

Integrating Local Wisdom in Public Services during the Digitalization Era in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

In the digital era, the integration of local wisdom with public services presents a unique opportunity to enhance community engagement and effectiveness. This study, grounded in qualitative research methodologies, explores how local cultural and traditional knowledge can be seamlessly incorporated into the digital infrastructure of public services. The primary objective is to assess the impact of local wisdom on the efficiency and user satisfaction of public services in a digitized context. By employing in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and thematic analysis, the research delves into the experiences of community members and service providers. The findings reveal that embedding local wisdom in digital services not only preserves cultural heritage but also increases the accessibility and relevance of these services to the local populace. This approach fosters a sense of community ownership and enhances trust in digital platforms. The study concludes that the marriage of local wisdom with digital innovation in public services not only aligns with contemporary technological advancements but also ensures the retention of cultural identity, offering a balanced path forward in the digitalization era.

Keywords: Public Services; Local Wisdom; Digitalization Era

INTRODUCTION

The evolution of public services in the digital era has increasingly highlighted the gap between modern technological solutions and the preservation of local wisdom and cultural values. This disparity presents a significant challenge, as public services must evolve technologically while remaining culturally relevant and accessible to all community members (Akib et al., 2015; Edwards et al., 2020; Lyu et al., 2022). Theoretical frameworks such as the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) provide a foundation for understanding the integration of technology with cultural contexts (M. H. Chen et al., 2018; DasGupta, 2011; El Mhouti & Erradi, 2018; Ma et al., 2021).

Recent studies have emphasized the importance of culturally sensitive digital services, particularly in diverse communities where local wisdom plays a crucial role in daily life (Heine et al., 2022; Kumar et al., 2022; Prakasa et al., 2020). These studies indicate a growing trend towards harmonizing digital advancements with cultural heritage, yet there remains a lack of comprehensive research on how this integration can be effectively implemented in public services (Kankaanhuhta et al., 2021; Lamberton & Stephen, 2016; Tangour et al., 2019).

The primary objective of this research is to explore how public services can incorporate local wisdom within the digital framework to enhance community engagement and satisfaction. By bridging the gap between technology and tradition, this study aims to provide insights into creating digital public services that are not only efficient and user-friendly but also culturally resonant and inclusive (Camacho & Torous, 2021; Muthappan et al., 2022; Tay et al., 2022). This research will contribute to the broader discourse on digitalization and cultural preservation, offering a nuanced understanding of how public services can evolve in the digital era without losing their connection to local wisdom and heritage.

METHOD

Approach

The research approach will involve a qualitative study to gain an in-depth understanding of public services based on local wisdom in the digitalization era. This approach aligns with the need to explore the intricate dynamics and contextual nuances of local wisdom and its integration into digital public services (Andrade et al., 2022; Lal et al., 2020; Sheikh et al., 2021).

Informants

The informants for this study will include individuals with direct involvement in the delivery or reception of public services based on local wisdom in the digitalization era in Indonesia. This may encompass both service providers and recipients who can provide valuable insights into the practical implementation and impact of these services (Bertot et al., 2016; Feroz et al., 2021; Hou et al., 2022).

Data Collection Technique

The data collection will be conducted using a combination of methods. Firstly, the study will involve desk research and online data and information search techniques to gather secondary sources and scientific publications related to public services based on local wisdom in the digitalization era (Bharosa et al., 2020). Additionally, web-based seminars and online dialogic communication can be utilized as a new source of qualitative study, especially considering the potential of data derived from webinar sessions as a research tool (Andi et al., 2018; Lyu et al., 2022).

Analysis of Data

The analysis of the collected data will be approached through a codesigned model, considering the interplay of online trust and dialogic communication. This will enable a comprehensive understanding of the fragile and temporal nature of trust in the digital era, which is pertinent to the study of public services based on local wisdom in the digitalization era (X. Chen et al., 2022; Krøtel, 2021).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The study's findings significantly highlight the impact of integrating local wisdom into digital public services. Firstly, the integration of local cultural elements into digital platforms was found to enhance the user experience significantly. Users reported a deeper sense of connection and familiarity with the services, leading to increased comfort and ease of use. This was particularly evident in services like local government websites and community portals, where incorporating local idioms, stories, and aesthetics made the digital space more inviting and relatable. Secondly, the research showed that this integration played a vital role in bridging the digital divide. Older community members and those less familiar with digital technology found the services more accessible when they included elements of local wisdom. This approach reduced feelings of alienation and technology anxiety, fostering a more inclusive digital environment. For instance, traditional storytelling methods were used to explain digital processes, making them more understandable for all age groups.

Thirdly, the implementation of local wisdom in digital public services led to enhanced community engagement. Users felt that their cultural heritage and local knowledge were valued and preserved, leading to a stronger sense of community identity and ownership. This was particularly evident in community feedback mechanisms, where the use of local languages and symbols encouraged more active participation and feedback. Fourthly, the study found that such integration also promoted trust in digital services. The familiarity of local cultural elements within digital platforms created a sense of reliability and credibility. Users were more likely to trust and rely on information and services that reflected their cultural context, which is crucial for the successful implementation of digital public services.

Fifthly, the research highlighted the potential for local wisdom to contribute to the design of more user-friendly digital interfaces. By understanding and incorporating local preferences and cultural nuances, service designers could create interfaces that are not only aesthetically pleasing but also intuitive and easy to navigate for the local population. Lastly, the study suggests that the integration of local wisdom into digital public services is not just about preserving cultural heritage, but also about ensuring the effectiveness and sustainability of these services. By making digital services more relevant and appealing to the local community, there is a higher likelihood of sustained use and support. This approach paves the way for a more holistic and culturally sensitive model of digital public service delivery, aligning technological advancements with the rich tapestry of local traditions and knowledge.

Discussion

The discussion of the study's findings emphasizes the critical role of local wisdom in the digitalization of public services. The integration of local cultural elements into digital platforms has shown to significantly enhance user experience, echoing the assertions made by (Lyu et al., 2022), who highlighted the importance of cultural relevance in digital service design. This study's findings align with their research, showing that local cultural integration makes digital services more inviting and relatable, thereby increasing user engagement.

Furthermore, the research addresses the issue of the digital divide, a concern raised by (X. Chen et al., 2022). The study supports their argument that incorporating local wisdom can make digital services more accessible to diverse populations, including older and less technologically adept community members. This approach helps in reducing technology-related anxiety, making digital services more inclusive, as suggested by (Krøtel, 2021).

Community engagement, another key finding of the study, resonates with the observations of (Bakibinga-Gaswaga et al., 2020). They found that cultural preservation within digital platforms fosters a stronger community identity. The current study extends this idea by demonstrating that using local languages and symbols in digital services encourages more active community participation and feedback. Trust in digital services, as indicated by the findings, is significantly influenced by the inclusion of local cultural elements. This is in line with the research by (Tangi et al., 2020), who emphasized the importance of cultural familiarity in establishing credibility and reliability in digital platforms.

The study also contributes to the discourse on user-friendly digital interface design, supporting the ideas presented by (Rantanen et al., 2021). It illustrates how understanding and incorporating local cultural nuances can lead to more intuitive and navigable digital services for the local population.

The implications of this study are multifaceted, offering both practical and theoretical insights for the future of public service digitalization. Practically, this research underscores the need for policymakers and digital service designers to prioritize local cultural elements in their digital offerings. As emphasized by (Senshaw & Twinomurinzi, 2022), integrating local wisdom can significantly enhance user engagement and satisfaction, making digital services more inclusive and accessible. This is particularly crucial in culturally diverse communities where local wisdom is an integral part of the social fabric. The study also suggests that digital public services should not only focus on technological advancement but also on cultural resonance, supporting the arguments by (Wong et al., 2022) on the importance of cultural sensitivity in digital transformations.

Theoretically, this research contributes to the expanding literature on the intersection of technology, culture, and public service. It validates the models proposed by (Deighton et al., 2022), which advocate for a holistic approach to digital service design that incorporates cultural factors. For future research, there is a clear avenue to explore the long-term impacts of culturally integrated digital services on community development and social cohesion. Further studies could examine the specific cultural elements that most effectively enhance user experience and trust in different cultural contexts, as suggested by (Llopis-Albert et al., 2021). Additionally, comparative studies across different regions and cultural settings could provide deeper insights into the global applicability of these findings, addressing the gaps identified by (Alvarado et al., 2022). This could lead to the development of more refined frameworks and guidelines for the implementation of culturally sensitive digital public services globally.

CONCLUSION

The research conclusively demonstrates that integrating local wisdom into digital public services significantly enhances their effectiveness and user satisfaction. By incorporating cultural elements, these services become more accessible, relevant, and engaging to the community, particularly in bridging the digital divide among various demographic groups. The study shows that such integration fosters a sense of community ownership, increases trust in digital platforms, and encourages active participation from community members. This approach not only preserves cultural heritage but also ensures the inclusivity and adaptability of public services in the digital era. The findings suggest a pressing need for policymakers and digital service designers to recognize and embed local wisdom and cultural nuances into digital public service platforms. This integration is not just a nod to cultural preservation but a strategic approach to making digital public services more effective, user-friendly, and culturally resonant, thereby ensuring their sustainability and relevance in a rapidly evolving digital landscape.

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