Sewaka Dharma Spirit of Effective Public Service Bureaucratic Culture during the Covid-19 Pandemic

I Nengah Merta¹, Ni Nengah Karuniati², Ni Luh Putu Erma Mertaningrum³, I Dewa Nyoman Juniasia⁴, I Gede Putu Yasa⁵, Moch. Noor⁶, I Gde Oka Saputra⁷

¹₂₃₄ⱼ₆⁷ Wira Bhakti Denpasar College, Denpasar, Indonesia

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:
Received June 01, 2022
Revised June 03, 2022
Accepted August 01, 2022
Available online August 25, 2022

Kata Kunci:
Budaya Organisasi, Birokrasi, Sewaka Dharma

Keywords:
Organizational Culture, Bureaucracy, Sewaka Dharma

ABSTRACT


ABSTRACT

The shift in public demands for more effective public services during the Covid-19 pandemic has made public service bureaucracies aware of the need to improve immediately. This study aims to analyze the factors that cause the low performance of public service organizations based on identifying factors and suggesting several operational policies to improve the performance of public service bureaucracies. This type of research is qualitative. The method of collection uses document analysis and references. The technique used to analyze the data is descriptive qualitative analysis. The results of this study show that the service culture is imbued with a monopolistic, patriarchal culture and is constrained by various formal constraints, moving the public service bureaucracy slowly and rigidly. This condition causes the quality of public services to be less than optimal during the Covid-19 pandemic. Government bureaucratic organizations must change their mindset to appear good state servants. Namely, serving is an obligation (sawaka dharma) and not being prestige to carry out their obligations as public servants. The spirit of service is a very relevant obligation to be adopted as a spirit that animates public service practices that can strengthen the government's commitment as a state servant.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic has created various problems in various aspects of human life (Kashian et al., 2020; Nicola et al., 2020). One of the aspects affected by the COVID-19 pandemic is the bureaucracy of public services (Sampurno et al., 2020; Taufik & Warsono, 2020). The ineffectiveness of meeting people's needs during the Covid-19 Pandemic was evident from the many complaints, protests, and demands from the public for the government bureaucracy to act fairly and evenly in opening access to public services to the public. When the bureaucracy was first proposed by Max Weber as an alternative form of organization that was better and more efficient than the authoritarian organization, which was solely based on the arbitrary application of power by the German Emperors, many people had high hopes for this new organizational figure (Losa, 2018; Sandiasa & Agustana, 2018). With its hierarchical authority structure,
functional specialization, and professional staff, it is expected that it will be able to carry out more and more complex tasks properly (Kurniadi, 2020; Yunas, 2016). After several years of being used by almost all countries worldwide, including Indonesia, evidence began to appear about the lack of reliability of this administrative structure. Initially, great trust in the bureaucracy began to fade, and many people began criticizing bureaucratic organizations in the public sector (Haning, 2018; Taufik & Warsono, 2020). A long-winded and inaccessible bureaucracy has begun to be accused by the public as one of the causes of a high-cost economy, inefficiency, and inability to provide good, quality, and fair services to all levels of society (Kartikaningdyah, 2012; Noer, 2018).

The orientation towards change refers to the extent to which the bureaucratic apparatus is willing to be responsive to public complaints regarding weak access to public services. Apart from that, it is also accompanied by knowledge about various things that occur in an environment outside the bureaucracy, such as technological developments and restrictions on people’s movements due to the Covid-19 Pandemic (Mahardhani, 2021; Salam, 2021). Knowledge of new things must provide better services to the community.

In addition, the orientation of change is also marked by actions or actions taken by bureaucratic officials to make changes (Nusanto & IP, 2015; Sandiasa & Agustana, 2018). In essence, this orientation has provided opportunities for officials to make changes to serve the community better. Orientation to change is an attitude that is opposite to the orientation to the establishment (status quo). The higher the attitude towards change, the lower the orientation towards the status quo. Orientation towards change makes officials see changes outside the bureaucracy and look for something new and different from the existing system. However, it seems that the situation is still far from what was expected. The orientation of changes in the service bureaucracy apparatus is still low, which means that the orientation towards the status quo (establishment) of the current condition of public services is still high, even though many service users complain that the image of public services is still slow, rigid, expensive, and discriminatory.

The Covid-19 pandemic is like a booster for changing bad habits in various aspects of life, including the government bureaucracy (Ramadhan & Tamaya, 2021; Surtrisna, 2021). What is the relationship with what factors most influence the bureaucracy so it cannot carry out its mission as a public service provider? The first is the monopolistic factor, namely that the public bureaucracy has very different characteristics from business organizations, namely, a typical context and pressures from the environment, such as managerial behavior, which are very different from business organizations. In contrast to companies that provide services and products determined by the market, public services by the government bureaucracy are organized monopolistically (Heffy, 2009; Sancoko, 2011). This monopolistic context is the main cause of the low efficiency and productivity of the public bureaucracy. In most sub-districts and villages, the government provides only health, drinking water, electricity, telecommunications, and other public services. There are no ideas or community initiatives to take over the government’s role when the emergency handling of Covid is urgently needed. The people are just waiting and waiting and hoping that the government will immediately intervene to assist, for example, in the form of groceries or direct cash assistance. Because there is no competition from non-government public service providers, there is no strong incentive to increase the number, quality, or even distribution of these services to the government bureaucracy.

Second, environmental factors greatly influence the public service bureaucracy. Orientation to the market or society is a huge obstacle for the public service bureaucracy (Anwaruddin, 2006; Badaruddin, 2013). Public managers face much greater formal constraints than those faced by private managers. Why are private companies often quicker to take advantage of opportunities that open up than state-owned companies, none other than because state-owned companies are always constrained by various formal constraints that make their movements not as easy as private companies that are only responsible to the Board of Commissioners and shareholders. Political interests control the government bureaucracy, so it is very slow to move without orders or approval from officials above it (Priyadi & Afrizal, 2020; Yunas, 2016). Our focus is on how the bureaucracy and civil servants should be able to move quickly in the circumstances and conditions of the Covid-19 pandemic without having to be held back by rigid operational guidelines and technical guidelines. To provide benefits to the community, directly and indirectly, it is inevitable that there will be a shift in the values of the old culture towards a new culture of public service bureaucracy. Modifications occur as a result of adjustments to current environmental pressures. The environmental pressure in question is the condition of the Covid-19 pandemic that hit the world, and no one knows for sure when it will end, and the bureaucracy is already formalized, so it is difficult to move as needed during the Covid-19 Pandemic (Dewi & Tobing, 2021; Surtrisna, 2021).

Third, patrimonial culture. Paternalism tends to encourage bureaucratic officials to be more power-oriented than service-oriented, position themselves as rulers and treat service users as service objects which need their help (Hasan, 2022; Rivai, 2019). In this culture of paternalism, there is a strong assumption that the government must and always feels that it knows best what the people need. The growth of the
practice of public bureaucracy inspired by the three factors mentioned above is also caused by the position of the Indonesian bureaucracy in the life of a prismatic society. A prismatic society is a society that has traditional or agrarian characteristics along with modern or industrial characteristics. It can be seen from high heterogeneity, high formalism, and overlapping.

There is a need for a shift in the approach to the culture of the public service bureaucracy during the Covid-19 Pandemic to create a culture of public service bureaucracy that is professional, effective, efficient, transparent, and accountable, as well as officials who have high dedication and loyalty. Structurally, this shift will have implications for changing the character of the bureaucracy, which previously had a very long bureaucratic process, then simplified or shortened by trimming several parts, such as the government’s plan to remove echelon 3 and echelon 4. lost or pruned and turned into a functional position. Mentally, of course, this will affect the social status of the bureaucrats. State Civil Apparatuses who are members of public service bureaucratic organizations must change their mindset to glorify structural positions no longer. So far, there has been a tendency to pursue structural positions seen as a certain social status within the bureaucracy. At the same time, functional positions are not as prestigious as structural positions experienced so far. The shift in people’s demands for more effective public services during the Covid-19 Pandemic has led to a public service system with the concept of serving as an obligation.

The spirit of serving is the obligation to mandate public service providers so that they are not proud to carry out their obligations as public servants. The purpose of this research is to analyze the factors causing the low performance of public service organizations and, based on the identification of these factors, suggest some operational policies improve the performance of public service bureaucracy.

2. METHODS

This study uses a qualitative research approach, namely a research approach whose findings are not obtained through statistical procedures or other forms of computation. It seeks to understand and interpret the meaning of an interaction event of human behavior in certain situations according to the researcher’s perspective. This study used the literature study/literature study method, namely a series of activities related to the library data method, reading and recording, processing the research material, and concluding (Sugiyono, 2014). The collection method uses document analysis and references. Data were obtained from various sources such as books, scientific articles in reputable journals, and previous studies related to public service bureaucracy. This literature review activity uses four steps, namely (1) preparing equipment for reviewing; (2) compiling selected or appropriate bibliography; (3) managing time and focus on activities to reduce or even avoid bias; and (4) carefully reading, take notes, and write up the results. This writing is descriptive. The author systematically and factually describes the public service bureaucracy and dharma lease. The data analysis technique is a qualitative data analysis technique that begins with data collection, classification, presenting, and analyzing data linkages to conclude (Denzin, 2011; Sugiyono, 2014).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Results

The direction of Public Service Bureaucracy Policy

The performance of the public service bureaucracy during the Covid-19 Pandemic has become an increasingly strategic policy issue because bureaucratic adaptation has broad implications for economic and political life. In economic life, for example, improving the performance of the bureaucracy will be able to anticipate the decline in the economic level of the people affected by the Covid-19 Pandemic. In politics, improving the performance of the public service bureaucracy will have broad implications, especially in improving the level of public trust in the government.

The factors above caused public service bureaucracy to tend to lead to the pathology of public services in the Covid-19 Pandemic era. Welcoming the new era requires an effective and efficient, professional, transparent, and accountable bureaucratic structure and officials with high dedication and loyalty. What are the administrative reform policies to overcome the obstacles to the bureaucratic structure of public services described above? In short, it can be explained that reform policies to improve the capacity of the public service bureaucracy must be directed at the following three targets: First, generating a spirit of competition in public services. According to Osborne and Gaebler in "Reinventing Government," the monopolistic spirit that is quite ingrained and well-established in the public bureaucracy is the factor that most influences the ability of organizations to provide good, quality, and fair services. To remove this establishment, it is necessary to create competition in public services, both competition between
government agencies and private companies openly to provide certain public services, for example, in vaccine services, services for fulfilling the scarcity of cooking oil, waste, clean water, distribution of necessities, social assistance services, as well as in the administration of other public services. This competition will create an entrepreneurial spirit in the public service bureaucracy, which will ultimately be able to improve its performance.

Second, the public bureaucracy must be developed to develop community participation in the true sense, not as has happened in practice. Genuine community participation is only possible to grow by empowering the community. This empowerment policy requires a change in basic values among members of the government bureaucracy. In this empowerment effort, it is necessary to have a very close partnership between the government and non-governmental organizations, especially with social institutions at the grassroots level. Third, change the patronial bureaucratic cultural order that always wants to maintain the status quo and always assumes that the government is the one who knows the people's wishes best and therefore feels that they are the most capable of fulfilling these wishes. In a hegemonic-dominative superstructure, bureaucratic culture like this can flourish. To erode the "know-it-all" bureaucratic culture, prospective bureaucrats must reorient the education and training policies. For example, it is ending the pattern of military-style education and training in service schools, civil service, and in courses because such a pattern will not be able to produce candidates for civil leaders unless it only further strengthens the patronial spirit which must be eradicated from the public service bureaucracy.

Effective Public Service

Public service is an activity to serve the needs of people or communities who have an interest in the organization by establishing laws and regulations. The function of serving is more related to implementing general government tasks, which prioritizes the public interest, facilitates public affairs, shortens the time for carrying out public affairs, and provides satisfaction to the public. Public services must contain basic elements such as; the rights and obligations of the service provider, and the recipient must be clear and known with certainty by each party. Arrangements for each form of public service must be by the conditions of the needs and ability of the community to pay based on the applicable statutory provisions while still adhering to the efficiency and effectiveness, quality, process, and results of public services. It can be accounted for.

Effective public services during the Covid-19 Pandemic should prioritize achieving the goals and objectives that lead to the following characteristics; (1) Simple, meaning that service procedures/procedures are carried out in an easy, fast, precise, straightforward, easily understood, and easily implemented by people who request services, (2) Clarity and certainty regarding procedures and procedures, technical requirements and administration, work units and or officials who are authorized and responsible, and time of completion, (3) Transparency, namely procedures, time, details of costs and other matters relating to the service process must be informed openly so that it is easily known and understood by the public both requested or not requested, (4) Efficiency implies; Service requirements are only limited to matters directly related to achieving service targets while still paying attention to integration between requirements and related service products, preventing repetition of fulfillment of requirements, (5) Timeliness, namely the implementation of services can be completed within a predetermined time, (6) Responsive, more oriented towards responsiveness and quick response to what is a problem for the needs of the community being served, and (7) Adaptive, namely quickly resolving what is the demands, desires and aspirations of the people who need service.

Discussion

How is the concept of quality service connected to the sewaka dharma? The Denpasar City Government coined the concept of sewaka dharma as the ideal foundation for public services (Ayuningsih et al., 2021; Wijaya et al., 2022). Sewaka dharma, or serving, is an obligation that aims to build an understanding of service that can strengthen the government's commitment as a servant of the state (Agustine & Prawira, 2018; Wijaya et al., 2022). Sewaka dharma is a public service concept for the government of Denpasar City which emphasizes the harmony of thoughts, speech, and acts of service for the harmony of human, natural and divine values (Artayasa, 2020; Wiryawan et al., 2018). Sewaka means service to fellow human beings (manawa), the same as serving God (madhawa). Sewaka is filial piety's main principle, which expands into a universal human principle. Dharma means virtue, purity, truth, duty, and law. Dharma is the highest principle in the teachings of Hinduism. Dharma is a principle of life that continues to exist consistently along the lines of human existence.

Dharma determines the way of life, prescribes rules and duties, and directs man to the highest goal in life. Dharma is karma which in everyday life is understood to be a duty. Duty is bhakti, serving others, nature, and God. The concept of sewaka dharma is very much in line with the functions of the government,
namely serving (service), producing justice, empowering, encouraging independence, and developing and creating prosperity. (Savira & Tasrin, 2018; Sucitawathi et al., 2018). The practice of sewaka dharma as the ideal foundation for public service in Bali begins with an awareness of the government’s obligations from the top to the lowest level. Public service is only possible if it is supported by an effective and efficient structure, a professional, transparent, and accountable culture, and officials who have high dedication and loyalty. The presence of the sewaka dharma spirit plays an important role in realizing quality (efficient, transparent, and accountable) public services. Therefore, grounding the teachings of sewaka dharma in the soul of the public service apparatus can encourage the realization of increasingly high-quality public services.

4. CONCLUSION

The patrimonial bureaucratic culture that has dominated public service practices is no longer by the needs of society. The paternalistic relationship between the state and society has hegemonized the community in that bureaucratic administrators are certain and always know better what is best for the people. Entering a new culture during the Covid-19 Pandemic has increasingly proven this assumption invalid. There is increasing evidence that the knowledge and ability of the Government bureaucracy to know what is best for society is limited. And the government’s ability to meet society’s demands is even more limited. The shifting demands of society so that public services are more effective during the Covid-19 Pandemic led to a public service system with the concept of sewaka dharma. Serving is the obligation to mandate public service providers, so they are not prestige in carrying out their obligations. Even though the Pandemic period, public services must remain optimal by continuing to implement health protocols in the office environment. This is a commitment and a form of an ongoing effort to provide the best service to the community and perform optimally by the principle of sewakadharma, where serving is an obligation.

5. REFERENCES


