monitor the procurement process carried out by the government. This not only increases accountability but also builds public trust in the government (Madon, 2017).

However, digital transformation cannot be separated from the existing challenges, both at the national and local levels. In Indonesia, these challenges include the digital divide, limited technological infrastructure, and the lack of regulations that support the implementation of new technologies in the procurement of goods/services. At the regional level, these challenges are often exacerbated by the lack of support from stakeholders and low awareness of the importance of digital transformation in supporting good governance (Putra & Kusnadi, 2020).

In the context of Gorontalo Province, this study found that one of the main challenges in implementing digital transformation is the lack of human resources who have competence in the field of information technology. Based on the data collected, there is a significant gap between the need for experts and the number of available human resources. This has a direct impact on the low effectiveness of the e-procurement system implemented. In addition, the organizational structure at the local government level is also an obstacle in the digital transformation process. Many work units do not yet have functional positions that are appropriate to support the implementation of new technologies. This problem is exacerbated by the lack of performance monitoring carried out by the local government, so that the procurement process often does not run according to the targets that have been set (Straut, 2020).

The technological aspect is also a major highlight in this study. Although the Gorontalo Provincial Government has adopted an e-procurement system, the level of technology integration in the management of goods/services procurement is still relatively low. Many applications used are not automatically connected, so the procurement process still requires manual intervention. This not only reduces efficiency but also increases the potential for errors in the procurement process. In addition, the lack of technological innovation is also an inhibiting factor in supporting digital transformation in this sector. For example, the use of blockchain-based technology to ensure transparency and data security in the procurement of goods/services has not been widely implemented in Gorontalo Province.

This study also highlights the importance of ethics in the digital transformation of goods/services procurement. Organizational ethics, public ethics, and professional/ASN ethics are important elements that must be considered in the implementation of digital transformation. Ethics

not only function as a moral guide for procurement implementers, but also as a tool to increase public trust in the government. This study recommends that local governments develop an ethical framework that has the same legal force as regulations. This framework must be implemented in stages, starting from the central level to local governments, to ensure that each procurement process is carried out in accordance with the established ethical principles (Clements, 2020).

Thus, this study makes a significant contribution to understanding the various aspects that influence the success of digital transformation in the procurement of goods/services in Gorontalo Province. The findings of this study are not only relevant to local governments, but also to various stakeholders involved in the procurement process of goods/services. Through improving HR competency, organizational restructuring, technology updates, and improving communication processes, digital transformation in the procurement of goods/services can run more effectively and efficiently. This study also emphasizes the importance of developing regulations that support the implementation of digital transformation, including in the ethical aspect, to ensure that the procurement process of goods/services is not only efficient, but also transparent and accountable.

In conclusion, digital transformation in procurement of goods/services is a strategic step in supporting bureaucratic reform and good governance. Although the challenges faced are quite large, collaborative efforts between the government, stakeholders, and the community are expected to overcome these obstacles. This study provides valuable insights for policy makers in designing more effective strategies to support digital transformation in the public sector, especially in procurement of goods/services.

Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design. This approach was chosen to deeply understand the phenomenon of digital transformation in the procurement of goods/services at the Procurement Bureau of Goods/Services of the Regional Secretariat of Gorontalo Province. Through this approach, researchers seek to explore comprehensive information related to the implementation of digital transformation with a focus on four main elements, namely human resources, organizational structure, processes, and technology.

The data collection technique in this study was carried out using the triangulation method, which includes in-depth interviews, observations, and document studies. Interviews were conducted with key informants selected purposively, namely officials and staff at the Procurement Bureau of Goods/Services and other related parties who have knowledge and experience in the procurement of goods/services. Observations were made to directly observe the procurement process of goods/services and the use of existing technology. Document studies were conducted by analyzing various official documents, such as regulations, performance reports, and relevant statistical data.

The selection of informants in this study used the snowball sampling technique, where the initial informant recommended the next informant who was considered to have important information related to the research topic. This technique allows researchers to obtain richer and more in-depth data. All data obtained were then analyzed using a thematic analysis approach, which involves the process of coding, grouping themes, and interpreting data to identify patterns that are relevant to the research objectives.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, this study applies source and method triangulation techniques. Source triangulation is carried out by comparing information obtained from various informants, while method triangulation is carried out by comparing the results of interviews, observations, and document analysis. Thus, this study is expected to be able to produce accurate and reliable findings. In addition, this approach allows for holistic identification of problems in the implementation of digital transformation in the procurement of goods/services at the local government level.

This study also considers the specific context in Gorontalo Province to ensure the relevance of the findings to local conditions. The use of a case study approach provides flexibility to explore the factors that influence the implementation of digital transformation directly. The findings of this study are expected to provide not only theoretical contributions, but also practical recommendations that can help local governments in overcoming challenges and increasing the effectiveness of procurement of goods/services. This includes increasing human resource capacity, organizational restructuring, technology updates, and optimizing communication processes to create an efficient, transparent, and accountable procurement system.

Results and Discussion

Digital transformation in government procurement of goods/services in Gorontalo Province shows great potential to increase efficiency, transparency, and accountability, but also faces a number of challenges that require attention. Based on the research results, there are four main elements that are the focus of the analysis, namely human resources (HR), organizational structure, processes, and technology. Each element has a strategic role in supporting the success of digital transformation, but can also be a source of obstacles if not managed properly.

1. Human Resources (HR)

One of the main findings of this study is the shortage of qualified experts in the field of information technology and procurement of goods/services. This gap is seen at certain functional positions, such as Associate Experts and First Experts, who play an important role in the implementation of the e-procurement system. Existing HR generally have limited technical understanding, both related to technology operations and data management. This problem has a direct impact on the implementation of less than optimal procurement, thus reducing the efficiency and effectiveness of the system.

In addition, the training provided to employees is considered inadequate to meet the needs of ever-evolving technology. The recommendation to overcome this problem is to increase investment in HR competency development, both through technical training, certification, and further education. The Gorontalo Provincial Government needs to collaborate with educational institutions and professional training providers to produce experts who are ready to face the challenges of digital transformation.

2. Organizational Structure

This study also found that the organizational structure in the Bureau of Procurement of Goods/Services does not fully support digital transformation. One of the main obstacles is the lack of coordination between work units, which causes the procurement process to run in silos (separately) without adequate synergy. In addition, not all work units have relevant functional positions to support technology implementation, so the workload is often uneven. An organizational structure that is less adaptive to change also becomes an obstacle in integrating new technology. To increase effectiveness, local governments need to restructure their organizations by considering the needs of relevant technology and work functions. Placement of functional positions that are in accordance with the demands of digital transformation is also important to ensure that each procurement process can run efficiently and transparently.

3. Procurement Process

From the process side, it was found that the procurement procedure for goods/services in Gorontalo Province still has many obstacles, especially related to standardization and documentation. The e-procurement system used has not been fully integrated, so most processes still require manual intervention. This not only slows down the implementation of procurement, but also opens up opportunities for errors and inaccuracies in data.

The procurement process is also not supported by systematic monitoring and evaluation, making it difficult to measure the performance and success of digital transformation. To overcome this problem, there needs to be standardization of procurement procedures supported by digital-based technology. The use of an integrated monitoring dashboard, for example, can help monitor procurement performance in real time.

4. Technology

From a technological perspective, this study identified that the level of technology adoption in the goods/services procurement sector is still relatively low. Although local governments have implemented an e-procurement system, the technology used is not optimal. Most of the existing applications are not interconnected, so the data generated cannot be accessed efficiently by various work units. The lack of technological innovation is also an obstacle in supporting digital transformation. For example, the use of blockchain technology to ensure data security and transparency of the procurement process has not been widely implemented.

In this context, local governments need to invest in the development of more advanced and integrated technology. The use of technology such as artificial intelligence for data analysis and decision making can also be a solution to increase the efficiency and accuracy of the procurement process. Dimensi Etika dalam Transformasi Digital In addition to technical aspects, this study also highlights the importance of ethical dimensions in digital transformation. Organizational ethics, public ethics, and professional/ASN ethics are important elements that must be considered in the implementation of digital transformation. These ethics not only function as moral guidelines, but also as tools to build public trust in the government. For example, transparency in data management and the use of technology must be accompanied by compliance with established ethical principles. The Gorontalo Provincial Government needs to develop an ethical framework that has the same legal force as regulations. This framework must be implemented in stages, from the central to regional levels, to ensure that every procurement process is carried out in accordance with ethical principles.

Discussion and Practical Implications

The results of this study provide several practical implications for local governments in implementing digital transformation in the goods/services procurement sector. First, the importance of increasing human resource capacity through relevant training and education. Second, organizational restructuring is needed to create synergy between work units and optimize the function of functional positions. Third, investment in new, integrated and innovative technology must be a priority to support the efficiency and transparency of the procurement process. Fourth, the application of ethical principles in every stage of procurement must be the foundation for building public trust in the government.

In the context of Gorontalo Province, the findings of this study are relevant to assist local governments in identifying challenges and opportunities in digital transformation. By overcoming the various obstacles that have been identified, digital transformation in the procurement of goods/services sector can run more effectively and efficiently. In addition, the implementation of more advanced and innovative technology can also open up opportunities for local governments to improve the competitiveness and quality of public services in the digital era. In conclusion, digital transformation in procurement of goods/services is a strategic step that requires attention to various important elements, including human resources, organizational structure, processes, technology, and ethics. With a holistic and collaborative approach, local governments are expected to be able to realize a more transparent, accountable, and efficient procurement system, so that it can provide greater benefits to the community.

Conclusion

Digital transformation in procurement of goods/services in Gorontalo Province has great potential to improve efficiency, transparency, and accountability. However, this process also faces significant challenges that need to be managed properly in order to be implemented optimally. Based on the research results, there are four key elements that need to be considered: human resources (HR), organizational structure, procurement process, and technology.

First, limited HR in information technology and procurement expertise is the main obstacle. To overcome this, it is necessary to improve competence through training and collaboration with educational institutions and professional training providers. Second, the organizational structure that does not fully support digital transformation must also be improved by restructuring to improve coordination between work units and placing relevant functional positions. Third, the procurement process still relies on manual intervention, causing slow implementation and data errors. Therefore, there needs to be standardization of procurement procedures supported by digital technology to accelerate and improve accuracy. Fourth, the adoption of technology is still limited and a challenge. The development and integration of more advanced technologies, such as artificial intelligence and blockchain, must be a priority to improve efficiency and security.

In addition, the ethical dimension is also important to ensure public trust in the government. The principle of transparency and compliance with the code of ethics must be applied throughout the procurement process. The Gorontalo Provincial Government needs to develop an ethical framework that supports the implementation of this digital transformation. Overall, to realize a more efficient and transparent procurement system, more attention needs to be paid to increasing human resource capacity, organizational restructuring, implementing innovative technology, and enforcing ethics. With a holistic approach, digital transformation can bring great benefits to society, improve the quality of public services, and strengthen regional competitiveness in the digital era.

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