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## Optimizing Village Bureaucracy Transformation: Gorontalo, Indonesia

### Abstract

This research analyzes bureaucratic transformation by optimizing village officials in Gorontalo Regency. Based on the research gap results, this study aims to analyze how bureaucratic transformation optimizes the role of village officials in providing public services. The academic interest of this research is to contribute new knowledge in the bureaucratic transformation field, especially through optimizing village officials. In addition, the practical importance is also quite significant, where this research can guide local governments and related stakeholders regarding strategies and concrete actions that can be taken to improve the quality of public services, bureaucratic efficiency, and responsiveness to community needs. This research uses simple descriptive statistics and is processed using the Nvivo 12 plus application. The community and local government want renewal or transformation in the bureaucratic structure of the village apparatus. The findings in the field are that the local government conducts competency mapping of village officials by conducting Computer Assisted Test (CAT) tests. The test results showed that of the 2089 participants who took part in the selection, only 179 people were ineligible, 50 people did not take the test, while those who passed the selection amounted to 1860. The transformation of the village bureaucracy was carried out through three steps, namely increasing the capacity of village officials, simplifying administrative procedures, and strengthening the supervisory system. The simplification of administrative procedures aims to reduce excessive bureaucracy and speed up public services. Strengthening the supervisory system also plays an important role in improving accountability and transparency.

### Keywords:

bureaucratic transformation; village government; repositioning

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## Introduction

Bureaucratic transformation generally refers to changes and reforms in government administration systems and processes to improve efficiency, responsiveness, and the quality of public services. The bureaucratic transformation aims to overcome the obstacles and challenges that exist in traditional bureaucracies, such as bureaucracy that is slow, inflexible, and less responsive to the needs of society.

The process of bureaucratic transformation involves changes in various aspects, including organizational structure, administrative procedures, organizational culture, information technology, and policies and regulations governing the bureaucracy. Bureaucratic transformation can involve reducing redundant bureaucracy, using information and communication technology in public services (such as e-government), increasing accountability and transparency, and changing organizational culture towards innovation and better services. With the changing times leading to more artificial intelligence innovations, this relates to public administration, where human expertise, both technical and non-technical, is critical to the successful implementation of artificial intelligence in public administration. (Noordt & Tangi, 2023); Momentum in the application of Artificial Intelligence (Artificial Intelligence/AI) in public administration is increasing, with the aim of providing smart, efficient, and optimized public services (Madan & Ashok, 2023); Digital transformation in public administration is geared towards improving citizen-oriented services as well as more efficient internal administrative processes (Scupola & Mergel, 2022); Digital transformation efforts in public administration continue to face major challenges due to the continued use of old systems (Irani et al., 2023); and Innovation in governance will bring a wide range of benefits, not only for the government but also involving various other institutions (Andhika et al., 2018).

The importance of bureaucratic transformation is recognized because an efficient, transparent and responsive bureaucracy can provide better public services to the community. Bureaucratic transformation is also considered important in the face of changing times and the increasingly complex demands of society. Digital transformation in the public sector is generally understood as an ongoing process in which public institutions use technology to improve service delivery, making it more efficient and accessible to the public and changing organizational processes, structures and cultures, also enabling co-creation and enhance value by engaging citizens and stakeholders (Cordella & Paletti, 2018); (Gong et al., 2020); (Meijer & Bekkers, 2015) (Moser-Plautz & Schmidhuber, 2023).

In the digital era and globalization, bureaucratic transformation often involves the use of information technology to improve the

efficiency and accessibility of public services. The importance of this is to improve the effectiveness of quality assessment and the level of citizen satisfaction with the services provided (Musaeva et al., 2020). However, bureaucratic transformation also faces various challenges, such as resistance to change, limited resources, regulatory complexity, and organizational culture issues. Therefore, it requires strong commitment from the government, effective leadership, active participation from the community, and good management in implementing bureaucratic transformation.

In the literature, there are various theories and approaches that address bureaucratic transformation, including organizational change theory, public management theory, and concepts such as good governance, management, and e-government. Research and discussion on bureaucratic transformation continue to grow in an effort to improve the quality of governance and public services in a changing context. Bureaucratic transformation has become the main focus of efforts to improve government performance and public services at various levels of government. Public officials often enjoy a high degree of de facto autonomy despite formally operating under rigid rules and guidelines (Fukuyama, 2013); (Lipsky, 1979); (Maggetti & Verhoest, 2014); and (Rasul & Rogger, 2018).

In Indonesia, bureaucratic transformation is an influential agenda to realize a more efficient, transparent and accountable government. However, being agile in the public sector, especially in a convoluted hierarchical organization like the government, is not as easy as it is in less bureaucratic organizations (Harfianto et al. 2022) . According to Akhakpe, (2001), the he bureaucracy is the most visible branch of the executive branch of government charged with the responsibility of impacting government policies and programs as well as the provision of goods and services to the people (Igbokwe-Ibeto et al., 2020).

One critical aspect of bureaucratic transformation is the optimization of village officials who play a role in governance at the local level.

Gorontalo Regency is one of the regions in Indonesia that is committed to bureaucratic transformation through the optimization of village officials. As a region with significant development potential, Gorontalo Regency faces challenges in optimizing bureaucratic performance to improve public services to the community.

In this context, the optimization of village officials is expected to be an effective strategy to overcome various obstacles and produce fundamental changes in the regional bureaucracy. How organizational culture is shaped to create a culture of public service, a bureaucratic culture based on serving citizens (Claver et al., 2004). Organizational culture is the collection of values, norms, behaviors, and beliefs that underlie how an organization operates and interacts with its members and its external environment, in the context of creating a public service culture and a bureaucratic culture focused on serving citizens.

Furthermore, to see the gaps in the research which is conducted in some developing countries as research (Insani & Azwari, 2020) digital-based service transformation, (Owen, 2020) local people's involvement in politics, (Newman et al., 2022) (Moser-Plautz & Schmidhuber, 2023) digital bureaucratic transformation, (Gasco-Hernandez et al., 2022) the role of organizational capacity, (Hoai et al., 2022) transformational leadership, (Hafsel et al., 2021) managing digital transformation projects in a government context, (Hanisch et al., 2023) governance in facilitating digital exchange relationships, digital transformation in industrial organizations (Imran et al., 2021); and management of digital transformation, and digital culture (Leal-Rodríguez et al., 2023).

In Indonesia itself, research conducted by (Syam et al., 2023) and (Pratama et al., 2023) see the transformation to digital services,

(Nuralim et al., 2014) effectiveness of village information systems, (Hawari & Kartini, 2023) agile governance in the process of bureaucratic transformation, (Ika Widiasuti, 2023) professional bureaucratic model, (Jacob et al., 2023) bureaucratic cuts, and Women's political transformation. The existence of several previous studies on bureaucratic transformation has seen a lot in terms of organizational transformation from the aspect of digitalization to support bureaucratic transformation with the aim of improving public services, the involvement of local communities, and creating a digital culture and political transformation.

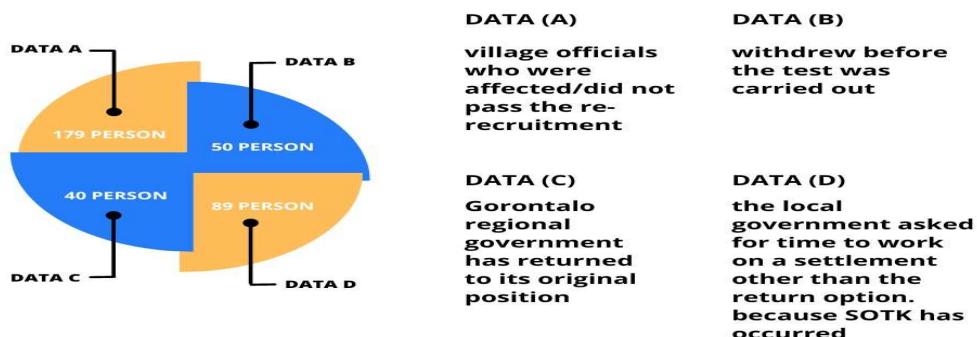
This research was conducted because of the condition of village officials who have not been able to provide maximum service to the community. This can be seen from: first, the structure and function of village government institutions have not been in accordance with the needs of the village and its people; second, the design of village governance policies has not led to the realization of village independence. Therefore, this research will focus on the bureaucratic transformation of the village government by improving the structure of the village apparatus in terms of repositioning the village apparatus or human resources, in order to be able to realize effective and efficient services.

Repositioning the role of human resources is important because one of the goals achieved is to obtain strong human resource practices in the organization. Repositioning the role of human resources is done in two ways, namely through repositioning behavior and repositioning human resource competencies (Moch Wispandono, 2009). Based on the results of the research gap, the purpose of the research is to analyze bureaucratic transformation in optimizing the role of village officials in conducting public services.

With a better understanding of the optimization of bureaucratic transformation through the optimization of village officials in local government, this study can contribute to developing the theory and practice of bureaucratic transformation in Indonesia. In addition, it is expected that the findings of this study can provide policy input for local governments and relevant stakeholders to improve bureaucratic effectiveness and public services at the village level due to the general affirmation that factors such as the urgency of the work situation and the immediacy of the task at hand are more influential determinants of bureaucratic behavior than individual characteristics (Scott & Pandey. 2000).

The problems in the research can be seen and described in the following figure 1.

**Figure 1.**  
**Data on Village Officials Affected by Village Official Reselection**



*Source: Combined Secondary Data from Gorontalo District PEMDes Office*

After further investigation, researchers encountered several new problems related to the fate of 89 Village Officials who were difficult to return. These problems arose due to the existence of Regent Regulation No. 20 of 2021 concerning the Organizational Structure and Work Procedures of the Village Government in Gorontalo District, in which the organizational structure in the Village government has been streamlined. Previously, there were 3 (three) Heads of Affairs and 3 (two) Section Heads, but now it has been restructured to 2 (two) Heads of Affairs and 2 (two) Section Heads. As a result, 2 (two) Structural Position Groups were eliminated in each village, so the option to restore 136 Village Apparatus was a dead end.

Based on the description of the previous problems, the researcher considers that this article is very important because it raises issues that are relevant and have a significant impact in the context of bureaucratic transformation in Indonesia, especially through the optimization of village officials. This article contributes to the understanding of bureaucratic transformation by providing a deeper understanding of the strategies and practices that can be used to optimize bureaucratic transformation at the local level. By focusing on the optimization of village

officials, this article highlights the important role of villages as the frontline administrative unit in public service and decision-making. Furthermore, it is relevant to practical needs, as it provides practical implications that can be adopted by local governments and relevant stakeholders.

Furthermore, researchers use the Overlay system in Vosviewer, which functions to display historical traces of research, the darker the visualization of bibliometric analysis, the longer time needed to carry out the research. If the visualization shows a light color, then the research was conducted in the near future. (Zakiyyah et al., 2022).

As for the results of Overlay Visualization using the Vosviewer application, it can be seen in the following figure:

Based on the topic mapping on Bureaucratic Transformation with the Network Visualization display model, it shows that research on bureaucratic transformation in cluster 3 has 27 total links that have been published. In addition, since the year where topics related to bureaucratic transformation are in the vulnerable years of 2020 to 2021, the results of mapping data or journals have been published through the existing Vos Viewer system. The researchers decided to conduct research related to bureaucratic

**Picture 1.**  
**Bureaucratic Transformation Mapping**  
**with Network Visualization display model**



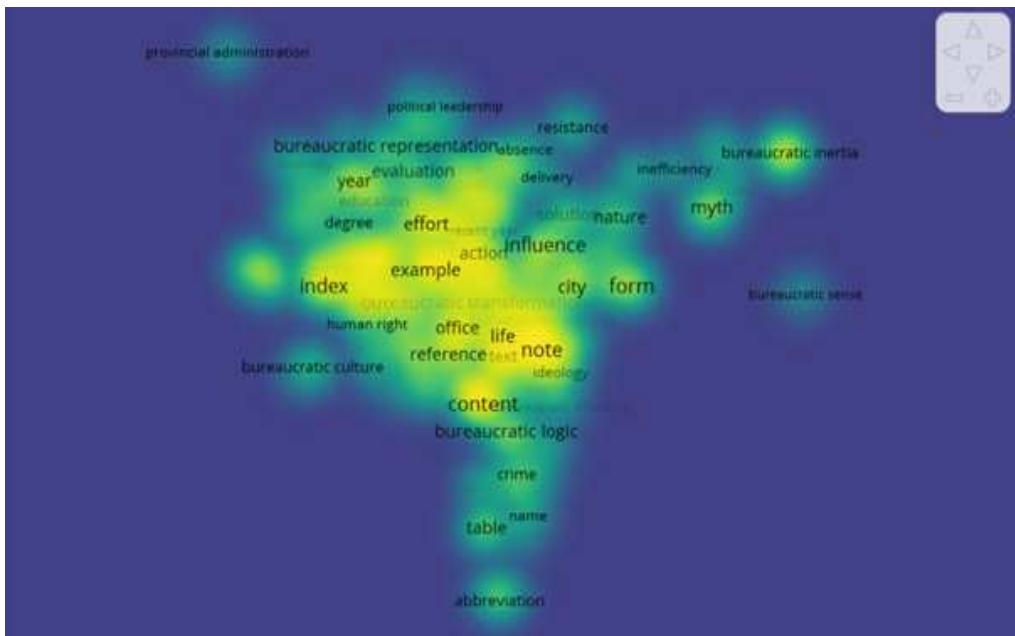
*Source: Processed by the Author (Vosviewer) 2023*

**Picture 2.**  
**Bureaucratic Transformation mapping results with Overlay Visualization display model**



Source: Processed by the Author (Vosviewer) 2023

**Picture 4.**  
Bureaucratic Transformation mapping results through Density Visualization



Source: Processed by the Author (Vosviewer) 2023

transformation in the village government itself in Gorontalo Regency. This is part of the reason why this research is very important because it is based on the mapping of published journals and can get the opportunity to revisit themes that have previously existed.

The findings of this study can guide local governments in designing policies, training

programs, and concrete actions to improve the quality of public services and bureaucratic efficiency at the village level. In addition to the potential for bureaucratic system improvement, by identifying key factors in bureaucratic transformation through the optimization of village officials, this article can provide insights to local governments on efforts that can be made

to improve the existing bureaucratic system. This can have a positive impact on improving local government performance, policy effectiveness, and better services to the community. As for the improvement of literature and knowledge, this article contributes to the development of literature and knowledge about bureaucratic transformation, especially in the context of optimization of village officials. By filling the existing knowledge gaps, this article can serve as a reference for further research and academic discussions on improving bureaucracy at the village level.

Research (Insani & Azwari, 2020) shows that local governments must be able to transform to keep up with the rapid development of the times, especially in the context of Era 4.0. Bureaucratic transformation is important in supporting the success of the Smart City concept, which focuses on public value and innovative collaboration. This research underscores the importance of change in the local government bureaucratic system to match the demands of an increasingly advanced era. Era 4.0, marked by technological advances and digitalization, requires local governments to adapt to these changes. Bureaucratic transformation is one of the main keys to achieving success in implementing the Smart City concept. Smart City emphasizes the importance of innovative collaboration between government and society in providing more efficient and responsive public services. Public value is the main focus in building Smart City, where local governments must be able to provide quality public services that meet the needs of the community.

Thus, existing research shows that bureaucratic transformation is an important aspect in supporting the development of the Smart City concept and facing the challenges of Era 4.0. Local governments need to take transformational steps to improve the quality of public services and be able to innovate. Many studies link innovation and public administration efficiency, with most

scholars analyzing the efficiency of information technology as an innovation (Kondratenko et al., 2020) to achieve success in implementing the Smart City concept.

Research (Arifah , 2020) shows that the importance of bureaucratic transformation through e-government lies in the support of factors such as supportive regulations, adaptive organizational structures, innovative organizational culture, and planned system reforms. Transparency and governance structures implemented by a government greatly affect the competitiveness of a country because basically the state is a system of government organizations consisting of various entities that create mutual benefit values. (Nugroho et al., 2021); (Sutanta, 2023). Serious and consistent implementation of e-government can also improve the transparency of public services, resulting in significant benefits to society. Bureaucratic transformation through e-government can improve the transparency of public services with a consistent monitoring system, extensive knowledge of information technology, and maintained integrity. Advances in information technology accompanying government administration (Adhania & Nurdin, 2022); (Arslan et al., 2020); and (Ndou, 2004) in the United States have examined representative bureaucracies as a means to control administrative discretion (Arslan et al., 2020).

Based on the results of existing research, it can be described. First, supportive regulations are an important factor in implementing bureaucratic transformation through e-government. The existence of a clear and supportive legal and policy framework allows local governments to implement e-government initiatives more effectively. Appropriate regulations can regulate legal aspects, data security, privacy protection, and the use of information technology needed in bureaucratic transformation. Bureaucracy reform is one of the first steps in supporting the government (Wibowo & Sihite, 2021).

Kedua, struktur organisasi yang adaptif menjadi faktor penting dalam mendukung transformasi birokrasi melalui e-government. Organizational factors influence individual behavior, but not to the point of denying moral conscience, freedom, and proper responsibility (Roszkowska & Mele, 2021). A flexible organizational structure that is able to adapt to technological changes and community demands can improve efficiency and responsiveness in public services. In the context of e-government, an integrated and coordinative organizational structure can facilitate accessibility and coordination in the application of information technology in various organizational units.

Furthermore, innovative organizational culture is an equally important factor in bureaucratic transformation through e-government. Leaders can help improve, shape and maintain a desirable organizational culture that can influence innovative work behavior by generating a new set of shared values (Jaskyte, 2004; Naqshbandi et al., 2018). According to Robbins (2003), one of the factors that exist at the organizational level and determine the success of the organization to achieve goals is organizational culture (Rohim & Budhiasa, 2019). An organizational culture that supports innovation, creativity, and willingness to adopt new technologies is a strong foundation in implementing e-government. A culture that is open to change and oriented towards better public services can help encourage the adoption and utilization of information technology in the bureaucracy.

Finally, planned system reform is an important factor in bureaucratic transformation through e-government. The process of bureaucratic transformation involves not only technological aspects, but also changes in administrative systems and processes. Planned system reforms include the development of information technology infrastructure, data integration, improved procedures, and increased

capacity of the human resources involved. The skill classification of ICT human resources in e-government in developing countries is divided into technology, commerce, and management (Ndou, 2004). On the other hand, (Bwalya, 2009) shows that governments need technical skills and technology to implement and develop e-government to provide efficient public services. Next, (A. Alghamdi et al., 2011) and (Basu, 2004) indicate that IT personnel require high character and a sense of responsibility to achieve the desired goals. According to Karimi dkk. (2007), finding IT human resources to support agency business processes to manage and redesign business processes to improve efficiency (Ariana et al., 2020).

By emphasizing that bureaucratic transformation through e-government will be successful if it is supported by supporting regulations, adaptive organizational structure, innovative organizational culture, and planned system reforms. These factors need to be considered and managed properly by local governments in an effort to optimize bureaucratic transformation through e-government to improve the quality of public services and bureaucratic efficiency.

Good implementation of e-government has the potential to create a public service system that is more efficient, reliable, and responsive to the needs of the community (Sumardi et al., 2021). Pope (2019) provides a view that government as a platform can be defined as "the re-organization of government work around a network of shared application programming interfaces (APIs) and components, open standards, and canonical data sets, so that civil servants, businesses, and others can deliver much better services to the public, more securely, efficiently and accountably" (Spall, 2022). It aims to enable various parties, including civil servants, businesses, and other entities, to provide better services to the public in a more secure, efficient, and accountable manner.

Across disciplines such as urban planning, e-government, and innovation research, good governance has been recognized as the combination of governance and technology to find more effective and efficient solutions to urban problems, including municipalities (Meijer & Bolívar, 2016; Viale Pereira et al., 2017). This is to facilitate service to the community, where with the digitalization of government.

The gaps in this study are the lack of focus on the optimization of village officials in bureaucratic transformation. Researchers see that many previous studies tend to focus more on bureaucratic transformation in general without paying special attention to the role of village officials, the impact of optimizing village officials on bureaucratic efficiency, and the effectiveness where this gap requires a more detailed analysis of how optimizing village officials can improve bureaucratic performance at the village level. In addition, the practical implications of optimizing village officials in bureaucratic transformation where this will provide clear guidance for local governments and other stakeholders in implementing effective practices of optimizing village officials.

## Methods

The transformation of bureaucracy is very interesting to study because it relates to services to the community, especially regarding rural communities who receive direct services from the village government. The increasingly complex problems associated with downsizing the bureaucratic structure at the village government level, so this needs to be the main basis for research using a qualitative approach (Nugrahayu et al., 2019).

The theoretical framework used in this study departs from the theory of organizational transformation proposed by Gouillart & Kelly (1995) which consists of: 1) Reframing; 2) Restructuring; 3) Revitalizing; and 4) Renewal.

This theory is the basis for understanding and analyzing the organizational transformation process carried out based on the four aspects that will be carried out in the Village Government in Gorontalo Regency. Based on the previous description, this research uses a qualitative approach which is a research design using a case study.

Case study was chosen as the research design as it allows researchers to investigate complex and contextual phenomena in an authentic context. Data were collected through several methods, including in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis. These are primary data which have several importance in the research, namely relevance and specificity, full control, uniqueness and originality, in-depth analysis, and flexibility. According to Sugiyono (2018), primary data is a data source that directly provides data to data collectors (Kalangi & Pusung, 2023). Data is collected by the researcher directly from the first source or where the object of research is carried out.

In-depth interviews were conducted with various key informants, such as government officials at the village level, village officials, administrative staff and other relevant stakeholders. These interviews aimed to capture their views and understanding of the implementation of the optimization of village officials, the challenges faced, and the changes in the bureaucracy following the optimization of village officials. This research uses simple descriptive statistics and is processed using the Nvivo 12 plus application, which is the software used for writing literature reviews and analyzing qualitative data (Wahid, et al 2023).

Participatory observation involves directly observing practices and processes at the village level, including interactions between village officials and communities and the implementation of new policies and administrative procedures. These observations helped to gain an in-depth

understanding of the implementation of village-level device optimization in a natural context.

This analysis helped to obtain additional data and validate findings from interviews and observations. By using a qualitative and case study approach, this research can provide a comprehensive picture of the practice of village apparatus optimization and its impact on bureaucratic transformation in Gorontalo District. This approach also allows researchers to explain the context, dynamics, and factors that influence the success or failure of the implementation of village apparatus optimization. In addition, this research involves a series of stages that follow the bibliometric approach that has been conducted previously (Brika et al., 2021; Cao et al., 2021; Khanra et al., 2021).

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Gorontalo District Village Government Transformation**

Based on the results of the research, it was revealed that the optimization of devices and administrative processes at the village level in the bureaucratic structure of Gorontalo Regency has an important role. The new paradigm in the implementation of Village Government always brings broad consequences for central and local government institutions. The spirit of decentralization in delegating authority implies independence. Independent in the sense of being free to choose and organize government accompanied by the ability. Regent Regulation Number 20 of 2021 concerning the Organizational Structure and Work Procedures of the Village Government in Gorontalo Regency is the legal basis for bureaucratic transformation. The implementation of village apparatus optimization in Gorontalo Regency includes changes in the structure and administrative processes within the village bureaucracy. In recent times, the use of structure has become important as a response to individual limitations and failures, rather than

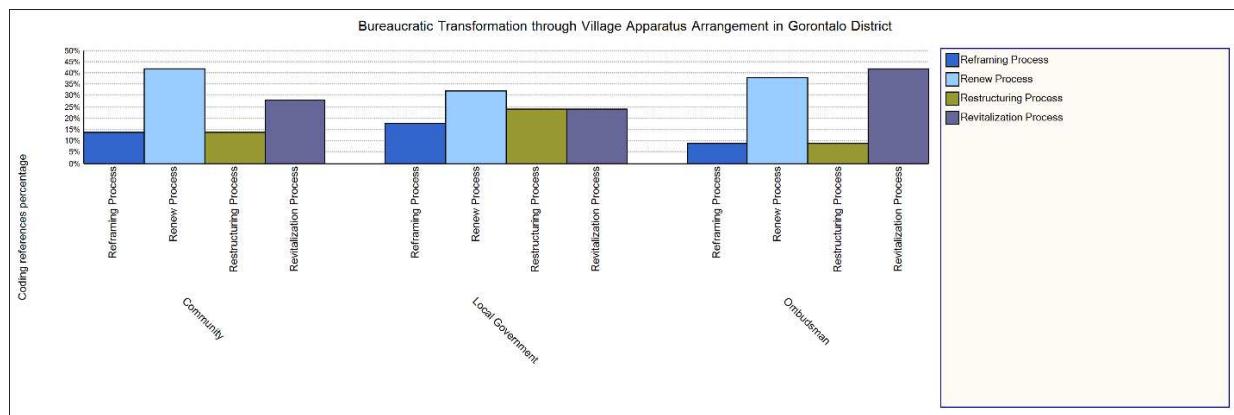
for the purpose of subordination and control over employees (Stevenson, 2014).

These measures are designed to improve the efficiency, transparency, and responsiveness of public services provided by village officials. A critical aspect of this implementation is the change in the structure of the village apparatus. The new structure of the village apparatus may involve the establishment or reorganization of work units such as working groups, teams, or specific sections within the village organization. This aims to ensure a clear separation of duties and responsibilities and optimize the management of human resources at the village level.

In addition, the implementation of village apparatus optimization also involves changes in administrative processes. These processes include planning, budgeting, reporting, monitoring and evaluation at the village level. Optimization of village officials focuses on simplifying processes, using information technology, and improving the quality of data used in decision-making. In its implementation, village officials in Gorontalo Regency undergo capacity building through training and education. The aim is to improve the competence and understanding of village officials regarding their duties and responsibilities as well as their ability to provide quality public services.

Based on the results of Nvivo 12 Plus, coding through in-depth interviews with resource persons, it is found that the Renew process has the highest percentage because the hidden asset of the human resources of the Village apparatus is intellectual capital which plays an increasingly important role in the continuity of Government in the Village. Intellectual capital consists of work culture, decision-making structure, and community. Among all these components, human capital is considered the most vital intangible asset, especially in innovation. To illustrate intellectual capital, village officials need to have human resources who have adequate knowledge and expertise and can implement policies. Village

**Figure 2.**  
**Bureaucratic Transformation of Village Apparatus Optimization in Gorontalo District**



governments today must emphasize the ability to work better, faster and more competitively. As expressed by one of the community leaders:

"So far, in terms of society, there has been a change in mindset that the village must be built by all stakeholders in the village, but in terms of services, the ability (mindset) that leads to the progress of services provided by village officials is still lacking due to the lack of guidance and training for village officials."

Village government officials stated the same thing:

"I propose that there is an element of compulsion from the Regional Government to encourage village officials to work flexibly, move according to regulations, always adapt to various changes in community needs, and be familiar with e-government."

The community and local government want renewal or transformation in the bureaucratic structure of village officials. The findings in the field are that the local government mapped the competence of village officials by conducting Computer Assisted Test (CAT) tests. The test results showed that of the 2089 participants who took part in the selection, only 179 people were ineligible, 50 people did not take the test, while those who passed the selection amounted to 1860.

Through these implementation steps, it is expected that the optimization of village officials in Gorontalo Regency will create a village bureaucracy that is more efficient, transparent and responsive to community needs. This implementation is also expected to improve the quality of public services provided by village officials to the local community.

One of the main aspects of village apparatus optimization is changes to the village organizational structure. New structures may include the establishment or restructuring of work units at the village level and, for example, the creation of working groups or teams with tasks such as village financial management, human resource development, supervision, or public services. The optimization of these structures aims to ensure a clear separation of duties and improve coordination between work units in the village. In addition, there are changes in village administration as part of the village apparatus structure. Village administration includes planning, budgeting, reporting, monitoring, and evaluation. Administrative processes are improved and simplified in the optimization of the village apparatus to increase efficiency and transparency.

One of the impacts was the dismissal of 176 village officials. However, after an evaluation, 40 of them have been returned to their

positions. The reinstatement process is based on recommendations made by the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is a supervisory institution for public service delivery whose role is to oversee the administrative actions of local governments, including State-Owned Enterprises and private entities or individuals tasked with organizing certain public services.

With the involvement of the Ombudsman, this institution must oversee the implementation of maladministration by local governments. This supervision is important to ensure that the policy of optimizing village officials adheres to the principles of good governance and favors the interests of the community. Through the role of the Ombudsman, efforts to oversee the process of bureaucratic change can reduce the possibility of inappropriate administrative actions that violate public service principles.

This unforeseen impact is an important lesson in the implementation of village apparatus management in Gorontalo District. Careful monitoring and regular evaluations are needed to ensure good governance plans and principles follow the bureaucratic changes. Collaboration between the local government, village apparatus, and oversight institutions such as the Ombudsman is key to achieving better bureaucratic transformation outcomes and supporting improved public service quality at the village level.

Based on the results of interviews with informants of the ombudsman representative of Gorontalo Regency, a revitalization process was suggested by 43%. However, 38% proposed a process of renewal of the village government bureaucracy. Revitalization emphasizes on

improving the quality of service to the community, renewing the work culture, and the importance of the village government apparatus in every bureaucratic service. Downsizing the village government organization is necessary to create a responsive working climate; in addition, to face faster changes, the younger generation is needed to contribute to village development.

"The trend of reports submitted to the Ombudsman related to village issues tends to increase if it is usually only about Standard Operating Procedures for certain service products, but currently the substance of the report is more diverse. One of them is about the potential maladministration of the village head in dismissing village officials."

The study results show that the optimization of village officials has a vital role in bureaucratic transformation at the local level. In the context of Gorontalo District, the optimization of village officials has resulted in several significant changes in the village bureaucracy. Through changes in administrative structures and processes, village officials have become more efficient, transparent, and responsive to the needs of the community (Bryson et al., 2014). It is understood that by making changes in the structure and process of village government administration, village officials can achieve better efficiency in the delivery of public services. In the service process, clear service guidelines are very important for employees in serving the community, because by referring to these guidelines, the service process can run well and service goals can be achieved (Panjaitan et al., 2019).

**Table 1.**  
**Transformation of Village Government Bureaucracy**

	Reframing Process	Extension Process	Restructuring Process	Revitalization Process
Community	14.29%	42.86%	14.29%	28.57%
Ombudsman	9.52%	38.1%	9.52%	42.86%
Government Apparatus	18.63%	32.92%	24.22%	24.22%

*Source: Nvivo 12 Plus*

Changes in administrative structures and processes occur due to changes in the environment. Rapid technological advances, including the expansion of digital governance, the use of artificial intelligence, and the ability to collect and analyze big data, promise to make public sector organizations leaner, more efficient, and more responsive to the needs of society (Newman et al., 2022). This means that rapid technological advances, such as the development of digital governance, the application of artificial intelligence, and the ability to collect and analyze big data provide the potential to transform the way organizations in the public sector work. A. Bento & R. Bento, (2011) argues that IT advances introduce computing and data storage easily into a device, which can store large amounts of digital data (Doni et al., 2021); (Razak et al., 2021:3) ICT-based governance or e-government is not only limited to the use of web technologies but also includes the socio-political and cultural systems involved.

With the right technology adoption, public sector organizations have the opportunity to become leaner, more efficient, and responsive to the needs of the community. For example, the use of digital technology can replace or simplify manual administrative processes, thereby increasing efficiency in public service delivery.

The need for village government innovation in providing services, as stated by Siddiquee (2008), that the innovations and reforms introduced have generally had a positive but limited impact (Andhika et al., 2018). A series of reforms were highly touted by the government and generated optimism among the opposition, but have so far done nothing to address the country's underlying institutional problems (Ramarao, 2022). This suggests that while innovation and reform efforts are necessary to improve bureaucratic performance, it needs to be recognized that there are limitations and constraints that may limit their overall effect. Therefore, there is a need for

continuous and ongoing efforts to improve and develop bureaucratic transformation in order to achieve more optimal and sustainable results.

In addition, this study also identified several challenges faced in the implementation of village apparatus arrangements. These challenges include limited resources, resistance from related parties, and the complexity of changing organizational culture (Polyakova et al., 2019). Transforming to be agile in the public sector, especially a convoluted hierarchical organization like the government, is not as easy as being less bureaucratic (Harfianto et al., 2022). However, with a strong commitment from the local government and active participation from the community, the optimization of village officials can be carried out well.

The implementation of bureaucratic transformation of village officials in Gorontalo Regency is inseparable from various challenges. These challenges can affect the smooth and successful implementation and require comprehensive efforts to overcome them. The following are some of the common challenges faced:

**Limited Resources** One of the main challenges is limited resources, both in terms of budget, manpower, and infrastructure (Mustar et al., 2022). These limitations may affect villages' ability to make structural changes, provide training, and use information technology. Comprehensive efforts are needed to overcome these limitations, including adequate budget allocations and human resource capacity building. Resource limitations can be seen based on the results of the Computer Assisted Test (CAT) conducted by the local government, the data shows that the number of village officials who participated in the selection amounted to 2089 people from 191 villages. Of these, only 179 people did not pass, 50 people withdrew before the test and 1860 people passed.

**Resistance from Related Parties** (Ahmad & Hardianti, 2020). Implementing village apparatus arrangements may face resistance or disapproval

from relevant parties, such as village apparatus who are used to the old structures and processes. Some parties may feel uncomfortable with the proposed changes and fear that the changes will threaten their position or power. Therefore, effective communication, deep understanding, and participation from relevant parties are required to overcome these barriers. This challenge is supported by the results of interviews regarding the policy process. Restructuring village officials has encountered a number of opposing views, one of which is from the informant of the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia Representative of Gorontalo who said that the Maladministration Polemic on the dismissal of hundreds of village officials in Gorontalo Regency, finally received a decision from the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia. The reason is that the legal basis used by the Gorontalo Regency Regional Government is said to be unusable because it is not in accordance with applicable regulations. With the above, the Ombudsman RI through a letter number T/59/RM.02.05/0010.2022/I/2023, asked the Gorontalo Regency Regional Government to take steps to resolve the problem of dismissal of village officials in Gorontalo Regency, with reference to several descriptions of the limited letter.

Complexity of Change (Brunswicker et al., 2019). The implementation of the optimization of village officials involves various complex aspects, including coordination between work units, harmonization of regulations, and changes in administrative systems. Good coordination between all relevant parties, including local governments, village officials and communities, is key to overcoming these complexities. Careful planning, continuous monitoring and regular evaluation are necessary to ensure smooth change. Based on the research results, the local government of Gorontalo Regency has stipulated the regulation of Gorontalo Regent Regulation Number 20 of 2021 concerning the organizational structure and governance of the village government which

regulates the organizational structure based on village classification, but the implementation of this policy has experienced obstacles, due to unclear village typology standards (population, village potential, infrastructure, area, village customs).

Facing these challenges requires a strong commitment from local governments, active community participation, and adequate technical support and guidance (Edwards et al., 2021). Synergistic and collaborative efforts of all parties (Wang et al., 2023) will help overcome challenges and optimize bureaucratic transformation by optimizing village apparatus in Gorontalo Regency. The implementation of village apparatus management in Gorontalo Regency has a significant impact on bureaucratic transformation at the village level. Some critical impacts arising from the optimization of village apparatus are:

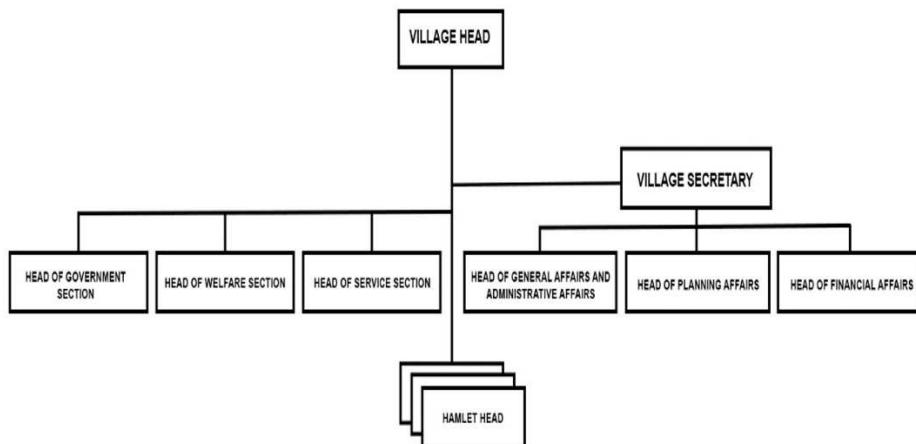
Efficiency Improvement (Wicaksana & Rachman, 2018). The optimization of village apparatus helps improve efficiency in administrative management and implementation of activities at the village level. Time and resources can be used more effectively with more transparent structures, good segregation of duties, and simplified administrative processes. This results in efficient budget utilization, faster decision-making, and increased work productivity (Mustar et al. 2022). It is understood that efficient budget utilization, faster decision-making, and increased work productivity are benefits that may be achieved through the application of modern administrative principles in the bureaucracy.

Improved Transparency: The optimization of village apparatus has also resulted in increased transparency in resource management and public services. New structures and more organized administrative processes make information more open and accessible to the public. Transparency of public and local finances is one of the most important factors in building a democratic society with a high level of public trust in government (Shkolnyk et al., 2020) implementation of

**Figure 6.**  
**Organizational Structure by Village Typology**

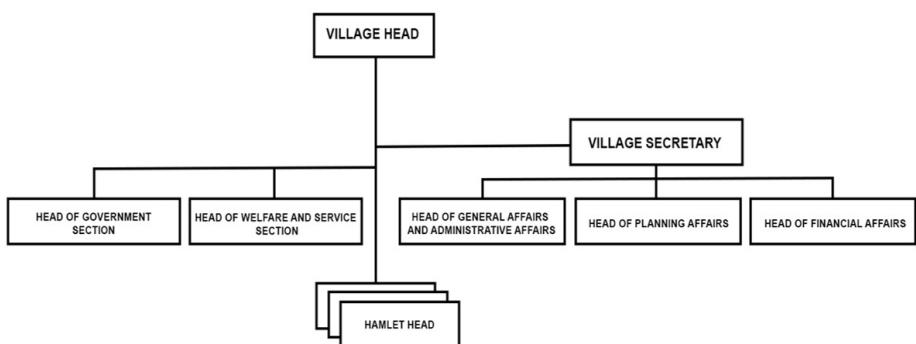
**VILLAGE GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

(*Swasembada/Swakarya*)



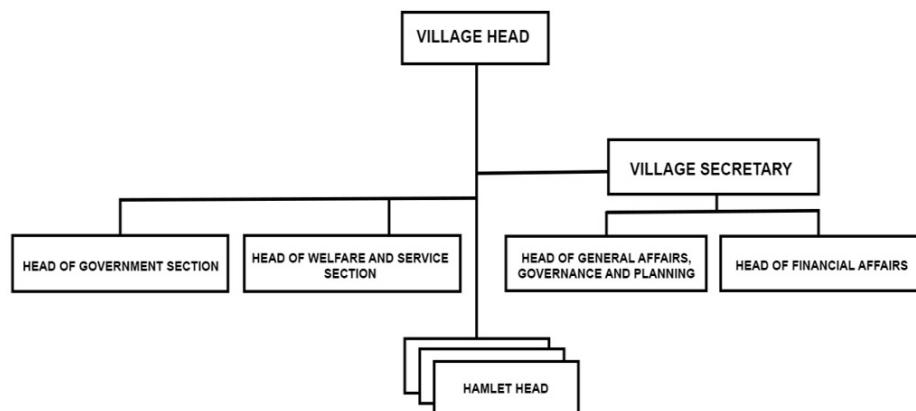
**VILLAGE GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

(*Swakarya*)



**VILLAGE GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

(*Swakarya/Swadaya*)



*Source: Perbup No. 20 of 2021 on the Organizational Structure and Work Procedures of the Village Government*

activities, and village-level decision-making processes.

**Responsiveness in Public Services:** The optimization of village officials has an impact on improving responsiveness in public services. With a more organized and clear structure, village officials can better respond to the needs and demands of the community. A more efficient decision-making process and more focused implementation of activities help improve the quality and speed of public services provided by village officials and have a positive impact on the response system at the village and district levels (Singh & Chudasama 2023). Efficient decision-making processes and focused implementation of activities are instrumental in improving the quality and speed of public services at the village level. The positive impact of this can also strengthen response systems at the village and district levels.

**Improved Service Quality:** The optimization of village officials also contributes to improving the quality of public services at the village level. Village officials with better structure and capacity building through training and education can provide more professional, responsive, and community-oriented services. This includes providing accurate information, clear procedures, friendly interactions with the community, and improving public services by sharing the right information (Curtis & Edwards, 2019). In addition, public services are usually characterized by a normative framework of integrity, impartiality, accountability, and professionalism (Bauer et al., 2021:4).

These impacts reflect a positive transformation in the village bureaucracy through the optimization of village officials. This optimization can potentially improve the quality of public services, increase resource management efficiency, and strengthen the relationship between village officials and the community (Udjianto et al., 2021). In the long run,

this transformation can bring about changes for better village governance and improve the welfare of local communities.

Bureaucratic reform requires employees who are productive, committed to work so that they focus on achieving the vision and mission of the organization, in line with the Bureaucratic Reform Road Map (Winurini, 2019). The impact of optimizing village officials on bureaucratic transformation in Gorontalo Regency can also be seen in the improvement of the quality of public services. With the increased capacity of village officials, public services have become more effective and efficient. The community feels an increase in accessibility, speed, and quality of service from village officials. Badudu, Zein, (1996) Optimization can be formulated as a matter, way, result or process of arranging (Lembong et al., 2017) Administrative reform encompasses a wide range of strategies, such as reduction of government employees, reorganization, rationalization, re-engineering, streamlining processes, fighting corruption, decentralization, devolution, financial and economic changes, performance management, elimination of bureaucracy, and many more (Analiza & Brilantes, 2020). It considers the appropriate structure, pattern, sequence, or layout to achieve the desired goal. The optimization process may involve selecting, grouping, sequencing, spatial arrangement, or optimal positioning at the level of governance itself.

As a consequence of research with a qualitative approach, researchers should build or develop theories after going through the stages of analyzing various theories, journals of previous research results, and the results of interviews with informants in the study. Furthermore, with regard to research by analyzing the applied theory put forward by Gouillart & Kelly (1995) consists of several dimensions, including: 1) Reframing, which is a change process that opens new insights by developing the organization's

vision and mission for organizational progress; 2) Restructuring, which is preparing the organization's infrastructure towards better performance to create efficiency; 3) Revitalizing, which is the process of bringing new life to the organization, among others, by further developing existing processes in order to answer stakeholder demands and keep up with changes in the development of the strategic environment; 4) Renewal, which is the process of equipping human resources with skills and developing new goals and targets so that the organization is always able to regenerate from time to time to keep up with changes in the development of its strategic environment. Furthermore, in order to deconstruct the theory, Gouillart & Kelly (1995), the researcher added one new indicator as a step to transform the bureaucracy through the optimization of village officials in Gorontalo Regency, namely the "Reposition Process" (Novelty)". The description of repositioning is a causality to complete the part that is considered less important in order to transform the Village government bureaucracy in Gorontalo Regency.

The concept of repositioning has not been widely put forward by experts in the field of government, but lately often with the rise of issues regarding bureaucratic reform, the view of repositioning has begun to be widely discussed as one part of institutional change in government. Today, the notion of repositioning is considered an important element in the process of institutional change in government.

In general, repositioning refers to a shift from an old position to a new position. In the context of governance, the idea of repositioning in the bureaucracy has been outlined by Osborne & Plastrik (1996) in their book entitled "Reinventing Government." They define "reinventing" as the transformation of the bureaucratic system into a more entrepreneurial system. They define "reinventing" as the transformation of a bureaucratic system into a more entrepreneurial

system. A fundamental shift in public systems and organizations to achieve dramatic improvements in effectiveness, efficiency, adaptability, and ability to innovate. This shift involves changes in their goals, incentives, accountability, power structures, and culture (Truscott, 2023). This view provides an understanding of reinventing, which emphasizes the renewal of government organizations from within to improve the system independently. Its relevance to the novelty of repositioning the Village Government bureaucracy lies in the absence of complaints from the community because the bureaucracy does not act discriminatively and prioritizes the interests of the community.

Other expert's opinions say that repositioning is generally known as a change from an old position to a new position. As said by Bennis (2017), the importance of repositioning and the role of bureaucracy as an effort in a series of governance and supporting the success of development. According to Bennis (2017), there are at least four interrelated things why repositioning is important in guiding change in the bureaucracy, including: 1) The existence of humanitarian problems that because the level of education is getting better, the demands of life are increasing; 2) The existence of rapid changes around us due to science that is always developing, which sometimes we do not expect and are difficult to predict; 3) The existence of growth that is not supported by the ability of government organizations; 4) The complexity of modern technology that fosters specialization and organizational activities and people in every government activity (Firdaus & Susi, 2020). If we look at the four proposed by Bennis, then in our country we have now experienced such a change, so the government bureaucracy must respond quickly.

That other opinions about the repositioning of public bureaucracy are also emphasized by Mosher (1980) that theoretically there is no agreement among public administration scientists

about a comprehensive and holistic theory of bureaucratic reform (Arslan et al., 2020). According to Iskandar (2017), through bureaucratic reform, leadership capacity development can be improved through transparent and meritocracy-based training, coaching, and selection (Muhadom, 2023). Therefore, Frederick C. Mosher (1975), for example, argues that the repositioning of the public bureaucracy must be emphasized on 4 (four) dimensions: 1) reform at the level of public programs and policies; 2) improving the quality of the effectiveness of the administrative wheel which includes expanding superior control over subordinates in order to improve coordination, decentralizing the decision-making process, increasing productivity, efficiency, and effectiveness, and deepening the use of modern administrative principles; 3) public bureaucratic staffing reform which includes an analysis of the effectiveness of the public bureaucracy (Erni et al., 2017) qualifications, welfare, job satisfaction of public bureaucracy employees; 4) dimensions that are the focus of criticism by actors outside the public bureaucracy (Alamsyah, 2017); (Firdaus & Susi, 2020).

In general, it can be understood that Frederick C. Mosher's view of repositioning the public bureaucracy with these four dimensions provides a comprehensive framework for bureaucratic transformation efforts to improve the quality of public services and achieve better development goals. It is important to understand the quality contributors and antecedents of service value relevant to e-government services, investigating the mechanisms through which service quality affects the value of e-government services, and examining the mediating role played by perceived service value (PSV) (Li & Shang, 2020).

From the various information expressed by the expert opinion above, the researcher draws the conclusion that there is a difference in meaning between Reposition and the research subfocus raised. At least from various sources

from various experts, the basic differences are as follows: 1) Reframing with Reposition. Reframing emphasizes more on employee attitudes by opening new insights that can identify what the organization can develop in the future. Meanwhile, Reposition has the meaning of refreshing new human resources that are predicted to bring changes in the organization in the future (Yusuf, 2018). Restructuring with Repositioning. Restructuring emphasizes the redesign of the bureaucratic structure if it is considered less effective and efficient.

Revitalization emphasizes upgrading competencies, such as regular technical guidance. Meanwhile, Repositioning is implemented if the bureaucratic pattern tends to be centralized, less sensitive to social, economic and political developments (Firdaus & Susi, 2020) Renewal with Reposition. Renewal does not have to be done to all levels in the organization, but only employees who are considered incompetent should be evaluated. Meanwhile, Reposition emphasizes the structuring of systems and mechanisms that are open, professional and accountable (Permana et al., 2022).

Overall, this article shows that the optimization of village officials can be an effective strategy to optimize bureaucratic transformation at the local level. Through changes in the structure, process and capacity of village officials, the village bureaucracy can adapt to the demands of the times and provide better services to the community. However, the existing challenges and obstacles need to be addressed appropriately through comprehensive support from the local government and active participation of the community in the bureaucratic transformation process.

This article contributes to understanding the importance of optimizing village apparatus for bureaucratic transformation. The results of this study can serve as a reference for local governments and policymakers in designing and implementing effective village apparatus

management programs to achieve broader bureaucratic transformation and provide tangible benefits to society. Furthermore, the need for efforts must always be seen as a process that refers to various innovations that develop in society such as economics, socio-politics, science, and technology. The development of information and communication technology in all fields has caused significant economic and social impacts (Radulescu et al., 2018) and gives us hope that these technologies will also find a role in the transformation, efficiency, or advancement of public administration (Sarbu et al., 2021). The use of technology in public administration can bring about positive changes in the delivery of public services, more effective decision-making, wider public participation, and more efficient resource management.

## Conclusion

Bureaucratic transformation in the form of a renewal process through the optimization of village officials is dominant in bureaucratic transformation. The transformation condition of the renewal of the organizational structure and work procedures of the village government has not shown an improvement in service quality. The process of public service and development that is in line with the demands of the community is not the quality of service that is the focus of attention. Instead, there is rejection and acceptance of the dismissal of some village government officials. To be agile in the public sector, especially a convoluted hierarchical organization like the village government is not as easy as being less bureaucratic. Layered bureaucracy impedes the application of agile methods. This can be seen in the many proposals from the Ombudsman Institution to revitalize the organizational structure and work procedures of the village government.

The optimization of village apparatus has a vital role in optimizing bureaucratic

transformation in Gorontalo Regency. The case study shows that the optimization of the village apparatus can improve efficiency, transparency and responsiveness in public services through changes in administrative structures and processes. However, the implementation of village apparatus management is not free from challenges, such as limited resources, resistance, and changes in organizational culture. Overcoming these challenges requires a strong commitment from the local government and the active participation of the community in the bureaucratic transformation process. The importance of public services in carrying out sustainable development (Masuda et al., 2022) and (Osborne et al., 2014).

The impact of optimizing village officials on bureaucratic transformation can be seen in the improvement of the quality of public services. By increasing the capacity of village officials, the community gets better accessibility, speed, and quality of services. Optimizing village officials is an effective strategy to optimize bureaucratic transformation at the local level. With purposeful changes in administrative structures and processes, village bureaucracies can adapt to the demands of the times and provide better services to the community. This article contributes to understanding the importance of optimizing village officials in bureaucratic transformation.

As for the weaknesses and shortcomings in this study where researchers only used a qualitative approach without using a quantitative approach, in future research, it is necessary to use qualitative and quantitative approaches or mixed methods to strengthen research. Furthermore, bureaucratic transformation needs to involve many complex dimensions, such as policy changes, organizational structure, work culture, and technology. Research tends to focus on certain aspects and may not be able to cover all relevant factors, as in the research only assesses from one dimension, namely organizational structure.

Given the previous conclusions, the researchers provide several suggestions that in future research it is necessary to see and measure bureaucratic transformation through different research approaches. There is also the need to see bureaucratic transformation from various different perspectives, whether it is in terms of policy, organizational structure, work culture, or technology.

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