



ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION DIGITALIZATION IN INDONESIA AND SOUTH KOREA

Rio Asmoro Saputro¹, Aminullah²

¹ Public Administration Study Program, Universitas Yudharta Pasuruan, Indonesia

² Public Administration Study Program, Universitas Yudharta Pasuruan, Indonesia

Email: rioasmoro53@gmail.com

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Abstract :

The rapid advancement of digital technology has triggered profound transformations in public administration systems across the world. Public administration digitalization is no longer understood merely as the application of information technology to public services, but rather as a comprehensive bureaucratic reform encompassing changes in administrative processes, service delivery mechanisms, institutional coordination, and the relationship between government and citizens. Digitalization has become a strategic instrument to enhance governmental effectiveness, efficiency, transparency, and accountability, while simultaneously improving the overall quality of public services. Indonesia and South Korea are two countries that have actively adopted public administration digitalization policies, yet they demonstrate different levels of maturity, readiness, and achievement. This study aims to analyze and compare the implementation of public administration digitalization in Indonesia and South Korea by focusing on policy frameworks, digital infrastructure development, service integration, and the capacity of public sector human resources. This research employs a qualitative descriptive method with a comparative approach. Data were collected through literature review and document analysis, drawing from national and international academic journals, reports from international organizations, and official government publications from both Indonesia and South Korea. Data analysis was conducted through systematic stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that South Korea has achieved a more advanced level of public administration digitalization than Indonesia, particularly in terms of integrated digital public services, equitable digital infrastructure development, and highly competent public sector human resources. In contrast, Indonesia continues to face significant challenges, including regional digital disparities, weak inter-agency coordination, limited system integration, and constrained bureaucratic capacity in managing digital transformation. This study is expected to contribute to policy evaluation and provide strategic references for strengthening public administration digitalization in Indonesia.

Keywords: digitalization, public administration, e-government, Indonesia, South Korea

INTRODUCTION

Digitalization has emerged as a central agenda in public administration reform worldwide, driven by the rapid development of information and communication technologies. Governments are increasingly expected to deliver public services more efficiently, transparently, and responsively in an era characterized by technological disruption and rising citizen expectations. The adoption of digital technologies in the public sector is widely perceived as a key mechanism for enhancing governance performance and strengthening public trust.



Public administration digitalization goes beyond the mere digitization of administrative procedures. It involves fundamental transformations in bureaucratic workflows, organizational structures, inter-institutional coordination, and governance culture. Digital transformation requires governments to adopt more open, collaborative, and citizen-centered approaches, shifting away from rigid hierarchical models toward more flexible and network-based governance arrangements.

In Indonesia, public administration digitalization has been institutionalized through the **Electronic-Based Government System (Sistem Pemerintahan Berbasis Elektronik/SPBE)** policy. SPBE aims to establish effective, efficient, transparent, and accountable governance through the systematic use of information technology. Despite notable progress, the implementation of SPBE continues to encounter significant obstacles, such as unequal digital infrastructure across regions, limited interoperability between government systems, and insufficient digital competencies among civil servants.

In contrast, South Korea is widely recognized as one of the global leaders in digital government. The South Korean government has consistently invested in integrated digital public services, data-driven governance, and continuous capacity building for public officials. This comparative study between Indonesia and South Korea is therefore crucial for identifying best practices and generating strategic insights to strengthen public administration digitalization in Indonesia.

Literature Review

Public administration refers to the process of managing public resources and implementing government policies to achieve national objectives and serve public interests. It plays a vital role in policy formulation, public service delivery, and program implementation. Effective public administration is essential for ensuring that governmental actions align with societal needs and democratic values.

Public administration digitalization is defined as the application of digital technologies to transform administrative systems, work procedures, and service delivery mechanisms within government institutions. The objective of digitalization is not only to improve bureaucratic efficiency but also to enhance transparency, accountability, and responsiveness in governance processes.

E-government refers to the use of information and communication technologies by government institutions to deliver public services electronically. Digital government represents a more advanced stage, emphasizing cross-sectoral service integration, strategic data utilization, policy innovation, and enhanced citizen participation. Digital government reflects a holistic transformation of governance systems rather than isolated technological initiatives.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive research design with a comparative approach. The research objects are the digitalization of public administration in

Indonesia and South Korea. Data were obtained through comprehensive literature review and documentation, including academic journal articles, international organization reports, and official government documents. Data analysis followed systematic stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing to ensure analytical rigor.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Public Administration Digitalization in Indonesia

The digitalization of public administration in Indonesia is primarily implemented through the Electronic-Based Government System (Sistem Pemerintahan Berbasis Elektronik/SPBE), which serves as the national framework for integrating digital technology into governmental processes. Normatively, SPBE aims to improve public service quality, enhance bureaucratic efficiency, strengthen transparency, and promote accountability within public institutions. This policy reflects Indonesia's commitment to aligning its governance practices with global digital transformation trends.

Empirical evidence indicates that digital initiatives have expanded rapidly across various sectors of public administration. Government institutions at both central and local levels have introduced digital platforms for licensing services, population administration, taxation, public procurement, and internal bureaucratic management. These initiatives are intended to simplify administrative procedures, reduce face-to-face interactions, and increase service accessibility for citizens.

However, the results of this study reveal that the implementation of digital public administration in Indonesia remains largely fragmented and sectoral. Many government agencies develop and operate their own digital systems independently, without sufficient coordination or interoperability standards. This fragmentation leads to overlapping applications, inconsistent data management practices, and inefficiencies in service delivery. Instead of creating a seamless digital ecosystem, the proliferation of disconnected platforms often complicates administrative processes for both civil servants and citizens.

Another critical issue identified is the unequal distribution of digital infrastructure across regions. While urban areas—particularly those located in Java—benefit from relatively advanced internet connectivity and digital facilities, many rural and remote regions experience limited access to reliable digital infrastructure. This regional digital divide constrains the effectiveness of digital public services and exacerbates inequality in public service delivery. Citizens in underserved areas are often unable to fully benefit from digital services, undermining the inclusiveness of digital governance initiatives.

From an organizational perspective, the study finds that human resource capacity remains a major challenge. Although the government has introduced various training programs, many civil servants still lack sufficient digital skills and technological literacy. Digital systems are frequently treated as supplementary tools rather than as integral components of administrative

reform. As a result, digitalization has not yet produced a fundamental transformation in bureaucratic culture, decision-making processes, or service orientation.

Analytically, these findings suggest that Indonesia's digitalization efforts are still positioned at the level of e-government, rather than full digital government. The emphasis remains on digitizing existing administrative procedures instead of redesigning governance processes in a more integrated, data-driven, and citizen-centered manner. Without stronger institutional coordination, unified data governance, and sustained human resource development, digitalization risks becoming symbolic rather than transformative.

Public Administration Digitalization in South Korea

In contrast to Indonesia, South Korea demonstrates a highly advanced and integrated model of public administration digitalization. The South Korean government has pursued digital transformation as a long-term national strategy, embedding digital innovation into the core of bureaucratic reform and governance modernization. Digitalization is not treated as a technical add-on but as a fundamental mechanism for improving state capacity and public service performance.

The findings indicate that South Korea's digital public administration is supported by a strong and coherent legal framework, particularly the Digital Government Act, which provides clear guidance for policy implementation, inter-agency coordination, and accountability. This legal foundation ensures continuity and consistency in digital government development across political administrations.

South Korea has successfully established nationally integrated digital service platforms, allowing citizens to access a wide range of public services through a single digital identity. Services related to civil registration, taxation, healthcare, education, and social welfare are interconnected within a unified system. This integration significantly reduces administrative burdens, shortens processing times, and enhances user satisfaction. Citizens are no longer required to navigate multiple agencies or repeatedly submit the same information.

Infrastructure readiness is another decisive factor in South Korea's success. The government has invested heavily in nationwide high-speed internet connectivity, ensuring that digital services are accessible across urban and rural areas alike. This infrastructural equity supports inclusive digital governance and minimizes regional disparities in service access.

Equally important is the development of public sector human resources. South Korea places strong emphasis on continuous training, digital competency development, and innovation-oriented bureaucratic culture. Civil servants are encouraged to adopt data-driven decision-making, experiment with emerging technologies, and collaborate across institutional boundaries. Consequently, digitalization has transformed not only administrative systems but also organizational norms and governance culture.

From an analytical standpoint, South Korea represents a mature digital government model, where technology, institutions, regulations, and human resources function as an integrated system. Digital transformation in South Korea enhances administrative efficiency while simultaneously strengthening public trust and democratic governance.

Comparative Analysis of Indonesia and South Korea

Indicator	Indonesia	South Korea
Policy Framework	SPBE	Digital Government Act
Digital Infrastructure	Uneven	Highly advanced and equitable
Digital Services	Partial and sectoral	Nationally integrated
Human Resources	Limited digital competence	Highly adaptive and skilled

Indonesia’s digitalization trajectory is characterized by incremental and fragmented progress, whereas South Korea follows a systemic and holistic approach. The lack of interoperability and centralized data governance in Indonesia contrasts sharply with South Korea’s integrated digital architecture. This structural difference has significant implications for administrative efficiency, service quality, and citizen trust.

Furthermore, cultural and institutional factors play a crucial role. While Indonesia continues to face bureaucratic resistance to change and limited adaptive capacity, South Korea has cultivated an innovation-oriented public sector culture that embraces technological change. This cultural readiness enables South Korea to continuously refine and expand its digital government initiatives.

Discussion: Strategic Implications for Digital Government Development

The findings of this study underscore that public administration digitalization is fundamentally a governance transformation process, rather than a purely technological endeavor. Indonesia’s experience illustrates the limitations of a technology-centered approach that lacks sufficient institutional integration and human resource development. In contrast, South Korea demonstrates that successful digitalization requires alignment between policy frameworks, institutional structures, technological systems, and organizational culture.

For Indonesia, the comparative insights from South Korea suggest several strategic priorities. These include strengthening inter-agency coordination mechanisms, developing integrated national digital platforms, enhancing data governance frameworks, and investing in continuous capacity building for civil servants. Addressing regional digital disparities through equitable infrastructure development is also essential to ensure inclusive and sustainable digital governance.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that South Korea has achieved a significantly more advanced level of public administration digitalization compared to Indonesia. South Korea's success is reflected in its integrated digital service platforms, comprehensive legal framework, equitable digital infrastructure, and highly competent public sector human resources. Digitalization in South Korea functions not merely as a technological initiative but as a core component of governance reform that enhances administrative efficiency, service quality, and public trust.

In contrast, Indonesia's digitalization of public administration remains at a transitional stage. Although substantial progress has been made through the implementation of the Electronic-Based Government System (SPBE), the findings indicate that digital transformation in Indonesia is still constrained by fragmented service integration, unequal digital infrastructure across regions, and limited bureaucratic readiness. The lack of interoperability among government systems and insufficient coordination between institutions reduce the overall effectiveness of digital public services. Furthermore, disparities in digital access and varying levels of digital competence among civil servants hinder the realization of inclusive and sustainable digital governance.

Based on these findings, this study recommends that the Indonesian government adopt a more comprehensive and integrated approach to public administration digitalization. Strengthening inter-agency coordination and establishing unified national digital platforms are essential to improving service integration and data governance. In addition, continuous investment in human resource development—particularly in digital skills, data literacy, and innovation capacity—should be prioritized to ensure bureaucratic adaptability to technological change.

Moreover, accelerating the equitable expansion of digital infrastructure, especially in rural and underserved regions, is crucial to reducing the digital divide and promoting inclusive access to public services. Digitalization policies should also be aligned with long-term administrative reform strategies to ensure sustainability and institutional coherence. By adopting these strategic measures, Indonesia can move beyond partial digitalization toward a mature digital government system that supports effective, transparent, and citizen-centered governance.

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