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Corruption in the digital bureaucratic service system (media studies in disclosure of corruption cases)

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ABSTRACT

Corruption still occurs even though the bureaucracy has transformed into a digital service system. Lately, the trend has become more rampant, involving all elements of service from the central to the regions, from high-ranking officials to field officers. Digitalization, which was initially implemented as a formula for preventing corruption, still opens wide gaps to be penetrated. The digital system that has been implemented has not been effective in preventing and eliminating the corrupt mentality of service delivery personnel. The digital era, which should be a moment of clean, open and responsible bureaucratic change, still has a long way to go. Based on that fact, this study aims to determine digitalization in bureaucratic services in preventing corruption. The method used in this study is descriptive qualitative, with media analysis studies to obtain data spread across three credible national online media networks. The results of the study show that corruption cases are still rife even though bureaucratic services have been transformed into a digital service system. In the implementation of the bureaucratic system, the media plays a very vital role as part of enforcing corruption laws and encouraging service personnel to act in a manner that is trustworthy, honest and responsible for their work.



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Introduction

Yoo et al. (2012), Baskerville et al. (2019), and Autio (2017) all agree that digitalization's three hallmarks are changing the way businesses are structured to create, deliver, and collect value. This shift is based on the fact that digital infrastructures are becoming more and more advanced and widely available, allowing for increasingly complex interactions to take place between parties involved in a transaction independent of their physical location. Digitalization is permeating even physical products, allowing them to be connected to digital platforms McDermott et al. (2013). Digitalization penetrates the deepest space of the bureaucratic system. His ability to reveal various frauds by unscrupulous bureaucratic officials neatly wraps up his actions so that they escape public attention. Digitalization, which produces sophisticated devices with various application systems such as social media, can capture exactly the moment and atmosphere when corrupt practices are taking place. Through the recording device embedded in the application system, you can immediately share it with all media networks. The advantage of a digital system with an audiovisual platform is that it has an interactive character and helps users directly operate content.

Interactivity is the ability of IPTV (Internet Protocol Television) to give users freedom of influence over the content/programs displayed from the media (Munandar & Tambunan, 2018). This interactivity of course involves public participation in it. The range of participation given to the implementation of this digital bureaucracy has a large space, because there are feedback space facilities to assess the performance or services provided by the bureaucracy (Bachtiar et al., 2020). This is possible due to the digitization nature of user generated content. It can even be developed individually or collaboratively, as well as produced, modified, shared and consumed (Pinuji & Satiri, 2019).

The application of a digital system opens up hope for improvements in the process of administering bureaucratic services. The benefits derived from this system can solve various problems that often arise, because the digital system becomes the control for bureaucratic servants. Thus, encouraging service personnel to act transparently and accountably. Even on the other hand, it requires bureaucrats to act professionally, carry out governance, apply a performance-oriented and service-oriented bureaucratic culture, be open-minded, innovative, simplify work processes, and take advantage of advances in technology, knowledge, and collaborate with related parties (Firdaus et al., 2021). The general pattern presented by digital systems raises demands along with its application to fundamental changes in service delivery. Changes that lead to improvement of bureaucratic services as a new system considering the opportunities for fraud, including acts of corruption will be prevented. From these various advantages, the Indonesian government is committed to making improvements including structures and processes in the delivery of public services, as well as changes in the mindset and culture set of employees (Wastuhana & Werdiningsih, 2021).

The commitment to changing the culture and profile of the bureaucracy was stated by the Minister for Administrative Reform and Bureaucratic Reform (PAN-RB) Abdullah Azwar Anas. According to him, digital bureaucracy can break the chain of corruption which is the cause of abuse of authority. Digitalization is a way, because there will be many things, we can do related to preventing corruption (menpan.go.id). Of course, the digitization of the bureaucracy that will be implemented in the state service system must contain all aspects regarding steps that might close the gap for acts of corruption. Because until now, even though it has been classified as the digital era, the ideal picture of this digital bureaucratic system has not actually been effective. In practice, acts of corruption are still rife with an increasing tendency and will not stop even if the system changes. Even ICW (Indonesian Corruption Watch) revealed that throughout 2022 there had been 579 corruption cases that had been acted upon. Of these, it showed an increase of 8.63 percent compared to the previous year of 533 cases. From these various cases, there were 1,396 people who were made suspects of domestic corruption. The number also increased by 19.01% compared to 2021 with 1,173 suspects (dataindonesia.id).

There are many reasons for the high rate of corruption. First, the corrupt mentality of bureaucrats, second, the culture of corruption as a foundation in bureaucratic administration, and misinterpreted power. While his actions relate to immoral categories, rotten nature and circumstances, involve positions in government agencies or apparatus, abuse of power in positions due to gifts, transporting economic and political factors and placement of families or groups into officialdom under the power of office (Rasyidi, 2020). In committing corruption, corruptors are unable to resist the temptations of the material world or property that exceeds their ability (Setiawan & Jesaja, 2022), because they are driven by motives or goals that are primarily sourced from economic, moral, political and even cultural issues (Pujiyono, 2017). These factors make corruption rampant. On the other hand, various prevention efforts have been made, from building superbody institutions such as the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK), to changing the pattern of bureaucratic services to a digital form. Ironically, this condition actually invites the creation of new forms of corruption or in other words corruption also transforms into digital service systems. This is possible because digitalization is only a means, while the corrupt mentality that is attached to unscrupulous bureaucratic officials is digitally untouched.

Many disclosures have been made, but all of them point to corrupt practices in the digital era that are relentless. Based on this, acts of corruption are divided into conventional and new modes. In conventional modes such as bribery, abuse of power, or vulgar conventional methods by trading influence for profit (kompas.com). Such conventional methods will not deter corruptors (Prastyono, 2020). Meanwhile, in the digital era, perpetrators find gaps that are annoying and can be broken through. Even though it has not been revealed in real terms, corruption in the digital era follows the path that is happening. That is, when digitization has transformed society into a cashless society, the *modus operandi* of corrupt perpetrators' financial transactions is increasingly sophisticated and complicated (Fransisco, 2020). Digital crimes have indeed emerged, but relatively few corruption cases involving state administrators with digital mode.

Although indicators of the level of corruption in the digital era have been revealed from the news of various online media, which publish them almost every day. The method and style of loading are relatively the same although there are changes in certain aspects, considering that online media is part of the ongoing transformation. However, due to its nature and characteristics, it cannot be disclosed directly because its

operational basis must be based on the required ethics and rules. The role of disclosure in the digital era can be taken by individuals who interact in the bureaucracy by using social media applications. However, this intersects with the credibility of the individual account owner. The pattern of distribution can be even more massive when news media operating on online networks reproduce sources from social media (Taufik & Suryana, 2022).

In its work, the media not only has a direct effect on individuals, but also influences culture, collective knowledge and also the norms and values of a society (Budiyono, 2013). Even though it is not the main parameter, the media contributes to building a clean system and acts as a means of control in creating an anti-corruption culture. Now, even though the reporting of corruption cases is starting to approach the saturation point, but it is still the focus of public attention, especially if it involves businessmen or authorities by way of hand-catching or Hand-Catching Operations (OTT) (Natalia, 2019). However, media control is still being exercised to keep the bureaucratic ecosystem free from corruption. Even though the digital bureaucratic system has become a regulation to be used, other efforts are needed to keep pace with its development. Among other things, by increasing the capacity and knowledge of officials so they understand digitalization. Service providers must also belong to the category of people who are able and know exactly the digital format in the bureaucratic service system. Moreover, this bureaucratic digitization program is in line with the bureaucratic reform agenda which leads to the formulation of a strategy for developing human resources for the apparatus which is in line with the preparation of ASN talents in facing the digital era (Khaeromah et al., 2021).

With regard to research on the theme of digital bureaucratic services, previous researchers have carried out this. Winarni's research with the title Development of Digital bureaucracy in Indonesia in 2019 found that digital technology is compatible with the digital bureaucracy approach, it's just that the problem of technological literacy at the level of bureaucratic apparatus and public service users is still a significant obstacle (L. Winarni, 2019). Subsequent research was carried out by Kritian I et al entitled Bureaucratic Ethics as a Prevention of Corrupt Behavior with the results of the research that corruption is an act that is not in accordance with ethics and morals. In preventing corruption, ethics plays a very important role. Bureaucrats who apply ethics within themselves are definitely reluctant to act corruptly because they are aware that this is deviant behavior and is not in accordance with ethics and morals (Kristian et al., 2021).

While recognizing the importance of the digital bureaucratic system, there's a gap in research about how to help officials and service providers keep up with its ongoing development. Although efforts are made to boost officials' understanding of digitalization, there's not enough exploration into specific ways to equip service providers with the skills needed for the digital format in the bureaucratic system. Current studies mention the compatibility of digital technology with bureaucratic approaches but don't adequately address the ongoing challenge of technological literacy among officials and service users. Based on the explanation of these problems, this study aims to determine the application of digital systems to corruption. The assumptions developed are considering that digital machines will reject them when they find disgraceful practices committed by bureaucratic officials. In other words, digitization is a refinement of the conventional system which is vulnerable to various modes and all acts of corruption.

Method

The role of the media cannot be ignored in creating a bureaucratic service system that is clean, transparent, and accountable. The media is a representation of the reality of the organized bureaucracy. Therefore, with regard to this research, the main focus is more on corruption cases exposed by the media, especially media that operate in online networks. To find out more, the approach used is qualitative. Qualitative research begins with topic selection. This topic then develops and narrows down to become more specific, followed by a search of literature and literature (Neuman & Kreuger, 2003; Wienarni, 2019).

In accordance with research interests, the first step is to observe the media circulating in online networks. Especially the media reporting on corruption cases involving state apparatus. From the search, almost all media, especially online media, are not left behind in reporting on the involvement or behavior of state administrators who act corruptly by taking advantage of their position and power. However, for the sake of research, the selection of media that is only in the credible category is carried out. Because media credibility is very important to ensure that content does not contain hoaxes, fake news or other elements of lies. This election does not mean to deny the credibility of other media. Thus, from the large number of online media, three online media were selected, respectively detik.com, Kompas.com, and cnn-indonesia.com. Selection of these three media. The three media are classified as very credible and have very accurate journalistic competence, and are even classified as digital transformation media. The news presented in the three media then becomes a source of data which is then processed by conducting an analysis based on the content presented during the research period which lasts for two months, to be exact in May and June 2023.

Analysis in qualitative research starts during data collection, however it often remains provisional and unfinished. Data analysis is the methodical organization, integration, and examination of information, with the aim of identifying patterns and linkages among the specific facts. In order to evaluate, we establish connections between specific data points and conceptual frameworks, formulate overarching conclusions, and uncover overarching patterns or themes. Analysis enables us to enhance comprehension, broaden theory, and progress knowledge.

Results and Discussions

The digital system is considered to have reliability in the administration of bureaucratic services. The practice he applied led to a new form of bureaucratic service that was more efficient and effective. The pattern of services it organizes can cut time, are easy, cheap, and open. The system implemented is formed in accordance with the required standards and procedures, so that any irregularities the system finds work and responds immediately by refusing to continue service. This form of implementation of the digital bureaucracy system is a model for administering and at the same time supervising the implementation of a new realistic bureaucracy so that it can close the gaps in fraud that are likely to be committed by service officials.

The ongoing application of digital bureaucracy is on the internal side of the bureaucracy, while on the external side it occurs in the form of supervision of the operationalization of the bureaucracy which is carried out through various media that run on online networks. Two monitoring systems in the internal environment and in the external environment of this bureaucracy are already running. This can be demonstrated by the digital bureaucratic system which is mechanical in nature and cannot compromise when it finds strange practices, as well as by the external system through the media which reports very strictly on various events that have a tendency of corruption.

In practice, digitization has been going well and has become the control of all service personnel. Digital space can be described as running in an orderly manner in accordance with practical instructions for implementing services, in other words leaving no loopholes for fraud or corruption. Cases of criminal acts of corruption eventually occur outside the digital system. Namely, committing acts of corruption in conventional ways. Given the conventional method has no traces that are recorded and can be disseminated to all media audiences. For more details, it can be described as below:

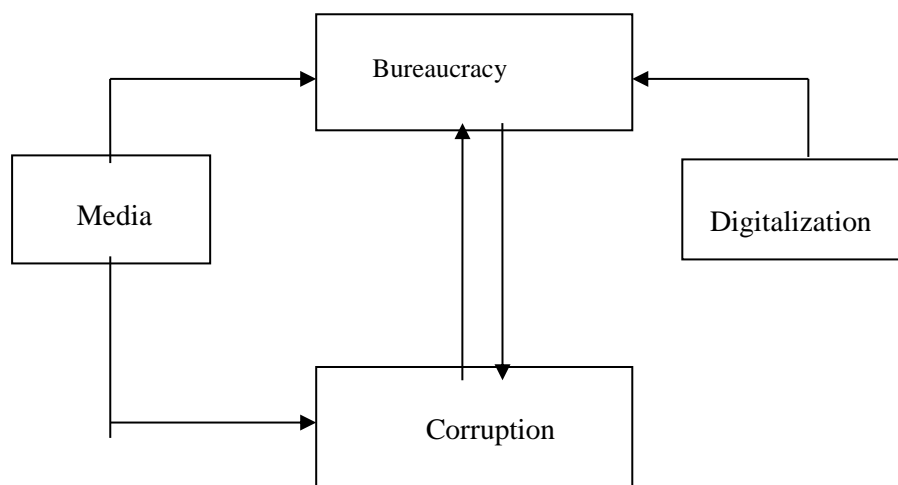


Figure 1. Media and disclosure of corruption cases

Based on this figure it can be explained that corruption occurs within the bureaucracy or in other words the bureaucracy provides opportunities for acts of corruption to occur. So that the bureaucracy and corruption are interconnected and mutually influence each other. When the bureaucracy has transformed into a digital system, corruption practices by corruptors still use conventional modes, considering that digital systems have little opportunity for acts of corruption to occur. However, opportunities remain open when the existing digital system is changed and leads to the interests and benefits of the bureaucracy. On the other hand, in the implementation of bureaucracy in both digital and non-digital bureaucratic systems, the media plays a very important role. Especially in disclosure. The role of the media can be in the form of providing initial information regarding the possibility of acts of corruption in a government agency or organization, as well as further disclosure by disseminating the results of disclosures originating from corruption enforcement officials.

Cases of corruption in the digital era, but with conventional modes that are mostly disclosed by the media, still color the digital world. This is similar to the acts of corruption that occurred in the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK), which ironically is an anti-corruption agent. (cnnindonesia.com). The actions taken by KPK members were even more tragic because the extortion was accompanied by ethical and moral violations, and immoral cases. Individuals suspected of committing corruption at the KPK did not use digital means, but conventional methods. Media disclosure of acts of corruption with a very massive tendency is accompanied by a more comprehensive reporting element that does not recognize the era. Both during the conventional era and in the digital era that has already been enforced.

The surveillance devices carried out by the media through reporting do not reduce the interest of actors to reduce the desire to fight common sense, but the tendency is to continue to escalate and become more systematized by involving actors from parties who are in the first circle of power. The arrest of high-profile corruption suspects and high-ranking state officials is no longer a strange event, but a normal thing considering that the power in their hands is suspected of being an instrument that serves as bargaining power with law enforcement agencies. However, along with massive disclosures and coverage, reporting on corruption is no longer an issue that attracts public attention. In other words, the degree of corruption news becomes regular news. Although on the other hand, the media does not stop reporting and disclosing it, because in addition to its duties it is also an obligation to convey various events. Moreover, corruption is still considered as an extraordinary case and has news value. What's more, the cases disclosed contain certain elements and intervention from the authorities to suspect parties who oppose the regime.

In contrast to various predictions that have emerged that by entering the digital era, corruption cases will stop or at least experience a decrease in the number of incidents. This emerging prediction leads to the advantages of a digital system that can cut the bureaucratic chain to be simple, low-cost, and will be able to close opportunities for potential corruptors to carry out their actions. Likewise, it is assumed that mass media with online networks will reduce the amount of coverage given that cases of corruption have decreased very drastically. However, in reality, the media control function that is carried out on the implementation of the digital era bureaucratic system actually finds many cases and the incidents are even increasing.

This can now be referred to the data collected from each of the three credible media: detik.com, Kompas.com, and cnnindonesia.com, with a relatively high frequency of reporting on corruption cases. The comparison between the high and low corruption cases disclosed by the three media outlets is assumed to be zero corruption news in the span of two months in May and June 2023 because the digital system has begun to be implemented. However, based on the search conducted, there were 86 corruption reports from the three online media which were the object of research. For more details, see the following table:

Table 1. Frequency of Corruption News

Media	Month		Amount
	May 2023	June 2023	
Detik.com	19	9	28
Kompas.com	8	10	18
Cnnindonesia.com	25	15	40

Based on the table it can be shown that corruption news cases are still an issue that is prioritized by the media to the public. Within two months, in May and June 2023 to be precise, the media disclosed 86 reports on corruption cases. The amount of coverage on this case was only in three media and not comprehensive in all media. Disclosure by the media through this corruption news shows that criminal acts of corruption still occur regardless of time and era. In other words, as long as the commitment to eradicate corruption is still owned by all stakeholders, the disclosure will continue. In fact, it will continue to be the main material of the media, as long as the mentality of the bureaucratic service apparatus still dares to abuse power for the benefit of himself, his family and his group.

The effect of disclosing by the media is becoming more widespread considering that all media re-distribute their news through their various social media channels. In other words, the three media not only publish the results of their disclosure through websites according to their url names, but also expand the scope of distribution through official accounts on social media networks such as Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and Facebook. In real terms, websites with social media are classified as digital media, so in accordance with their nature, digital media provides space for the public to participate in supervising the running of government. The role of the community in supervising the implementation of bureaucracy in the digital era is possible because in a digital system inherently there is a large space for the functions and roles that must be carried out. Community participation

and participation in monitoring can be carried out by using the media, both media with their own accounts and by using comments provided throughout the media space. Likewise with the news media in the form of a website being a pillar of supervision for the functioning of the bureaucratic service system. However, media that are truly independent are straight towards enforcement of corruption and far from intervention by power. In addition, the media can work together with the owners of social media accounts in spreading and making viral various cases that occur within the government as well as with regard to the means of power to stop disclosures by the media.

Findings from the study by Bartolomeus Marulitua Simanjorang (2023) corroborate the idea that citizens can better oversee the delivery of public services, offer suggestions, and share opinions when they have easier access. More openness in decision-making, less red tape, and easier performance monitoring for public sector organizations are all possible outcomes of IT implementations. This paves the way for the government to accept and process papers electronically, eliminating the need for potentially corruptible human interaction.

Conclusions

Acts of corruption do not know the era, either when the bureaucratic service system is still in a conventional format or in an era when bureaucratic transformation has been implemented. The large number of acts of corruption based on media reports shows that corruption is a reality in the bureaucratic administration system. The basis is as long as the public considers that acts of corruption are classified as evil acts and damage the bureaucratic service system which disrupts the existing system. The same thing is when law enforcement officials continue to make corruption an enemy that cannot be tolerated and must be strictly punished. In the implementation of the bureaucratic system, the media plays a very vital role as part of enforcing corruption laws and encouraging service personnel to act in a manner that is trustworthy, honest and responsible for their work. This includes the absence of intervention from the authorities on the media, so that the media control function can run properly. At the same time, this research is expected to be used as a reference for interested parties, especially with regard to efforts to implement bureaucratic reform that has been transformed into a digital system. This includes the media that operate on the internet network in exercising control over the aparta and the implementation of the bureaucracy so that it can carry out its role independently without any intervention from any party. Furthermore, the media can synergize with the owners of social media accounts to make various findings that arise in corruption practices viral.

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