



Ethics In Public Administration As The Foundation Of Good Governance In The Digital Era

Musri¹⁾, Sayid Anshar²⁾, Puryanto³⁾, Onzukrisno⁴⁾, Baso Ifing⁵⁾

^{1), 3), 4)} Faculty Of Politics And Social Sciences Universitas Ekasakti, Padang,

^{2), 5)} Faculty Of Law Universitas Ekasakti, Padang

*Corresponding Author: musmawa95@gmail.com

Abstract: *Administrative Ethics as the Foundation of Good Governance in the Digital Era discusses the importance of administrative ethics in establishing good governance, particularly within the ever-evolving digital context. In the digital era, new challenges have emerged in public service delivery, including the need for greater transparency, accountability, and responsiveness. This study aims to identify how administrative ethics can serve as a pillar in realizing the principles of good governance. Employing a qualitative approach, this research analyzes various policies and administrative practices implemented across different government agencies. The findings indicate that the application of administrative ethics not only improves the quality of public services but also strengthens public trust in the government. However, several challenges remain, such as the digital divide and the need for ethics training among civil servants. This study recommends the development of more inclusive policies and ongoing training to enhance ethical awareness within the bureaucracy.*

Keywords: *Administrative ethics, good governance, digital era, bureaucracy.*

INTRODUCTION

The importance of administrative ethics in the context of good governance cannot be underestimated, especially in efforts to establish a government system that is transparent, accountable, and responsive to the needs of society. Administrative ethics serve as a guideline for civil servants in carrying out their duties and responsibilities, and also form the foundation for building public trust in government institutions.

One of the theoretical foundations of administrative ethics encompasses a set of values and norms that regulate the behavior of state officials in carrying out their public functions. Ethics serve not only as a moral guideline but also as a framework that determines the operational success of public organizations. In the context of good governance, administrative ethics play a crucial role in ensuring that government decisions and actions reflect the values of justice, integrity, and transparency. The implementation of sound administrative ethics enhances transparency in decision-making processes, enabling the public to access relevant information regarding public policies and government actions. Furthermore, administrative ethics promote accountability among public officials, so that

with a clear code of ethics, civil servants are expected to be accountable for their actions to the public. In addition, administrative ethics contribute to the prevention of corruption by instilling strong moral values within bureaucratic behavior.

The strict implementation of ethics can reduce the likelihood of abuse of power and administrative violations. The positive impacts of administrative ethics include, among others, improving the quality of public services—where sound administrative ethics contribute to enhancing the quality of services provided to the community—and reducing corruption, as the application of strong ethical standards minimizes the risk of corruption and abuse of power. Furthermore, administrative ethics help build public trust, as people are more likely to trust a government that demonstrates a commitment to ethics and integrity.

Several challenges in the implementation of administrative ethics include deeply rooted bureaucratic culture, which can hinder the adoption of sound ethical practices. The lack of ethics education is also a significant issue, as many state officials do not receive adequate education or training regarding administrative ethics. In addition, external political pressures from politicians or interest groups can influence the decisions made by state officials.

In the digital era, administrative ethics have become increasingly important in the context of good governance. Digital transformation presents both new challenges and opportunities for government, making the implementation of strong ethics essential to ensure that technology is used responsibly and transparently. The changes and challenges faced in the digital era are significant, particularly in the context of public administration and good governance. This transformation is driven by the rapid development of information and communication technology (ICT), which is changing the way governments operate and interact with society. This is evident in several areas, including the shift towards digitalization of public services, as government agencies transition from conventional systems to digital platforms and adopt e-government initiatives.

To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public services, the process of digitalization needs to be carried out more rapidly and transparently, while also facilitating easier access to information for the public. Innovation in administration has become increasingly important in the digital era, driving reforms in the delivery of public administration. Governments are required to adapt to the needs of citizens who demand more responsive and technology-based services. This includes the development of applications and information systems that facilitate interaction between the government and the public. Furthermore, increased transparency and accountability can also be achieved through the utilization of digital technology, which enables governments to provide information openly to the public. These efforts are crucial for building public trust in government institutions.

The positive impacts of administrative ethics in the digital era include increased public trust, where the application of sound ethical principles in the use of technology can strengthen public confidence in the government. In addition, the implementation of strong ethics can prevent the misuse of technology for personal or group interests. Good administrative ethics can also encourage innovation in public services through the responsible use of technology.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative approach using the case study method. This approach was chosen because it allows the researcher to explore the phenomenon of administrative ethics within the context of good governance in a comprehensive and holistic manner. In this case study, the research was conducted by selecting several government agencies that have implemented digital technology in public service delivery. One of the selected agencies is the Department of Population and Civil Registration (Dukcapil), which utilizes an online system for managing population documents. In addition, this study also involved conducting in-depth interviews.

The researcher will conduct in-depth interviews with public officials, administrative staff, and members of the community who use these services. These interviews aim to explore their perspectives on the implementation of administrative ethics and its impact on good governance. In addition to the interviews, the researcher will also carry out participatory observation of the public service processes that utilize digital technology. This observation is intended to understand the ethical practices applied in the interactions between government officials and the public.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Role of Administrative Ethics in Good Governance

Good governance is a concept that refers to the way in which the government exercises power and manages public resources effectively, transparently, accountably, and responsively to the needs of society. In this context, administrative ethics play a very important role. Administrative ethics refer to a set of moral principles and values that regulate the behavior of public officials in carrying out their duties and responsibilities.

Several roles of administrative ethics in good governance include the following: (1). Enhancing Transparency Transparency is one of the main pillars of good governance. Administrative ethics encourage public officials to be open in decision-making and information management. By applying the principle of transparency, the public can access relevant information regarding government policies and actions, thereby reducing the potential for abuse of power. This aligns with the principle of accountability, where public officials must be able to justify their actions to society, (2). Promoting Accountability Accountability is the obligation of public officials to explain and be responsible for their actions to the public. Administrative ethics play a role in building a culture of accountability within the bureaucracy. When public officials adhere to ethical principles, they tend to be more responsible in carrying out their duties, thus increasing public trust in the government. High accountability also helps prevent corruption and abuse of authority, (3). Facilitating Public Participation Good administrative ethics encourage public participation in the decision-making process. By involving the community, the government can better understand public needs and aspirations, and create more responsive policies. Public participation based on ethics also enhances the legitimacy of policies, as people feel included in the process, (4). Improving the Quality of Public Services Administrative ethics contribute to the improvement of public service quality. Ethical public officials strive to provide the best service to the community, prioritizing public interest over personal or group interests. This

creates a conducive environment for innovation and continuous improvement in public service delivery, and (5). Preventing Corruption and Abuse of Power One of the greatest challenges in good governance is preventing corruption and abuse of power. Strong administrative ethics serve as a barrier against corrupt practices and misuse of authority. By instilling values of integrity, honesty, and responsibility among public officials, the risk of corruption can be minimized. In addition, the implementation of a clear code of ethics and strict sanctions for ethical violations can further strengthen efforts to prevent corruption.

Challenges in the Digital Era

In the current digital era, information and communication technology has become an integral part of everyday life, both in personal and professional contexts. However, the lack of ethical practices in digital environments can lead to various problems that negatively affect individuals, organizations, and society as a whole. These issues include, among others: (1). The Spread of False Information (Hoaxes) One of the most significant issues arising from the lack of ethics in digital environments is the spread of false information or hoaxes. With the ease of access to information, individuals can quickly disseminate unverified news. This can lead to confusion, distrust, and even panic within society. The spread of hoaxes can also damage the reputation of individuals or organizations and influence important public decisions (Lazer et al., 2018), (2). Privacy and Data Security Violations A lack of ethics in data management can result in violations of individual privacy. Many organizations collect and store personal data without the explicit consent of the data owners. In addition, inadequately protected data can become a target for cyberattacks, which may lead to identity theft and financial losses for individuals. (Solove & Schwartz, 2022), (3). In digital environments, algorithms and automated systems are often used to make decisions that affect individuals' lives. However, if these algorithms are not designed with ethical principles in mind, they can reinforce discrimination and injustice. For example, algorithms used in recruitment processes may unintentionally discriminate against certain groups based on race, gender, or social background. This can exacerbate existing inequalities within society (O'neil, 2017), (4). Cyberbullying and Digital Harassment. The lack of ethics in digital environments also contributes to the increasing incidence of cyberbullying and digital harassment. The anonymity provided by the internet often makes individuals feel free to behave aggressively or demean others without facing consequences. This can lead to serious psychological impacts on victims, including depression, anxiety, and even suicidal ideation (Hinduja & Patchin, 2008), and (5). Damage to Reputation and Trust. When ethics are not properly upheld, both individuals and organizations can suffer significant reputational damage. Negative content, whether disseminated by third parties or resulting from one's own mistakes, can quickly spread across digital platforms. Such reputational harm can lead to a loss of trust from customers, business partners, and the general public, which in turn can adversely affect the performance and sustainability of the organization (Fombrun & Van Riel, 2004).

The Impact of Technology on Transparency and Accountability

In the current digital era, information and communication technology (ICT) has become a major driver in enhancing transparency and accountability across various sectors, including government, business, and non-governmental organizations. The use of technology not only facilitates access to information but also enables more effective oversight of actions and decisions made by individuals and institutions. This article will discuss the impact of technology on transparency and accountability, as well as its implications for society, including but not limited to the following aspects; (1) Enhancing Access to Information. One of the most significant impacts of technology on transparency is the increased access to information. With the advent of the internet and digital platforms, information that was previously difficult to obtain is now easily accessible to the public. Governments and organizations can publish data and reports online, allowing the public to access information regarding policies, budgets, and institutional performance (Bertot et al., 2010), (2). Facilitating Public Participation. Technology also plays a role in facilitating public participation in decision-making processes. Digital platforms, such as social media and participatory applications, enable the public to provide input, criticism, and suggestions regarding proposed policies. This not only enhances transparency but also accountability, as governments and organizations are required to answer for their decisions to the public (Karpowitz & Raphael, 2014), (3) Oversight and Accountability. Technology also enables more effective oversight of actions and decisions taken by individuals and institutions. With the availability of online reporting systems and monitoring applications, the public can report irregularities or violations that occur. For example, public complaint reporting applications allow citizens to directly report issues related to infrastructure or public services to the government. This creates a stronger accountability mechanism, whereby institutions are required to respond to and address the reports received (Bertot et al., 2010), (4) Data and Analysis for Decision-Making. The use of technology in data collection and analysis also contributes to transparency and accountability. With big data and analytics, institutions can make more evidence-based and transparent decisions. The data collected can be used to evaluate performance, identify issues, and formulate more effective policies (Heald, 2006), and (5). Challenges and Risks. Although technology has great potential to enhance transparency and accountability, there are also challenges and risks that need to be considered. For example, not all members of society have equal access to technology, which can create a digital divide. Additionally, the use of technology may raise issues related to privacy and data security, which can undermine public trust if not properly managed (Mansell, 2012).

Drivers and Barriers

The implementation of ethics within organizations, both in the public and private sectors, is essential for creating a healthy work environment, enhancing public trust, and promoting accountability. However, the application of ethical principles does not always proceed smoothly. Therefore, it is important to identify the factors that support the implementation of ethics so that organizations can optimize ethical practices in their operations. The following are key factors that support the implementation of ethics: (1).

Ethical Leadership. Ethical leadership is one of the primary factors in the implementation of ethics within organizations. Leaders who demonstrate a commitment to ethical values serve as role models for other members of the organization. (Brown & Treviño, 2006). state that ethical leaders can influence organizational culture and encourage ethical behavior among employees. Ethical leadership includes transparent decision-making, honesty, and integrity, (2). Ethics-Supportive Organizational Culture. A strong organizational culture that supports ethics is crucial for the effective implementation of ethical practices. This culture encompasses values, norms, and practices that prioritize ethics in every aspect of operations. (Schein, 2010) argues that a positive organizational culture creates an environment where employees feel comfortable discussing ethical issues and reporting violations without fear of negative consequences. Organizations with an ethical culture tend to be more successful in enforcing ethical policies, (3). Ethics Education and Training. Structured ethics education and training can enhance employees' understanding of the importance of ethics and how to apply ethical principles in daily work. Effective training programs help employees recognize ethical dilemmas and provide tools for making appropriate decisions. (Weaver & Treviño, 1999) assert that good ethics training increases ethical awareness and facilitates ethical behavior in the workplace, (4). Clear Ethical Policies and Procedures. Clear and detailed ethical policies and procedures are essential to support the implementation of ethics. These policies should include guidelines on expected behavior as well as sanctions for ethical violations. (Kaptein, 2008) notes that clear ethical policies provide a framework for employees to understand what constitutes ethical and unethical behavior. Additionally, transparent reporting procedures are important to encourage employees to report ethical violations, (5). Reward and Sanction Systems. A fair system of rewards and sanctions can promote the implementation of ethics within organizations. Recognizing employees who demonstrate ethical behavior can motivate others to follow their example. Conversely, strict sanctions for ethical violations send a strong signal that the organization is serious about upholding ethical values. (Treviño et al., 2024) emphasize that effective reward and sanction systems reinforce commitment to ethics throughout the organization, and (6). Stakeholder Support Support from various stakeholders, including management, employees, and the community, also plays a vital role in the implementation of ethics. When all parties are committed to ethical practices, organizations are better able to create an environment that fosters ethical behavior.

According to (Maak, 2007), stakeholder involvement in the development of ethical policies can enhance the legitimacy and acceptance of those policies. Meanwhile, the barriers faced by public officials in implementing administrative ethics include: (1). Rigid Bureaucratic Culture One of the main obstacles to implementing administrative ethics is a rigid bureaucratic culture. In many public organizations, entrenched norms and practices can hinder innovation and change. This culture often emphasizes strict adherence to procedures and hierarchy, which can reduce flexibility in making ethical decisions. (Akpa et al., 2021) states that an organizational culture that does not support ethics can create an environment where unethical behavior is considered the norm, (2). Lack of Ethics Education and Training. Insufficient ethics education and training for public officials is also a significant barrier. Many officials lack adequate understanding of ethical principles and how to apply them in daily situations. Without proper training, they may be unable to recognize ethical dilemmas or make appropriate decisions. Consistent with this idea, Treviño et al. (1999) emphasize that

effective ethics training programs are essential to raise ethical awareness among public officials, (3). Political and External Pressure. Public officials often face political and external pressures that can influence their decisions. Pressure from superiors, political parties, or interest groups may compel officials to disregard ethical principles to meet certain demands. This can create conflicts between professional obligations and external pressures, which in turn can reduce accountability and transparency. (Kettl, 2013) notes that political pressure can undermine the integrity of officials and obstruct the implementation of administrative ethics, (4). Unclear Ethical Policies and Procedures. Ambiguity in ethical policies and procedures is another barrier to implementing administrative ethics. If ethical policies are unclear or poorly defined, officials may not know what is expected of them in specific situations. This can lead to confusion and uncertainty in decision-making. (Kaptein, 2008) asserts that clear and detailed ethical policies are crucial to provide guidance for officials in carrying out their duties, (5). Lack of Management Support. Support from top management is vital for creating an environment conducive to ethical implementation. If management does not demonstrate commitment to ethics or fails to provide sufficient support, officials may feel unmotivated to apply ethical principles. (Brown & Treviño, 2006) state that ethical leadership can influence organizational culture and promote ethical behavior among employees, and (6). Legal and Regulatory Uncertainty. Uncertainty in laws and regulations can also hinder officials in applying administrative ethics. When laws and regulations are inconsistent or difficult to understand, officials may hesitate to make ethical decisions. This can lead to risk avoidance and unethical choices. (Heald, 2006) emphasizes that clear legal and regulatory certainty is essential to support the implementation of ethics in public administration.

CONCLUSION

Administrative ethics plays a crucial role in supporting good governance. By enhancing transparency, accountability, public participation, service quality, and preventing corruption, administrative ethics can create a better and more responsive government that meets the needs of society. Therefore, it is essential for governments to integrate ethical principles into every aspect of public administration.

Similarly, the lack of ethical implementation in digital environments can lead to serious issues, ranging from the spread of misinformation to privacy violations and discrimination. It is important for individuals, organizations, and policymakers to develop and enforce a robust ethical framework for the use of digital technology. This will not only protect individuals and organizations but also contribute to creating a safer and fairer digital environment.

Technology has a significant impact on transparency and accountability. By improving access to information, facilitating public participation, and enabling more effective oversight, technology can help create more transparent and accountable governments and organizations. To ensure that the benefits of technology are accessible to all members of society, it is necessary to address the challenges that arise.

The implementation of ethics within organizations is influenced by various factors, including ethical leadership, a supportive organizational culture, ethics education and training, clear policies, reward and sanction systems, and stakeholder support. By understanding and optimizing these factors, organizations can foster a more ethical and

accountable environment.

Public officials face several barriers in applying administrative ethics, such as rigid bureaucratic culture, lack of ethics education and training, political pressure, unclear policies, insufficient management support, and legal uncertainty. To overcome these obstacles, it is important for public organizations to create an environment that supports ethical implementation, including providing adequate training, establishing clear policies, and demonstrating commitment from top management.

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