

MICROSOCIETY AND HUMAN CAPITAL IN NON-WESTERN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION: IMPLICATIONS FOR PUBLIC SERVICE INNOVATION IN INDONESIA

Ida Bagus Shantih Ananda Wiradarma^{1*}, Lucy Afrilia², Mela Roido Br Situmorang³

^{1,2,3} Public Administration, University of Indonesia, Indonesia

*mela.roido@ui.ac.id

Abstract

The evolution of public administration paradigms reflects a transition from Old Public Administration (OPA), which emphasizes hierarchy, to New Public Management (NPM), which prioritizes efficiency, and subsequently to New Public Service (NPS), which promotes citizen participation. However, these paradigms are largely grounded in Western socio-institutional contexts, resulting in conceptual and practical limitations when applied to non-Western countries such as Indonesia. Despite growing critiques, Indonesian public administration discourse still lacks a systematic framework that integrates local socio-cultural dynamics into public service innovation. Addressing this gap, this article examines Non-Western Public Administration (NWPA) as a contextual alternative by highlighting two fundamental pillars: micro-society and human capital. This study employs a qualitative research design based on systematic literature review and conceptual analysis of peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, policy reports, and selected case studies on public service practices in Indonesia and other non-Western settings published between 1998 and 2023. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns, conceptual linkages, and contextual dynamics related to governance, participation, and capacity building. The findings indicate that micro-society functions as a community-based arena that fosters cultural legitimacy, collective action, and locally driven innovation, while human capital plays a crucial role in enhancing bureaucratic competence and citizens' capacity to engage meaningfully in governance processes. This article concludes that NWPA is not merely a conceptual alternative to Western paradigms but a practical necessity for developing public governance in Indonesia that is culturally embedded, socially responsive, and resilient in addressing future challenges.

Keywords: Non-Western Public Administration, Micro-society, Human Capital, Public Service Innovation, Collective Welfare.

INTRODUCTION

The development of public administration in the modern world has never been detached from the dynamic paradigm shifts that reflect the interaction between the state, society, and the market. In its early stage, public administration was synonymous with the model of Old Public Administration (OPA), which was rooted in Max Weber's theory of bureaucracy. This model emphasized hierarchy, formal rules, and rigid administrative procedures as mechanisms to ensure stability and legal certainty. OPA played a significant role in building the foundation of the modern bureaucracy; however, it was also often criticized for being too slow, bureaucratic, and unresponsive to the ever-changing needs of society (Weber, 1947). A shift occurred in the 1980s when many Western countries introduced the New Public Management (NPM) paradigm. This paradigm sought to instill private-sector management principles into the public sector, emphasizing efficiency, effectiveness, and performance-based accountability (Hood, 1991).

Through market logic, contractualization, and competition, NPM promised a leaner and faster public service. Yet, the implementation of NPM was not without criticism, as it risked eroding social justice values and reducing citizens to mere consumers rather than active participants with civic rights.

As a response to these limitations, the New Public Service (NPS) paradigm emerged in the early 21st century, emphasizing democracy, collaboration, and citizen participation. Denhardt (2000) asserted that the main task of bureaucracy is not to “control” society as in the logic of OPA, nor merely to “serve customers” as in NPM, but to “serve citizens” within the framework of the public interest. NPS opens broader spaces for citizen participation in the policy-making process, emphasizing that governmental legitimacy arises from civic engagement in deliberation and collective decision-making. Hence, it becomes evident that the evolution of public administration paradigms has moved from being rule-driven, to market-driven, and finally to citizen-driven. However, although these shifts appear progressive, a fundamental issue persists: all these paradigms were born within Western socio-political and economic contexts, which cannot be uncritically applied to non-Western nations such as Indonesia.

Critiques of Western-dominated perspectives in public administration arise because theories and practices developed in Europe and America are frequently treated as universal, despite the vastly different social, cultural, and institutional contexts of non-Western societies. In Indonesia, for instance, bureaucratic practices do not operate solely on Weberian rational-legal principles but are deeply shaped by patrimonial values, patron-client relations, and indigenous norms that predate the modern state. Antlöv (2003) observes that village governance in Indonesia is characterized more by *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation), communal solidarity, and deliberative consensus than by procedural rationality alone. When Western administrative models such as standardized performance measurement, rigid hierarchical accountability, or rule-bound service delivery are applied without adaptation, they often generate policy gaps between formal design and actual practice. These gaps can be seen in development programs that emphasize individual accountability and output indicators but overlook communal decision-making processes, resulting in low local ownership, symbolic compliance, or informal resistance at the grassroots level. Such distortions demonstrate that public governance in Indonesia cannot be detached from its embedded social and cultural systems. Consequently, the concept of Non-Western Public Administration (NWPA) emerges as an effort to reconstruct public administration by incorporating local values and institutional realities that have long been marginalized within Western-centric theoretical frameworks.

NWPA is not merely a rejection of Western theories but rather an epistemological proposal to create hybridity between global principles and local values. Within this framework, bureaucracy is understood not merely as a rational machine but as a social entity embedded within networks of culture, tradition, and customs. Evans (2004) describes this as embedded autonomy: a professional bureaucracy that remains autonomous yet maintains reciprocal relationships with local communities. In Indonesia, this is reflected in the role of traditional institutions such as *banjar* in Bali, *nagari* in Minangkabau, or *lembaga kerapatan adat* in Riau, which function not only as social institutions but also as legitimate arenas for public decision-making. Values such as *musyawarah mufakat* (consensus deliberation), *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation), and *adat basandi syara', syara' basandi Kitabullah* in Minangkabau exemplify how local principles can serve as sources of legitimacy in public service management.

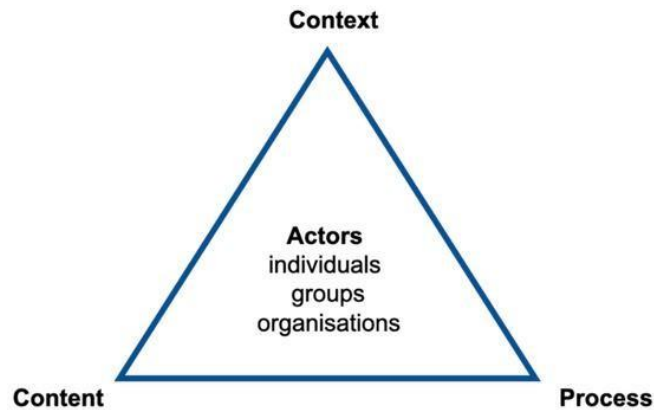
One key approach within NWPAs is the role of microsocieties community-based entities such as villages, customary groups, or social organizations as arenas of social participation and innovation. Microsocieties not only implement policies but also generate local solutions that can evolve into broader public policies. For example, the *posyandu* (integrated health service posts) in Indonesia began as grassroots initiatives led by local women in the 1980s and have since become a national program in maternal and child health. Likewise, the *perarem* (customary regulations) in Bali illustrate a community-based regulatory innovation that has been formally recognized within the national legal system (Atmadja, 2021). In addition to microsocieties, another foundational aspect of NWPAs is the strengthening of human capital. The human capital theory popularized by Becker (1993) emphasizes that investments in education, health, and skills lead to increased productivity and competitiveness.

In the context of public service, human capital refers not only to the quality of bureaucrats but also to citizens' capacity to participate in policy processes. Indonesia faces serious challenges in this regard. According to the World Bank Human Capital Index (2020), Indonesia scored 0.54, meaning that a child born in Indonesia today will reach only 54% of their full productivity potential compared to ideal conditions. This score remains below Singapore (0.88) and Malaysia (0.61), but it signifies room for improvement. Bureaucratic reform programs such as the ASN Academy and public training initiatives like *Kartu Prakerja* align with the idea of strengthening human capital. At the local level, the Digital Village program in West Java demonstrates how the human capital of rural youth can be harnessed to manage technology-based public service applications while reinforcing village microsocieties as centers of social interaction.

The combination of microsociety and human capital within the NWPAs framework creates a unique ecosystem for public service innovation. Microsociety provides cultural roots and social legitimacy, while human capital strengthens adaptability and sustainability. This model is not a mere Western import but a contextual hybridity grounded in local values. For instance, the principle of *musyawarah mufakat* in Javanese and Minangkabau traditions can be integrated with modern deliberative methods, creating a policymaking mechanism that is both participatory and culturally legitimate. Similarly, the spirit of *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) can be combined with digital collaboration logics to foster technology-based public service innovations.

When viewed through the framework of the public policy triangle developed by Walt and Gilson (1994), public administration within the perspective of Non-Western Public Administration (NWPAs) can be mapped as an interaction between actors, processes, and context. This framework is particularly relevant for analyzing NWPAs because it explicitly rejects technocratic and state-centric assumptions by emphasizing the plurality of actors, the non-linear nature of policy processes, and the centrality of contextual factors in shaping policy outcomes. Within this perspective, the actors include not only the government and bureaucracy but also traditional institutions, civil society organizations, and religious groups. The processes are not limited to formal administrative procedures but also encompass practices such as *musyawarah* (deliberation), traditional rituals, and *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation). Meanwhile, the context involves cultural values, social structures, and local norms that give meaning to policy actions. Within this framework, public service innovation in Indonesia must therefore be understood as the result of a continuous dialogue and at times tension between global administrative norms and locally embedded forms of governance and wisdom.

Figure 1. Public Policy Triangle – Walt & Gilson (1994)



Source : Kent Buse, Nicolas Mays dan Gill Walt. 2005. Making Health Policy. England: Open University Press.

The importance of this approach becomes increasingly evident when we recognize that Indonesia is a country of extraordinary cultural diversity. From Aceh, where Islamic law forms the basis of local governance, to Bali with its *desa pekraman* customary village system, and Papua with its *noken* tradition as a symbol of communal democracy all demonstrate that public service in Indonesia cannot be separated from each region's cultural context. Therefore, the idea of Beyond Western Paradigms is not merely an academic discourse but a practical necessity to ensure that public governance truly aligns with the needs and aspirations of local communities.

Accordingly, the objective of this essay is to analyze how micro-society and human capital can serve as the foundations of public service innovation within the NWPA framework, emphasizing Indonesian customary and cultural values as both epistemological and practical bases. This study is expected to contribute to enriching the literature on public administration, which has long been dominated by Western perspectives, while also offering a more contextual, inclusive, and sustainable policy direction for Indonesia.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS FORMULATION

The evolution of public administration paradigms has undergone several key phases, most of which have been dominated by Western thought. In its early phase, the Weberian model of bureaucracy was regarded as the ideal framework for modern governance. Weber (1947) emphasized rational-legal principles characterized by hierarchy, specialization, formal rules, and impersonality. While this model provided stability and legal certainty, it was often criticized for its rigidity and lack of adaptability to social dynamics (Hughes, 2012). Criticism of classical bureaucracy paved the way for the emergence of New Public Management (NPM) in the 1980s. This paradigm, influenced by neoliberalism and private-sector management principles, emphasized efficiency, competition, and results (Hood, 1991). Although NPM successfully initiated bureaucratic reforms in several countries, it faced criticism for diminishing democratic legitimacy and reducing the role of citizens to mere service consumers. In response, the New Public Service (NPS) paradigm developed by Denhardt (2000) emphasized participation, democracy, and accountability, aiming to restore the position of citizens as citizens rather than

customers.

Nevertheless, these three paradigms represent the Western intellectual tradition that has often been treated as a universal standard for non-Western nations. The dominance of Western perspectives has been critically challenged by the Non-Western Public Administration (NWP) approach. Drechsler (2015) underscores the need for a new orientation contextualized to the values, norms, and social structures of non-Western societies. NWP highlights the importance of local wisdom, social solidarity, and inclusivity as the foundation of public service delivery. In this context, public administration should not be understood solely through the lenses of economic efficiency or liberal democracy, but must also consider the socio-cultural realities of society.

One of the key concepts gaining attention within the NWP framework is micro-society. Elinor Ostrom (1996), through her concept of coproduction of services, explained that local communities can play a vital role as co-producers of public services alongside the government. Micro-society encompasses small-scale social units such as villages, customary communities, religious groups, and social organizations that serve as arenas for civic participation. Research in Indonesia shows that practices such as *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation), village deliberations, and traditional institutions like *banjar* in Bali significantly contribute to public services in areas such as security, health, and social welfare (Atmadja, 2021). This demonstrates that micro-society is not merely a supplementary actor but a foundational element in context-based public policy design.

In addition to micro-society, the concept of human capital also holds strong relevance. Becker (1993) introduced human capital as an investment in education, skills, and health aimed at improving productivity. Within the context of public administration, human capital not only strengthens bureaucratic capacity but also enables citizens to actively participate in public innovation. According to the World Bank Human Capital Index (2020), Indonesia scores 0.54 lower than Vietnam (0.69) and Singapore (0.88). This data underscores the limitations in human resource quality that affect Indonesia's capacity for public innovation.

Within the NWP framework, the relationship between micro-society and human capital should be understood not as a deterministic synergy but as a contingent and relational dynamic. Micro-society functions as a socio-cultural arena that shapes norms, trust, and patterns of collective action, while human capital represents the cognitive, professional, and ethical capacities of actors operating within that arena. Rather than assuming an inherent alignment between the two, their interaction depends on how public officials, community leaders, and citizens interpret and negotiate institutional roles and local values. In this regard, Osborne and Brown's (2013) theory of public service innovation is relevant insofar as it conceptualizes innovation as an emergent process arising from interactions among individuals, organizations, and social networks, rather than as a linear outcome of managerial design. When situated within NWP, this perspective suggests that public innovation in non-Western contexts is mediated by culturally embedded social relations and varying levels of human capacity, which may enable, constrain, or reshape innovation outcomes. Consequently, inclusiveness, participation, and sustainability should be viewed as potential rather than automatic results of the interaction between micro-society and human capital, contingent upon contextual compatibility, institutional incentives, and the ability of actors to bridge formal administrative logics with local governance practices.

From the above literature review, it can be concluded that there exists a research gap

concerning how the integration of micro-society and human capital can be formulated as the foundation for public service innovation within the NWPA framework. Most existing public administration literature continues to emphasize Western paradigms or treat micro-society and human capital in isolation, without exploring their interconnection in non-Western contexts. Based on this review, the following hypothesis can be formulated: The integration of micro-society and human capital within the NWPA framework can generate public service innovations that are more inclusive, participatory, and sustainable than those derived from purely Western paradigms.

This hypothesis asserts that strengthening local values through micro-society and enhancing human resource quality through human capital constitute a strategic combination for building a model of public administration that is both contextually relevant to Indonesia and applicable to other non-Western nations.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach based on a narrative and critical literature review combined with conceptual analysis. The research data consist of secondary sources, including peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books and handbooks, policy reports obtained from official Indonesian ministry websites, and selected public service innovation case studies in non-Western contexts, particularly Indonesia, published between 1998 and 2023. Literature selection is guided by three criteria: (1) relevance to public administration theory and public service innovation, (2) explicit engagement with Western or non-Western administrative perspectives, and (3) applicability to developing country or Indonesian governance contexts. Western-oriented literature is included to establish a comparative analytical framework assessing its assumptions and limitations in non-Western settings. Data analysis is conducted using thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke (2019), involving four stages: (1) familiarization with the literature, (2) initial coding to identify key concepts related to Western and non-Western public administration paradigms, (3) theme development centered on micro-society and human capital, and (4) conceptual synthesis to construct an integrated analytical framework on the foundations of public service innovation from the Non-Western Public Administration (NWPA) perspective.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. The Role of Micro-society in the NWPA

According to the study by Yadisar et al. (2024) from Kapuas Sintang University, community participation within the NWPA perspective cannot be separated from the social, cultural, and local value contexts in which governance is implemented. This stands in contrast to the Western paradigm, which tends to emphasize the rationality of formal bureaucracy. The role of the micro-society becomes crucial because it bridges administrative structures with the cultural realities of society, thereby strengthening legitimacy, accountability, and responsiveness in public service delivery (Yunus & Tamma, 2014). Thus, NWPA argues that effective governance can only be achieved when the state accommodates citizen participation through social institutions that remain active at the local level (Yadisar et al., 2024).

Within the NWPA paradigm, the micro-society serves as both a center of social innovation and a bridge between citizens' needs and state policies. A micro-society in the NWPA approach

differs from an ordinary community because it is not merely a social grouping; rather, it is a structured unit of social innovation in which norms, values, and local practices are organized to form the foundation for public decision-making and innovation. The micro-society connects individuals to state policies while simultaneously enhancing human capital, enabling citizens to actively contribute to public governance. The Micro-society approach in NWPA can be observed through several key aspects:

1. **Local Cultural Contextualization**
Public services become more effective when implemented in alignment with local cultural values and practices. For instance, *Posyandu* units managed by women community health cadres are capable of understanding the language, habits, and needs of local residents. This cultural proximity enables greater acceptance of healthcare services within the community (Kinayugan, 2024).
2. **Civic Participation and Gotong Royong (Mutual Cooperation)**
Micro-society facilitates direct citizen involvement in the provision of basic public services. Community efforts such as neighborhood collective works (*kerja bakti*) to construct local roads or repair drainage systems indicate that public service provision is not solely the responsibility of the government, but also a shared outcome of communal solidarity (Yadisar, 2024).
3. **Legitimacy and Public Trust**
Programs tend to gain wider acceptance when delivered through actors who hold community trust, such as customary leaders or village authorities. This allows social assistance schemes to be more accurately targeted and promotes a stronger sense of fairness within society (Istanabi et al., 2023).
4. **Local Innovation**
Micro-society also fosters innovation tailored to regional needs. For example, community-based waste banks not only contribute to environmental cleanliness but also provide environmental education and generate economic value. A relevant application can be seen among Indigenous Balinese communities, where circular economy initiatives are implemented while maintaining cultural values and local wisdom (Dwiantara et al., 2025).

These aspects are inherently complementary and are indirectly interconnected with one another. Their concrete form can be observed in the role of micro-societies in public service delivery at the local level, such as *Posyandu* operated by community health volunteers providing basic healthcare, neighborhood collective work (*kerja bakti*) to repair roads and drainage systems, and the distribution of social assistance through community leaders or village authorities to ensure public trust.

Developing a digital innovation capable of bridging these different aspects has therefore become crucial. The integration of local initiatives with technology can serve as a concrete step to ensure that all aspects can be implemented simultaneously. In this context, the micro-society functions as a bridge between the state and citizens, making public services more accessible, socially accepted, and sustainable. One practical manifestation of this integration is the concept of a Digital Village, which represents a strategic approach to delivering micro-society-based public services. Through technology utilization, Digital Village initiatives can integrate local wisdom, citizen participation, community trust, and social innovation into a unified ecosystem. Digital village applications and platforms enable *Posyandu* volunteers to provide healthcare services adapted to local culture and language, facilitate community collective action through online coordination for infrastructure improvements, and enhance transparency in social aid programs.

by involving traditional leaders and village administrators. Furthermore, Digital Villages encourage the emergence of local innovations, such as mobile-based waste banks or digital cooperatives, which contribute to both environmental cleanliness and community welfare. Thus, Digital Village initiatives not only strengthen the role of micro-society, but also promote more participatory, transparent, and sustainable governance in rural public service delivery.

Digital innovations that integrate local wisdom with technology represent an essential step in strengthening public service delivery. The micro-society plays the role of a bridge between the state and citizens, thereby making services more accessible, participatory, and sustainable. A tangible example of this application is the Smart Kampung initiative in Banyuwangi, where digital technology is leveraged to support health services, village development, social assistance transparency, and the emergence of local innovations such as app-based waste banks and digital cooperatives. This demonstrates that Smart Kampung not only introduces efficiency, but also reinforces the community's role in transparent and sustainable public governance

B. Human Capital as a Key Driver of Innovation

Based on the Public Service Index (Indeks Pelayanan Publik, IPP) data, the quality of public services in Indonesia remains uneven. Differences in scores across provinces exacerbate disparities in development equality, particularly regarding the distribution of public service quality (Satu Data Jabar, 2024). At the national level, the quality of public services in Indonesia is still far from satisfactory. High-quality services are largely concentrated in Java, while provinces outside Java especially in the eastern regions such as Papua, Maluku, and parts of Sulawesi still maintain a rating of "adequate" or even "adequate with notes." This situation indicates a significant gap in public service quality across regions and disparities in bureaucratic performance between areas (Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform, 2025). In this context, the performance of public sector employees plays a crucial role in determining the quality of public services

When discussing public services, community participation also plays a crucial role. The participation referred to here is the active involvement of citizens in decision-making, implementation, oversight, and evaluation of services (Setyowati & Nugroho, 2020). The level of community participation in public decision-making significantly contributes to service effectiveness. The higher the participation of citizens in the planning and evaluation of public policies, the greater the likelihood that these policies will be relevant and beneficial to the community, thereby improving public service outcomes (Rahmadani, 2025). However, in several regions, literature reviews such as those by Sanggenafa et al. (2025), Dewi et al. (2025), Wardhana et al. (2024), and Fadhli et al. (2024) indicate that community participation in public services remains low. Low participation is influenced by both internal and external factors. From an internal perspective, limited participation is often due to low literacy, as many citizens do not fully understand the importance of their involvement in public policy processes. Cultural factors, such as reluctance to speak up, hesitancy to criticize, or feeling inappropriate to voice opinions in front of officials, further restrict the space for participation. These internal barriers show that, even when opportunities for participation exist, not all segments of society are able or willing to utilize them effectively (Dewi et al., 2025). External factors include bureaucratic weaknesses and resource limitations such as insufficient personnel, inadequate competency capacity, and limited budget which prevent the government from fully opening up spaces for public participation. Additionally, low community participation is influenced by limited communication channels and

insufficient government responsiveness to public complaints (Sanggenafa et al., 2025).

This indicates that human capital is a key pillar that directly influences the quality of public services. Competent, communicative, and adaptive public sector human resources, combined with active community participation, make services more responsive and aligned with the actual needs of citizens. However, human capital development cannot rely solely on administrative approaches; it requires a more inclusive framework. This is where NWPA plays a role as an approach emphasizing collaboration, participation, and sustainability to enhance human capacity in service delivery. Integration with Social Enterprises becomes relevant, as this mechanism not only empowers citizens economically but also trains them in managerial, entrepreneurial, and digital skills, thereby strengthening the quality of human capital itself. The concept of micro-society complements this as a “social laboratory,” where the government can observe community interactions and needs while testing service innovations based on

competent human resources and active citizen participation. Thus, public services can develop into more inclusive, sustainable, and human-centered systems.

C. Microsociety and Human Capital Integration within the NWPA Framework

In the dynamics of contemporary public administration, the integration of micro-society, human capital, and the Non-Western Public Administration (NWPA) paradigm represents a strategic approach to developing a more contextual, inclusive, and sustainable model of public governance. This integration emerges from a critical reflection on Western Public Administration (WPA), which has historically shaped dominant administrative models through Weberian bureaucracy, *New Public Management* (NPM), and *New Public Service* (NPS). While WPA has contributed significantly to the development of rational-legal authority, organizational efficiency, performance management, and citizen oriented service delivery, its underlying assumptions such as institutional neutrality, individualism, and universal applicability often overlook the social embeddedness, communal relations, and historical trajectories that characterize many non-Western societies.

As a result, administrative reforms inspired by WPA frequently prioritize technocratic efficiency, standardization, and managerial control, which may limit their effectiveness when applied to governance contexts marked by strong informal institutions, local norms, and collective social structures. In response to these limitations, NWPA does not reject WPA entirely, but rather repositions it as one reference among many, emphasizing the need to contextualize administrative principles within local socio-cultural realities. NWPA thus emerges not merely as a regional variation, but as an effort toward epistemic decolonization, affirming that public governance can be grounded in local values, distinctive social structures, and context-specific human capital. By integrating micro-society and human capital, this approach moves beyond the dominant efficiency-oriented logic of WPA and advances a governance model that prioritizes embeddedness, relational governance, and co-creation between the state and society (Farazmand, 2012)

In this context, micro-society functions as a social space grounded in local values, enabling citizens to practice democratic participation, maintain solidarity, and test public service innovations on a micro scale. Traditions such as *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) in Indonesia, *rewang* in Java, *mapalus* in Minahasa, and *subak* in Bali are concrete examples of living micro-societies. These collective values are not merely cultural wisdom; they constitute social institutions that shape resource redistribution mechanisms, decision-making processes, and

social solidarity. Koentjaraningrat (2009) emphasizes that gotong royong (mutual cooperation) forms the basis of social cohesion, allowing Indonesian communities to withstand major changes, ranging from economic crises to political transformations. Thus, micro-society can be understood as a social laboratory where citizens develop participatory capacities, negotiate, and manage collective interests.

However, micro-society cannot function effectively without being supported by the quality of human capital. This underscores the relevance of human capital, defined as the accumulation of skills, knowledge, and values inherent in individuals that can be mobilized for collective purposes. Since its introduction by Becker (1993), the concept of human capital has expanded beyond the economic realm to encompass public service. In the public administration sector, human capital extends beyond technical competence to include cognitive, affective, and social capacities. Civil servants, village officials, and public service personnel need data literacy, problem-solving skills, intercultural communication abilities, and ethical sensitivity to respond to citizens' needs effectively (Brixiová et al., 2020). A concrete example of the relevance of human capital can be seen in Indonesia's Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH). The success of this program is determined not only by budget allocation but also by the quality of social facilitators capable of building trust with beneficiary families. A study by the Ministry of Social Affairs (2019) shows that PKH's effectiveness significantly increases in regions where facilitators possess strong facilitation skills, interpersonal communication, and social empathy. In other words, the human capital of facilitators functions as a bridge connecting policy with social realities. A similar phenomenon can be observed in Smart City initiatives in Bandung, Surabaya, and Makassar. Without civil servants who possess adequate digital literacy, digital public service initiatives risk remaining mere technological jargon rather than serving as instruments of transformation.

Meanwhile, NWPAs serve as a conceptual framework that unites micro-society and human capital. This paradigm rejects the homogenization of public governance and instead emphasizes plurality and situated knowledge. Farazmand (2012) asserts that NWPAs function as an alternative epistemology, providing legitimacy for governance practices rooted in local contexts. Thus, NWPAs allow the integration of micro-society and human capital to be seen not merely as good practices, but as a valid normative framework. For example, in Community-Based Forest Management (CBFM), the NWPAs model is clearly evident. In Nepal, Community Forest User Groups not only conserve forests but also develop citizens' capacities in collective management and consensus-based decision-making (Ostrom, 1996). A similar phenomenon occurs in Indonesia through social forestry schemes, where indigenous communities act as primary forest managers, combining traditional values of gotong royong (mutual cooperation) with modern resource management skills.

The reciprocal relationship between micro-society and human capital can be understood as a mutually reinforcing ecosystem. Through participation in micro-society, individuals acquire social skills, leadership abilities, and service ethics. Conversely, individuals with adequate capacities can strengthen the micro-society by introducing innovations and ensuring the sustainability of social values. In this context, NWPAs serve as a conceptual umbrella that unites both elements, emphasizing that these practices are part of an epistemic decolonization process. A concrete illustration is the Digital Village Program in Central Java, where citizens participate in building internet infrastructure through gotong royong (mutual cooperation), while village officials with digital skills manage the village information system. This is not merely a

Western-style e-government implementation, but a locally grounded innovation that embodies the spirit of NWPA.

Nevertheless, this integration is not without challenges. One such challenge is the elitism of micro-society, where village deliberations are often dominated by local elites, marginalizing groups such as women and the poor. Antlöv (2003) indicates that although Village Funds promote participation, many deliberation forums remain controlled by village elites. Another challenge is the reduction of human capital to technocracy, where excessive focus on technical skills neglects ethical and cultural dimensions. Additionally, the co-optation of NWPA poses a risk: rather than facilitating local models, NWPA can be misused as a legitimizing jargon for old, bureaucratic, and top-down policies. To address these challenges, reflective strategies are required. Participation monitoring must be inclusive, ensuring the involvement of women, youth, and vulnerable groups. Training curricula for civil servants and social facilitators should emphasize social values, service ethics, and communication skills, not merely technical competencies. Policy evaluation must also be conducted participatively, so that NWPA retains its essence as a paradigm emphasizing collaboration and co-creation.

The integration of micro-society, human capital, and NWPA carries significant long-term implications. First, it strengthens the adaptive capacity of public services, making them more responsive to social and technological changes. Second, it redistributes governance legitimacy, shifting it from the monopoly of central bureaucracy to local communities. Third, it promotes epistemic decolonization, emphasizing that public governance innovations can emerge from local practices rather than merely importing Western theories. This aligns with Hilderbrand and Grindle's (1997) argument that the success of public administration reforms in the Global South largely depends on local institutional capacity and human capital, rather than solely on the transplantation of Western models.

Ultimately, the integration of micro-society and human capital within the NWPA framework is not merely a technical strategy to improve public service quality, but an epistemological and practical repositioning. Micro-society functions as a social space grounded in local values; human capital ensures the sustainability of innovation through individual capacities; and NWPA serves as the conceptual framework that unites both in the spirit of participation, collaboration, and sustainability. Examples such as Village Funds, the Family Hope Program (PKH), Digital Villages, and Community Forest Management demonstrate how this integration can operate in practice, although challenges such as elitism, technocratization, and co-optation persist. Through a reflective approach, this integration can open opportunities to develop public governance that is inclusive, human-centered, and contextually relevant in non-Western societies. This is the significant contribution of NWPA: taking public administration beyond Western paradigms toward governance that is rooted, plural, and sustainable.

Figure 2. The Relationship between Microsociety and Human Capital in the NWPA Paradigm: Implications for Public Service

Aspect	Microsociety through NWPA	Human Capital	Implications for Public Service

Contextuality & Local Culture	Microsociety adapts services according to customary norms, religion, and traditions (e.g., village deliberations, Balinese subak, Posyandu run by local mothers).	Local human resources understand community culture and language, enabling more effective service delivery.	Public services are better accepted as they align with the socio-cultural context.
Participation & Communitarianism	Microsociety provides space for gotong royong (mutual cooperation), collectivism, and co-production of services (e.g., building shared facilities).	Human capital drives participation through social skills, community leadership, and empathy.	Services become more equitable as citizens actively engage, rather than being passive recipients.
Hybrid Governance (formal–informal)	Microsociety strengthens trust in government programs through respected local leaders.	Human capital acts as a “trust builder” (social agents, customary or religious leaders, health cadres).	Enhances community compliance with public policies.
Nilai Moral & Sosial Capital	Public services are not merely technical but are delivered with values of solidarity, justice, and harmony.	Human capital develops service ethics, integrity, and orientation toward collective interests.	Public services become more sustainable, reducing social resistance.
Inovasi Lokal	Microsociety generates solutions based on local wisdom (e.g., waste banks, village cooperatives).	Local human resources are empowered through training and knowledge to manage innovations.	Public services become more creative and aligned with citizens’ real needs.

Source: Author’s elaboration from literature review and discussion (2025)

D. Comparison of NWPA and the Western Paradigm

Debates on public administration in the developing world cannot be separated from the longstanding dominance of Western paradigms. Western Public Administration (WPA), rooted in

Weberian bureaucratic theory, has long been perceived as the “ideal” model for constructing a modern governmental system. Rational-legal authority, universalism, efficiency, and the separation between politics and administration are treated as universal standards that can be replicated across different contexts. However, the experiences of non-Western countries demonstrate that public administration cannot be fully understood through a purely Western lens. Diverse social, political, and cultural realities require more contextual approaches, which are embodied in the concept of Non-Western Public Administration (NWP).

NWP rejects the simplification that Western structures can be transplanted uniformly into all nations. It emphasizes the importance of adaptation to local values, social practices, and unique political dynamics (Dwivedi & Nef, 1982). Within this framework, the comparison between WPA and NWP is not only theoretical but also epistemological. It raises a crucial question: Should public administration be understood as a universal science or as a practice deeply embedded in the history, culture, and societal structures of a specific community? This question is increasingly relevant when discussing contemporary public service innovations, in which concepts such as micro-society and human capital are viewed as foundational alternatives capable of surpassing the limitations of Western paradigms. This line of inquiry resonates strongly with the comparative public administration tradition, which has long questioned the universality of Western administrative models. Riggs (1964) argues that administrative systems are ecologically embedded within specific social, cultural, and historical contexts, particularly in developing societies characterized by hybrid institutional arrangements. From this perspective, public administration cannot be fully understood as a value-neutral or universally applicable science, but rather as a contextual practice shaped by local institutional configurations. Accordingly, contemporary public service innovations that emphasize micro-society and human capital can be seen as context-sensitive responses that align with the comparative administration critique of Western-centric paradigms.

Overall, several distinctions between WPA and NWP reflect divergent basic orientations, structural forms, and administrative practices. These differences are not purely conceptual, but also indicate contrasting paradigms concerning how bureaucracy should operate and what constitutes its primary source of legitimacy. To provide a clearer and more systematic illustration, these distinctions are summarized in the following table.

Figure 3. Comparison of Western Public Administration (WPA) and Non-Western Public Administration (NWP)

Aspect	Western Public Administration (WPA)	Non-Western Public Administration (NWP) – Konteks Indonesia
Basic Orientation	Rational-legal, efficiency, universalism.	Adaptation to local social, political, and cultural contexts.
Politics-Administration Relationship	Separation of politics and administration.	Public administration is often politicized; bureaucracy functions as an instrument of power, especially during the New Order era.

Performance Principles	Efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability based on formal performance indicators.	gotong royong (mutual cooperation), social harmony, and community interests are prioritized over mere efficiency.
Source of Legitimacy	Rule of law, formal regulations, and the merit system.	A combination of formal rules with patronage, personal relations, and customary or local cultural values.
Bureaucratic Characteristics	Professional, meritocratic, impersonal, and hierarchical.	Patrimonial and centralistic (a legacy of colonialism), yet also grounded in social relations and local values.
Implementation Examples	Bureaucratic reforms, implementation of e-government, digital public services, and civil servant performance indicators.	Village deliberation processes, gotong royong (mutual cooperation) practices, and the application of local values as a moral driver in public service delivery.

Source: Author's elaboration, adapted from Weber (1978), Wilson (2014), and Dwivedi & Nef (1982).

1. Basic Orientation

WPA is built upon rational-legal assumptions: public administration must operate based on formal laws, standardized rules, and the principles of efficiency. These principles allow predictability and consistency in decision-making. Weber (1978) argued that rational bureaucracy represents the most efficient organizational form for modern states because it eliminates traditional and personal influences in governance. NWPA, in contrast, stems from the belief that public administration cannot be separated from its social and cultural context. Dwivedi and Nef (1982) contend that in many non-Western countries, bureaucracy develops not only as a legal structure, but also as a social institution that must adjust to local traditions, norms, and practices. For instance, social harmony or community interests often take precedence over mere procedural efficiency. WPA therefore tends to be universalistic, while NWPA is more particularistic and situational. This distinction creates space for more plural innovations in public administration, acknowledging that effectiveness does not solely depend on formal efficiency, but also on the ability to sustain social balance.

2. Politics-Administration Relationship

One of the core pillars of WPA is the separation between politics and administration. Wilson (2014) emphasized that politics should determine public policies, while administration is responsible for implementing those policies neutrally and professionally. This separation is necessary to protect bureaucracy from short-term political interests. However, NWPA demonstrates that in many non-Western contexts, such separation is difficult to realize. Public administration is frequently intertwined with politics, and bureaucracy often becomes not only a policy implementer but also a political actor with influence in policymaking. In many developing countries, bureaucracy has been used as a tool of power, political mobilization, or regime legitimacy. Although this integration is often seen as bureaucratic politicization, it reflects a fundamental epistemological difference. Under NWPA, public administration is both technical and political because it is embedded within unique power structures and

social relations.

3. Performance Principles

Within WPA, bureaucratic performance is measured through formal indicators such as efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability. This orientation was reinforced by the rise of New Public Management (NPM), which stresses market mechanisms, competition, and quantitative indicators as metrics of success (Hood, 1991). NWPA, on the other hand, evaluates performance within social frameworks. Community interests, gotong royong (mutual cooperation), and social harmony frequently serve as more relevant indicators than statistical outcomes. These collective practices function not only to deliver administrative outputs but also to strengthen social cohesion. Performance under NWPA is therefore more holistic. It assesses what has been achieved while considering how the process reinforces social relationships and community sustainability. NWPA places social values (solidarity, shared responsibility, mutual trust) and citizen participation at the center. The advantage is strong social ownership of public policies, making them more suitable for heterogeneous societies while enhancing local capacity through coproduction. Elinor Ostrom asserts that coproduction involving citizens and government produces more relevant and sustainable services in many contexts. However, this orientation requires time, capacity-building, and carries the risk of varied results across communities.

4. Sources of Legitimacy

WPA derives legitimacy from the rule of law, formal regulations, and merit-based systems. Bureaucratic authority is legitimate because it rests on legal mandates and professional competence. In contrast, NWPA draws legitimacy from a combination of formal rules and social values. Authority is recognized not only through legal status but also through the ability to foster trust, social relations, and local cultural norms (Antlöv, 2003). Legitimacy in NWPA is therefore dual: legal-formal and socio-cultural. This hybrid legitimacy model is particularly adaptive to societies that remain strongly bound by traditional norms.

5. Bureaucratic Characteristics and Public Service Motivation

Bureaucracy in WPA is ideally professional, meritocratic, impersonal, and hierarchical. This model aims to create efficient, stable, and consistent public service delivery. Civil servants are driven by merit-based systems, performance-oriented promotions, and clear formal rules. Motivation under WPA is influenced primarily by extrinsic incentives such as career progression, legal certainty, job stability, and administrative rewards. Public Service Motivation (PSM) emerges in Western public administration as an effort to examine intrinsic motivation that transcends individual self-interest, although still framed within rational and universal bureaucratic structures. NWPA bureaucracy often operates based on social relationships and local values. Bureaucracy is understood not only as a formal organization but also as a social network linking officials and communities. Motivation is shaped not only by formal incentives, but also by collective values, cultural norms, and moral commitments to the community. For example, social harmony, moral duty to serve others, and gotong royong (mutual cooperation) can become significant motivational factors. PSM in many non-Western contexts emerges not only from identification with formal institutions, but also from embeddedness in community-based social norms. WPA motivations derive mainly from legal-formal structures and merit systems, whereas NWPA motivations rely more heavily on socio-cultural orientations. This shows that motivation in public administration is inherently contextual and cannot be understood purely from a universal perspective.

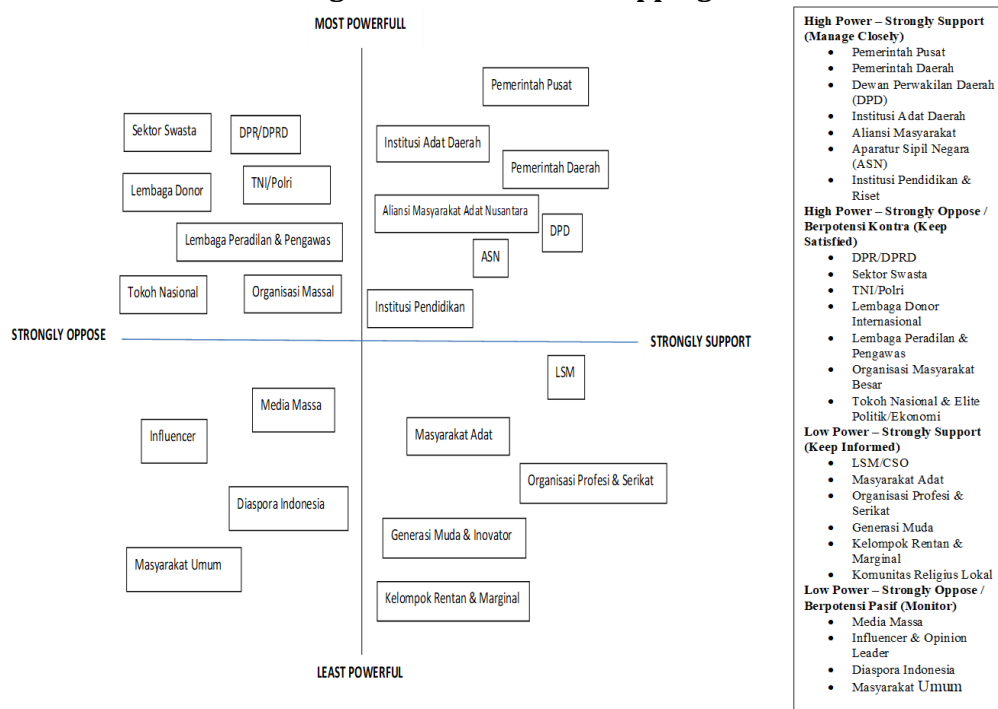
6. Case Study: Implementation Example

China provides an illustrative example of how NWPA functions in practice. A qualitative

study by Tao and Wen (2022), also discussed in Van der Wal and Mussagulova (2023), demonstrates that Public Service Motivation (PSM) among young Chinese civil servants is not primarily driven by financial incentives or formal rationality as emphasized within Western paradigms, but rather by Confucian values. Loyalty to the state, dedication to family and nation, collectivism, and moral duty to serve the public shape bureaucratic behavior. This contrasts with New Public Management (NPM), which emphasizes efficiency, quantitative targets, and performance contracts. As a result, Western-style administrative reforms often fail when imported without cultural adaptation. The study confirms that civil servants in non-Western contexts are more motivated when policies align with prevailing cultural norms. The lesson is highly relevant for Indonesia, where gotong royong (mutual cooperation), deliberative decision-making, and social solidarity remain important assets for developing public services that are not only administratively efficient but also socially legitimate.

E. Analysis and Mapping of Key Actors in Public Service Innovation Based on Microsociety and Human Capital

Figure 4. Stakeholder Mapping



Source: Stakeholder Mapping, compiled by the author (2025)

Stakeholder mapping serves as a crucial instrument to understand the dynamics of power and interests in public service innovation based on Non-Western Public Administration (NWP). Using Mendelow's framework (1991), stakeholders are categorized into four quadrants: Manage Closely (high power, high interest), Keep Satisfied (high power, low interest), Keep Informed (low power, high interest), and Monitor (low power, low interest). This mapping not only identifies key actors in building public service innovation grounded in microsociety and human capital, but also reveals potential conflict dynamics arising from divergent interests, sources of authority, and institutional logics among stakeholders. In non-Western contexts, tensions may emerge between

formal local government institutions operating under statutory regulations and customary or community-based institutions that derive legitimacy from traditional norms and social practices. Such conflicts illustrate that public service innovation within the NWPA framework is not a linear or purely managerial process, but a negotiated and contested arena in which political, economic, social, and cultural dynamics continuously interact.

a. Quadrant I: High Power – High Interest (Manage Closely)

Actors positioned in the Manage Closely quadrant possess both significant formal authority and strong interest in NWPA-driven public service innovation. In the Indonesian context, this group includes the central government ministries (Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform, Ministry of National Development Planning, Ministry of Village Development, Ministry of Communication and Informatics, Ministry of Health), local governments, traditional institutions, national indigenous organizations such as the Indigenous Peoples Alliance of the Archipelago (AMAN), and educational or research institutions. These ministries hold regulatory and budgetary power that critically determines the direction of innovation. For instance, the Digital Village 2025 agenda, targeting 75,265 villages, seeks not only technological expansion but also empowerment of village youth and strengthening of microsocieties as public service hubs. As of July 2025, digital village development in frontier, outermost, and least-developed regions reached only 4,132 villages or around 41.32 percent of the target, which shows that success depends heavily on collaboration within this quadrant.

Traditional institutions and organizations like AMAN also hold vital roles. AMAN documented 121 indigenous community conflicts in 2024, involving 2.82 million hectares of customary land dispossession. This confirms that indigenous communities are not merely development objects but essential stakeholders that must be engaged closely through the incorporation of cultural legitimacy, deliberation, and social solidarity in governance. Educational institutions strengthen human capital. Indonesia's Human Development Index (HDI) reached 75.02 in 2024, reflecting progress but persistent regional disparities. Universities, research centers, and indigenous education programs are therefore pivotal to preparing citizens and officials capable of active participation in public service innovation.

b. Quadrant II: High Power – Low Interest (Keep Satisfied)

This category includes stakeholders with significant power whose interest in NWPA may be indirect or primarily instrumental. They must be kept satisfied to prevent obstruction of policy implementation. These actors include the parliament (DPR/DPRD), private sector entities such as telecommunications companies and infrastructure investors, international development partners (World Bank, ADB, UNDP, USAID), and security or judicial institutions. Parliament wields legislative and budgetary control, including authority over the Indigenous Peoples Bill that remains subject to political contestation. Telecommunications companies hold a decisive role in digital village infrastructure but sometimes lack commercial incentives to invest in remote areas. International donors and multilateral institutions contribute funding and governance standards, although Western-centric frameworks often require contextualization to avoid overshadowing NWPA with exogenous policy models.

c. Quadrant III: Low Power – High Interest (Keep Informed)

This group consists of actors with strong interest in NWPA implementation but limited formal authority. They include civil society organizations (such as WALHI, ICW, YLBHI, Solidaritas Perempuan, JATAM, and Greenpeace), local indigenous communities, professional organizations (IDI, PGRI, labor unions), rural youth, and vulnerable groups (women in rural areas, persons with disabilities, isolated indigenous populations). These

actors contribute social legitimacy and grassroots innovation. Community-driven models such as posyandu (integrated community health posts), initiated by local women in the 1980s and later institutionalized nationally, illustrate how local participation generates sustainable service delivery. Similar patterns emerge in provincial digital village initiatives where village youth manage public service applications that simultaneously strengthen micro-society as a space of social interaction. They must be continuously informed and involved to secure co-ownership, deliberation, and accountability in NWPB-based innovation.

d. Quadrant IV: Low Power – Low Interest (Monitor)

Actors in this quadrant have limited formal influence and relatively low direct interest, yet remain important because they affect public perception. This group includes mass media, digital influencers, the Indonesian diaspora, and the general public that is not organized into specific communities. With internet penetration expanding across rural areas, social media has become a growing sphere of discourse on public service delivery. These actors require ongoing monitoring to ensure accurate public communication. They can function as catalysts for promoting innovation but also as sources of misinformation if communication strategies are inadequate.

The stakeholder mapping indicates that successful implementation of NWPB in Indonesia is not driven solely by governmental authority, but also by the capacity of indigenous communities, local society, and education systems to strengthen human capital. Close coordination among Manage Closely actors is essential, while ensuring the satisfaction of Keep Satisfied actors helps prevent resistance. Meaningful engagement with Keep Informed actors enhances social legitimacy, and monitoring actors in the Monitor quadrant maintains stability in public opinion. Overall, this mapping demonstrates that Indonesian public governance cannot be detached from cultural and societal contexts. NWPB grounded in micro-society and human capital will only succeed if key actors collaborate while respecting local wisdom and leveraging digital technology to promote inclusivity. Stakeholder mapping is therefore not merely a technical tool, but also a political and social strategy to ensure that this alternative paradigm is genuinely realized in public governance practice.

F. Practical Recommendations

Within the context of Indonesian public administration, a fundamental challenge that frequently arises is the epistemological and practical gap between Western public administration theories and the socio-political realities of local communities. The Non-Western Public Administration (NWPB) approach aims to bridge this gap by emphasizing the role of micro-society and human capital as the foundation for public service innovation. Therefore, the practical recommendations presented in this essay are designed to operationalize the idea of going beyond Western paradigms through inclusive, adaptive, and locally embedded policy strategies. These recommendations cover seven key areas: institutionalizing the role of micro-society, strengthening human capital, hybridizing local values with digital technologies, redefining the role of the state, reinforcing multi-stakeholder governance, establishing contextual evaluation indicators, and advancing mechanisms for replication and scaling-up of local innovation

a. Institutionalizing the Role of Micro-society in Public Governance

A crucial first step in realizing public service innovation grounded in NWPB is the institutionalization of micro-society as a legitimate governance actor. Micro-society, which includes customary institutions, religious-based social groups, community organizations, and informal village structures, must not be treated merely as a complement to formal bureaucracy. It should instead be recognized as a pillar of social legitimacy in public decision-making. Although Village Law No. 6 of 2014 has created opportunities for such

integration, its implementation remains largely administrative. Village deliberation forums and regional development planning discussions must require the participation of traditional and community leaders. Local mechanisms such as *perarem* in Bali or *sasi* in Maluku could be formalized in community-based dispute settlement policies. Atmadja (2021) emphasizes that community legitimacy is a crucial prerequisite for ensuring that public innovation remains rooted in cultural foundations. Formal recognition strengthens the role of micro-society while creating space for locally driven innovation to thrive.

b. Strengthening Human Capital at the Local Level

Beyond institutional recognition, human capacity serves as a determining factor. Human capital encompasses not only technical skills, but also education quality, health status, and societal adaptability to social change. The World Bank Human Capital Index (2020) positions Indonesia at 0.54, significantly below Singapore (0.88), demonstrating serious challenges in maximizing the potential of future generations. Community-based educational initiatives, such as indigenous schools or village-level vocational learning centers, can serve as solutions to local human capital development. For example, the Digital Village Program in West Java engages youth in managing digital public services, demonstrating the capacity of empowered communities to produce contextually relevant innovations (Komdigi, 2023). Similarly, community-initiated health innovations such as *posyandu*, which emerged in the 1980s, could be revitalized using telemedicine, improving access to primary health care in remote areas.

c. Hybridizing Local Values with Digital Technology

The NWPAs paradigm rejects the dichotomy between traditional and modern systems. The next step is to encourage the hybridization of local values and digital technology. *Gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) can be expressed through community-based crowdfunding platforms. The principle of *musyawarah mufakat* can be translated into online deliberation platforms that allow wider participation, including from the village diaspora. The Ministry of Communication and Informatics (2025) reports that 97.42 percent of settlements in Indonesia are currently covered by 4G network access, offering strong potential for the development of digital public service innovations that remain aligned with social norms. A digitized indigenous information system, for instance, can enable government and citizens to access *adat* laws, rituals, and local wisdom relevant to policymaking. Technology thus becomes a medium that strengthens rather than marginalizes cultural heritage.

d. Redefining the Role of the State as a Facilitator

The success of NWPAs-based public innovation depends not only on local communities but also on the role of the state. The government must shift from acting as a dominant regulatory authority to becoming a facilitator enabling local initiatives to grow. Data from the Indigenous Peoples Alliance of the Archipelago (AMAN) indicate 121 agrarian conflicts involving customary communities in 2024 (GoodStats, 2025), revealing weak state protection over local rights. Affirmative policies are needed, including stronger recognition of land rights, community innovation funds, and more equitable partnerships between government and customary institutions. Evans (2004) introduces the concept of embedded autonomy, where bureaucracy remains professionally autonomous while socially embedded. The state should strengthen local capacity, not replace or overpower it.

e. Strengthening Multi-Stakeholder Governance Networks

Stakeholder mapping using Mendelow's Matrix (1991) highlights the importance of distinguishing governance strategies based on actor power and interest. Actors with high power and strong support, such as the national and regional governments, customary institutions, AMAN, and educational entities, must be managed closely. Those

with high power but lower engagement potential, including parliament, the private sector, and donor agencies, must be kept satisfied through negotiation and selective partnerships. Actors with low power but high commitment, such as NGOs, rural communities, labor unions, youth, and religious groups, must be empowered as critical partners. Actors with low power and weak engagement, including media, influencers, and the general public, require monitoring through adaptive public communication strategies. This differential approach reduces conflict and reinforces stakeholder synergy.

f. Contextual Success Indicators and Evaluation Mechanisms

Public innovation requires clear measurement standards. The next recommendation is the development of localized success indicators. Four primary indicators can be applied: social legitimacy, local capacity strengthening, conflict reduction, and public service effectiveness. Social legitimacy can be measured through community participation in policy forums. Local capacity can be assessed by improvements in regional Human Capital Index scores, which averaged 74.39 nationally in 2024 (BPS, 2024). Conflict reduction can be indicated by fewer disputes over land or natural resource management. Public service effectiveness can be evaluated based on expanded access to basic services. Evaluations must employ participatory methods to ensure results reflect citizen perspectives and not solely technocratic assessment.

g. Replication and Scaling-Up of Local Innovations

Community-driven public innovation often emerges at the village or customary level but fails to expand nationally. Strengthening scaling-up mechanisms is necessary. The central government could organize an indigenous-based public innovation competition with both financial incentives and symbolic recognition. The Ministry of Home Affairs' Innovative Government Award (IGA) could include a new category titled "Customary and Community-Based Innovations." Knowledge-exchange platforms must be developed to disseminate best practices. Effective innovations must be integrated into the National Mid-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) and Regional Mid-Term Development Plans (RPJMD). This would ensure continuity and prevent local breakthroughs from stagnating at the pilot level. These recommendations demonstrate that NWPA-based innovation requires a governance ecosystem grounded in micro-society, supported by strong human capital, and driven by multi-stakeholder collaboration. The combination of local values and modern technologies, with the state positioned as facilitator, allows Indonesia to emerge as a global reference for public administration beyond Western paradigms.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that reconstructing the paradigm of public administration through the lens of Non-Western Public Administration (NWPA) is an urgent necessity for non-Western countries, including Indonesia. While dominant paradigms such as Old Public Administration (OPA), New Public Management (NPM), and New Public Service (NPS) have significantly shaped modern governance, these models were developed within Western socio-economic and political contexts that may not fully align with non-Western realities. Uncritical adoption often produces distortions, legitimacy gaps, and even social resistance. NWPA therefore emerges as an alternative paradigm, advocating the integration of local values, cultural wisdom, and community-based social structures in public service delivery.

Two key pillars underpinning innovation within the NWPA framework are micro-society and human capital. Micro-society manifested in customary communities, villages, or social organizations does not merely function as a complementary actor in policy implementation;

rather, it serves as a primary arena for participation, innovation, and social legitimacy. Through practices such as village deliberation forums, collective community work, and social initiatives like *posyandu* or community based waste banks, micro-society has proven itself to be a social laboratory capable of generating contextual, inclusive, and sustainable solutions. The values embedded within it such as solidarity, *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation), and trust enhance the acceptability of public services while making them more responsive to community needs. Accordingly, micro-society does not only mediate the relationship between the state and citizens, but also emerges as a central source of policy creativity grounded in local cultural roots.

Human capital plays an equally critical role by strengthening both individual and collective capacities in public governance. Investment in education, skills, health, and ethical values not only enhances bureaucratic professionalism but also cultivates active and critical citizenship. Indonesia's position in the mid-range of the Human Capital Index highlights the need for significant improvement in both government personnel and community capacity. Strong human capital becomes a transformative driver of innovation and is essential to maintaining adaptive, participatory, and locally relevant governance practices. It connects personal capability with collective development goals, shaping a sustainable foundation for social progress.

The integration of micro-society and human capital produces a unique and resilient innovation ecosystem under NWPAs. Micro-society ensures deep cultural legitimacy, while human capital supplies the intellectual, technical, and moral capacity necessary for managing change. Their reciprocal relationship forms a more humane governance model in which the bureaucracy operates not merely as an administrative machinery, but as a community-rooted facilitator. Citizens are no longer passive recipients of services, but active partners in public policy creation. This dynamic presents a hybrid governance approach that balances the formal efficiency found in Western models with the sociocultural sensitivity of non-Western governance.

Furthermore, the study affirms that the future of public administration in Indonesia cannot rely solely on rational-instrumental logic. Governance must be anchored in the diverse values, traditions, and social practices that characterize Indonesian society. From Aceh with its Islamic legal foundation, Bali with the *desa adat* system, to Papua with the *noken* cultural tradition, public service design must reflect dialogue between global standards and local wisdom. When micro-society and human capital operate synergistically, innovation in public services advances not only administrative efficiency but also social justice, legitimacy, and collective sustainability.

Looking ahead, the future of Non-Western Public Administration (NWPAs) in Indonesia largely hinges on its ability to transition from conceptual acknowledgment to fully institutionalized practice. NWPAs presents a promising framework for governance that is sensitive to local contexts, yet its implementation faces notable challenges. These include bureaucratic resistance to participatory approaches, power imbalances between state actors and local institutions, and the potential for idealizing local values without robust accountability mechanisms. Furthermore, disparities in human capital across regions may constrain the effectiveness of micro-society-based innovations if not supported by sustained investments in education, capacity building, and institutional development. Continued research is therefore crucial to strengthen the empirical foundations of NWPAs. Comparative studies across regions, longitudinal assessments of micro-society-driven public services, and policy-oriented investigations into institutional design can offer valuable insights into the practical

operationalization of NWPAs principles. Additional exploration of governance conflicts, hybrid institutional arrangements, and the role of digital innovation in enhancing local participation will further enrich the evolving discourse on NWPAs.

In conclusion, “Beyond Western Paradigms” is not merely an academic discourse. It is a practical necessity in addressing public governance challenges in Indonesia. Integrating micro-society and human capital within the NWPAs framework leads to public administration that is more inclusive, adaptive, participatory, and sustainable while preserving cultural resonance and social identity. This approach enables public administration to move beyond technical efficiency toward governance that is more contextual, humane, and aligned with the aspirations of non-Western societies.

REFERENCES

Buku

- AMAN. (2024). *Laporan tahunan Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara: Konflik agraria dan masyarakat adat*. AMAN.
- Atmadja, I. (2021). *Posyandu sebagai inovasi pelayanan kesehatan berbasis komunitas di Indonesia*. Pustaka Sehat Nusantara.
- Atmadja, I. D. G. (2021). *Banjar dan demokrasi lokal di Bali: Modal sosial dalam tata kelola komunitas*. Udayana University Press.
- Atmadja, I. D. G. (2021). *Hukum adat Bali: Perarem, paruman, dan dinamika kontemporer*. Udayana University Press.
- Becker, G. S. (1993). *Human capital: A theoretical and empirical analysis, with special reference to education* (3rd ed.). University of Chicago Press.
- Buse, K., Mays, N., & Walt, G. (2005). *Making health policy*. Open University Press.
- Dwiantara, I. M., Widnyani, I. A. P. S., & Rahayu, L. R. (2025). The existence of local wisdom in waste management using “Teba” modern system. Dalam *Economic sustainability and social equality in the technological era* (hlm. 356–364). Routledge.
- Hughes, O. E. (2012). *Public management and administration: An introduction* (4th ed.). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Koentjaraningrat. (2009). *Pengantar ilmu antropologi*. Rineka Cipta.
- Mendelow, A. (1991). *Stakeholder analysis for strategic planning*. Strategy Press.
- Mendelow, A. L. (1991). Environmental scanning: The impact of the stakeholder concept. Dalam I. Wilson (Ed.), *Proceedings from the Second International Conference on Information Systems* (hlm. 407–418). Cambridge University Press.
- Osborne, S. P., & Brown, L. (2013). *Handbook of innovation in public services*. Edward Elgar.
- Riggs, F. W. (1964). *Administration in Developing Countries: The Theory of Prismatic Society*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Weber, M. (1947). *The theory of social and economic organization* (A. M. Henderson & T. Parsons, Trans.). Oxford University Press.

Artikel Jurnal

- Antlöv, H. (2003). Village government and rural development in Indonesia: The new democratic framework. *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies*, 39(2), 193–214. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00074910302013>
- Arniti, N. K., Yuliani, I., Irawan, B., Hidayat, H., & Zahidah, A. (2022). Public administration from a local wisdom perspective. *IJD-Demos*, 4(4).
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2019). Reflecting on reflexive thematic analysis. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 11(4), 589–597. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2019.1628806>
- Brixiova, Z., Égert, B., & Essid, T. H. (2020). Skills and human capital in productivity growth: Evidence from Europe. *Economic Modelling*, 91, 117–132.

- Dewi, L. K. D. K., Amallia, N., Kusumastuti, H., & Sasora, F. (2025). Partisipasi masyarakat dalam meningkatkan pelayanan publik di Pekon Sidorejo Kabupaten Tanggamus. *Jurnal Semarak Mengabdi*, 4(2), 93–98.
- Duan, C., Jiao, J., Zhao, C., & Li, Y. (2023). Does Confucian culture affect public service motivation of grassroots public servants? Evidence from China. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 1066624. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1066624>
- Dwivedi, O. P., & Nef, J. (1982). Crisis and continuities in development theory and administration: First and Third World perspectives. *Public Administration and Development*, 2(1), 59–80.
- Evans, P. (2004). Development as institutional change: The pitfalls of monocropping and the potentials of deliberation. *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 38(4), 30–52. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02686327>
- Farazmand, A. (2012). The future of public administration: Challenges and opportunities A critical perspective. *Administration & Society*, 44(4), 487–517.
- Fitrianti, A. A., Cellindita, S., & Pramnesti, K. (2021). Efektivitas inovasi program smart kampung di Desa Ketapang Kabupaten Banyuwangi. *Journal of Governance Innovation*, 3(1), 1–17.
- Hilderbrand, M. E., & Grindle, M. S. (1997). Building sustainable capacity in the public sector: What can be done? *Public Administration and Development*, 17(5), 441–463.
- Hood, C. (1991). A public management for all seasons? *Public Administration*, 69(1), 3–19. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9299.1991.tb00779.x>
- Istanabi, T., Miladan, N., Suminar, L., & Utomo, R. P. (2023). Ekspresi modal sosial berbasis kepedulian lingkungan dalam pengelolaan Bank Sampah Guyub Rukun Dusun Madugondo, Kecamatan Piyungan, Kabupaten Bantul. *Desa-Kota*, 6(1), 101–111.
- Kinayungan, U. P., Hasanbasri, M., & Siwi Padmawati, R. (2024). Cross-sectoral support in stunting prevention through integrated health posts (Posyandu) in Yogyakarta City. *Al GIZZAI*, 4(2), 80–94.
- Mawardi, R. A., & Pratama, M. R. (2023). Peran social enterprise sebagai inovasi pengentasan kemiskinan di Indonesia. *Jurnal Studi Inovasi*, 3(1).
- Nurakhmadi, D. A., Rahmawan, T. I., & Suhendro, S. (2024). Optimalisasi partisipasi masyarakat dalam penganggaran: Strategi dan rekomendasi kebijakan. *Peradaban Journal of Law and Society*, 3(1), 48–62.
- Ongaro, E. (2023). Non-Western philosophies and public administration. *Public Management Review*, 25(12), 1773–1792. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2023.2175500>
- Ostrom, E. (1996). Crossing the great divide: Coproduction, synergy, and development. *World Development*, 24(6), 1073–1087. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0305-750X\(96\)00023-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/0305-750X(96)00023-X)
- Ramadhani, S. (2025). Efektivitas pelayanan publik pada aparatur sipil negara (ASN) dalam prinsip good governance. *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Humaniora*, 3(1), 75–84.
- Rijal, S. (2023). The importance of community involvement in public management planning and decision-making processes. *Journal of Contemporary Administration and Management (ADMAN)*, 1(2), 84–92.
- Sanggenafa, M., Lambe, K. H. P., & Baka, A. (2025). Pelayanan publik di Distrik Nabire Kota: Kajian peran pegawai dan partisipasi masyarakat dalam perspektif kelembagaan. *MARIOBRE*, 3(1), 22–28.
- Tao, L., & Wen, B. (2022). Demystifying the components of public service motivation among young public servants in China: A qualitative inquiry. *Asia Pacific Journal of Public Administration*, 45(3), 248–273. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23276665.2022.2131587>
- Walt, G., & Gilson, L. (1994). Reforming the health sector in developing countries: The central role of policy analysis. *Health Policy and Planning*, 9(4), 353–370. <https://doi.org/10.1093/heapol/9.4.353>
- Wardhana, M. N. A., Husaini, M., & Barkatullah, B. (2024). Partisipasi masyarakat pada Posbindu penyakit tidak menular dalam pelayanan kesehatan lansia di Desa Sungai Sandung Kecamatan Sungai Pandan Kabupaten Hulu Sungai Utara. *Jurnal Pelayanan Publik*, 1(4), 1304–1314.
- Welch, E., & Wong, W. (1998). Public administration in a global context: Bridging the gaps of theory and practice between Western and non-Western nations. *Public Administration Review*, 40–49.
- Wilson, W. (2014). The study of administration. *Political Science Quarterly*.
- Yadisar, A. M. (2024). Partisipasi masyarakat dalam meningkatkan kualitas pelayanan kepada masyarakat. *FOKUS*, 22(2).
- Yunus, R., & Tamma, S. (2014). Importance of cultural legitimacy to the local government in Indonesian

democracy. *Bisnis & Birokrasi*, 21(1), 27.

Sumber Internet

- Badan Pusat Statistik. (2024). *Indeks pembangunan manusia 2024*. BPS. <https://www.bps.go.id>
- Bisnis.com. (2025, Juli 10). Realisasi desa digital di wilayah 3T baru capai 41,32%. *Bisnis Indonesia*. <https://bisnis.com>
- GoodStats. (2025, Januari 12). Masyarakat adat alami 121 konflik sepanjang 2024. *GoodStats Indonesia*. <https://goodstats.id>
- GoodStats. (2025). Data konflik agraria di Indonesia 2024. *GoodStats Indonesia*. <https://goodstats.id>
- Kementerian Komunikasi dan Informatika Republik Indonesia. (2023). *Laporan capaian infrastruktur telekomunikasi nasional 2023*. Kominfo. <https://www.kominfo.go.id>
- Komdigi. (2023, November 28). 91,16% desa sudah tercover 4G, tapi 5G baru 0,75%. *Kementerian Komunikasi dan Digital*. <https://komdigi.go.id>
- Kementerian Sosial Republik Indonesia. (2019). *Evaluasi pelaksanaan Program Keluarga Harapan*. Puslitbang Kesos.
- Liputan NTB. (2025, Februari 16). Program Desa Digital 2025 targetkan 75.265 desa. *Liputan NTB*. <https://liputanntb.com>
- World Bank. (2020). *Human capital index 2020*. World Bank.
- World Bank. (2020). *The human capital index 2020 update: Human capital in the time of COVID-19*. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org>