



## Public administration: State apparatus leadership in the present era

Romi Saputra\*

Institut Pemerintahan Dalam Negeri, Jawa Barat, Indonesia

### Abstract

**Aim:** Achieving leadership success in the modern era takes time and effort. It is a public administration challenge to find the appropriate response for leaders in a situation where it is hoped that they will be able to make many changes by adopting new paradigms of public administration and management.

**Methodology:** This study employs a qualitative, descriptive methodology. Information was gathered from reading materials and relevant scholarly articles.

**Findings:** According to the study's results, leaders open to change and lifelong learning are best positioned to meet the challenges of public administration under the new leadership paradigm. There is a need for leaders who can transform organizations to meet the challenges of modern public administration. Leaders fearless in adapting to new circumstances are essential in today's world, where rapid, dynamic changes are the norm so that institutions like the state stay caught up.

**Implications/Novel Contribution:** There has been a shift toward a new paradigm in leadership in recent years, as it has become clear that the old ways of doing things won't cut it in the era's world. This study provides an overarching look at the types of leadership required to keep a team on track during the transition while being flexible enough to meet immediate needs.

*Keywords:* Public Administration, State Apparatus Leadership, Leader.

**Received:** 09 January 2022 / **Accepted:** 13 April 2022 / **Published:** 19 June 2022

### INTRODUCTION

Although leadership is a topic that has been discussed previously, it remains worthwhile to investigate. Leadership has been around for as long as people have been trying to form organizations and coordinate the efforts of individuals to achieve specific goals (Asrar-ul Haq & Anwar, 2018). You can't take a leader out of the equation when considering the effectiveness of government policy or strategy. The role of the leadership of the state apparatus is crucial within the framework of the system of state administration. The reason for this is the widespread acceptance of the idea that a nation's leader is a significant factor in determining the path it will take. An effective leader can inspire followers to work together toward a common goal (van Knippenberg, 2020). Public institutions around the era are under increased pressure to meet their constituents' rising expectations due to economic globalization, and informatization (J. Wu & Walker, 2020).

The system and public administration are the agents of change in many societal spheres. Changes in organizational structure, procedure, and habit are all necessitated by pursuing the desired outcome (Buschmeyer, Schuh, & Wentzel, 2016). Therefore, public administration has intellectual and moral responsibilities in various institutions to address national and state-level development problems and challenges. According to proponents of the process view, public administration is essentially a web in which data, dialogue, and policymaking all come together (Ziekow, 2021). There is a growing demand for a public administration process that is faster, better, adheres to quality standards, and is efficient in this era of global competition (Battilani et al., 2022). The administrative apparatus is thought to evolve if it establishes priorities, streamlines procedures, and cuts waste (Matei & Bujac, 2016).

Reforming the actual institutional arrangements, processes, and procedures of public administration is what we mean when we talk about "administrative reform" (Capano, 2021). At the same time, management has been

\* Corresponding author: Romi Saputra

† Email: [ramspt1882@gmail.com](mailto:ramspt1882@gmail.com)

largely shut out of efforts to improve public administration, which have thus far focused solely on enhancing the human resources of the apparatus, institutions, and systems. In addition, the service model that aims solely at the service staff and focuses solely on the service's structure and technical aspects have yet to produce desirable outcomes. It's partly due to the state's leadership needing to pay more attention to reforming its apparatus. This is because leaders are people, and people have strengths and advantages. Leaders need to be intense, persistent, passionate, and knowledgeable. Although leaders are in short supply, they play a crucial role in ensuring that the organization achieves its objectives. The work of his subordinates will be affected, as is often the case with transformational leadership (see, for example, (Jam, Donia, Raja, & Ling, 2017; Khan, Rehmat, Butt, Farooqi, & Asim, 2020; Waheed, Khan, Khan, & Khalil, 2012)).

Thus, it becomes clear that the organization's life and dynamics depend on the actions of a select few people. Even more drastically, the advancement of humanity is the result of a handful of extraordinary people who stand in for their group or nation in pursuit of a common goal. In this category, you'll find the so-called originals, pioneers, thinkers, creators, and experts in structuring a group. They are examples of influential leaders. The evolution and leader of an organization can be traced back to its leader(s) (Benmira & Agboola, 2021; Farooq, Akhtar, Hijazi, & Khan, 2010). When juggling several tasks and objectives simultaneously and competing for needs for limited resources, leaders are frequently forced to employ various strategies (van der Hoek, Groeneveld, & Beerkens, 2021; Waheed, Klobas, & Kaur, 2017).

At the same time, if we look at public administration in the twenty-first century, we can see that certain challenges necessitate a new approach to management, the presence of change leaders, and the capacity to oversee staff's information and knowledge-based productivity. It follows that citizens will have higher expectations of their government in terms of quantity and service quality. Likely, this trend will lead to a higher-quality service from the state apparatus. It is essential to make more profound and systemic shifts away from outdated paradigms, such as those that view citizens as the state's property. In most companies, workers believe that investing in their leaders is a good idea, as it has been shown to benefit both the individual and the company in the long run (Haq, Ramay, Rehman, & Jam, 2010; Kjellström, Stålné, & Törnblom, 2020; Waheed & Hussain, 2010).

For this reason, it is imperative that the most influential actors in the state apparatus also undergo a mental shift. In recent years, scholars have paid more attention to the idea that leadership is something that teams do rather than something that people in positions of authority do (Q. Wu & Cormican, 2021). And in the next decade, governments will need to do even more to earn back the public's trust by solving new problems innovatively (Gerton & Mitchell, 2019).

## METHOD

In this research, we take a descriptive, qualitative approach. This method relies on observing, analyzing, and describing the phenomenon to arrive at a solution and enhance practice (Koh & Owen, 2000). The information was gathered from published articles on public administration, specifically on the management of state institutions. This research aims to shed an era on how contemporary public administration responds to the difficulties posed by taking charge of the state apparatus in the wake of the new paradigm.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### **Public Administration: Challenges in Today's Era**

Economic globalization, education, unemployment, social responsibility, and environmental conservation are some challenges that public administration must overcome. Science and technology that is used and exploited; politics; natural disasters; global warming; social inequality; multicultural management; paperless bureaucracy; and leadership quality are all areas that could use improvement. At the same time, the tendency to prioritize self-interest, which prioritizes maintaining status and is also resistant to change, is a significant problem in Indonesia, as it is in every country. Furthermore, everything is centralized, and those in positions of power often exploit this for their ends.

Nine additional bureaucratic pathologies can be derived from these, such as leaders' inability to employ the appropriate leadership style and an emphasis on self-interest rather than teamwork. Moreover, the government bureaucracy suffers from a lack of professionalism, primordialism, cronyism, nepotism, ignored norms and

ethics, disregarded principles, and dysfunctional bureaucracies. Second, no organizational culture encourages the development and upkeep of a work ethic characterized by patriotism, discipline in the workplace, obedience to authority, and tenacity. The final problem is that the public and private sectors' trust in the government has been eroding due to the policies' inconsistent results.

The field of public administration draws from many different academic disciplines. The difficulties in public administration reveal that it affects practically every facet of an organization's functioning, including its finances, culture, politics, ethics, and morals. Leadership and competence of government and business leaders are strongly correlated with reform and improvement of organizational performance. Public administration leaders must adapt to the constant changes brought about by globalization, which includes the emergence of cultural clashes and the decline of local values. Meanwhile, the changes will require a paradigm shift in administering the state government, which includes altering one's way of thinking or frame of mind.

Efforts to provide a positive agenda for the government to play a conducive role in a dynamic economic system are at the forefront of the debate about the role of public administration in the economic system. There is a pressing need for a limited governance framework with a constructive responsibility agenda, even though the current workload and government activities have grown to be massive. Therefore, public administration's three primary functions are (in no particular order):

- Ensuring a fair distribution of national income.
- Protecting individual's right to private property and wealth.
- Ensuring the freedom of individuals and communities to assume responsibility for their health, education, and care for the elderly.

The conditions of the development paradigm in third-world countries like Indonesia suggest that these issues are still relevant. Because national governments have always depended on the cooperation of other nations and international organizations to ensure the stability of their economies, it is clear that this trend has continued in the era of globalization. As a result, difficulties in public administration are connected to the efficiency with which the country competes internationally.

Education indicators are essential in the context of leadership because it is through basic education that a nation's leadership can be revitalized. Regeneration in the 1960s and 1970s produced, for instance, the current leaders of developed countries like Singapore. Furthermore, due to the scarcity of available jobs, the unemployment rate has been rising. The government must make more significant, more immediate efforts to address this condition and situation. The issue will worsen and lead to more joblessness if not addressed. Workers' low wages and output are other issues plaguing the labour market.

Public administration needs help assessing the effects of low levels of education and employment. Public policies have been implemented thanks to various government efforts, but there's still room for improvement in how they're carried out. As a result of developments in public administration, regional governments like provinces, districts, and municipalities now have more leeway to expand their administrative areas, for instance, by forming opportunities to establish direct economic relations with the global economy. However, the additional administrative regions still need to improve the quality of community services or reduce the severity of social and economic problems.

Once that happens, public administration challenges become extraordinarily convoluted. Because of this, a breakthrough is required if you want to emerge quickly from the multifaceted crisis. Meanwhile, from the point of view of public administration, a state or nation is necessary to improve the lives of its people. Ultimately, every nation aspires to be a 'welfare state,' regardless of its ideology or political system. In the meantime, this objective calls for a wide range of solid and dependable organizations, both within and beyond the government, to meet the varying degrees of difficulty of future threats.

## **The Development of Public Administration in the Current Era**

The strategic conditions that each nation must deal with in the twenty-first century differ from those of the twentieth. All nations have high expectations for their ability to profit from the new global economic order of the twenty-first century. The studies and statistics show that Indonesia was still in a multifaceted crisis at the turn of the century. Although external developments are to blame, many other fundamental factors originate within the company.

An essential flaw in the evolution of systemic processes and public administration contributes to the multifaceted crisis. More dedication from those in charge of state institutions is one of them. Neglect or inattention to the values and principles of good governance, which form part of the state's administrative system, can be caused by deviations from various dimensions of values that should serve as a reference for individual behaviour and policies. Governmental institutions, the economy, and the country's social fabric are all on the verge of collapse.

While this is happening, the complexity and dynamics of state and national problem development can raise new issues and questions. The legitimacy of challenging the efficacy of public administration in solving national problems is thus established. More specifically, the new setup should encourage the growth of public administration theories. However, the complexity of globalization and the 21st century has led to various approaches to public administration theory.

In terms of the social and cultural dimension, globalization promotes the movement of workers across national boundaries, which can lead to friction between different societies. That's why we will see a rise in the number of businesses operating as joint ventures. Because globalization will not necessarily result in cultural and philosophical global homogeneity, it can stimulate theoretical thinking about management in multicultural organizations. Multicultural institutions will emerge due to globalization, propelled by the wide range of cultural traditions represented within their membership.

It is essential to recognize that globalization encompasses the spread of political values that are seen as universally applicable, such as respect for human rights, democracy, good governance, and so on, and not just from an economic perspective. In this way, the relationship between the state and society shifts, and the balance of power shifts toward civil society. Then came the theories that proposed redistributing authority by making the government more open and democratic in its procedures and policies. The market or the private sector will be more socially responsible if civil society has a more significant say in managing its interests.

In addition, the bureaucracy's role must shift to that of a mediator between the community's special interests, as represented by civil society, and the state, which protects the public interest. Meanwhile, it is the responsibility of the bureaucracy to foster a culture of individual and collective agency. This new configuration may be too radical for the standard public administration theories. Globalization, on the other hand, necessitates a shift in one's thinking and skill set. A capacity gap can lead to dysfunction if bureaucrats and a good government cannot grasp the new arrangement.

## **Leadership: A New Paradigm in Today's Era**

The new leadership paradigm is one of the key factors influencing the future of public administration. This revised view of leadership emphasizes the skills necessary to steer businesses in the modern era. Likewise, administration and management revolve around strong leadership. In contrast to the essence's centrality, leadership is given an exceptionally strategic role at the level of the organization. The leader can steer the group in the right direction regarding its objectives. It has been established through research and practical application that the role of organizational leadership is that of a mover, lever, driver, protector, servant, and person in charge of the activities of an organization. By doing so, the traditional functions of a leader, such as commanding subordinates, passing judgment on their actions, and keeping an eye on anything that deviates from the norm, can be adapted to meet the needs of modern business.

The new paradigm of state apparatus leadership in the modern era rejects the idea that public leaders must have a complete and accurate picture of their circumstances and those of the people they serve. This includes the paradigms and administrative structures in which it participates, as well as the developments and strategic environmental problems encountered in various disciplines and professions. Meanwhile, the leader must steer his team toward practical solutions to the many challenges they, as a whole, must face in this era.

According to this theory, a leader needs to become a trustworthy agent of change, so much more than simply possessing the right skills and experience. The leader, the community's current state, and the ever-evolving national and international environment comprise the three pillars upon which the leadership structure rests. Consequently, in light of the complexities of development and dynamics of change in the 21st century, it is reasonable to question whether or not specific leadership qualifications and competencies are necessary for effective leadership. Thus, in light of this, we must question the paradigm and system of public administration that can be considered relevant and necessary to face various problems and challenges that may originate from within or outside the institution. It's where ideas can be shared and debated, and new leaders can emerge.

It should come as no surprise, then, that a public leader needs to have a strong sense of self-presence. In addition, leaders need to recognize the values that are worth upholding and can serve as a standard by which their citizens can live and thrive. To realize the state's ideals and goals, the leader needs to fully grasp the significance of his role as an integral part of the state administration system that shapes the complex institutional process of state and nation society in international relations.

There are a wide variety of issues and threats in society, economy, government, institutions, and national defence and security, all of which contribute to the complexity and volatility of the national strategic environment. The economic structure, competitiveness, law enforcement, and autonomy/decentralization of implementation are all weak points. Large amounts of external debt, high rates of poverty and unemployment, democratic reform, social disintegration, and leadership competition are additional factors. Meanwhile, estimates suggest that the evolution of the global environment is marked by ever-changing, uncertain, and sometimes hostile situations, conditions, challenges, and demands.

In light of recent changes in the strategic environment, leaders must be steady and trustworthy. They need to foresee potential outcomes, construct a vision, mission, and strategy, and create policy actions, institutional systems, and government management appropriate for dealing with complex national and international developments, problems, and challenges. Therefore, leaders must be able to move, encourage, and inspire their followers. Given the complexity of the problems we face in the twenty-first century, effective leadership cannot simply be located at the helm of an organization; instead, it must be rooted at the very centre of the business, alongside all the company's resources at its disposal. High-involvement leadership roles can aid a company in its pursuit of the speed, flexibility, quality, and service required to compete globally.

Meanwhile, from a leadership standpoint, the solution to transformational and transactional action is the solution to the challenges of public administration if a change is based on ideas that support the principles of gradual and peaceful changes. The market, culture, role, and role model of the leader continue to be essential factors in the transformation. People still value a leader's character in Indonesia, no matter where you go. Leaders also need to demonstrate stability when implementing new policies. Then, democratic standards, openness, and expertise should all be benchmarks for executing this role. If there is a shift, it must sidestep the universally loved or hated parts. Using this strategy can help legitimize and back a leader.

On the other hand, at the level of state apparatus leadership, officials are held to the standards of contemporary public administration. Until now, stability has been the norm in government, but now is the era to develop pluralism and institute checks and balances in the legislative, executive, and judicial branches. A more transparent and influential people's representative institution is needed in regions where the DPD or Regional Representative Council is established. To further de-emphasize the presidency's leader at the pinnacle of authority, the position of president has been established through popular vote. Regional governors and mayors undergo the same democratic process. The unexpected continued to occur despite this. This is because not all political leaders seeking office meet the minimum competency and qualification requirements that are sometimes the basis for political support.

But in the modern era, we need leaders who can empower the community and are flexible to change. When a leader assists their subordinates, it sends a message to the community that they are strong and wise. Therefore, leaders who can grow over time will be the ones who thrive in the modern era. Furthermore, a new leadership paradigm is needed in the modern era, one that can ride the waves of change rather than merely ride the waves of static stability. Then, everyone's input into self-improvement and the company's overall growth becomes critically important.



Then, leadership needs to be extensive, spanning not just one but multiple departments and even organizational levels. Leaders who can teach their followers to become influential leaders are in high demand in the modern era, so a single charismatic figure is not the only source of positive reinforcement. A leader in the new paradigm is open to new information and experiences, uses their time and resources efficiently, and is compassionate, straightforward, and multitasking. As a result, the importance of quantity declines and quality as a leadership trait rises. Future leaders should also be lifelong learners, whether through classroom instruction or on-the-job training. This is why leaders must keep expanding their horizons and learning new things. This is paramount because knowledge is the driving force behind every successful enterprise.

## CONCLUSION

According to the data presented above, effective leadership within the state apparatus is crucial to the success of any organization or nation in achieving its objectives. As the old era of leadership proves inapplicable in the modern era, a new leadership paradigm has begun to take shape. In public administration terms, this presents a challenge. It was determined that adaptable and curious leaders about new ideas and information are the best bet for overcoming this obstacle, as they will be better able to use their newfound skills to improve the lives of the people they lead and the community at large. Therefore, leaders with a capacity for the era are seen as particularly well-suited to the challenges of modern public administration. A transformational leader will help their team adapt to the inevitable fluctuations that occur in any organization. Leaders who are only concerned with their interests and resistant to new ideas have no place in shaping today's era.

## REFERENCES

- Asrar-ul Haq, M., & Anwar, S. (2018). The many faces of leadership: Proposing research agenda through a review of literature. *Future Business Journal*, 4(2), 179–188. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fbj.2018.06.002>
- Battilani, C., Galli, G., Arecco, S., Casarino, B., Granero, A., Lavagna, K., ... Damiani, L. (2022). Business process re-engineering in public administration: The case study of Western Ligurian Sea Port Authority. *Sustainable Futures*, 4, 1-13. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sftr.2022.100065>
- Benmira, S., & Agboola, M. (2021). Evolution of leadership theory. *BMJ Leader*, 5, 3-5. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/leader-2020-000296>
- Buschmeyer, A., Schuh, G., & Wentzel, D. (2016). Organizational transformation towards product-service systems—empirical evidence in managing the behavioral transformation process. *Procedia CIRP*, 47, 264–269. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.procir.2016.03.224>
- Capano, G. (2021). Models of administrative reform. In *Oxford research encyclopedia of politics*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.1436>
- Farooq, A. J., Akhtar, S., Hijazi, S., & Khan, M. (2010). Impact of advertisement on children behavior: Evidence from Pakistan. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 12(4), 663–670.
- Gerton, T., & Mitchell, J. P. (2019). Grand challenges in public administration: Implications for public service education, training, and research. *Journal of Public Affairs Education*, 25(4), 435–440. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/15236803.2019.1689780>
- Haq, I., Ramay, M. I., Rehman, M. A. U., & Jam, F. A. (2010). Big five personality and perceived customer relationship management. *Research Journal of International Studies*, 15, 37–45.
- Jam, F. A., Donia, M. B., Raja, U., & Ling, C. H. (2017). A time-lagged study on the moderating role of overall satisfaction in perceived politics: Job outcomes relationships. *Journal of Management & Organization*, 23(3), 321–336. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1017/jmo.2016.13>
- Khan, H., Rehmat, M., Butt, T. H., Farooqi, S., & Asim, J. (2020). Impact of transformational leadership on work performance, burnout and social loafing: A mediation model. *Future Business Journal*, 6(1), 1–13. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1186/s43093-020-00043-8>
- Kjellström, S., Stålné, K., & Törnblom, O. (2020). Six ways of understanding leadership development: An exploration of increasing complexity. *Leadership*, 16(4), 434–460. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/1742715020926731>

- Koh, E. T., & Owen, W. L. (2000). Descriptive research and qualitative research. In *Introduction to nutrition and health research*. Boston, MA: Springer. doi:[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4615-1401-5\\_12](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4615-1401-5_12)
- Matei, A., & Bujac, R. (2016). Innovation and public reform. *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 39, 761–768. doi:[https://doi.org/10.1016/S2212-5671\(16\)30278-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2212-5671(16)30278-7)
- van der Hoek, M., Groeneveld, S., & Beerkens, M. (2021). Leadership behavior repertoire: An exploratory study of the concept and its potential for understanding leadership in public organizations. *Perspectives on Public Management and Governance*, 4(4), 363–378. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1093/ppmgov/gvab022>
- van Knippenberg, D. (2020). Meaning-based leadership. *Organizational Psychology Review*, 10(1), 6–28. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/2041386619897618>
- Waheed, M., & Hussain, M. F. (2010). Empirical study of learner contentment towards e-learning: Influential role of key factors.
- Waheed, M., Khan, A. Z., Khan, H. G. A., & Khalil, M. S. (2012). Creative learning environment and knowledge management. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 2(1), 144-159.
- Waheed, M., Klobas, J. E., & Kaur, K. (2017). The importance of actual use in defining and measuring innovative behaviour: Comparison of e-book reader users and non-users. *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science*, 49(4), 368–379. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/0961000616640030>
- Wu, J., & Walker, R. M. (2020). Public management in China: Reform, innovation and governance. *International Public Management Journal*, 23(3), 1-6. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/10967494.2020.1784646>
- Wu, Q., & Cormican, K. (2021). Shared leadership and team effectiveness: An investigation of whether and when in engineering design teams. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 1-12. doi:<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.569198>