



Bureaucratic Reform: Challenges And Opportunities In National Political Development

Hamka Hendra Noer

Universitas Muhammadiyah Jakarta, Indonesia

*Corresponding author: hamka.hn@umj.ac.id

Abstract

The implementation of a good government system achieves the welfare of society. One of the things that can be done to realize a good government system is bureaucratic reform. A country will not run without a government system. The government system will not run without a bureaucracy. Thus, bureaucracy has an important role in running a country. This research aims to discover the various challenges and opportunities in developing national politics related to bureaucratic reform. The method used is a descriptive method with a qualitative approach. The data analysis uses Miles and Hubberman analysis, which consists of three activities that occur simultaneously: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing/verification. The results show that bureaucratic reform aims to create a professional, corruption-free, and capable bureaucracy in serving the public. The development of national politics is a serious challenge, including political uncertainty, policy uncertainty, and limited resources. Besides the challenges, there are also opportunities in developing national politics, including the use of technology and innovation, public participation, and increased transparency.

Keywords: Bureaucracy; Politics; Reform

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1. Introduction

Bureaucracy is the most important element in creating good government, this is because bureaucracy is the implementing element of a country's administration. The country will not be able to run without a government, and the government will not run if there is no bureaucracy in it (Wang et al., 2022). Bureaucracy is an indicator for carrying out government functions, where the function of running government depends on whether the bureaucratic system is running effectively or not. This proves that bureaucracy plays a very central role in determining the success of government performance in carrying out government programs for the welfare of the people of a country (Chen & Liu, 2023; Suryaningsih et al., 2023)

Bureaucratic reform is currently necessary to improve the quality of the state civil service. From a societal perspective, bureaucracy has long been considered difficult, complicated, and unprofessional. From the government's point of view, it is starting to feel uncomfortable with the status of the state civil apparatus, which has the title of arbitrary, corrupt, and unswerving (Teller, 2022). The failure of the bureaucracy to respond to crises, whether economic or political, will affect the achievement of good governance. Ideally, the bureaucracy organizes the administration of public policies and is independent of all political interests. However, bureaucrats currently have a close relationship with political interests (Bertoncello et al., 2015; Gayo, 2022).

The bureaucratic reform process is an activity that will never stop. This is because there will always be changes and dynamics in state management and the complexity of problems that continue to develop. Thus, bureaucratic reform is a sustainable program that must be implemented over time. Therefore, the

bureaucratic reform process must continue to receive support from all parties. All stakeholders or stakeholders need to continue to be involved in it (Wang et al., 2022).

Previous research conducted by Martin (2020) explains that many factors influence bureaucratic reform, both internally and externally, which also determine how bureaucratic reform should be carried out. The failure of bureaucratic reform that has occurred so far is because, at the same time, it has not seriously reformed the political system. Whatever the political system, the bureaucracy will be at the forefront in implementing the products of political system reform (Biadgilign et al., 2019).

The importance of bureaucratic reform makes it necessary for more research to be conducted. Different from previous research, the novelty of this research is that it explains the challenges and opportunities in national political development within the framework of bureaucratic reform. In this way, various solutions to face challenges and opportunities to take advantage of opportunities become wider.

Bureaucracy cannot be separated from the formation of a good government system. So, bureaucratic reform in government is a challenge in itself. For this reason, this research aims to determine the challenges and opportunities in national political developments related to bureaucratic reform.

2. Methods

This research uses a descriptive method with a qualitative approach. Descriptive research is a form of research aimed at describing existing phenomena, both natural phenomena and man-made phenomena (Kim et al., 2017). Descriptive research is a research strategy in which researchers investigate events and phenomena in the lives of individuals and ask one or a group of individuals to tell stories about their lives (Sundler et al., 2019). Meanwhile, qualitative research is based on post-positivism philosophy because it is useful for researching natural objects (as opposed to experiments). The researcher contributes as a key instrument, sampling, data sources are carried out purposively, and snowballing, collection techniques are triangulation (combination), analysis of the data is inductive/qualitative, and the results of qualitative research emphasize meaning rather than generalizations (Rortveit et al., 2020; Taufik & Supriadi, 2022). The data analysis uses Miles and Huberman analysis, which begins with data collection, an integral part of data analysis activities. Followed by data reduction. Data reduction is an effort to summarize the data and then sort the data into certain conceptual units, certain categories, and certain themes. Then, finally, conclusions are drawn from the data that has been processed.

3. Result And Discussion

Bureaucratic reform in Indonesia is important for several reasons, including increasing personnel spending. This is caused by employee recruitment continuing to increase without effective control and the enlargement of the government's bureaucratic organizational structure. Therefore, bureaucratic reform must be carried out to improve employee management and organizational structure to make them more efficient and effective in carrying out government duties and functions (Wallace et al., 2018; Sudrajat, 2023). The role of good governance in improving people's welfare is pursued through the implementation of fair rules (policies) as well as fair allocation and distribution of resources. Bureaucracy is a state institution responsible for carrying out all policies related to the interests of the people in the state. If implemented correctly, bureaucracy can potentially become a tool that increases work efficacy and efficiency (Yera et al., 2020).

Bureaucratic reform aims to create a professional government bureaucracy with adaptive characteristics, integrity, high performance, free and clean from corruption, collusion, and nepotism, capable of serving the public, neutral, prosperous, dedicated, and upholding the basic values and code of ethics of the state apparatus. (Teper et al., 2019). Meanwhile, according to Younessi et al. (2022), the aim of implementing bureaucratic reform is to create a professional government bureaucracy with adaptive characteristics, integrity, high performance, clean and free from corruption, collusion, and nepotism, capable of serving the public, neutral, prosperous, dedicated and upholding the basic values and code of ethics of state officials.

National political developments seriously impact the implementation and success of bureaucratic reform in a country. Bureaucratic reform cannot be separated from ongoing political activities because various policies and changes in the government system are related to the political agenda. Changes in leaders and various changes in government systems are triggers for bureaucratic reform. A change in leadership in the government system, which is the source of administrative change, will trigger reform.

Bureaucratic reform is also related to political desires to help improve government efficiency and performance. So, the development of national politics is important to the success or failure of bureaucratic reform. The challenge facing bureaucratic reform is the still strong political grip on the bureaucracy. Bureaucratic politicization often occurs before regional head elections, causing officials to be caught in a back-and-forth dilemma. Practices like this certainly harm the spirit of upholding integrity and neutrality. Low commitment to reform from politicians in the executive and legislative branches is still a problem (Hilmawan et al., 2023). Other challenges in national political development are as follows:

3.1 Political uncertainty

The instability of national political developments has also hampered the implementation of bureaucratic reform. Political uncertainty causes an environment that is not conducive to changes and innovations in government administration, along with the various demands of community needs that must be met by regional governments, both in efforts to improve the welfare of communities in the region, overcoming several economic, social and cultural problems due to global interactions and the era of free competition. Law no. 23, concerning the Regional Government, states that the Regional Government is directed to accelerate the realization of community welfare through improving services, empowerment, and community participation and increasing competitiveness in the region. According to Oliveira et al. (2023), regional governments in implementing bureaucratic reform, in order to reduce the risks that need to be faced, several principles implementing bureaucratic reform regional stakeholders need to pay attention to:

- a. Bureaucratic reform begins with individual reform and requires the support of change triggers that encourage others to reform themselves;
- b. Professional apparatus is the backbone of implementing bureaucratic reform;
- c. The aim of bureaucratic reform is overall improvement that results in large increases in benefits for society;
- d. The government does not carry out reforms alone. Many partners can participate in improving government performance, And
- e. Bureaucratic reform needs political support to gain great momentum and resonance.

3.2 Limited Resources

Humans have different traits, characters, motivations, and emotions, so they require different handling/management for each individual. Human resources are the most important resource in every organization, where humans act as drivers and managers of other resources. The arrangement of human resources in the bureaucratic reform process can be interpreted as a form of human resource management approach. From the perspective of bureaucratic reform, this approach is carried out in order to address, overcome, and, at the same time, anticipate human resource problems in the bureaucracy (Qin et al., 2023; Kristhy et al., 2023). Bureaucratic reform is a means for a country to achieve good governance. In implementing bureaucratic reform, the most important thing is to improve the quality of human resources in government officials. Apparatus human resources are the most important in determining the success of implementing bureaucratic reform (Aspinall & Mietzner, 2014). One strategy for improving the quality of human resources in the apparatus is employee welfare. Improvement of the personnel system and it is hoped that in its implementation, it will be able to provide remuneration to improve employee performance so that they can maximize the implementation of services and carry out their functions so that "Good Governance" is realized, for leaders to be wiser and fairer in assigning tasks to their employees because, in the remuneration system, it is calculated from the workload and tasks they have carried out. If the distribution of tasks is unequal, then the welfare of employees in the agency will also be unequal (Chaffin et al., 2014).

3.3 Policy ambiguity

Government bureaucracy plays a major role, even the sole role, in developing a country. Continuous bureaucratic centralization is difficult to separate from practical political interests. The bureaucracy, which should be an institution implementing public policy, is now experiencing a shift in its role to become a practical political instrument (Galvin et al., 2017). For example, Law No. 22 of 1999, revised to No. 32 of 2004 concerning Regional Government, has created regional autonomy as a form of decentralization to bring regional government services closer to the community. However, it turns out that regional government services and performance have not shown optimal results (Al-Ghetaa et al., 2022). Various bureaucratic reform policies in Indonesia still have objectives that are not clear enough, so their implementation becomes less effective.

Apart from challenges, there are opportunities in national political development as follows:

1. Technology and innovation

Information technology can be used in people's daily lives, from education, business, and organizations; this encourages governments and information providers to continuously develop information and technology systems (Bell, 2018). Information and Communication Technology should be mandatory for developing public service innovation as a form of bureaucratic development through e-government (Wand et al., 2023). Without supporting technology, information systems cannot produce accurate and effective information. Thus, technology and innovation become opportunities for national political development.

2. Public participation

Community involvement in decision-making and implementing reforms helps increase accountability and public trust. Public participation in formulating policies and implementing development programs and public services is a basic element in good governance because community participation will help the government make government efficient and realize community welfare. As with simultaneous national elections, the aim is to create congruent election results (Hadiz, 2018).

3. Strengthening and increasing transparency

Transparency refers to a situation where all aspects of the service delivery process are open and easily known by users and stakeholders who need it (Younessi et al., 2018). The level of government transparency also contributes to a good government system. The higher the transparency, the higher the public's trust in the government. This is an opportunity for the development of national politics in Indonesia. In the context of public information disclosure, clarifying the relationship between freedom of information seems necessary. Open and transparent government, considering that one and the other cannot be separated. In principle, information transparency in bureaucratic circles is synonymous with well-programmed, planned, and sustainable socialization activities. So, to fulfill the determining aspects to achieve good and clean governance, supervision from the mass media and high public participation are required (Cruz et al., 2021).

4. Conclusion

Bureaucratic reform in Indonesia is very important. Bureaucratic reform aims to create a bureaucracy that is professional, free of corruption, and capable of serving the public. Developing national politics is a serious challenge, including political uncertainty, policy ambiguity, and limited resources. Besides challenges, there are opportunities in national political development, including the use of technology and innovation, public participation, and increased transparency. Thus, bureaucratic reform in Indonesia is related to resources and influenced by various other changes. So, the importance of strong political commitment to political and technological developments continues to change.

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