

ARTICLE

Model for Post-Pandemic Bureaucracy in Indonesia: Is Post-Bureaucracy Relevant?

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to investigate alternative post-pandemic bureaucratic models. This research contributes to the theoretical and practical knowledge of appropriate bureaucratic models during the pandemic and its aftermath. This research employed a qualitative method with a constructivist approach through a comprehensive literature review from credible sources, including scientific journals, books, and information from official government websites or international institutions. The results show that post-bureaucracy can be an antithesis and alternative to Indonesia's dominant Weberian bureaucratic paradigm. While the Weberian bureaucracy relies on rigid rules and structures, post-bureaucracy thrives on flexibility, citizen-centeredness, open organizational boundaries, and a focus on people. These post-bureaucratic characteristics are particularly relevant to the Indonesian context. The practical implication is that the Indonesian government needs to consider the post-bureaucratic model to initiate a transformative change in bureaucracy in response to the evolving challenges posed by the pandemic and its aftermath.

A. INTRODUCTION

The Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has triggered a multidimensional crisis, affecting almost every aspect of human life globally. The spread of the COVID-19 virus has infected millions worldwide, resulting in an unprecedented economic disruption (Olivia et al., 2020). Despite the government's multifaceted efforts, positive outcomes have remained elusive. Regrettably, the healthcare system in Indonesia has struggled to detect and respond effectively to the crisis.

During a pandemic, the government faced a dilemma, forced to choose between saving people's lives at the potential cost of economic sacrifices or seeking a middle ground between these two options, which is equally complex and uncertain (Pradana et al., 2020). The bureaucracy must undergo structural changes to maintain the community's rights to public services. The urgency of bureaucratic transformation becomes evident in the context of public services during pandemics. Traditional offline innovations that rely on physical meetings face substantial challenges, as exemplified by the Public Service Mall (PSM). For instance, service provision must be temporarily suspended when a PSM employee tests positive for COVID-19.

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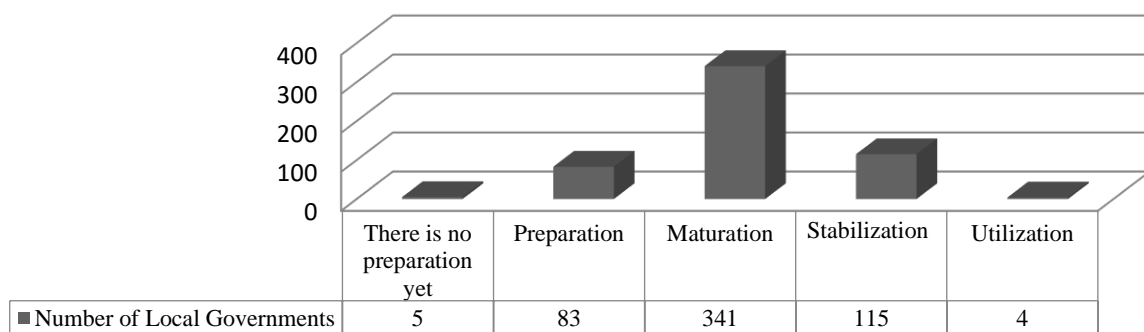
Table 1. The Public Service Mall (PSM) Closed Due to the Pandemic

No.	Location	Pandemic Impact
1.	PSM Sidoarjo	It was closed because the building was used to isolate COVID-19 patients
2.	PSM Padang	It was temporarily closed because there were employees who tested positive for COVID-19.
3.	PSM Surabaya	It had closed three times during the pandemic because there were positive employees.
4.	PSM Banyumas	It was temporarily closed because there were employees who tested positive for COVID-19.
5.	PSM DKI Jakarta	It was temporarily closed because there were employees who tested positive for COVID-19.
6.	PSM Banyuwangi	It was temporarily closed because there were employees who tested positive for COVID-19.
7.	PSM Badung	It was temporarily closed because there were employees who tested positive for COVID-19.
8.	PSM Pandeglang	It was temporarily closed because there were employees who tested positive for COVID-19.
9.	PSM Bekasi City	It was closed for two months due to COVID-19

Source: Data is Analyzed from Various Sources (2022)

The data in Table 1 highlights the direct impact of the pandemic on PSM. Some PSMs were forced to suspend their services. Even for those that continued to operate, the circumstances were markedly different. For example, before the pandemic, PSM Sidoarjo, East Java, could serve up to 600 people daily, offering 177 services and involving 25 local agencies (Astuti, 2020). This condition shows the significant disruption experienced by public services in Indonesia.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the Indonesian bureaucracy had been actively pursuing digital transformation innovations, a global trend resonating. However, the progress in these transformation efforts has fallen short of expectations. Reflecting on the results of a study by Yunita & Aprianto (2018), it is apparent that local government e-government practices in Indonesia remain predominantly in the maturation stage.



(Source: Yunita & Aprianto (2018))

Figure 1. E-Government Development in Local Government in Indonesia

According to the results of a survey by the United Nations (UN) regarding the E-Government Development Index (EGDI), Indonesia was ranked 88th out of 193 countries in 2020. This marked an improvement in Indonesia's position, as it had risen by 19 places compared to 2019, when it was ranked 107th.

Table 2. E-Government Development Index (EGDI) di ASEAN

Country	EDGI Level	Rating Class	Rank	EGDI	Online Service Index	Telecommunications Infrastructure Index	Human Capital Index
Singapore	Very High EGDI	VH	11	0.915	0.9647	0.8899	0.8904
Malaysia	Very High EGDI	V1	47	0.7892	0.8529	0.7634	0.7513
Thailand	Very High EGDI	V1	57	0.7565	0.7941	0.7004	0.7751
Brunei Darussalam	High EGDI	HV	60	0.7389	0.6353	0.8209	0.7605
Philippines	High EGDI	H3	77	0.6892	0.7294	0.5838	0.7544
Viet Nam	High EGDI	H3	86	0.6667	0.6529	0.6694	0.6779
Indonesia	High EGDI	H3	88	0.6612	0.6824	0.5669	0.7342
Cambodia	High EGDI	H1	124	0.5113	0.4529	0.5466	0.5344
Myanmar	Middle EGDI	M3	146	0.4316	0.2588	0.5234	0.5125
Lao People's Democratic Republic	Middle EGDI	M2	167	0.3288	0.1941	0.2383	0.5539

Source: (United Nations, 2020)

As shown in Table 2, Indonesia's e-government capabilities are lacking, posing a problem during the pandemic. The insufficient infrastructure for online public services (E-Government) resulted in online services replacing traditional services. Many regions in Indonesia still need to improve in terms of supporting technology.

The pandemic has shown the limitations of public service innovation during crises. All these innovations are meaningless if the bureaucrats or the bureaucratic model fail to adapt and change. Indonesia's current bureaucratic model is heavily influenced by Weberian bureaucracy, which emphasizes rigidity and formalism (Dwiyanto, 2015). Formalism in public services becomes irrelevant during the pandemic, creating a gap between innovation and bureaucratic models and challenging the implementation of transformation initiatives.

Previous studies conducted by Faedlulloh et al. (2020) showed that Smart ASN (Smart Civil Servants) has weak roots as an idea for Indonesia's future bureaucratic profile. This study is relevant in providing a critical perspective on sophisticated concepts often present in Indonesia, which must be placed in objective conditions. Bureaucracies often exhibit limitations, hindering organizations' flexibility and ability to adapt and innovate. In this case, studies by Palmi et al. (2021) and Plesner et al. (2018) suggested that replacing bureaucratic organizations with new organizational forms and practices is essential to fill the gap in bureaucratic discourse in Indonesia.

Based on the above background, this study conducted a theoretical study on the relevant bureaucratic model in the post-pandemic era. Therefore, instead of focusing on innovation, this study will contribute to projecting bureaucratic models that can be considered suitable post-pandemic bureaucratic models. An appropriate bureaucratic model can be utilized to restore public services and become an adaptive bureaucracy when rapid changes occur.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to several theories, bureaucracy and public policy are difficult to change (Biesbroek et al., 2018; Turner et al., 2022). The reason is that regulations underpin bureaucracy, and public policies are generally debated at round tables involving the executive, legislature, and judiciary. The COVID-19 pandemic, on the other hand, has forced all parties to adapt. The government must evolve, specifically the bureaucracy and the public policies it implements. Ideally, the bureaucratic system and government-run public policy have a

mechanism for reacting to and adapting to change (Janssen & van der Voort, 2020). However, generally, the reactions are gradual. The COVID-19 era has accelerated the pace of change. To continue to serve the public optimally, the government must be responsive and devise strategies quickly and precisely. After all, the public has many needs that government organizations must meet. However, the public cannot move as freely as before the COVID-19 era.

Bureaucratic reform in Indonesia, including central and regional government management, is integral to improving the bureaucracy's performance (Krisnajaya et al., 2019). The bureaucracy in Indonesia also needs to revise and develop various policies and modernize them by adapting the functions of government institutions based on the new paradigm (Hajar, 2015). Theoretically, bureaucrats are compelled to transition from a rule-based bureaucracy to a performance-based bureaucracy, ultimately evolving into a dynamic government. This transition is done to realize the good and clean government set through the acceleration of implementing bureaucratic reform. Thus, the government will restructure the administration system, where the bureaucracy will become the backbone of change.

In local government, bureaucratic reform can encourage changes to a more competitive bureaucracy (Paskarina, 2017). Bureaucratic reform has become a strategic agenda in the Indonesian government after the fall of the new order. As previously explained, bureaucratic reform impacts the effectiveness and efficiency of government, economic improvement, and a country's competitive advantage. On the other hand, the bureaucracy in Indonesia still has various problems, such as corruption, inefficiency, and politicization of the bureaucracy.

Bureaucracies are frequently naturally rigid, limiting an organization's adaptability and capacity for innovation. In this situation, the study by McKenna et al. highlighted the necessity to replace bureaucratic organizations with new organizational forms and practices. Reform of the public sector aims to increase the effectiveness of public administration by introducing new, agile organizations as policy instruments (Vento & Kuokkanen, 2022).

The current bureaucratic reform agenda needs to start providing space for flexibility (Annosi & Brunetta, 2018; Stewart, 2014), incorporating public values (Bryson et al., 2014), driving a bureaucratization of organizational learning (Ingvaldsen & Engesbak, 2020), and advancing the value of emancipation (Gronouwe et al., 2022) which is relevant to the spirit of democracy. This research is more theory-driven. The novelty of this research lies in bridging a gap by developing an alternative bureaucracy model based on specific experiences in Indonesia within the context of a crisis and analyzing it using post-bureaucratic theory—discussion within the bureaucratic discourse in Indonesia (Wihantoro et al., 2015). Different approaches and locus contexts offer the potential for identifying additional relevant and essential characteristics for bureaucratic models. However, the post-bureaucracy model still requires further discussion within the bureaucratic discourse in Indonesia (Wihantoro et al., 2015).

C. METHOD

This research applied a constructivist methodological approach, with a literature review to identify Indonesia's relevant post-pandemic bureaucracy model. This research focuses on how the construction of knowledge in the text comes from complex bureaucratic dynamics. The understanding and interpretation of texts are influenced by the social context, values, beliefs, and experiences of bureaucrats and communities dealing with the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. A constructivist approach to the literature review allows researchers to develop a more critical and reflective point of view in interpreting texts (Charmaz, 2014). A literature review is an excellent method for synthesizing research findings, providing meta-level evidence, and identifying areas where further research is required, which is crucial to developing theoretical frameworks and conceptual models. Typically, an integrative review aims to assess, critique, and synthesize the literature on a research topic to enable the emergence of new theoretical frameworks and perspectives (Snyder, 2019).

The research process involves several stages. The first was conducting a comprehensive search, reading, and documentation of bureaucracy and public services findings during the pandemic era from various reputable sources, including scientific journals, books, and information from official government websites and international institutions. Articles were tracked from reputed international journals published by Emerald, Tandfonline, Elsevier, Wiley online library, and Sage, using the keyword "post-bureaucracy" from 2013 to 2022. These articles were critical references for many scholars and aided in the theoretical development of bureaucratic models in contingency situations. Additionally, the authors incorporated various other relevant sources into their research. Subsequently, the authors reconstructed the findings, encompassing theory, data, and bureaucratic models. The final stage involved a critical review by elaborating a relevant and innovative bureaucratic model for the context of bureaucratic reform in Indonesia.

D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Public Service in the Pandemic Era

Public services are the community's right; the state must consistently deliver these services to its citizens. The bureaucracy must optimize technology, information, and communication across various sectors. This transformation is necessary to ensure that citizens' rights to public services continue to be met, especially given the difficulties of the ongoing pandemic. Consequently, the bureaucracy has transitioned from the conventional face-to-face service model to electronic services. Internally, the organization has also adapted, with activities such as meetings, performance reporting, attendance tracking, and other functions transitioning to electronic formats incrementally (Taufik & Warsono, 2020).

Data released by the Ministry of Administrative Reform and Bureaucratic Reform noted that after implementing the WFH policy for public servants, complaints emerged from the public because public services were often disrupted. These complaints include those related to population administration services (153 reports), electricity services (116), taxation (40), licensing (20), immigration (11), and oil and gas (8). Public complaints submitted directly related to public services during the COVID-19 pandemic witnessed a significant surge. By May 2020, the South Kalimantan Ombudsman had received over 216 complaints. The East Nusa Tenggara Ombudsman reported that from March to April 2020, they had received 167 reports of public complaints (Kanisius, 2020). The Central Java Ombudsman received 87 reports during the pandemic. West Papua Ombudsman received 101 public reports, 37 of which were specific reports related to COVID-19. Meanwhile, nationally, until Quarter 1, information submitted to the Ombudsman reached around 5,000 reports (Firhansyah, 2020).

Weberian bureaucratic organizations appear large and sprawling, implying they are highly hierarchical. The logical consequences of this large and hierarchical organization are 1) a slow bureaucracy in making decisions, 2) long bureaucratic service procedures, 3) employee disorientation, 4) the emergence of employee solidarity with a nepotistic character, and 5) bureaucrats who avoid responsibility for their actions (Surur, 2019). Inherently, hierarchical, bureaucratic institutions have the problem of slow decision-making (Tomo, 2019). It is reinforced by the statement of Indonesia's Vice President, Ma'ruf Amin, stating that one of the obstacles in the recovery of the health and economic sectors due to the COVID-19 pandemic is the slow bureaucracy (Purnamasari, 2020). Slow planning and budgeting processes, data inaccuracies, delays in the procurement of goods and services, and overlapping programs or activities between ministries/agencies and local governments are bureaucratic problems during the pandemic.

Government officials must maintain continuity of service by changing the service approach to reduce physical contact between the government and citizens as service recipients.

The change in service delivery to citizens is an imperative aligned with the principles of maintaining service continuity and adaptability in public services (Djellal et al., 2013; Kessler, 2018). Service continuity implies that public services to citizens should not be interrupted during a pandemic; at the very least, essential services must still be provided through a minimal services framework. Simultaneously, adaptability involves modifying service delivery methods during a pandemic to facilitate easy access to public services for citizens.

Since implementing the work-from-home (WFH) policy for civil servants, there have been numerous complaints from service users about delays in public services, including population administration services, electricity, taxation, licensing, and more. Surprisingly, digital-based public services, which have been widely promoted, do not seem to have been fully optimized. Given the COVID-19 pandemic, this momentum should force the bureaucracy to accelerate its digital transformation. On the other hand, the State Civil Service Agency (BKN) found that around 30 percent of ASNs did not perform their duties during the work-from-home period due to technological issues (Jannah, 2022). This condition indicates the ongoing problems related to the quality of human resources.

The brief note above shows a symptom of the continued prevalence of Weberian bureaucracy within the bureaucracy in Indonesia. The bureaucracy is slow in decision-making, especially in times of crisis. Furthermore, the bureaucracy often adheres to protracted procedures within public services despite the government's repeated campaigns advocating for digital transformation.

Table 3. Indonesian Bureaucracy Problems in the Pandemic Times

No	Problems	Reasons
1	Bureaucracy is slow to make decisions	Hierarchy and proceduralism
2	Obstruction of public services	Lack of innovation
3	Not optimal digital/platform-based public services	Human resources and digital infrastructure
4	Due to technological issues, many officials do not perform their jobs while working from home.	Human resources

Source: Faedlulloh et al. (2023)

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the people's demand for public services was not necessarily met with the expected accessibility and dependability. The provision of services was directly impacted when staff members tested positive for COVID-19. However, the government's online document management tools have not achieved optimal functionality. Consequently, individuals often find themselves perplexed when attempting to access public services. In this context, the community expressed discontent with the closure of numerous service offices without viable alternatives, suggesting that few bureaucracies or service organizations have engaged in innovation (Firhansyah, 2020).

Several experts have evaluated Indonesia's pattern of public service delivery and identified seven fundamental weaknesses. Four of these aspects pertain to attitudes, characterized by a lack of responsiveness, inadequate information provision, insufficient coordination, and an unwillingness to solicit feedback and input from the public. Three additional aspects are weaknesses, efficiencies, limited accessibility, and bureaucracy (Saggaf et al., 2018). Meanwhile, regarding human resources, defects relate to professionalism, competence, empathy, and ethical conduct. Most working bureaucrats are influenced by an overly structured, hierarchical, formalistic, and relatively closed bureaucratic model. From an institutional perspective, weaknesses are related to organizational design, which should be more tailored to community service delivery, characterized by excessive hierarchies that lead to a lack of coordination and increased bureaucracy (Langer, 2022).

Criticism of The Dominant Bureaucracy Model

Before explaining the offer of a bureaucratic model, it is necessary to critique the condition of the modern bureaucracy in Indonesia, which remains trapped in a Weberian bureaucratic framework. At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, bureaucratic complexities emerged, as seen from implementing the Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB) policy. Regional governments seeking to enforce PSBB measures were initially required to obtain central government approval, complicating efforts to control the spread of COVID-19. The experience presented by [Amilia \(2020\)](#) showed that matters related to administrative issues remain the main thing in the public service process. An instance in Surabaya's Health Service involved issuing a regulation to withhold the ID cards of residents who were required to self-isolate due to reactive rapid test results. Residents were compelled to navigate through administrative steps involving endorsements from the local neighbourhood chief, subdistrict head, regent, and local Health Center director. To retrieve their ID cards, showing the irrationality of the bureaucracy.

The above illustration demonstrates how formality has been embedded in the Indonesian bureaucracy. The Weberian bureaucratic model binds the Indonesian bureaucracy. According to Weber, bureaucracy has five main principles: standardization and formalization, division of labour and specialization, the hierarchy of authority, professionalization, and written documentation. These principles guide bureaucratic organizations in Indonesia. It is a trap of regularity and formalism that strikes Indonesian administrators ([Dwiyanto, 2015](#)).

The practice of realizing Weberian bureaucracy in the field warrants reconsideration. Many experts have voiced criticisms of the Weberian bureaucratic concept, deeming it inefficient and ineffective. From a Foucauldian perspective, the Weberian model is no longer relevant to government work in the 21st century because it only creates obedience controlled by instruments of power with a military character in society ([Kvachev, 2019](#)). Weberian bureaucracy is considered to have failed to build a public administration system that favours the people. From this system, an oligarchy of officials was born, which is challenging for society to control ([Hanlon, 2016](#)).

A new organizational model of bureaucracy is needed, where everyone shares responsibility for overall success. The nature of the problem and not the organizational structure determines the bureaucracy that can foster connections. Agreement and open communication replace hierarchy, control, and authority. [Rapolienè & Jakubè \(2015\)](#) argued that established bureaucratic rules are inflexible. So, mutual trust must be fostered. Bureaucracy should be empowering rather than an "iron cage" that dehumanizes people to work like robots. The post-bureaucratic model assumes that every organization member is a whole human being, making it relevant in a pandemic contingency situation.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shifted the human aspect of society. The bureaucratic delays in assisting the community hinder community-driven activities. Therefore, the bureaucracy must align itself with the community in this situation. Therefore, a new perspective on bureaucracy in Indonesia is required. Society needs a bureaucracy that prioritizes the public interest, is adaptable rather than rigid, and can internally empower the organization.

Post-Bureaucracy as an Opportunity

The initial call for post-bureaucracy was Crozier, the most influential critique of the Weberian bureaucracy in Europe ([Crozier & Friedberg, 2017](#)). Post-bureaucracy experienced momentum when the bureaucratic reform movement in several developed countries in the early 1990s encouraged people to pressure the government to improve public services. It was marked by the birth of several scientific works from experts related to public services, with the emergence of a post-bureaucratic paradigm, such as Barzelay, Parker and Heckscher & Donnellon ([Laffin, 2018](#); [Rolls, 2021](#)). The 1990s saw the New Public Management (NPM) paradigm emerge. The era's spirit was to promote corporate culture in government to reduce

inefficiency and bureaucratic dysfunction. The NPM paradigm considers public choice theory, managerialism, and reinventing government (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2015).

Hummel explained that the current bureaucracy needs to be seen from a post-modern point of view to create a new balance and gain a fresh perspective, necessitating a new social structure (Carnevale & Stivers, 2019). In the context of the pandemic and the accompanying wave of disruption, the post-bureaucratic model becomes a relevant consideration for the bureaucratic reform agenda in Indonesia.

Post-bureaucracy is not just a periodization term but the antithesis of modern Weberian bureaucracy controlled by rigid rules and structures. In business practice, post-bureaucracy is becoming a significant model adapted to improve organizational change readiness, implement cross-functional processes, empower, and delegate decision power closer to knowledge and information (Annosi & Brunetta, 2018). The idea of post-bureaucracy seeks to promote the value of freedom and present a much more democratic bureaucracy. Therefore, post-bureaucracy focuses on people rather than rigid rules, so the structure is designed horizontally, and power is decentralized.

Prominent critical thinkers like Barzelay, Heckscher, Kernaghan, and Maravelias have dissected the distinguishing features of post-bureaucracy as compared to the Weberian model (Mustafa et al., 2022; Tsvykh & Nelipa, 2019; Virtanen et al., 2018). Within post-bureaucracy, regulations are substituted with consensus and dialogue rooted in personal influence. It is centred around citizens, assignments are based on merit rather than hierarchy, empowerment takes precedence, and organizational boundaries are more permeable.

Prominent critical thinkers such as Barzelay, Heckscher, Kernaghan, and Maravelias have dissected the distinguishing features of post-bureaucracy as compared to the Weberian model (Mustafa et al., 2022; Tsvykh & Nelipa, 2019; Virtanen et al., 2018). In post-bureaucracy, regulations are substituted with consensus and dialogue rooted in personal influence. It is centred around citizens, assignments are based on merit rather than hierarchy, empowerment takes precedence, and organizational boundaries are more permeable.

Table 4. Characteristics of Post-Bureaucracy According to Some Experts

Barzelay	Heckscher	Kernaghan	Maravelias
Emphasis on outcomes that are useful to society, the existence of quality and value, products, and adherence to norms	Consensus through institutionalized dialogue	Citizen centered Quality of service to citizens	Flat organization design
Prioritizing mission, service, and result	Influence through persuasion instead of power and command	Participatory leadership Shared values and participatory decision-making	Decentralization
Emphasis on giving value to society, building accountability, and strengthening work relations	High need for internal trust	People-centred Empowering and caring environment for employees	Emphasize flexibility rather than just following the rules
Emphasis on understanding and applying norms, identification and resolution of problems, and continuous improvement	Emphasis on organizational mission	Collective action consultation, cooperation and coordination	
	Strategic Information is shared within the organization	Oriented to change Innovation, risk-taking and continuous improvement Result oriented Accountability for results	

Focusing on guiding Principles of action, not on rules for conduct	Decentralized Decentralization of authority and control
Fluid decision-making process	Non-departmental form Various mechanisms deliver the program.
Special functional Relationship network	Driven by revenue Programs are financed as far as possible based on cost recovery.
An open and visible peer review process	Competitive Competition with the private sector for program delivery
Open limits Broad public performance standards Hope for change	

Source: Processed from Various Sources (2022)

Table 4 illustrates the distinctions between the bureaucracy and the Weberian model. It embodies a profound shift in the nature and structure of bureaucracy. Post-bureaucracy encompasses numerous attributes, prompting the authors to identify the characteristics most applicable to shaping a post-pandemic bureaucratic model in Indonesia. To select relevant aspects, the authors analyzed the challenges encountered by the Indonesian bureaucracy during the pandemic and sought to antithesis these problems using post-bureaucratic characteristics.

The most relevant characteristic of alternative post-pandemic bureaucratic models is flexibility. The COVID-19 pandemic has forced the bureaucracy to adapt quickly to unexpected environmental changes, such as working from home, limiting face-to-face meetings, and adopting digital technology. A more flexible post-bureaucratic model can help the bureaucracy adapt to these changes and develop innovative solutions to the challenges posed by the pandemic. In the context of alternative post-pandemic bureaucratic models, flexibility can also mean reducing bureaucracy and increasing speed in making important decisions. It can help the bureaucracy be more responsive to the dynamics and changes (Annosi & Brunetta, 2018). Specifically, in the context of digitalization, flexibility becomes more relevant. The empirical findings of Mustafa et al. (2022) provide consistent cross-study support for the relevance of post-bureaucratic structures in digitalization.

Furthermore, the second important aspect of the post-bureaucratic model is citizen-centered. In the context of the pandemic, the Indonesian government's experience of not focusing on citizens could have a negative impact (Kusumaningrum et al., 2021). Post-bureaucratic models focus more on customers than citizens, although the two are often considered similar concepts. The post-bureaucratic model replaces traditional bureaucratic control with a more results-focused orientation that seeks to improve the quality and effectiveness of public services by providing better responses to public needs. However, citizens remain the essential factor in the post-bureaucratic model. In practice, the post-bureaucratic model emphasizes the importance of public participation in the decision-making process and management of public services. Therefore, the third post-bureaucratic characteristic relevant in the Indonesian context is the characteristic of an open bureaucracy (Kalimullah et al., 2015). Openness is done by facilitating citizen participation in discussions and consultations and building partnerships and collaboration between government and society to strengthen citizen participation.

During the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Indonesian bureaucracy experienced a slowdown in performance due to limitations in human resource capacity (Kurniawan et al., 2022). Therefore, empowerment in the bureaucracy is an important aspect. In this context, the post-bureaucratic characteristic of being "people-centred" gains relevance for the Indonesian bureaucracy. Bureaucracy should focus on the needs, desires, and experiences of employees. It should value employees as individuals and recognize their critical role in the organization's success. In the post-bureaucratic model, "people-centred" is a fundamental principle for creating a more collaborative, creative, and innovative work environment. By prioritizing the needs and wants of employees and customers first, organizations can strengthen their relationship with society and create added value for all stakeholders involved.

Post-bureaucratic practices can be learned from Taiwan's experience as a country that successfully handled COVID-19 due to its digitalization (Yang & Huang, 2020). Taiwan's bureaucracy has demonstrated agility and a remarkable ability to adapt to the changes due to the pandemic. It has effectively offered responsive information services concerning the management of COVID-19 and has consistently delivered public services to the community.

Successful control of COVID-19 in Taiwan was a gradual and extensive process. The historical institutionalization of reforms in Taiwan, from 1949 to 2010, illustrates the substantial effort put into this endeavour (Shih et al., 2012). The Taiwanese government and society faced many challenges and obstacles. A political process drove bureaucratic reform, and civil servants had to adapt and navigate the various dynamics of value conflicts that arose. The bureaucracy in Taiwan is a manifestation of NPM, an epistemological intersection of the concept of post-bureaucracy. Several post-bureaucratic characteristics are inherent in bureaucratic practices in Taiwan, such as focusing on change, community needs, and collective action in the form of consultation, cooperation, and coordination of the reintegration agenda. The pursuit of change-oriented governance encourages the holistic rearrangement of public organizational structures and enhances their readiness for high levels of digitalization.

Criticism of The Post-Bureaucracy and The Response

Post-bureaucracy is not without its critics. One expert who provided a straightforward critique of the concept of post-bureaucracy is Höpfl (Ozmen, 2013). Höpfl asserted that there is no arguable difference between bureaucracy and post-bureaucracy unless bureaucracy is defined as "hierarchical" and post-bureaucracy as "non-hierarchical". Post-bureaucracy has become a sensational and fashionable concept in organizational studies, like the addition of the terms "post" and "late" often used by social theorists such as post-modern, post-colonial, late-capitalism, etc. In his analysis, hierarchy cannot be eliminated in a complex organization. Rather than encouraging non-hierarchical forms, it is better to re-theorize Weberian bureaucracy without the need for "post."

The purpose of this article is not to dichotomize bureaucracy and post-bureaucracy. In some contexts, categorization remains necessary to distinguish one concept from another (Briand & Hodgson, 2015). Therefore, following Höpfl's logic, a specific model is needed as an alternative to improve the existing bureaucracy model. Theoretically, models serve as simple frameworks that seek to facilitate the explanation of a particular phenomenon (Crozier & Friedberg, 2017). Therefore, models are needed to facilitate descriptions. Practically, this model can be used to develop a blueprint for bureaucratic reform in Indonesia.

Furthermore, a more epistemological criticism is that this post-bureaucracy intersects with the NPM paradigm. Hence, the intention of the bureaucratic change is friendly and responsive to the market, revenue-driven, programs financed wherever possible based on cost recovery, and competition with the private sector for program delivery. The NPM paradigm encourages client/customer-orientated services so that the state's role competes "equally" in the market, resulting in the minimal part of the state providing services to the community.

The answer to this criticism is the need for dialectical reading. The authors agree that bureaucratic reform efforts should be free of the elimination of state roles and responsibilities. Washington Consensus-style bureaucratic reform, which promotes de-bureaucratization, deregulation, and total privatization, contradicts Indonesia's constitutional principles, specifically Pancasila Article 33 of the 1945 Constitution and Pancasila. The Washington Consensus emphasizes the competitive exchange rate policy, liberalization in the trade and financial sectors, privatization, and deregulation (Faedlulloh et al., 2020). Thus, these policies discourage government intervention in economic activities, aiming to minimize the state's role and allow the market to replace. Carroll & Jarvis (2015) have long emphasized that the Washington Consensus needs to provide a proper framework for understanding East Asia's economic successes or the difficulties these countries face. Therefore, citizen-oriented bureaucracy is an aspect that must be supported (Tsvykh & Nelipa, 2019; Virtanen et al., 2018).

Bureaucracy should stay the course, emphasizing outcomes beneficial to society according to mutually agreed norms. Therefore, the New Public Services (NPS) view can be a hybrid with post-bureaucracy. Denhardt & Denhardt (2015) argued that government should be run democratically as a reflection of the service agents elected by putting citizens at the centre of service. Bureaucrats should be responsible for serving and empowering citizens while managing public organizations and implementing policies. Therefore, the orientation of post-bureaucracy with the hybrid NPS paradigm is no longer solely for customers but for citizens. In this case, the most crucial aspect is how public administration can evolve to address diverse general issues using various approaches, methods, and models adapted to the field context.

Society needs public administration that is responsive and adaptive to change. On the other hand, strengthening the epistemological basis must also continue to be encouraged so that public administration science remains relevant to various changes (Tobirin, 2020). The post-bureaucratic model elaborated above is an effort to be responsive and strengthen epistemology so that bureaucracy remains relevant to contingency conditions full of various possibilities and uncertainties.

E. CONCLUSION

The condition of the bureaucracy in Indonesia, heavily influenced by the Weberian bureaucratic narrative, has resulted in a stuttering response to the extreme changes caused by the pandemic. This, in turn, implies that the bureaucracy fails to meet the needs of society. Weberian bureaucracy can only run agilely if rigid rules and structures control it. The bureaucracy still prioritizes procedural aspects, and formalism in public services is no longer relevant during the pandemic. Therefore, a new bureaucratic model adaptive to contingency situations is needed, and this model is referred to as post-bureaucracy.

We argue that the post-bureaucratic model represents the antithesis of Indonesia's dominant Weberian bureaucratic paradigm. Essential post-bureaucracy characteristics relevant to the Indonesian experience are flexibility, citizen-centeredness, open organizational boundaries, and people-centric focus. By shifting from the existing bureaucratic model to this post-bureaucratic paradigm, there is a greater likelihood of successfully restoring post-pandemic public services in Indonesia.

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