

# Public Service Innovation: Drawing Inspiration from The Success of Developed Countries to Improve Public Services in Indonesia

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**Abstract:** Innovation in public services has become inevitable and relevant in the development of modern society. The importance of this innovation lies in efforts to provide services that are more effective, efficient and responsive to the needs of the community, which are universal and contextual. Developed countries such as China, South Korea, and Denmark have become role models in developing public service innovation. They leverage technology, inclusive policies, community engagement, and approaches focused on user needs. Case studies of public service innovation in China, South Korea, and Denmark provide insight into the success of innovation in its public services. The results of this study show that there are several success factors that include the development of systems, procedures and methods, infrastructure, personnel training, and community empowerment so as to help the success of service innovation in the public sector that is more responsive, inclusive, and oriented to community needs.

**Keywords:** Innovation, Public Service, Public Sector Innovation

## INTRODUCTION

Innovation in public services is inevitable and highly relevant in the context of the development of modern society. Public service innovation is widely researched by academics and government bodies (Bloch and Bugge, 2013). Public sector innovation has also been on the political and administrative agenda in many advanced western democracies (Borins, 2008) and soon spread to developing countries. During changing social, technological, and societal demands, the government's

ability to innovate in the provision of public services is becoming increasingly crucial. Transparency, technological change, and collaboration with citizens are becoming more important thus improving service quality and placing public organizations and users in an equal position (Ansell and Torfing, 2014). By implementing innovation, public organizations can improve the quality of public services (Damanpour and Schneider, 2009).

The importance of innovation in public services lies in efforts to provide

services that are more effective, efficient, and responsive to the needs of the community. Given the increasing social and economic inequality, public service delivery must be universal, that is, not dependent on the social or economic status of the recipient, and contextual, that is, able to balance various local needs and conditions (Bertot, Estevez, Janowski, 2016). These innovations must help address complex issues such as inequality of service access, slow bureaucracy, and limited resources. In addition to increasing efficiency, innovation in public services can also increase government accountability and public participation. By implementing innovative solutions, governments can be more open to input and feedback from their citizens, enable active participation in policy formulation, and increase transparency in the management of public resources.

Public services can be interpreted as legal entities owned by the state, which are tasked with carrying out various activities that benefit the community in general, with the aim of meeting the needs of its population (Matei and Camelia, 2015). The characteristics of each country's public services vary, depending on market imperfections, types of goods, and demand for those goods. This variation is also caused by contextual factors such as existing institutions, human resources, structural problems faced, and the basis of public services provided (Batley and Mcloughlin, 2015).

Indonesia, as one of the developing countries that has a variety of social and economic challenges, must understand, and implement innovations in public services to meet the needs and expectations of its citizens. In the context of Indonesia, with its large and diverse population and challenges such as urbanization, poverty, and limited access to basic services, innovations in public services have crucial relevance. The country has embarked on several innovative efforts in various sectors, from health to education, in hopes of improving the quality of life of citizens and advancing the country as a whole. The Government of Indonesia is also committed to supporting public service innovation through the national regulatory framework (Pratama, 2019).

Government Regulation Number 38 of 2017 concerning Regional Innovation regulates how regions carry out local innovation. In addition, the Ministry of State Apparatus Empowerment of the Republic of Indonesia has also held a public service innovation competition since 2014. The national competition has generated high enthusiasm from various public organizations. It is characterized by the increasing number of senders from year to year. Starting in 2014 with 515 registered competitors, the number increased by 130 percent in 2015, which recorded 1,189 shippers. Then in 2016 with 2,476 registered senders (KemenpanRB, 2017). This shows that more and more government institutions,

as well as public organizations in Indonesia are willing to innovate in providing public services. However, the most common result of public service innovation is addressing societal problems in the health and education policy sectors. Meanwhile, governance innovation is still rarely found because it requires collaboration and interaction with various parties (Pratama, 2019).

Developed countries have managed to set high standards in providing efficient, responsive, and quality services to their citizens. Developed countries such as China, South Korea, and Denmark have become role models in developing public service innovation. They have leveraged technology, inclusive policies, community engagement, and approaches focused on user needs to improve the efficiency and accessibility of public services. In the digital era, the application of technology has become a crucial aspect in improving public services. Developed countries are using digital platforms, mobile applications, and artificial intelligence (AI) to facilitate access and speed up the process of services to the public. Examples of innovations such as online healthcare, electronic tax payments, and digital education systems are some examples of how technology has changed the way public services are accessed and delivered to society. In addition, community involvement in the decision-making process and development of public services is also the key to success. Developed countries encourage public

participation through mechanisms of consultation, feedback, and cooperation between governments and civil society. This allows the government to better understand people's needs and align them with the innovations offered.

For Indonesia, learning from public service innovation in developed countries is an important foundation in efforts to improve its public services. Although there have been progressive measures such as the implementation of technology-based programs, there is still room for further development. By considering the approaches that have been successfully used by developed countries, the Indonesian government can accelerate the transformation of its public services to become more efficient, responsive, and quality. This requires collaboration between government agencies, policy updates, investment in technology, and active community involvement. By understanding and adopting innovation principles that have proven successful in developed countries, Indonesia can improve its public service delivery, create a positive impact for its citizens, and move towards a better direction in building a more advanced and inclusive society.

Through this research, it is hoped that there will be a better understanding of how developed countries manage public service innovation, as well as how Indonesia can adopt, adapt, and implement lessons learned from the experience of developed countries to improve the quality of its own public services.

### Theoretical Foundation

The concept of innovation is complex and multifaceted, striving to find ways to provide better services to users and encompassing changes both external and internal. Some innovations may arise from interactions involving different government administrations at different levels, etc. (Walker, 2006). Innovation plays a key role in updating and shaping the resources available to organizations, including competencies and routines (Matthews and Shulman, 2005). Innovation enables organizations to react to internal weaknesses or external pressures and consequently becomes an important tool for decision-making agents around the world. This concept also applies in the public sector, where innovation is one of the useful solutions in improving the quality of public services. Borins (2001) categorizes the reasons that motivate public sector innovation into five main groups: political initiatives (due to electoral mandates, legislation or political pressure); new leaders (new managers of public bodies); crisis (failure or visible problem); various internal problems (changes in the environment, inability to meet requests or reach users, lack of resources, coordination needs); and new opportunities (due to technology or other causes).

According to Gabris, Nelson, and Wood (2009), the framework within which innovation in the public sector can

emerge and succeed requires three factors:

1. Credible leadership. Organizations need managers who are leaders in innovation, managers who can be trusted, managers who act in logical and coherent ways, and managers who are able to implement behaviors appropriate to the innovations they promote.
2. The need for a managerial team. Innovation requires teams of individuals who collaborate with each other, who communicate frequently, who complement each other's skills and knowledge, and trust and respect each other.
3. The collaboration of city council representatives is politicians. Although politicians are often not leaders or advocates of innovation, the support of these politicians is necessary. In this case, politicians should not direct their policies on things that can stifle innovation.

A study conducted by Walker (2006) suggests there are three types of innovation to understand the types of innovations that can be done by the government, namely Product Innovation, Process Innovation, and Additional Innovation. Additional Innovation can also be called Collaborative Innovation because it better explains the nature of this type of innovation. Product innovation means creating new goods and/or services for consumers. These product innovations include three types: Total, offering new

goods/services to new types of customers; Expansive, offering existing goods and services to the same users as before; and Evolutionary, offering new goods or services to the same users. While process innovation affects management and organization and changes the relationship between members of the organization, which has an impact on the rules, roles, processes, structure, ways of communication and exchange between members of the organization as well as between the environment and members (Khan et al, 2012).

There are two types of process innovation: technological, related to changes in physical equipment, organizational techniques, and systems, and purely organizational, which implies innovation in structure and strategy as well as in administrative processes. Finally, collaborative innovation or incremental innovation relates to the relationship between the organization and other organizations, be it service providers, other public bodies, or users themselves. To that end, Feller et al (2011) claim that public authorities that want to change the way they create and offer their products or services on an ongoing basis need to a) maintain productive relationships with other public authorities and with other external bodies; b) easily exchange knowledge, competencies, and other experiences so as to improve internal processes and ways of service to the community; and c) commit to communities and other bodies with the

aim of achieving the creation of new services together.

According to Lewis and Gilman (2005) there are several factors that support public service innovation activities, including: a) systems, procedures, and methods, namely in providing public services there needs to be an adequate information system, fixed procedures, and methods that support smooth delivery of services; b). personnel, it needs to be emphasized on the behavior of the apparatus in serving the public is to provide services professionally, disciplined, and open to criticism from *stakeholders*; c). Facilities and infrastructure, in providing services, of course, supporting infrastructure plays an important role. Equipment, workspace, and public service facilities should be a major concern. For example, the convenience of waiting rooms, adequate parking spaces, child-friendly rooms and so on; d). the community as customers, of course, the main thing about the existence of a service is the user of the service who is none other than the community.

## **METHOD**

Based on the background and problem formulation that has been submitted, the author will try to provide an overview of public service innovation in developed countries as a lesson to improve public services in Indonesia. The data source we use is secondary data from research related to public service innovation that has been researched and written in the form of articles which are

then published in international journals indexed by Scopus. The method of searching for articles is carried out online, by searching through Scopus and Google Scholar sites with the keyword "innovation public service" and limited to the last 10 years.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Public Service Innovation in Developed Countries**

Service innovation in the public sector has been carried out in various countries. This research will explain the factors supporting the success of service innovation in the public sector in developed countries such as China, South Korea, and Denmark. The results of existing research are expected to be used as a learning process.

### **Public Service Innovation in China**

One of the studies on public service innovation in China is Yu et al (2023) research on digital-based public service innovation in the health sector. The research examines the evolution of e-health services in China and changes in technology, institutions, and partnerships in public service innovation. Through the perspective of institutional logic, the study identifies changes from phases of relative autonomy to state intervention, as well as strategic transformations in public service innovation in China's eHealth sector. Yu et al (2023) also highlight the importance of understanding institutional logic in designing institutional changes and business

strategies that are responsive to institutional changes in China. The evolution of electronic healthcare in China is undergoing several important stages. At first, eHealth was only proposed as part of a national institution with an immature eHealth development design. However, in 1997, the health reform and development decrees proposed by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council formed the main organizational basis for the development of eHealth. This helps establish an independent service system with viability and sustainability. Furthermore, from 2005 to 2010, information technology has been widespread in many first-class hospitals in major cities. Many modules have evolved into relatively independent subsystems, and Hospital Information Systems (HIS) have become more established. During its development, eHealth in China also involved the development of technologies, such as the use of IT to pay bills through connections to medical insurance institutions, the development of international standards, and other digital applications in clinics. In addition, the article also highlights the importance of understanding institutional logic in designing institutional changes and business strategies that are responsive to institutional changes in China. Institutional, technological, and partnership changes have had a significant impact on public service

innovation in the eHealth sector in China. The article highlights that the evolution of eHealth in China has involved a shift from a phase of relative autonomy to state intervention, as well as a strategic transformation in public service innovation in the eHealth sector. Institutional changes, such as government policies supporting eHealth services, have formed the basis for the development of independent service systems with viability and sustainability. Meanwhile, technological developments, such as the use of IT to pay bills through connections to medical insurance institutions, the development of international standards, and other digital applications in clinics, have played an important role in improving the quality of eHealth services. In addition, changes in partnerships, such as the establishment of new partnerships between hospitals (service customers) and vendors, as well as an increase in the number of regional health information exchange projects and pilot programs, have stimulated the growth of the digital platform market for Information Systems integration, as well as realizing that new business opportunities will depend on partnerships with regional healthcare administrators. Thus, changes in institutions, technology, and partnerships have together formed the foundation for public service innovation in the eHealth sector in China.

### **Public Service Innovation in South Korea**

Other public service innovations that have been carried out by other developed countries are:

South Korea. South Korea has provided evidence of the success of eGovernment innovation that can be obtained from international comparative surveys, especially global surveys by the United Nations since 2003. When the survey began in 2003, South Korea had already demonstrated its advanced status in the application of eGovernment innovation. South Korea ranked thirteenth out of 191 countries in the E-Government Development Index (EGDI) and sixteenth out of 191 countries in the electronic participation score. EDGI is an index that combines various measures that show the willingness and capacity of a country's government in using ICT to provide public services. In 2004, South Korea's position in both indices jumped to fifth and seventh place and finally reached first place in 2010. Since then, Korea has maintained its position in the world's top four countries in the development of e-Government. Achieving and maintaining a level of achievement in e-Government requires constant innovation as it is a moving field where changes in technology, demand, and possibility require experimentation, imagination, organization, and commitment to stay ahead of the curve. According to Turner, Kim and Kwon (2022), using political economy analysis, it is explained that South Korea has succeeded in achieving and maintaining e-Government innovation due to 5 things, namely:

1. A legacy that serves as the basis for the vision and policy of eGovernment. This instilled the idea into the Korean psyche that the state had a great role to play in economic development under capitalism. So, the government plays the role of "senior partner" in the development of ICT infrastructure, ICT services, and economic development of the country. The heritage of developing countries provides a solid foundation for e-Government Development, giving Korea a head start compared to other developed countries.
2. Effective policy processes. This process creates a realistic Long-term vision for ICT and e-Government, by identifying and analyzing policy options, and monitoring and evaluating implementation outcomes. A rational process that recognizes that innovations developed elsewhere will not be suitable in Korea unless there is a modification so that it conforms to the country's standards.
3. Administrative practices and structures that support effective policies in achieving government objectives. In general, the bureaucracy in Korea has received changes so that it has become very important in the development of eGovernment. Achievements based on appointment, hard work ethic, discipline, the importance of hierarchy, and awards have been carried out by the Korean

government to form an effective bureaucracy.

4. The Asian financial crisis and democratization have given extra impetus to the development of e-Government innovation in Korea. This is important so that it becomes part of Korea's broader future vision that rests on ICT's global leadership. Although the private sector is responsible for most ICT development, the government has consistently provided direction and support to phenomena that emerged in the developmental stage and continue to exist today.

#### **Public Service Innovation in Denmark**

Public service innovation has also been carried out by the Danish Government. There are concrete initiatives taken by the Danish Government in encouraging digital innovation. Both the central and local governments in Denmark participated in the preparation of the e-Government plan in 2001. After that, digitalization continues to be promoted to improve digital services and public sector efficiency. Today, Denmark's ranking is rapidly improving thanks to its recent digital governance strategy. In the 2020 UN e-Government survey, as in 2018, Denmark ranked first in the field of e-Government development index. One of the innovations in public sector services that has been carried out by the Danish Government is to receive petitions from the public and process the administration online. At the heart of the



Danish government's public sector service innovation are government portals. Denmark operates an intuitive and easy-to-use web portal for citizens (borger.dk), foreigners (denmark.dk), and Companies (virk.dk). Based on the portal, public sector service innovations that have been carried out by the Danish Government have been realized in two directions, namely independent digital services, the use of digital posts, and data-based policies (Choi, Chung and Cho, 2022). First, Denmark has promoted a self-service strategy through a digital government portal, which allows citizens to access various public services independently through online platforms. This includes a wide range of services ranging from administration to transactions with governments. Second, the Danish Government has been actively utilizing digital posts to provide public services efficiently and easily accessible to the public. This initiative includes the delivery of public information and services through digital platforms. Third, data-driven policies, Denmark has encouraged the effective use of data in the provision of public services. This policy has the following objectives:

1. A clear legal framework for e-Government.
2. Progress with a good data base;
3. Correct payments and better individual data

Denmark's data-driven public sector service innovations are not limited to efficient use of data, but have been carried out in various fields,

including smart cities and GPS, as well as national growth engines. The various innovations that have been carried out by the Danish Government are part of the Danish government's efforts to encourage digital transformation in public services with a focus on providing efficient, accessible, and data-driven services.

### **Factors Supporting the Success of Service Innovation in the Public Sector in Developed Countries**

According to Lewis & Gilman (2005) factors that support public service activities such as systems, procedures, and methods; personnel; facilities and infrastructure; and the community as customers, have certainly been carried out by the governments of the three developed countries above. First, the innovation of eHealth services in China, systematically, China has a strong eHealth system, covering a large database to support digital health services. In terms of procedures and methods, there is the adoption of *cloud computing* technology to store and manage health data, facilitate fast and secure access for health care providers, and the implementation of telemedicine and online consultations to provide wider access to health and reduce the need for physical visits. In terms of personnel, the Chinese Government is very enthusiastic in improving every system related to public services such as apparatus positions, compensation for apparatus, forms of training, assessment and performance measures of apparatus, and pension systems

provided (Purwadi et al, 2020). In terms of facilities and infrastructure, the Chinese government prepares quality technology infrastructure such as fast internet networks and the use of 5G technology to support the smooth implementation of eHealth. In terms of the community as customers, the Chinese government provides educational programs and counseling campaigns related to eHealth so that people can understand the benefits and easily access its services. *Community feedback* is also integrated in the development and evaluation of eHealth services.

While in South Korea, in terms of systems, procedures and methods, public service processes have been integrated and simplified to reduce bureaucracy. In terms of personnel, there is full support from government employees in implementing innovations, including improved technological skills and flexibility in dealing with change. In terms of facilities and infrastructure, the South Korean government in 2019 has launched a 5G+ strategy that proves that South Korea is a leader in digital transformation (OECD 2023). From the community side, increased participation is carried out through the edemocracy platform to increase interaction between the government and the community.

In addition to South Korea, Denmark is also one of the world's leading countries in digital government. South Korea has been slightly ahead of Denmark in eGovernment in the past, but Denmark is performing better in today's digital government. Systems-wise, Denmark has a highly integrated e-government system, which includes an online public service platform that allows unified access to a wide range of government services. Procedurally and methodically, self-service digital services are designed with a simple and intuitive user interface to ensure greater accessibility for all walks of life. Personnel-wise, government employees in Denmark receive intensive training in technology and data management to ensure a deep understanding of digital services and data-driven policies. In terms of facilities and infrastructure, transparent and well-regulated data-based policies to protect citizens' privacy and ensure public trust in the use of government data. In terms of society as a customer, Danes actively use self-service digital services and are provided with an integrated feedback mechanism in the continuous development and improvement of these digital services and data-driven policies.

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<b>China</b>	<b>South Korea</b>	<b>Danish</b>
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<b>System</b>	Robust eHealth system	Successful Government System	e-System with service platform Public Online
<b>Procedure and Method</b>	Adoption Cloud Computing Technology and Application of Telemedicine, Online Consultation	Process Integrated	Service Self-service digital services, use of digital posts, and data-driven policies
<b>Personnel</b>	Improvement of the public service system such as apparatus positions, compensation for apparatus, forms of training, assessment and performance measures of apparatus, and Pension System	Full support from employees Government in implementing Innovation	Provision of intensive training related to technology and Data Management
<b>Means and Infrastructure</b>	Quality technology infrastructure utilizing 5G technology	which and Solid infrastructure strategy launch 5G+	eGovernment such as Strong technology infrastructure and Transparent and well-regulated data-driven policies
<b>Community</b>	Associated programs MA Public Health Feedback and eHealth Service Community Evaluation	Digital literacy and community evaluation	Increased participation through the e-democracy platform
			The community actively uses independent digital services and is provided with a feedback mechanism that Integrated

By adopting best practices of public service innovation in developed countries such as China, South Korea, and Denmark, Indonesia can improve efficiency, accessibility, and public satisfaction in its public services. So, it is important to ensure technology integration, community engagement, infrastructure improvement, and prudent policy development to achieve optimal results.

### Challenges of Public Sector Service Innovation in Indonesia

According to Kurniawan's research (2016), development in Indonesia has three problems; First, regarding the bureaucracy that is still fat, slow, and has not been able to provide excellent service to the public and investors. The second is about corruption, where there are still many state administrators who abuse state financial management. Third, related to the problem of inadequate infrastructure, as well as the

lack of state budget for its construction and maintenance. Departing from these problems, a bureaucratic reform acceleration program is needed to create a bureaucracy clean from corruption, collusion, and nepotism, serve, and be competent in the duties and responsibilities carried.

Public services are the most visible measure of government performance. The public can directly assess the government's performance based on the services it receives. For this reason, the quality of public services in all ministries/institutions is a fundamental thing that must be improved immediately. In Law Number 25 of 2009 it is stated that excellent service is fast, easy, certain, cheap, and accountable. Public services organized by the government are currently still far from expectations because the government is faced with the problem of an ineffective and efficient government system and the quality of apparatus resources that are still inadequate. The community and all its interests have not been the main priority in public services, so the community has never been the main criterion in improving the public service system (Umam and Adianto, 2020). According to Suryana (2018), the government must be able to develop its ability and creativity in providing public services that are in accordance with the needs of the community. The quality of service to the community is one indicator of the success of state organizers.

Learning from the efforts made by developed countries, the Government of Indonesia needs to make efforts to improve public sector service innovation based on factors that support its success such as systems, procedures, and methods; personnel; facilities and infrastructure; and the community as a customer.

## CONCLUSION

In China, eHealth service innovation is seen in strong systems, adoption of *cloud computing technology*, and utilization of *telemedicine*. Health personnel receive training and are involved in technology development. Quality technology infrastructure such as fast internet, supporting the implementation of eHealth and community participation is enhanced through education programs. South Korea has integrated and simple public services with the full support of government employees. 5G infrastructure supports digital transformation and community participation is enhanced through e-democracy platforms. Denmark features the integration of self-service digital services, a simple interface. Its government employees receive intensive training and transparent data-based policies protecting citizens' privacy. Danish society actively uses self-service digital services, with feedback mechanisms integrated in the development and improvement of such services.

It is important to apply a holistic approach that includes system development, procedures, and methods, as well as technological infrastructure, personnel training, and community empowerment. To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public services, Indonesia can combine innovative elements from the three countries according to local contexts and needs. This will help create public services that are more responsive, inclusive, and oriented to the needs of the community.

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