

Implementation of E-Government Through Public Service Innovation in Sinjai Regency

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ABSTRACT

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This study aims to explore the implementation of e-government through public service innovation in Sinjai Regency. Digital transformation is crucial in public services to improve the efficiency, transparency, and accountability of local governments. The research method used is a qualitative approach with an explanatory type. The novelty of this study lies in a comprehensive analysis using six determinant indicators—communication infrastructure, connectivity and IT use, human resources, budget, legal instruments, and paradigm shifts—to dissect the complexity of digitalization at the local government level. The results show that e-government implementation in Sinjai Regency has been realized through various application innovations such as SIPPADAI, SIMPELMI, and SIPAKAINGE. Despite being supported by Regent Regulation Number 48 of 2023 and the commitment of regional leaders, its implementation still faces significant obstacles such as limited ICT infrastructure, low digital literacy, budget constraints, and resistance to digital paradigm shifts among employees. This study provides practical and theoretical contributions as an in-depth evaluation instrument for the implementation of the Electronic-Based Government System (SPBE) at the district level, while also serving as a strategic reference in mapping the structural barriers to digital transformation in the region.



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INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of science and technology has driven the Indonesian government to implement various innovations in its governance system. The government's function is now not only as a law-maker and enforcer, but also as a public service provider responsible for meeting the needs of the community (Dwiyanto, 2021). The paradigm shift from rule-based to service-oriented government emphasizes that the government must focus on improving the quality of public services that are fast, transparent, and responsive. Public service is a key function in realizing public welfare. Good governance is characterized by participation, transparency, accountability, effectiveness, and legal certainty (UNDP, 1997).

Digital transformation in the bureaucracy began to be implemented through Presidential Instruction Number 3 of 2003 and was reinforced by Presidential Regulation Number 95 of 2018 concerning the Electronic-Based Government System (SPBE). According to Irawan (2018), the development of E-Government aims to organize the management system and work processes of government agencies so that public services can be provided more effectively and efficiently. However, the urgency of implementing E-Government currently faces crucial challenges in the context of non-metropolitan areas such as districts. In these areas, digitalization is often hampered by specific problems such as disparities in digital infrastructure between sub-districts, regional fiscal limitations, and low digital literacy among the public and officials. The phenomenon of "digital paradox" often arises where technological innovations are launched, but fail to provide substantial impact because they are not aligned with the preparedness of the regional socio-economic conditions.

Several previous studies have attempted to map e-government adoption in Indonesia. Studies by Pratama (2020) and Sari et al. (2022) indicate that leadership support and regulatory availability are key to successful digitalization. However, these studies have limitations because they tend to focus on large cities (smart cities) with established infrastructure and human resources. Furthermore, the majority of previous studies remain stuck in a descriptive approach that only describes application features without a deeper evaluation of implementation dynamics and organizational structural readiness at smaller government levels.

Sinjai Regency is one of the non-metropolitan areas in South Sulawesi Province that actively implements E-Government through the regulation of Regent Regulation Number 48 of 2023. The local government has developed various applications such as SIPPADAI, SIMPelMi, SIPAKAINGE, and E-NIKDA as a strategic step to strengthen effective governance (Kabarsinjai.com, 2025). Although administratively the innovation is available, the effectiveness of its implementation in supporting good governance requires in-depth evaluation to ensure that the technology is truly capable of changing bureaucratic behavior and service quality.

Therefore, this study aims to fill a significant research gap in the public policy literature. First, there is a lack of explanatory qualitative studies that comprehensively analyze the determinants of e-government success through six key indicators (infrastructure, connectivity, human resources, budget, law, and paradigm), particularly at the district level. Second, this study corrects the dominance of previous research that focused on descriptive applications by shifting its focus to evaluating readiness and implementation dynamics in the field. Thus, this study goes beyond describing existing technological innovations to critically analyzing the structural and cultural factors that determine the success of digital transformation in the regions.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with an explanatory approach. This method was chosen based on the need to not only describe existing innovations but also critically explain the determinants and causal relationships that influence the success or failure of policy implementation in the field.

This research specifically adopts and synthesizes Rahmawati's (2019) e-readiness model. The researcher used six determinant indicators as a comprehensive evaluation instrument to analyze the dynamics of e-government implementation in Sinjai Regency:

1. Communication Infrastructure: The availability of hardware and data transmission networks as the physical foundation.
2. Level of Connectivity and IT Usage: The extent to which officials utilize information technology to support the actual performance of the bureaucracy.
3. Human Resources (HR): The capacity, digital literacy, and technical competence of officials as the driving force of the system.
4. Funds and Budget: The availability of financial allocations for investment, operations, and ongoing maintenance.
5. Legal Instruments: The existence of regulations (such as Regent Regulation No. 48 of 2023) that guarantee legal certainty and digital governance mechanisms.
6. Paradigm Shift: Mental and cultural readiness (change management) to transform conventional work methods into digital systems.

Data collection technique:

1. In-depth Interviews: Conducted with key informants (regional leaders and heads of regional government agencies) to explore structural and cultural barriers.
2. Observation: Direct observation of the effectiveness of application use (SIPPADAI, SIMPelMi, SIPAKAINGE).
3. Documentation: Analysis of regulations and SPBE achievement reports for Sinjai Regency.

Theoretical Framework: Relationship Between Variables

Theoretically, the success of digital transformation at the regional level depends on the interconnected linear relationship between systems, innovation, and service output. E-Government implementation, based on the six determinant indicators mentioned above, serves as the primary foundation. A strong foundation will foster relevant and sustainable public service innovation. This innovation is the primary driver of quality public services characterized by efficiency, transparency, and accountability (good governance).

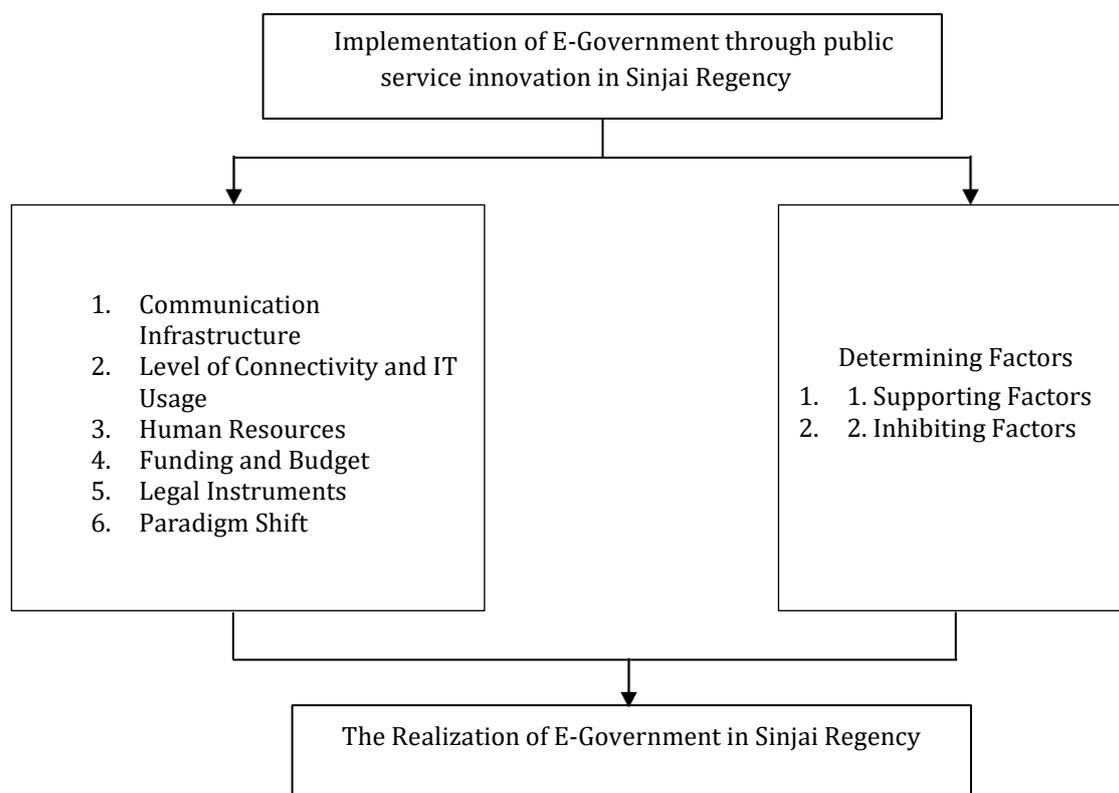
In the context of Sinjai Regency, this relationship is tested to see whether the availability of physical indicators (such as infrastructure and law) is directly proportional to non-physical indicators (such as paradigm shifts), considering that the quality of public services is not only determined by the sophistication of applications, but by the readiness of the bureaucratic ecosystem as a whole.

The assertion of the use of Rahmawati's (2019) model in this study is based on the relevance of its variables to the characteristics of non-metropolitan areas. The following is a detailed explanation of the role of each factor:

1. Structural Aspects (Infrastructure, Connectivity, Budget): These are technical prerequisites. Without equitable connectivity and a maintenance budget, applications like E-NIKDA will remain only temporary innovations.
2. Legal Aspects (Legal Instruments): These serve as an umbrella for officials to ensure they are confident in digitizing sensitive data.

Cultural Aspects (Human Resources & Paradigm Shift): This is a crucial point in this explanatory research. Often, e-government failures are not caused by a lack of computers, but rather by employee resistance to changes in work patterns that demand greater transparency.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of E-Governance Through Public Service Innovation in Sinjai Regency

Penerapan *E-Governance* melalui inovasi layanan publik merupakan salah satu langkah strategis Pemerintah Kabupaten Sinjai dalam mewujudkan tata kelola pemerintahan yang transparan, akuntabel, dan efisien. *E-Governance* berperan penting dalam transformasi digital birokrasi dengan memanfaatkan teknologi informasi dan komunikasi (TIK) untuk mempercepat proses pelayanan, memperluas akses masyarakat terhadap layanan, serta meningkatkan efektivitas penyelenggaraan pemerintahan daerah.

In this context, the Sinjai Regency Government has prioritized the development of technology-based public services as a regional priority. This was emphasized by the Regional Secretary of Sinjai Regency, A. Jefriato, who stated:

"So, this is indeed one of the priority programs of the Sinjai Regency government, one of which is technology-based services. With the principles of transparency, service acceleration, and how they provide the best service to the community, we emphasize this to OPDs engaged in public services such as the Civil Registration Department and the PTSP." (Interview, Monday, May 19, 2025).

This statement demonstrates the regional government's strong commitment to strengthening digital-based public services. This effort also aligns with the region's mission to accelerate access to services and build a more open and efficient government system.

The Head of the Sinjai Regency Communications, Informatics, and Cryptography Agency added that the implementation of e-governance began with an information digitization initiative through the Dilan Smart (Information Digitalization as the first step towards Smart Village) innovation. This innovation serves as the foundation for public information transparency down to the village and sub-district levels. As stated in an interview:

"Speaking about implementing e-governance through public service innovation, we at the Communications and Informatics Agency are implementing information digitalization as the initial step towards Smart Village, or Dilan Smart for short, which serves as the foundation for public information transparency down to the village and sub-district levels." (Interview, Tuesday, May 20, 2025).

Furthermore, the Head of the Sinjai Regency Investment and One-Stop Integrated Services (PTSP) Office explained that the implementation of e-governance is realized through the online licensing system SIMPelMi (Online Licensing Administration Service Management Information System), which aims to facilitate the public in processing business permits and public administration online. He emphasized:

"We at the Sinjai Regency PTSP have a public service innovation called the Online Licensing Administration Service Management Information System (SIMPelMi). The goal is to provide widespread online licensing services to the public to obtain excellent service and improve the ease of doing business and regional competitiveness." (Interview, Wednesday, May 21, 2025).

Data from the Sinjai Communications and Information Agency (2025) shows that there are six main innovations developed by the local government to support the implementation of E-Governance, namely PPID, Lapor SP4N, Baruga Sulsel, Sipakainge, Dilan Smart, and SIMPelMi. Each innovation has a specific function: PPID focuses on public information disclosure, Lapor SP4N as a national complaints channel, Baruga Sulsel for cross-agency coordination, Sipakainge in handling infrastructure complaints, Dilan Smart for digital information integration at the village level, and SIMPelMi in managing online licensing services.

Through the implementation of these innovations, the effectiveness of public services in Sinjai Regency has significantly improved, marked by ease of access, increased transparency, and strengthened accountability of officials. E-governance has become a key instrument in driving the modernization of regional bureaucracy and strengthening public trust in government performance.

Application-Based Public Service Innovation

As a follow-up to its political commitment, the Sinjai Regency Government has launched various innovative public service applications, which are diligently managed by the relevant regional government agencies (OPDs). A summary of these applications can be seen in Table 1:

Table 1. Applications, Managers and Functions

No	Application Name	Application Manager	Main Function
1	PPID	Diskominfo Sinjai	Access to Public Information (In Accordance with the KIP Law)
	Lapor SP4N	Diskominfo Sinjai	National Complaint Management System

No	Application Name	Application Manager	Main Function
2			
3	Baruga Sulsel	Diskominfo Sinjai	Integrated Complaint Application for Provincial Government
4	Sipakainge	Diskominfo Sinjai	Quick Local Complaints (Garbage and Street Lights)
5	Dilan Smart	Diskominfo Sinjai	Information Digitalization as the Foundation for Information Transparency
6	Simpelmi	DPMTSP Sinjai	Online Licensing Administration Services

Source: PPID Kominfo Sinjai, 2025

These innovations can be grouped based on their service focus:

1) Innovation in Information Disclosure and Basic Digitalization

Innovations focused on information digitization are managed by the Sinjai Communications and Cryptography Agency (Diskominfo). Its main innovation is Dilan Smart (Information Digitalization as the first step towards Smart Village). The Head of Diskominfo explained that Dilan Smart is designed as a foundation for public information transparency down to the village and sub-district levels. Furthermore, the PPID (Information and Documentation Management Officer) application, accessible through ppid.sinjaikab.go.id, aims to guarantee the public's right to access information in accordance with the Public Information Disclosure Law.

2) Innovation in Online Administration and Licensing Services

The innovation that has had the greatest impact on licensing and ease of doing business is SIMPELMI (Online Licensing Administration Service Management Information System), managed by the DPTSP. The Head of DPTSP stated that SIMPELMI aims to "provide widespread online licensing services to the public to obtain excellent service and improve ease of doing business and regional competitiveness" (Wednesday, May 21, 2025).

This application makes it easier for the people of Sinjai Regency to apply for permits online.

3) Integrated Public Complaint Management Innovation

The Sinjai Regency Government maintains an integrated complaint system at various levels: Lapor SP4N (connected to central ministries/agencies), Baruga Sulsel (integrated with the provincial government), and, specifically locally, the Sipakainge app. The Sipakainge app is specifically designed for waste and streetlight issues, which require a faster response from implementing agencies.

Impact and Benefits of E-Governance for Society

The implementation of e-governance through these innovations has been implemented by relevant regional government agencies (OPDs) and the benefits have been directly felt by the public. The most significant benefits lie in ease of access, transparency, and time efficiency. This is reflected in the testimony of service user Nurul:

"With the innovation of electronic public services, processing permits has become easier. Once a file has been submitted, we no longer have to go to the PTSP office to

inquire about the progress. We can check it directly through the website dpmptsp.sinjaikab.go.id. There, we can clearly see the applicant's file at which stage it is at." (Thursday, May 22, 2025).

This information serves as empirical evidence of SIMPELMI's success in increasing transparency of service progress. The public is no longer in uncertainty but has the means to independently monitor the status of their applications, which aligns with the e-Government goal of increasing the accountability of public service providers.

Implementation Analysis Based on 6 Determinant Indicators

Although innovations have been created, the success of E-Governance is measured by the readiness and suitability of its implementation in all aspects of government.

Table 2. Analysis of 6 Indicators Based on the Results of the Application of Determinant Factors

Indicators (Research Focus)	Implementation Results (Determinant Factors)
Communication Infrastructure	Not yet evenly distributed across all Regional Apparatus Organizations (OPD); there are still technical constraints and equipment limitations.
Level of Connectivity and IT Usage	Application utilization is suboptimal due to low digital literacy and network limitations. Network limitations and a lack of initiative from some employees are obstacles.
Human Resources (HR)	The quality of human resources is not yet evenly distributed, most of whom have not fully mastered digital technology, hindering the optimal implementation of digitalization.
Funds and Budget	Limited funds and budget are the main obstacles in developing an equitable digital system.
Legal Instruments	Supported by clear regulations (Regent Regulation Number 48 of 2023), its implementation in the field still requires strengthening.
Paradigm Shift	There is strong support from regional leaders, but it has not been fully responded to by all employees, indicating resistance to digital system changes.

Based on the results of the analysis of six main indicators, namely communication infrastructure, level of connectivity and IT usage, human resources, funds and budget, legal instruments, and paradigm shifts, it can be concluded that the implementation of E-Governance in Sinjai Regency is in the development stage towards maturity, with positive achievements but still facing several structural and cultural challenges.

In terms of communications infrastructure, local governments have demonstrated a strong commitment to building adequate network systems and hardware. The presence of a Network Operating Center (NOC), the use of a Virtual Private Network (VPN), and cross-regional collaboration indicate adequate technical readiness. However, limited connectivity in

rural areas and dependence on a single network provider highlight the need for a more equitable and sustainable digital infrastructure expansion strategy.

In terms of connectivity and IT utilization, Sinjai has successfully developed a technology-based public service model through various digital channels such as websites, social media, radio, and public Wi-Fi networks (Dilan Smart). This multi-channel approach improves the accessibility of public services. However, digital literacy and equitable internet access remain challenges that must be addressed to ensure truly inclusive digital services.

Human resource (HR) indicators show that civil servant (ASN) capacity in information technology is starting to improve through routine training initiated by the Communication and Information Technology Office (Diskominfo). However, ASN competency is not evenly distributed across all regional government agencies (OPD) and is not supported by a measurable, ongoing training system. Therefore, strengthening digital capacity building based on the needs of each agency is essential for effective public service innovation.

In terms of funding and budgeting, fiscal constraints remain a major obstacle. Minimal budgets hinder system development, network maintenance, and application innovation. Regional governments need to develop a medium-term digitalization financing roadmap, establish strategic partnerships with the private sector, and utilize central funding schemes such as the Special Allocation Fund (DAK) for digitalization and the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology's (Kominfo) BAKTI program.

Meanwhile, legal instruments have shown progress, with the issuance of a Regent's Regulation and a Presidential Regulation serving as the legal basis for implementing SPBE and information security. However, the absence of a binding and long-term Regional Regulation (Perda) means that the sustainability of digital policies remains dependent on executive discretion. The development of a Perda SPBE is crucial to strengthen legitimacy and consistency of implementation across regional government agencies (OPDs).

Finally, in terms of paradigm shift, the Sinjai bureaucracy appears to be transforming toward a digital mindset. Regional leaders and regional government agencies (OPD) are progressively instilling a culture of innovation and technological adaptation, despite still facing resistance from some civil servants and slow work culture changes. The long-term success of e-governance will be largely determined by consistent development of the mentality of civil servants and the implementation of visionary digital leadership at every level of government organizations.

Compared to other regencies in South Sulawesi, such as East Luwu and Bone, which are also actively pursuing digitalization, Sinjai Regency is unique in its "Dilan Smart" innovation, which reaches down to the village level. However, in terms of e-government maturity, or SPBE maturity, Sinjai Regency is currently at Level 2 (Developing) moving towards Level 3 (Integrated).

Field findings indicate that Sinjai has passed the Interaction phase (information provision through the PPID) and entered the Transaction phase (payment or licensing through SIMPelMi). However, limitations in infrastructure and connectivity indicators prevent Sinjai from achieving the Seamless phase, or full integration between services. Compared to practices in Java (for example, Sumedang Regency, which serves as a national benchmark), Sinjai still faces a significant "digital divide" between urban and remote areas, a common characteristic of digital governance implementation in non-metropolitan areas.

An analysis of six determinant factors revealed that legal instruments (Regent Regulation No. 48/2023) and paradigm shift (leadership commitment) were the primary driving forces. However, this success was hampered by human resources and budgetary factors. These findings confirm the theory that digital transformation in the region is not simply a

matter of application procurement, but rather a matter of bureaucratic ecosystem readiness. The apparatus' resistance to digital systems in Sinjai indicates that the organizational culture remains analog-minded amidst the digital-driven technological tide.

Overall, the implementation of e-government through public service innovations in Sinjai Regency has demonstrated a positive and systematic direction for digital transformation. The local government already has adequate infrastructure, legal frameworks, and institutional support. However, to achieve full effectiveness, cross-sectoral policy integration, increased public digital literacy, strengthened civil servant capacity, and sustainable, planned funding are needed to achieve the ideal SPBE maturity.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors for Implementation

The implementation of e-government in Sinjai Regency is supported by several factors, including the commitment of the regional head, public administration digitalization policies, and continuously improved ICT infrastructure. Furthermore, collaboration with the South Sulawesi Provincial Government and the Ministry of Communication and Informatics has strengthened the sustainability of digital programs in the region.

Inhibiting factors include limited human resources (HR) with unequal mastery of information technology, internet network constraints in some sub-districts, and resistance from some officials to changes in digital work systems. Despite this, the overall level of adaptation and readiness of regional institutions has shown a positive trend year after year.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis and discussion, this study concludes that the implementation of E-Government in Sinjai Regency is a strategic manifestation of bureaucratic reform that has significantly increased the standards of effectiveness, efficiency, and transparency of public services through digital innovation ecosystems such as SIPPADAI, SIMPELMI, SIPAKAINGE, and Dilan Smart. Theoretically, this finding provides a deep understanding that digital transformation in non-metropolitan areas cannot be viewed solely through the lens of technological determinism, but must be understood as a complex interaction between structural readiness and cultural dynamics, where the variables of paradigm shift and legal certainty are the main determinants of whether technological infrastructure will function optimally or simply become an unused digital artifact. This study makes a significant contribution to the enrichment of public administration and digital governance literature in Indonesia, particularly in Eastern Indonesia, by presenting an explanatory qualitative evaluation model capable of dissecting latent obstacles to the implementation of Electronic-Based Government Systems (SPBE) that are often overlooked in quantitative assessments of national indexes.

The policy implications of this research emphasize the need for a more systematic and sustainable regional digitalization roadmap, beginning with operational steps such as the integration of various service applications into a Single Sign-On (SSO) portal to create a non-fragmented service ecosystem. Strategically, the Sinjai Regency Government must encourage strengthening the legal umbrella through regulatory escalation from a Regent Regulation to a Regional Regulation (Perda) on SPBE to ensure the sustainability of programs across leadership periods and the stability of budget allocations, accompanied by creative financing schemes and strategic partnerships to resolve connectivity issues in remote areas. In terms of human resources, a transformation of work culture through measurable digital capacity building is needed to erode apparatus resistance to system changes. In closing, this research opens up space for further studies to conduct comparative studies with regions with a higher level of SPBE maturity and conduct in-depth analysis of the community user experience to measure the real impact of digital transformation on public satisfaction levels more comprehensively.

Author Contributions

Asdar Palewai: Conceptualization, Methodology, Investigation (Field Data Collection), Formal Analysis, Writing – Original Draft. Umar Congge: Supervision, Validation, Writing – Review & Editing, Project Management. Mochamat Nurdin: Data Curation, Resources, Validation, Writing – Review & Editing.

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Declarations

The authors declare that this research was conducted without any financial or commercial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest. There were no personal interests, professional relationships, or influences from external parties or data-providing institutions in Sinjai Regency that could have affected the independence of the analysis, data interpretation, or conclusions drawn in this article. The entire research process was conducted objectively for the benefit of advancing knowledge in the field of public administration.

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