Analysis of the Failures and Successes of Digital Public Service Applications:

A Case Study in the Regency of Central Java Province

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Abstract: The digitization of public services has become a primary focus for local governments in Central Java Province. Various policies and digital applications have been introduced to enhance the efficiency and accessibility of public services. However, the implementation of these applications often encounters obstacles, resulting in many programs failing to meet public expectations. This article aims to analyze the factors contributing to the success and failure of digital public service applications in several regencies and cities in Central Java Province. This research employs a qualitative approach by analyzing various policies and evaluation results of existing applications. The findings indicate that successful applications possess characteristics of easy accessibility, robust policy support, and adequate human resource readiness. Conversely, failures are often attributed to inadequate planning, insufficient user training, and misalignment of applications with community needs. Based on these findings, this article provides policy and management recommendations for public services to enhance the effectiveness of digital applications, emphasizing the importance of comprehensive planning, effective socialization, and continuous evaluation to ensure optimal utilization by the community.

Keywords: Public service, digitalization, public service management, public policy.

1. Introduction

The digitalization of public services has become a strategic agenda for governments across various regions, including Central Java Province. This digital transformation is anticipated to enhance the efficiency, transparency, and accessibility of public services, enabling citizens to directly experience the benefits of technological advancements (Bertot, Jaeger, & Grimes, 2010). However, in practice, the implementation of digital public service applications often encounters numerous obstacles that hinder the achievement of these goals. Some applications even fail to meet public expectations due to inadequate planning, insufficient user training, and incompatibility with local needs (Gil-Garcia & Pardo, 2005). Conversely, certain applications have been successfully implemented owing to user-friendly system characteristics, robust policy support, and the readiness of human resources (Coursey & Norris, 2008). Therefore, it is imperative to conduct an in-depth analysis of the factors influencing the success and failure of digital public service application implementations. This study aims to identify and analyze these factors through case studies in several districts/cities in Central Java Province, and to provide policy recommendations that can enhance the effectiveness of digital applications in the delivery of public services.

In the context of Central Java Province, various regencies and cities have initiated numerous digital applications to enhance public services, such as population administration, healthcare, education, and others. However, the success of each initiative varies greatly, depending on a multitude of complex factors. On one hand, some regions exhibit significant progress through the implementation of applications that have successfully improved the quality of public services and citizen satisfaction (Moon, 2002). On the other hand, a considerable number of programs have faltered due to unprepared infrastructure, low levels of digital literacy among users, and inadequate support from relevant stakeholders (Heeks, 2003).

Through this research, it is anticipated that the key factors influencing the success and failure of the implementation of digital public service applications in the regencies and cities of Central Java Province can be identified. This study also aims to examine the policies that have been implemented and evaluate their effectiveness in supporting digital transformation in the public service sector. Thus, the findings of this research are expected to serve as a reference for policymakers and practitioners in the public service field to formulate more effective and inclusive strategies for the implementation of digital applications.

The structure of this article commences with a literature review encompassing theories and prior studies related to the implementation of e-government and the digitalization of public services. Subsequently, the research methods employed will be elucidated, followed by the presentation and analysis of the research findings. The concluding section of this article will provide conclusions and recommendations, which are anticipated to contribute significantly to the enhancement of public services in Central Java Province through a digital approach.

By employing a qualitative approach in this study, it is anticipated to provide a comprehensive depiction of the dynamics involved in the implementation of digital public service applications in Central Java Province, while also proposing pragmatic solutions to overcome the various challenges encountered.

2. Methodology

This research employs a qualitative approach to analyze the factors influencing the success and failure in the implementation of digital public service applications in various districts/cities in Central Java Province. The qualitative method was chosen as it allows researchers to deeply comprehend the dynamics occurring within complex and diverse contexts. Data was amassed through the collection of user feedback or reviews of digital public services. Data analysis was conducted using sentiment analysis techniques on user feedback or reviews to identify, measure, and understand user perceptions of specific applications. The research also utilizes supporting data from government websites and related information regarding the socialization and training of digital public service applications.

3. Results and Discussion

This study aims to analyze the factors influencing the success and failure of digital public service applications in regencies and cities within Central Java Province. The research method employed is a comparative analysis of government applications from regencies and cities, utilizing review data and ratings from application platforms such as the Play Store.

Research findings indicate that digital public service applications which receive positive feedback generally have ratings above 4.0, accompanied by a significant number of reviews. For instance, the "Pantau Semar" application from Semarang City received a rating of 4.5 from 31 reviews, with the majority of users praising its reliability and user-friendliness. One user remarked, "For the first time, there is a Semarang city

application that is extremely useful for checking floods, road closures, and traffic congestion." Identified factors of success include an intuitive user interface, swift responses from authorities, and features that are relevant and easily accessible to the public.

Conversely, applications that receive negative feedback typically possess ratings below 3.0 with a substantial number of reviews. For instance, the application "Sapa Mba Ita" from Semarang City has a rating of 2.8 from 23 reviews. Numerous users have complained about technical issues, such as frequent crashes and slow response from the authorities. One review stated, "Unable to register, there is a notification 'data incorrect,' tried multiple times but the issue persists. Please rectify this. Thank you." Factors contributing to this failure include poor application performance, lack of technical support, and inadequate features to meet the needs of the community.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the success of digital public service applications is greatly influenced by the technical quality of the application and the responsiveness of the authorities. To enhance the quality of these applications, it is recommended that district and city governments conduct more intensive trials before the official launch and ensure the presence of adequate technical support systems. Additionally, it is crucial to continuously develop the application in accordance with user needs through the feedback received.

In addition to technical factors and user feedback that influence the success or failure of an application, this study also identifies several other significant aspects. A successful application, such as "Pak Dalman," a population administration app from Kendal Regency with a rating of 3.9 from 54 reviews, demonstrates that active government involvement in public outreach and education regarding the app's usage also plays a crucial role. In the "Pak Dalman" app, the Kendal Regency government, through the Population and Civil Registry Office, conducts training activities called "Technical Guidance for Enthusiastic Village Heads through the Pak Dalman Application" for village officials in Kendal Regency.

Conversely, applications with negative feedback, such as "Kendal Karir" from Kendal Regency, which possesses a rating of 2.0 from 55 reviews, indicate that the primary cause of failure is a lack of communication and user feedback. A significant portion of user reviews have not received a response from the app developers.

Application	Rating	Total Review	Description	Factors of Success/Failure
Pantau Semar (Kota Semarang)	4.5	31	The majority of users commend the reliability and user-friendliness.	• Intuitive interface • Prompt response from authorities • Relevant and easily accessible features
Sapa Mba Ita (Kota Semarang)	2.8	23	Numerous users have lamented technical issues such as crashes	• The application's performance is subpar • There is a lack of technical support • There is a dearth of features that cater to

			and sluggish response times.	the needs of the community
Pak Dalman (Kab. Kendal)	3.9	54	Active governmental engagement in public outreach and education.	• Training and information from the government • Active government involvement
Kendal Karir (Kabupaten Kendal)	2.0	55	The lack of communication and feedback from users has become one of the primary causes of failure.	• The absence of clear communication to convey complaints or suggestions • No channel exists for reporting issues

Source of data: https://play.google.com accessed on 5th October 2024

From a policy perspective, local governments excelling in the implementation of digital public service applications also demonstrate a steadfast commitment to allocating resources for the development and maintenance of these applications. However, within the same districts or cities, there are also applications that are less successful. Therefore, the success of the government's digital public service policies is also influenced by the development units of these public policy applications.

It is recommended that other district and city governments emulate this commendable practice by placing greater emphasis on the development of human resources and information technology infrastructure. Additionally, it is imperative to establish effective communication channels between users and application developers to ensure user feedback is addressed promptly and accurately. Furthermore, good coordination is necessary among application development units and their supervising agencies so that the policies implemented can be uniformly applied across all digital public service applications within the city or district.

4. Conclusion and recommendations:

1. The Success of the Application:

    a. Influenced by the technical quality and responsiveness of the authorities.
    b. An intuitive user interface, swift responsiveness, and pertinent features are of utmost importance.
    c. The active involvement of the government in outreach and education also plays a crucial role.

2. Application Failure:

    a. Due to the application's poor performance, the lack of technical support, and the insufficient features to meet the needs of the community.
    b. The lack of clear communication for conveying complaints or suggestions also contributes to the failure.

3. Recomendations:

a. The municipal and district governments must conduct more rigorous trials before the official launch.
b. Ensure the presence of an adequate technical support system.
c. Develop the application in accordance with user needs through the feedback received.
d. Allocate resources for the development and maintenance of the application.
e. Establish an effective channel of communication between users and application developers.

By implementing the findings of this research, it is anticipated that the digital public service applications in Central Java Province will become more effective in meeting the needs of the populace and enhancing the overall quality of public services. Collaborative efforts between the government, application developers, and the community must also be continuously strengthened to create a better and more sustainable digital ecosystem.

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