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Public Service Transformation Strategy Through the Digital Platform of Surabaya Library Data Bank (BANPUSBOYO)

Gabriela Natali Olivia*, Bintoro Wardiyanto, Erna Setijaningrum

Universitas Airlangga, Indonesia

Email: Gabriela.natali.olivia-2024@pasca.unair.ac.id*, bintoro.wardiyanto@fisip.unair.ac.id, erna.setijaningrum@fisip.unair.ac.id

Abstract

The demand to reconstruct the image and function of public libraries in the digital age has driven the emergence of transformative initiatives. This descriptive qualitative research aims to analyze the implementation of the Surabaya Library Data Bank (*Banpusboyo*) application by the Surabaya City Library and Archives Office as a strategy to change the service paradigm. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with five key informants, in-depth observations at three service points, and analysis of policy documents and performance reports for the 2021–2025 period. The findings show that *Banpusboyo* functions as a boundary object that brings together the logic of conventional bureaucracy with the demands of the digital society. The implementation of this application triggered a philosophical shift—from the custodial paradigm to the paradigm of curatorial access to knowledge. However, this transformation faces tension between innovation ambitions and the realities of existing institutional and regulatory capacity. Based on the analysis, the research concludes that the success of the public service paradigm transformation depends on the ability to create narrative alignment among digital vision, institutional structure, and regulatory ecosystem. The theoretical implications of this study enrich discussions on public service logic and digital governmentality in the context of developing countries, while the practical implications offer an evaluation framework for similar innovations in the public sector.

Keywords: paradigm transformation, digital public services, *public service logic*, public sector innovation, digital governance

INTRODUCTION

Public services in Indonesia are experiencing paradigmatic transformative pressures, driven by the convergence of bureaucratic reform demands, the expectations of a digital society, and the imperative of knowledge-based development (Prasodjo, 2025; Syahidan, 2024; Yolanda & Wirantari, 2025). In this context, public library institutions face an existential dilemma: on the one hand, they serve as guardians of conventional literacy traditions; on the other, they must adapt to the logic of a networked society that prioritizes accessibility, personalization, and speed (Audunson et al., 2019b, 2019a; Schloffel-Armstrong et al., 2021; Vårheim et al., 2019). The social stigma attached to libraries as physical spaces with rigid atmospheres, static collections, and bureaucratic procedures has created a disconnect with the digital-native generation, who view technology as the primary medium of social interaction and knowledge acquisition. This condition demands not only changes at the operational level but, more fundamentally, at the paradigmatic level regarding the essence, purpose, and social value of public library services in the 21st century.

Previous research on digital transformation in the public sector has largely focused on macro-level policy frameworks (Janowski, 2021; OECD, 2021), technical infrastructure (Gil-Garcia et al., 2021), and citizen adoption (Twizeyimana & Andersson, 2021). Studies such as those by Mergel et al. (2021) and Torugsa & Arundel (2023) have highlighted the importance of leadership, organizational culture, and regulatory support in enabling digital innovation. However, there remains a gap in understanding how digital platforms serve as boundary objects that mediate between bureaucratic logic and societal expectations, particularly in the context of public libraries in developing countries. Research by Lindgren et al. (2021) and Scholta et al. (2021) has begun to explore the relational and institutional dimensions of digital

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government, yet few studies have examined the paradigmatic shifts triggered by digital innovation at the local government level, especially in Indonesia.

Responding to these challenges, the Surabaya City Government, through the Library and Archives Service (Dispusip), launched the Surabaya Library Data Bank (*Banpusboyo*) application as an ambitious policy experiment. This initiative cannot be reduced to merely digitizing administrative processes but must be understood as a strategic effort to reconstruct the social image and role of libraries in the public imagination. The application is designed to operate on three interrelated levels of objectives: first, as a standardization infrastructure that harmonizes service quality throughout the village library network; second, as a communication medium that actively deconstructs traditional narratives about libraries and builds new imaginaries as a dynamic knowledge platform; third, as an engagement mechanism that specifically targets Generation Z through idioms and communication channels aligned with their digital habitus. The complexity of these goals reflects the ambition to intervene not only at the service level but also at the levels of perception and social relations.

Based on this context, this study conducts a critical investigation of the implementation of the *Banpusboyo* application through the lens of paradigm change theory in public administration. The focus of the analysis explores how digital innovation is constructed as an instrument of paradigmatic change, as well as the mechanisms through which these transformations are operationalized in the context of local government bureaucracy. By placing internal actors as the main unit of analysis, this study seeks to uncover policy logic, implementation dynamics, meaning contestation, and transformative impact on the literacy service ecosystem. The research findings are expected to make a substantive contribution to the development of public service transformation theories in developing countries, while offering critical reflection for formulating contextual and sustainable digital innovation strategies.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

This study adopted a qualitative approach with an intrinsic case study design to explore the complexity of the phenomenon of digital innovation implementation in a specific public organization setting. Qualitative approaches were chosen based on their ability to uncover meanings, subjective experiences, and social processes that underlie the phenomenon of organizational transformation (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The intrinsic case study design allowed researchers to deeply investigate the unique contexts, processes, and interactions that shaped policy implementation, with a focus on understanding the case itself as an entity of substantive value.

This study was located within the Surabaya City Library and Archives Office, which was chosen based on strategic considerations as an example of best practice in digital innovation in the public library sector at the regional level. The selection of the locus was based on the following criteria: (1) the existence of a structured and documented digital transformation initiative; (2) institutional commitment reflected in resource allocation and supporting policies; (3) adequate data and information accessibility for in-depth analysis. The research participants consisted of five Dispusip employees who were recruited through purposive sampling techniques with the following criteria: (a) direct involvement in the *Banpusboyo* application policy cycle (planning, implementation, or evaluation); (b) a minimum of four years of service in the relevant institution; (c) structural or functional positions that allowed access to strategic information; (d) willingness to participate in intensive research processes. Ethical principles were upheld through a written informed consent mechanism,

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identity protection using pseudonymous codes (PK-1 to PK-5), and data confidentiality guarantees.

Data collection was carried out through a triangulation strategy of sources and methods to ensure the depth, validity, and reliability of the findings. First, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted using interview protocols developed based on the conceptual framework of the research. The protocol covered six domains of exploration: (a) social constructions of the problem and rationality of innovation; (b) political and organizational dynamics in the policy process; (c) implementation strategies and challenges; (d) changes in practices, norms, and employment relationships; (e) impact on the service ecosystem and relations with residents; (f) critical reflection on learning and sustainability. Each interview session lasted 100-150 minutes, was recorded with consent, and was transcribed verbatim for analysis.

Second, limited participant observations were carried out at the Dispusip headquarters and three village libraries representing a variety of socio-demographic characteristics. The focus of observation included: (a) daily practices in operating digital systems; (b) interactions between officers, technology, and users; (c) adaptation of work procedures and culture; (d) supporting physical and digital infrastructure. Observations were conducted over a four-month period with a frequency of fifteen visits, using a structured observation journal while allowing flexibility to capture emergent phenomena.

Third, document analysis was carried out on three categories of materials: (a) formal policy documents such as the Mayor's Regulations (*Perwali*) on digital transformation and archive governance (*Perwali* No. 10/2024, 64/2024, 65/2024, etc.); (b) operational documents such as annual performance reports, strategic plans, and technical guidelines; (c) publication documents such as press releases, media articles, and promotional content. Document analysis aimed to reconstruct the policy context, track the evolution of discourse, and triangulate with primary data.

The data were analyzed using a reflective thematic analysis approach that integrated deductive (theory-based) and inductive (data-driven) logic. The analysis process followed an iterative cycle that began with immersion in the data through in-depth reading of transcripts and observation notes. The coding stage employed a hybrid coding approach, combining concept-driven coding based on theoretical frameworks with data-driven coding to capture emergent concepts. Codes were then grouped into substantive themes through categorization and theme development. Relationships between themes were explored to build narrative patterns about the mechanisms of paradigm shift, with document analysis integrated to enrich historical and policy contexts. The validity of the analysis was maintained through member checking, peer debriefing, and thick description in the presentation of findings.

This research was carried out by adhering to strict ethical principles of social research, including informed consent, confidentiality, and risk minimization. The researcher adopted a reflective position by critically examining positionality and biases that might affect the research process. Bracketing was applied to theoretical assumptions and personal experience to ensure openness to empirical findings. Research logic and methodological decisions were documented in detail to ensure auditability and transparency.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Social Construction: Problems and Rationality of Innovation

The findings of the study revealed that the launch of the *BANPUSBOYO* application was preceded by a process of social construction of complex and multidimensional "problems". Policy makers at Dispusip do not only view fluctuations in the number of visitors as a purely

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operational problem, but frame it as a symptom of a paradigm mismatch between conventional service models and the logic of a digital society. A policy architect described the construction of this problem: "We see a widening disconnect between what we offer as physical services that are bound by time and place, and how people, particularly young people, consume information today. They live in a competitive attention economy, where information must be on-demand, personalized, and engaging. Traditional libraries with specific opening hours and administrative queues do not speak their language" (PK-2).

The rationality of innovation is then developed not only based on the logic of technical efficiency, but rather in response to the existential challenges of the institution. The *BANPUSBOYO* application is constructed as a boundary object that serves to bridge two worlds: a structured and predictive bureaucratic world, and a fluid and dynamic digital society. This construction involves intense discursive work to build a narrative about "transformation" and "relevance", while responding to regulatory mandates such as Guardian Regulation No. 10 of 2024 concerning Library Administration, which encourages the adaptation of services in the digital era. This process of social construction shows that digital innovation in the public sector does not emerge from a vacuum, but is the product of negotiation of meaning, institutional pressure, and a strategic vision of the future of public services.

Political-Organizational Dynamics in Implementation

The implementation of BANPUSBOYO reveals the complex political-organizational dynamics within the bureaucracy. The findings of the study show that there are three main contestation arenas in the implementation process. The first arena is resource contestation, where digital projects must compete with other budget priorities in the context of local governments' fiscal limitations. The second arena is the contest of authority, related to the redistribution of responsibility and control over service processes that are increasingly digitized. The third arena is knowledge contestation, between groups that master digital competencies and groups that adhere to conventional expertise in library management. The implementation process does not follow a linear plan-do-check-act model, but rather resembles iterative negotiation involving a coalition of supporters, covert resistance, and tactical adaptation. One of the project managers expressed this dynamic: "Every feature in the app is the result of compromise. A compromise between our ideals of a user-centric platform and the reality of the team's technical capacity. A compromise between the desire for radical transformation and the need to maintain the stability of services that are already running. Even interface design has become a battleground between modern aesthetics and accessibility considerations for users who are less digitally literate" (PK-3). These political dynamics show that digital transformation in the public bureaucracy is not just a technical problem, but a process of changing power and social relations in the organization. Successful implementation is highly dependent on the ability of policy entrepreneurs to build supportive coalitions, manage resistance, and create win-win solutions that bring together various interests. These findings strengthen the perspective of institutional work theory that emphasizes agency actors in changing, maintaining, or disrupting existing institutions.

Paradigmatic Shift: From Custodian to Curator of Knowledge

An in-depth analysis revealed that the implementation of *BANPUSBOYO* has triggered a profound paradigmatic shift regarding the nature and purpose of library services. The old paradigm that positioned the library as a custodian (custodian) of physical collections is gradually shifting to a new paradigm as a curator (manager) of knowledge access. This shift is not only conceptual, but is reflected in changes in practices, incentive structures, and

performance measures. In the custodial paradigm, the main focus is on preservation, cataloging, and providing physical access to collections. Performance is measured based on metrics such as the number of collections, copies, and physical visitors. Meanwhile, in the curator paradigm, the focus shifts to value creation through content curation, digital access facilitation, and meaningful user experiences. Performance is measured based on metrics such as user engagement, session duration, and content discovery. A head of the digital services section reflects on this change: "In the past, my success was measured by how neat the bookshelves were and the order of the lending administration. Now I'm required to think like a content strategist: what content is relevant to a particular user segment, how recommendation algorithms work, how to increase app user retention rates. This is a very fundamental change in mindset" (PK-1).

This paradigmatic shift is supported by changes in the regulatory framework, such as Guardianship No. 64 of 2024 concerning Archival Media Transfer, which opens up space for digital transformation of collections, and Guardianship No. 65 of 2024 concerning Archival Information Network Systems which provides a legal basis for digital system integration. However, research also reveals the existence of a lag paradigm where changes in practice are not always followed by changes in evaluation and reward systems. This tension between old and new paradigms creates a situation of hybridity in which conventional and digital logic coexist, sometimes reinforcing each other, sometimes contradicting each other.

The Tension Between Technology and Institutions

The implementation of BANPUSBOYO reveals the structural tension between technological logic that tends to be disruptive and institutional logic that tends to stabilize. The study's findings identified three main forms of voltage. First, the tension between the speed of technology that demands rapid iteration and bureaucratic deliberation that requires tiered procedures and approvals. Second, the tension between the openness of digital platforms that are ideally connected to the wider ecosystem and data security and control is the main concern of the government. Third, the tension between user-centric design that is oriented to user needs and rule-compliance that is oriented towards compliance with regulations and standards. These tensions manifest in various forms of implementation dilemmas. For example, in the development of chatbot features for information services, the development team wanted to use the latest natural language processing technology, but had to face data protection regulatory constraints and limited government server infrastructure. Or in the case of integration with digital payment systems for late fines, it must go through a lengthy approval process involving the financial office and the regional bank. One app developer described this dilemma: "We are often sandwiched between what is technologically possible and attractive to users, with what is legally permissible and institutionally manageable. Sometimes we have to sacrifice the user experience for compliance, or conversely, take certain risks to provide better service" (PK-4). This tension suggests that digital transformation in the public sector cannot be understood as a purely technocratic process, but should be seen as a negotiation arena between technical, legal, organizational, and political logic. Successful transformation depends on the ability to creatively manage this voltage, rather than eliminate it. These findings contribute to the institutional complexity literature by showing how public organizations develop coping mechanisms to manage conflicting demands in the context of digital transformation.

Regulation Ecosystem as an Enabler and Constraint

Analysis of policy documents reveals the role of a complex regulatory ecosystem in shaping the implementation of *BANPUSBOYO*. The city of Surabaya has a relatively

comprehensive regulatory framework related to digital transformation and information governance, as reflected in a series of Mayor Regulations (Perwali) between 2021-2024. These regulations function as enablers as well as constraints for digital innovation. On the one hand, regulations such as Guardianship Regulation No. 57 of 2023 concerning the Archive Security Classification System and Guardianship No. 58 of 2023 concerning Integrated Archive Information Systems provide the legal basis and technical standards necessary for digital transformation. These regulations create an enabling environment by defining accountability frameworks, interoperability standards, and oversight mechanisms. On the other hand, the complexity and sometimes rigidity of regulations also create constraints on the speed and flexibility of innovation. The process of compliance with various applicable regulations requires a lot of time and resources, and sometimes limits experimentation with more radical service models. Interestingly, the research findings reveal the existence of creative compliance practices where the implementation team develops interpretations and adaptations to regulations to allow innovation to continue. For example, in implementing Guardianship No. 64 on Archive Media Transfer, the team developed a gradual digitization protocol that prioritizes specific content based on an analysis of user needs, rather than simply redirecting based on chronological or administrative order. This kind of practice shows the agency of field actors in translating and operationalizing regulations in specific contexts. The regulatory ecosystem also creates a multi-level governance dynamic where policies at the city level must be aligned with national regulations such as the Library Law and the Government Regulation on Public Services. These alignments and misalignments between different levels of regulation create additional complexity in implementation. These findings reinforce the importance of the regulatory governance approach in the study of public sector digital transformation, by emphasizing the dynamic interaction between regulations, organizations, and technology.

Transformative Impact on State-Citizen Relations

The implementation of BANPUSBOYO has had a transformative impact on the relationship between library institutions (as an extension of the state) and citizens. The study's findings identified three fundamental changes in this relationship. First, the change from episodic transactional relationships (residents come, borrow books, go home) to sustainable relational relationships through digital platforms. The app allows for more intense and continuous interactions, not limited by time and physical location. Second, the change from one-to-many relationships (one library serves many residents with standard services) to more personal and contextual relationships. Features such as interest-based recommendations and personalized notifications allow for customization of services based on individual profiles and preferences. Third, the change from a hierarchical provider-consumer relationship to a more collaborative relationship. Features such as user-generated content (book reviews, discussions) and co-creation program mechanisms involve citizens not only as passive service recipients, but as partners in knowledge production. These relational changes have important implications for the theory of state-society relations in the digital context. Platforms like BANPUSBOYO can be seen as a new interface between the state and citizens, which changes not only the service mechanism, but also the dynamics of power and participation. However, the research also reveals the risk of digital exclusion where digital transformation can ignore groups of people who lack access or digital capabilities. A community service officer expressed this concern: "We are pleased to see the high engagement of young people through the app, but we are also concerned that older groups or people in areas with limited internet access are being left behind. Digital transformation must not mean abandoning those who are not ready" (PK-5). This dilemma between inclusion and innovation highlights the importance of a hybrid Public Service Transformation Strategy Through The Digital Platform of Surabaya Library Data Bank (BANPUSBOYO)

service model approach that combines digital services with conventional services, as well as an inclusive digital literacy strategy. These findings contribute to discussions about the digital divide and access equity in the transformation of public services.

Critical Reflections on Sustainability and Learning

An analysis of the BANPUSBOYO implementation journey reveals the importance of organizational learning mechanisms and sustainability strategies. The research findings suggest that the initial success of implementation does not necessarily guarantee the sustainability of the transformation in the long term. Three main sustainability challenges were identified: first, the reliance on a particular policy champion that initiates innovation; second, the need for sustainable investment for the maintenance and development of systems; third, the need for continuous adaptation to technological developments and changing societal needs. The organizational learning process in the implementation of BANPUSBOYO occurs through various mechanisms: learning by doing through iterations of application development, learning from users through analysis of usage data and feedback, and learning from peers through benchmarking with similar innovations in other regions. This learning mechanism is facilitated by an organizational culture that is relatively open to experimentation and critical reflection. However, research also reveals limitations in the institutionalization of learning, where knowledge and experience often remain segmented on specific individuals or units, not fully integrated in the institutional system. The sustainability strategy developed includes: developing a clear technology roadmap, diversifying funding sources (APBD budget, grants, partnerships), and building internal capacity through digital talent training and recruitment programs. Importantly, this sustainability strategy focuses not only on technical and financial aspects, but also on social and political aspects, including building a supportive constituency among users and stakeholders. These findings enrich the understanding of the sustainability of public sector innovation by emphasizing its multidimensionality that goes beyond the technoeconomic aspect alone.

Theoretical Implications: Towards an Integrative Paradigmatic Transformation Framework

Based on the findings of the research, an integrative theoretical framework can be developed to understand the transformation of the public service paradigm through digital innovation. The framework emphasizes the dynamic interaction between four key elements: (1) discursive construction of problems and solutions; (2) political dynamics in the organization and multi-level governance; (3) institutional work to change practices and norms; (4) relational transformation between the state and citizens. Paradigmatic transformation does not occur linearly through predicted stages, but through emergent and recursive processes in which the four elements influence each other complexly. Digital innovation serves as a catalyst and medium for change, but its outcome is highly dependent on the interaction between actors' agencies and existing institutional and regulatory structures. This framework contributes to the theory of institutional change by integrating insights from policy, organizational, technology, and governance studies. In particular, this study develops the concept of paradigmatic boundary work to describe how actors manage the tension between old and new paradigms in the transformation process. This concept emphasizes that paradigm shift does not involve a complete shift from one paradigm to another, but often involves creative work to negotiate coexistence, hybridization, or gradual transitions between different elements of the paradigm. This approach offers richer nuances compared to paradigm shift models that are revolutionary or deterministic.

Practical Implications for Public Service Management

The findings of this study have several important practical implications for public service management, particularly in the context of human resource development and digital transformation. First, the importance of developing digital leadership that not only understands technology, but is also able to manage organizational and political changes. Digital transformation leaders need to have the ability to build compelling narratives, manage coalitions of support, and navigate regulatory complexities. Second, the need for hybrid competency among public service human resources. Staff not only need to master digital technical competencies, but also the ability to translate between technological logic and public service logic, as well as the ability to manage relationships with users in a digital context. Human resource development needs to shift from a training approach to a holistic capability building approach . Third, the need to design an adaptive governance mechanism that allows flexibility and learning in the implementation of innovation. Mechanisms such as sandbox regulation, iterative prototyping, and learning evaluation can help manage the uncertainty and complexity of digital transformation. Fourth, the importance of an inclusive digital transformation approach that actively identifies and addresses the risks of digital exclusion through hybrid strategies and targeted digital literacy programs. For the context of Surabaya in particular, the findings of this research support the need to strengthen the institutional capacity of Dispusip in managing increasingly complex digital platforms, the development of an ethical and secure data ecosystem, and a more participatory engagement strategy with various segments of society. Specific recommendations include: the development of an internal digital innovation center, a fellowship program for digital talent, as well as a more systematic user feedback mechanism that impacts decision-making.

Research Limitations and Advanced Research Agenda

This research has several limitations that need to be acknowledged. First, the focus on the organization's internal perspectives, while providing depth of analysis on implementation dynamics, is relatively limited in uncovering the broader perspective of users and social impact. Second, a limited period of research may not fully capture the long-term dynamics of paradigm transformation. Third, the specific context of the city of Surabaya, which has a relatively high fiscal and institutional capacity compared to other regions in Indonesia, limits the generalization of the findings. Based on these limitations, several advanced research agendas are recommended: (1) longitudinal research that follows the evolution of digital platforms and paradigm shifts in a period of 5-10 years; (2) a comparative study between the implementation of digital innovation in various regions with different capacities and contexts; (3) mixedmethods research that integrates digital usage data analysis with ethnographic studies to understand changes in user behavior and perception; (4) political economic analysis of the digital transformation of public services, including the role of technology vendors and industry dynamics; (5) experimental research that tests the effectiveness of various interventions in accelerating adoption and improving digital transformation outcomes. In particular, in the context of the study of public service management and human resource development, further research may focus on: the analysis of digital competency development models for public bureaucracies, the study of transformational leadership in a digital context, as well as the evaluation of the effectiveness of various governance mechanisms for digital innovation in the public sector. This kind of research will contribute to the development of more contextual theories and practices for the transformation of public services in Indonesia and other developing countries.

CONCLUSION

This research reveals the multidimensional complexity of public service paradigm transformation through the *Banpusboyo* application's implementation in Surabaya, framing digital innovation as a socio-technical process involving problem reconstruction, political negotiation, institutional work, and relational shifts rather than mere technical fixes. Key findings highlight a paradigm shift from a custodian model of physical collections to digital knowledge curation, amid tensions in resource contestation, institutional logics, and adaptive improvisation, yielding an integrative theoretical framework emphasizing discursive, political, institutional, and relational interactions—enriched by the concept of paradigmatic boundary work. Practically, it underscores the need for hybrid competencies (techno-managerial, political-organizational, ethical-relational) in public servants, a shift from training to sustainable capability building, and dynamic alignment of innovation vision, capacity, regulations, and community needs for lasting transformation, positioning Banpusboyo as a reflective case of digital reinvention in developing countries. For future research, comparative studies across multiple Indonesian cities or longitudinally tracking Banpusboyo's long-term sustainability could validate the framework's generalizability and identify evolving sociotechnical dynamics.

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