

Analysis of Corruption-Free Area Indicators in the Government of Gorontalo Province

Jurni Biahimo^{1*}, Sastro Mustapa Wantu², Yanti Aneta³, Ismet Sulila⁴

^{1,2,3,4}State University of Gorontalo, Gorontalo, Indonesia

jurnibiahimo01@gmail.com^{1*}, sastrowantu@ung.ac.id²

yantianeta@ung.ac.id³, ismetsulila@ung.ac.id⁴

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the implementation of the Integrity Zone in creating a clean and corruption-free bureaucracy in the Gorontalo Provincial Government. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method, which involves in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis related to the policies and implementation of the Integrity Zone program in various local government agencies. The results of the study show that the implementation has experienced significant developments, especially in terms of increasing transparency of public services and strengthening the internal monitoring system. However, there are still several obstacles faced, such as the low understanding of employees regarding the concept of integrity in bureaucracy and resistance to change, especially in the implementation of digitalization of administrative services. Therefore, a more comprehensive strategy is needed to increase the effectiveness of this program, such as optimizing information technology, strengthening internal supervision, and providing incentives for work units that successfully implement the integrity principle optimally. With these steps, it is hoped that the Integrity Zone can become the main instrument in creating cleaner, more transparent, and more accountable governance in Gorontalo Province.

Keywords: Integrity Zone, bureaucracy, Corruption-Free Area

INTRODUCTION

Corruption is one of the main obstacles to development and good governance. Various reports show that corruption not only causes state budget leaks, but also reduces public trust in the bureaucracy and hinders the effectiveness of public services (Rompas, 2023). In line with the spirit of bureaucratic reform, the Indonesian Government has initiated various policies to create a clean, transparent, and accountable government. One of the policies that is a priority in efforts to eradicate corruption in the bureaucratic sector is the Integrity Zone (ZI) program.

Corruption is one of the problems that continues to be a challenge in governance in various countries, including Indonesia. This phenomenon not only harms state finances, but also hinders development, damages public trust in the government, and creates injustice in the distribution of resources. Corruption can occur in various forms, ranging from abuse of authority, bribery, embezzlement, to nepotism. The main causes of corruption are often related to weak supervisory systems, low integrity of the apparatus, and the existence of a permissive culture towards practices that violate ethics and the law.

In Indonesia, efforts to eradicate corruption have been carried out through various policies and regulations, such as the establishment of the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK), the implementation of an e-government system, and bureaucratic reform that emphasizes transparency and accountability. One of the strategies implemented is the development of the Integrity Zone, which aims to create a clean and corruption-free bureaucracy. However, even though various steps have been taken, corruption is still a problem that is difficult to eradicate completely. This is due to the existence of structural and cultural factors that support corrupt practices at various levels of government and the public sector.

The impact of corruption is very broad, especially in the economic and social fields. In the economic aspect, corruption causes inefficiency in the use of the state budget, increases investment costs, and inhibits economic growth. Meanwhile, in the social aspect, corruption widens social disparities, reduces the quality of public services, and reduces public trust in the government. In the long term, if corruption is not controlled, it can weaken political stability and hinder public welfare.

To overcome this problem, a more comprehensive approach is needed, which does not only focus on legal action, but also on prevention and education about the importance of integrity. Anti-corruption education needs to be strengthened from an early age so that the values of honesty and accountability can be embedded in the culture of society. In addition, strengthening the internal and external monitoring system is also key to preventing corrupt practices. Public participation in overseeing government performance must also be increased, so that any indication of corruption can be immediately detected and followed up. With collaboration between the government, society, and the private sector in creating transparent and accountable governance, it is hoped that corruption can be significantly reduced. A more open system change, accompanied by leadership with integrity, will be an important step in realizing a clean government that is oriented towards the public interest.

The Integrity Zone is part of a bureaucratic reform strategy designed to strengthen the integrity of government institutions by emphasizing increased accountability and quality of public services. This program includes efforts to develop Corruption-Free Areas (WBK) and Clean and Serving Bureaucratic Areas (WBBM) which aim to ensure that government agencies implement professional service standards, are free from corrupt practices, and are oriented towards the interests of the community (Nisa, 2023). The success of this program is highly dependent on the implementation of appropriate policies, the active involvement of all state civil servants, and support from the community in overseeing bureaucratic performance (Fajarwati, 2023).

The Gorontalo Provincial Government has adopted the Integrity Zone policy as part of its commitment to improving regional governance. The implementation of this policy is not

only aimed at preventing corruption, but also at increasing the effectiveness of public services and building public trust in government institutions (Aneta, Sulila, & Tohopi, 2022). However, even though this policy has been implemented, there are still various obstacles faced in the implementation process. These challenges include resistance from government officials who do not understand the importance of integrity in their work, weak internal oversight systems, and limitations in terms of ongoing policy evaluation (Indrawaty, 2019). The success of developing an Integrity Zone in an agency is not only determined by compliance with existing regulations, but also by an organizational culture that supports transparency and accountability (Safroni, 2021). In practice, there are still many agencies that implement only as a formality without any fundamental changes in organizational governance. This shows that bureaucratic reform policies require a more systematic and strategic approach in order to provide optimal results. Therefore, it is important to conduct a more in-depth study of the implementation in the Gorontalo Provincial Government to identify factors that influence the success or obstacles in implementing this policy. In order to realize a clean and professional bureaucracy, the Ministry of State Apparatus Empowerment and Bureaucratic Reform (Kemenpan RB) has determined six areas of change in the development. These areas include change management, governance, HR management system, strengthening performance accountability, strengthening supervision, and improving the quality of public services (Wajdi, 2022). These six aspects are the main benchmarks in assessing the success in government agencies. However, various studies show that there is still a gap between policy and implementation in the field. One of the main problems found is the existence of a bureaucratic culture that still does not fully support changes towards transparent and accountable governance (Sawir, 2020). For example, there are still many employees who do not understand the values of integrity and the importance of implementing ethical standards in carrying out their duties. In addition, the suboptimal monitoring mechanism often causes deviations bureaucratic reform policies. Based on this background, this study aims to measure the success of the implementation of the Integrity Zone in the Gorontalo Provincial Government by reviewing the WBK and WBBM indicators. In addition, this study will also identify the challenges faced and formulate policy strategies that can be applied to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of the Integrity Zone at the regional level. Thus, the results of this study are expected to provide a real contribution in efforts to create a clean, transparent government that is oriented towards quality public services.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method to understand the implementation of the Integrity Zone in the Gorontalo Provincial Government. This approach was chosen because it allows for in-depth exploration of the phenomenon being studied and provides a holistic picture of the factors that contribute to the success or obstacles in the development of the Integrity Zone. As stated by Moleong (2018), the qualitative method aims to understand social reality based on the perspective of participants, so that it is more appropriate in analyzing public policy and its implementation.

The data used in this study consists of primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through in-depth interviews with government officials, employees involved in the program, and the public who use public services. This interview technique aims to collect information about the experiences, understandings, and challenges faced. Meanwhile, secondary data was obtained from various official documents such as government evaluation reports, regulations related to bureaucratic reform, and relevant previous research results (Nugroho, 2018).

To ensure the validity of the data, this study applies a triangulation technique that includes triangulation of sources, methods, and theories. Source triangulation was carried out by comparing information obtained from various sources, while method triangulation was carried

out by combining interviews, document studies, and direct observation in the data collection process. In addition, theory triangulation was used by referring to various academic perspectives on public policy, bureaucratic reform, and governance (Sawir, 2020). The data analysis technique in this study refers to the interactive model of Miles and Huberman which involves three main stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions and verification (Moleong, 2018). Data reduction is carried out by sorting information that is relevant and significant to the research, while data presentation aims to organize the findings in the form of descriptive narratives to make them easier to understand. In the final stage, conclusions are drawn by referring to the main findings of the study which are then re-verified to ensure their validity. Through this method, this study is expected to provide a deeper understanding Government, as well as identifying the factors that play a role in the effectiveness of the policy. In addition, the findings of this study can be the basis for policy recommendations for local governments in improving the quality of clean and accountable governance.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study indicate that it has experienced significant development, but still faces various obstacles. Based on the results of interviews and observations, it was found that most agencies have implemented the principles of WBK and WBBM in their operations, including increasing transparency in public services and optimizing the internal monitoring system. However, the main challenge faced is the low understanding of employees regarding the importance of integrity in bureaucracy, as well as the continued existence of bureaucratic practices that have the potential to open up loopholes for deviations. From the results of a survey conducted on employees in several government agencies, it was found that the level of understanding of the varies, with some employees not fully understanding the importance of implementing WBK and WBBM in daily performance. This indicates the need for further socialization and training so that integrity values can be truly internalized by all elements of the bureaucracy.

Secondary data obtained from the evaluation report shows that several work units have succeeded in obtaining the WBK predicate, but have not yet reached the WBBM category. This is due to the lack of innovation in improving service quality and the limitations of the performance monitoring system. In addition, organizational culture factors and resistance to change are also major challenges in implementing the Integrity Zone policy as a whole. This resistance is seen in the form of rejection of the digitalization policy of the administrative system which aims to increase transparency and accountability. In terms of public services, it was found that there are still obstacles in implementing service standards in accordance with the principles of the Integrity Zone. Several people who were respondents in this study revealed that although there were improvements in the service system, there were still complaints regarding the time it took to complete the administration and the attitude of employees in providing services. This indicates the need to strengthen the performance-based evaluation system to improve the effectiveness of public services. Corruption-Free Area (WBK) and Clean and Serving Bureaucracy Area (WBBM) are part of the bureaucratic reform strategy initiated by the Indonesian government to create clean, transparent, and service-oriented governance. WBK is a status given to government agencies that have successfully implemented an effective corruption prevention system, while WBBM is a further stage that emphasizes improving the quality of public services. These two stages aim to build public trust in the bureaucracy and ensure that all government processes run with high accountability.

The implementation of WBK and WBBM is based on six main areas of change, namely change management, governance arrangement, human resource management system arrangement, strengthening performance accountability, strengthening supervision, and improving the quality of public services. Change management is carried out to change the

mindset and work culture of the apparatus to be more professional and have integrity. The governance arrangement includes the preparation of transparent standard operating procedures (SOPs) and the implementation of information technology-based systems to increase efficiency. A good HR management system is also an important factor, with recruitment, promotion, and performance assessment mechanisms based on meritocracy.

Strengthening performance accountability is implemented through the preparation of performance reports that can be accessed by the public, in order to increase transparency. Internal and external supervision is also tightened so that any deviations can be minimized. In terms of public services, innovation continues to be developed to ensure that the public receives fast, accurate, and maladministration-free services. By optimizing these six aspects, it is hoped that government agencies can achieve the WBK predicate and then increase their standards to the WBBM level.

However, the implementation of WBK and WBBM in the field still faces various challenges. One of the main obstacles is the low understanding of the apparatus regarding the concept of the Integrity Zone. Many employees still consider this program as a formality, not as a basic need in improving the quality of bureaucracy. In addition, resistance to change is also an obstacle, especially from parties who feel disadvantaged by a more transparent and technology-based system. The lack of resources and infrastructure in several agencies also hampers the digitalization of services, which should be the main instrument in building a more accountable bureaucracy.

On the other hand, the less than optimal supervision system is also a serious challenge in the implementation of WBK and WBBM. Although there is an internal supervision mechanism, in practice supervision is often administrative in nature and does not touch on substantial aspects in improving bureaucratic performance. Therefore, strategic steps are needed to ensure that each agency is not only committed to integrity, but also has a strict evaluation mechanism to close the gap for deviant practices.

To overcome these various obstacles, synergy is needed between the government and the community in overseeing the implementation of WBK and WBBM. The commitment of the leadership is a key factor in creating a bureaucratic culture with integrity. In addition, strengthening employee capacity through regular training, providing incentives for high-achieving work units, and utilizing information technology in public services must continue to be optimized. The community also needs to be given a greater role in bureaucratic supervision, for example through a more transparent and responsive complaint mechanism.

With the right strategy and full support from all elements of the bureaucracy and the community, the implementation of WBK and WBBM can run more effectively. The success of this program will not only improve the quality of public services, but also strengthen public trust in the government. With a clean, professional, and public interest-oriented bureaucracy, the major goal of bureaucratic reform in creating a government that is free from corruption and provides optimal service can be realized.

Based on the research results, the success of the implementation of the Integrity Zone in the Gorontalo Provincial Government is highly dependent on the commitment of the leadership and the active participation of employees. As stated by Fajarwati (2023), the sustainability of bureaucratic reform requires full support from all elements of the organization, including incentives for employees who demonstrate high performance in maintaining integrity. In addition, the implementation of this policy requires a more comprehensive approach, including strengthening stricter monitoring mechanisms and a performance-based evaluation system.

The results of this study are also in line with the opinion of Rompas (2023) who emphasized that the success of the Integrity Zone depends not only on formal policies, but also on non-formal aspects such as organizational culture and visionary leadership. Therefore, agency leaders must be role models in implementing integrity values, and ensure that all

employees have the same understanding regarding the importance of building a bureaucracy that is free from corruption.

Another strategy that can be implemented is increasing transparency through the use of information technology. A study conducted by Sawir (2020) shows that digitalization of public services can reduce the potential for irregularities in the administrative process and increase the efficiency of bureaucratic work. The Gorontalo Provincial Government needs to accelerate the implementation of a digital-based service system to ensure that the entire service process can be easily accessed by the public and with minimal intervention from irresponsible parties.

In addition to the technological aspect, it is also important to strengthen the internal supervision system. As explained by Safroni (2021), an effective supervision system must be data-based and carried out periodically to ensure that all elements of the bureaucracy work according to established standards. In the context of the Gorontalo Provincial Government, this supervision can be realized by increasing the role of regional inspectorates and establishing internal compliance units in each agency.

Furthermore, increasing public participation in bureaucratic supervision is also a key factor in supporting the sustainability of the Integrity Zone. According to research conducted by Nisa (2023), public involvement in supervising public services can increase government accountability and narrow the space for corrupt practices. Therefore, the Gorontalo Provincial Government needs to encourage a more transparent and responsive public complaint mechanism, so that any complaints or reports related to irregularities can be followed up immediately.

Thus, to increase the effectiveness a more targeted strategy is needed, such as increasing employee capacity through regular training, strengthening technology-based monitoring systems, and incentives for work units that successfully implement the principles of WBK and WBBM optimally. In addition, community involvement in overseeing the implementation of this policy can also be a determining factor in its long-term success. The sustainability of this program is highly dependent on the synergy between the government, the community, and the private

CONCLUSIONS

This study shows that Government has made significant progress, although it still faces various obstacles in its implementation. Success in building a Corruption-Free Area (WBK) and a Clean and Serving Bureaucracy Area (WBBM) is highly dependent on the commitment of the leadership, employee understanding, and the readiness of the performance monitoring and evaluation system. The results of the study revealed that transparency in public services has increased along with the implementation of the principles, but there are still obstacles in aspects of organizational culture and resistance to change, especially in terms of digitalization of administration and service innovation.

Community involvement in overseeing the implementation of this policy still needs to be improved so that the effectiveness e can be more optimal. Complaint mechanisms and public participation must be strengthened so that the community can play an active role in maintaining bureaucratic transparency and accountability. In an effort to achieve a clean and integrated bureaucracy, strategic steps are needed that include increasing employee capacity through ongoing training, strengthening technology-based monitoring systems, and providing incentives for work units that successfully implement WBK and WBBM standards properly. Thus, the sustainability Government requires synergy between the government, society, and the private sector in creating a transparent and accountable bureaucratic environment. The success of this program depends not only on the policies implemented, but also on the consistency in their implementation and the commitment of all elements involved. Therefore, there needs to

be continuous innovation in bureaucratic management so that integrity can become an inherent value in every aspect of public service.

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