

**DIGITAL GOVERNANCE AND WORK FROM ANYWHERE POLICY:
BUREAUCRATIC REFORM STRATEGIES IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR****Richard Djiko¹**¹Politeknik Perdomaia Halmahera

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ABSTRACT

Digital transformation in the public sector is driving a paradigm shift in governance towards a more adaptive, flexible, and technology-based model. One of the policies that has come to the fore is Work From Anywhere (WFA), which is seen as an innovative strategy in supporting bureaucratic reform. This study aims to analyze the relationship between digital governance and the implementation of the WFA policy as an instrument of bureaucratic reform in the public sector. This study uses a qualitative approach with literature study and policy analysis methods on various regulations, government reports, and WFA implementation practices within the framework of an electronic-based government system. The results of the study show that the success of WFA is highly dependent on the maturity of digital infrastructure, the readiness of human resources, and technology-based performance management systems. Digital governance serves as the foundation for ensuring transparency, accountability, and effectiveness of public services even though they are not physically based. In addition, WFA contributes to increased work flexibility, operational efficiency, and work-life balance for civil servants. However, challenges such as data security, performance monitoring, and organizational cultural resistance still need to be anticipated. Therefore, the integration of WFA policies into the digital governance framework is an important strategy in realizing an adaptive, responsive bureaucracy that is oriented towards quality public services.

Keywords: Digital, governance, WFA, reform, transformation.

INTRODUCTION

Digital governance has become a strategic issue in bureaucratic reform in the era of information technology revolution, especially in the context of increasingly digital-based governance to improve the quality of public services. This transformation emphasizes the integration of technology in administrative processes, decision-making, and community service. Not only the adoption of electronic systems, but also changes in organizational structure and patterns of performance evaluation of personnel are part of the transformation agenda. Digital governance, thus, demands a synergy between technological innovation and adaptive regulation (Giest & Roberge, 2025).

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, flexible working models such as Work from Anywhere (WFA) have been adopted by various government agencies to maintain continuity of public services amid social restrictions and operational disruptions. This change is not only technical, but also structural, as it forces the bureaucracy to adjust the mechanisms for coordination, communication, as well as monitoring performance online. The WFA policy was initially positioned as an emergency response, but in its development it has become a catalyst for accelerating digital transformation in the public sector. The digitalization of administration that previously took place has gradually accelerated significantly through the use of cloud-based

office applications, electronic signature systems, and online performance management platforms.

WFA is considered to provide higher work flexibility for the state civil apparatus, especially in setting the time and location of work, without reducing responsibility for performance achievements. This flexibility contributes to increased operational efficiency, reduced travel costs, and optimized use of physical workspaces. In addition, remote working patterns are encouraging bureaucracies to adopt more transparent and well-documented digital collaboration systems. In this context, the use of information technology is no longer a support, but the main infrastructure of government administration.

In the perspective of Public Administration reform, WFA is seen as a form of institutional adaptation to the global crisis as well as a momentum for restructuring bureaucratic governance towards a more agile and responsive model (OECD, 2021). This adaptation reflects a paradigm shift from a physical presence-based bureaucracy to a performance and output-based bureaucracy. Therefore, WFA is not just a flexible work policy, but an integral part of the digital-based bureaucratic reform agenda oriented to the effectiveness, accountability, and quality of public services.

However, the implementation of WFA in the public sector faces various challenges, including the readiness of digital infrastructure and a work culture that is still oriented towards physical presence. Differences in technological capacity, Information System Security, and digital competence of the apparatus become crucial factors. Infrastructure inequality between regions also affects the effectiveness of this policy in supporting bureaucratic transformation (UN DESA, 2022).

A number of studies show that the implementation of WFA needs to be adjusted to the characteristics of each agency's public services. Administrative services based on digital documents are relatively more adaptable than services that require direct interaction. Therefore, a policy strategy based on operational needs evaluation and measurable performance monitoring system (Napitupulu et al., 2023).

In this context, digital governance is the main foundation for the effectiveness of WFA policies in bureaucratic reform. Transparency, accountability, and efficiency of services must be ensured through the integration of electronic-based government systems. With the support of Integrated data Management and digital performance evaluation, WFA has the potential to strengthen an adaptive and responsive bureaucracy (World Bank, 2024).

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach to the design of literature studies (library research) which aims to analyze the relationship between digital governance and Work from Anywhere (WFA) policies in the context of bureaucratic reform. The qualitative approach was chosen because it is able to provide an in-depth understanding of Public Policy phenomena and digital-based organizational transformation through conceptual and regulative data interpretation (Creswell & Creswell, 2022). The Data used are sourced from indexed international and National Journal articles (2020-2025), International Agency reports, government policy documents, as well as regulations related to electronic-based government systems and flexible work policies in the public sector.

Data collection techniques are carried out through searching scientific databases such as Scopus, Google Scholar, and official portals of government agencies. The keywords used include "digital governance," "Work from Anywhere," "public sector reform," and "digital transformation." The data collected is then analyzed using content analysis techniques to identify themes, policy patterns, as well as supporting and inhibiting factors for WFA

implementation within the framework of digital governance. The analysis was carried out systematically through the stages of data reduction, categorization, interpretation, and conclusion in order to obtain a comprehensive overview of digital-based bureaucratic reform strategies (Bowen, 2020).

Data validity is maintained through triangulation of sources by comparing various academic references and official policy documents. With this method, the research is expected to produce a relevant conceptual synthesis in explaining the position of WFA as part of the digital governance strategy in the public sector.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Digital Governance in the context of Indonesian Bureaucratic Reform

Digital transformation in Indonesia's public sector cannot be separated from the bureaucratic reform agenda that has been running for more than a decade. The government of Indonesia through the electronic-based government system (SPBE) policy affirms the importance of information technology integration in governance in order to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, transparency, and accountability of Public Services (Ministry of PANRB, 2023). Digital governance in this context is not simply the digitization of services, but includes a paradigm shift in public administration towards data-driven models and integrated electronic systems.

The concept of digital governance refers to the use of digital technology in decision-making processes, public services, and management of government organizations (Giest & Roberge, 2025). In Indonesia, the strengthening of digital governance can be seen from the development of integrated public service applications, national data integration, and acceleration of interoperability between systems. This transformation is an important foundation for the implementation of flexible work patterns such as Work from Anywhere (WFA).

The 2020-2024 phase of the Indonesian bureaucratic reform also emphasizes the development of an agile and results-oriented bureaucracy. This demands a change in the work system that is no longer based on physical presence, but on performance achievement and service output (LAN, 2022). Digital governance is the main prerequisite for the creation of the work system.

B. Work from Anywhere (WFA) policy in the Indonesian public sector

The COVID-19 pandemic is a turning point in the change in Indonesia's bureaucratic work system. The government implemented a Work from Home (WFH) policy which later developed into the concept of Work from Anywhere (WFA). This policy is aimed not only at maintaining the health of the apparatus, but also at ensuring the sustainability of public services (OECD, 2021). WFA in the Indonesian context began to be considered as a long-term policy after it was proven that many administrative functions can be carried out digitally. Several ministries and local governments have adopted flexible work systems with the support of digital performance and attendance management applications. This shows a paradigm shift from presence-based bureaucracy to performance-based bureaucracy. However, the implementation of WFA still faces differences in readiness between agencies. Ministries or institutions that already have a mature SPBE system are relatively easier to implement WFA than agencies with limited infrastructure (UN DESA, 2022).

C. Integration of WFA and SPBE as a reform strategy

SPBE is the main foundation for the success of WFA in Indonesia. Without an integrated digital administration system, WFA has the potential to reduce the quality of public

services. SPBE allows the process of electronic correspondence, digital signatures, electronic archive management, and ASN performance monitoring systems to be carried out online. According to the National SPBE evaluation report, the level of digital maturity between institutions still varies, thus affecting the effectiveness of the implementation of the flexible work Policy (Ministry of PANRB, 2023). Therefore, the integration of WFA and SPBE must be accompanied by strengthening infrastructure, increasing ASN digital literacy, and adequate cybersecurity systems.

Digital governance serves as an integrative framework that brings together flexible working policies with digital governance systems in modern governance. Through this approach, the Work from Anywhere (WFA) policy is not viewed as a mere administrative policy, but rather as part of a broader digital transformation ecosystem. Digital governance ensures that the process of coordination, decision-making, monitoring performance, to public services continues to run in a structured and accountable manner even though the apparatus works from different locations. This integration also requires system interoperability, data security, and the use of digital collaboration platforms that support bureaucratic efficiency. In the perspective of modern public administration, the change reflects a shift from rigid hierarchical governance and vertical control-based to more collaborative, adaptive, and technology-based networked digital governance (Giest & Roberge, 2025). This Model positions technology as a key enabler in creating bureaucracies that are responsive to increasingly complex social dynamics and demands for public services.

D. Impact of WFA on performance and Public Services

Several studies in Indonesia show that the application of flexible work can improve ASN job satisfaction and operational time efficiency (Napitupulu et al., 2023). Job site flexibility allows the apparatus to reduce travel time and increase output-based productivity. However, the effectiveness of WFA depends heavily on a scalable performance management system. Without results-based performance indicators, WFA risks creating a perception of disciplinary decline or weak oversight. Therefore, digital performance management is an important instrument in WFA-based bureaucratic reform.

In terms of public services, digitization of processes allows services to run consistently even though the apparatus works from different locations through the Work From Anywhere scheme. The use of electronic-based government systems supports digitized administrative processes, from filing documents, verifying data, to issuing services that can be done in real time. The integration of online service applications, digital queue systems, and electronic-based complaint channels strengthens public accountability because every process is recorded and can be traced transparently (World Bank, 2024). In addition, the use of data-based performance monitoring and management dashboards allows agency leaders to monitor apparatus productivity without relying on physical presence. Digitalization also increases community participation through access to more inclusive and responsive services. Thus, digital governance not only ensures the continuity of services, but also encourages efficiency, transparency, and continuous improvement in the quality of public services.

E. Challenges of WFA implementation in Indonesia

Despite its great potential, the implementation of WFA in the Indonesian public sector faces several structural challenges:

1. Digital infrastructure inequality between regions

Digital infrastructure inequality can be seen from differences in internet network quality, device availability, and data center access between regions. Urban areas are relatively ready to implement online systems, while remote areas still face limited

connectivity. This condition has the potential to cause gaps in the quality of public services and slow down the implementation of digital policies.

2. Bureaucratic work culture that is still hierarchical

Hierarchical bureaucratic cultures tend to emphasize structural control and physical presence as performance indicators. This pattern is less in line with the principles of flexible and collaborative work in digital governance. As a result, innovation and data-driven decision-making are often hampered by lengthy procedures as well as rigid communication.

3. Data security and risk of information leakage

Digitization of services increases the volume of government-managed data, including people's personal data. Without a strong cybersecurity system, the risk of hacking, misuse, and information leakage is even greater. Data protection requires encryption, periodic system audits, and clear regulations to maintain public trust.

4. Resistance to organizational change.

Changes towards digital work systems often cause resistance from apparatuses accustomed to conventional patterns. Concerns over technology-based performance evaluation and adaptation of digital skills are inhibiting factors. Therefore, it requires ongoing training, transformational leadership, and persuasive internal communication.

Inequality of internet access in the regions is a significant obstacle in the equitable distribution of WFA policies. In addition, the traditional work culture that assesses performance based on physical presence is still deeply rooted in bureaucracy (LAN, 2022). Cybersecurity is also a crucial issue. Increased remote access to government systems increases the risk of cyberattacks. Therefore, the WFA policy must be accompanied by strengthening the National Information Security System.

F. Strategic model of Integrative Digital Governance-WFA

Based on the analysis, relevant integrative strategic models for Indonesia include:

1. Spbe infrastructure strengthening

Strengthening the infrastructure of electronic-based government systems (SPBE) is the main foundation of bureaucratic digital transformation. These efforts include increasing internet network capacity, integration of national data centers, government cloud computing, and interoperability of applications between institutions. A reliable infrastructure enables public services to run stably, safely and efficiently. In addition, equitable digital access between regions is important to reduce service gaps and ensure the implementation of digital policies can be inclusive and sustainable.

2. Standardization of digital performance management

Standardization of digital performance management is needed so that the evaluation of the apparatus is no longer based on physical presence, but on the achievement of outputs and outcomes. E-kinerja system, dashboard monitoring, as well as key performance indicators based on real-time data should be integrated nationwide. These standards help create transparency, objectivity, and accountability in performance measurement. Thus, flexible working policies can still be controlled through measurable and digitally documented evaluation mechanisms.

3. ASN digital competency development

Digital transformation requires state civil servants (ASN) to have technological literacy, data analysis skills, and online collaboration skills. Continuous training programs, digital competency certification, and online platform-based learning are becoming important strategies. This development not only increases the effectiveness of work, but also builds an innovative culture in the bureaucracy. ASNs that are adaptive to technology will be better able to respond to changes in policy and community needs quickly and professionally.

4. Technology-based surveillance system

Technology-based supervision utilizes digital audit applications, online reporting systems, and internal control dashboards to monitor agency performance in real-time. This technology minimizes maladministration practices and increases the transparency of budget usage. In addition, the integration of big data and analytics enables early detection of potential deviations. With a digital surveillance system, the principles of accountability and good governance can be maintained in a flexible working model.

5. Integrated cybersecurity policy

A unified cybersecurity policy is needed to protect government and public data from the threat of hacking and information leakage. This strategy includes data encryption, strengthening firewalls, user access management, as well as periodic security audits. Inter-agency coordination in cyber incident response should also be strengthened. Clear and consistent data protection regulations will increase public confidence and ensure the sustainability of the digital transformation of the public sector.

This Model places digital governance as a systemic Foundation and WFA as an adaptive policy instrument. Digital-based bureaucratic reform should lead to an agile, responsive, and results-oriented bureaucracy.

CONCLUSIONS

Digital transformation in Indonesia's public sector confirms that digital governance is not just technology adoption, but a paradigm shift in governance. The integration of electronic-based governance systems, digital performance management, and Work from Anywhere (WFA) policies indicate a shift from conventional bureaucracies to more adaptive, collaborative, and data-driven governance models. In the context of Bureaucratic Reform, digital governance serves as a strategic framework that ensures work flexibility remains aligned with the principles of accountability, transparency, and effectiveness of public services.

The implementation of WFA in Indonesia proves that work flexibility can go hand in hand with improving performance if supported by adequate digital infrastructure, output-based evaluation standards, and strong digital competence of personnel. However, challenges such as interregional infrastructure gaps, hierarchical work cultures, cybersecurity risks, and organizational resistance remain barriers that need to be systematically managed. Therefore, strengthening SPBE, standardizing digital performance management, and integrated cybersecurity policies are important prerequisites for the sustainability of this reform.

Overall, the digital governance and WFA strategies reflect the new direction of Indonesia's bureaucratic reform that is more responsive to global dynamics and societal demands. Reform is no longer based on administrative restructuring alone, but on technology-

based governance innovations that place public services as the main orientation. With consistent policy commitment, equitable infrastructure investment, and sustainable human resource capacity development, this transformation has the potential to strengthen the competitiveness of the Indonesian government in facing the digital era and build a professional, adaptive, and service quality-oriented bureaucracy.

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