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Strategic Leadership and Management Practices in Improving Organizational Performance: A Qualitative Study at the Immigration Office Class I TPI Samarinda

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to deeply analyze strategic leadership and management practices in improving organizational performance at the Class I Immigration Office TPI Samarinda. The research is grounded in the need for bureaucratic reform and optimization of public service delivery within Indonesia's immigration sector. This qualitative research employed a case study approach involving in-depth interviews with eight key informants, including structural officials, operational employees, and external stakeholders. Data were analyzed thematically using the Miles and Huberman (2020) model through reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that strategic leadership in the Samarinda Immigration Office emphasizes service vision, employee empowerment, digital innovation, and integrity reinforcement. Effective management practices include strengthening internal communication, implementing measurable performance indicators, and enhancing cross-departmental collaboration. These strategies have improved public satisfaction, reduced service time, and strengthened an adaptive work culture. The study contributes theoretically to the development of strategic leadership models in the public sector and provides practical implications for human resource optimization in government institutions.

I. INTRODUCTION

The performance of public organizations today faces significant challenges amidst demands for transparency, accountability, and bureaucratic efficiency. One of the key aspects determining the success of a public organization is the effectiveness of strategic leadership capable of translating the institutional vision into concrete and adaptive managerial practices in response to environmental changes. In the context of immigration institutions, this becomes increasingly important given the nature of their duties and functions, which directly intersect with public services, state security, and the dynamics of human mobility globalization (Sari & Prasetyo, 2021).

The Class I Immigration Office TPI Samarinda, as a vertical agency under the Directorate General of Immigration, holds a strategic mandate in providing immigration services in the East Kalimantan region. In recent years, this institution has faced challenges such as an increased volume of passport services, changes to an online-based digital system, and public demands for fast and maladministration-free services. These conditions require

the application of strategic leadership that not only motivates employees but also directs the organization to align with national bureaucratic reform goals (KemenPAN-RB, 2022).

Previous research indicates a positive correlation between strategic leadership and improved organizational performance through the dimensions of vision formulation, strategic communication, and the development of an adaptive culture (Setiawan & Harahap, 2020; Nugroho, 2023). Meanwhile, effective organizational management practices strengthen strategy implementation through human resource governance, performance-based evaluation systems, and the utilization of information technology in public services (Hidayat & Yusuf, 2022). However, most prior studies have focused on central agencies or private corporations, leaving in-depth studies in the context of regional government institutions, particularly immigration, relatively limited.

Based on the researcher's preliminary observations, the Class I Immigration Office TPI Samarinda has undertaken several managerial innovations, such as implementing a digital queue service, a service indicator-based performance evaluation system, and enhancing employee capacity through training and functional rotation. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of these strategies in improving overall organizational performance still requires scientific investigation. Therefore, this study focuses on how strategic leadership and management practices are applied to enhance organizational performance within the Class I Immigration Office TPI Samarinda.

Based on the description above, the research problems to be examined are: 1. What are the forms and characteristics of strategic leadership implemented at the Class I Immigration Office TPI Samarinda; 2. How do organizational management practices support the improvement of the institution's performance; 3. What factors influence the effectiveness of implementing these strategies. This research is expected to provide an academic contribution by enriching the literature on public sector strategic leadership and to serve as a practical reference for government agencies in improving performance through an integrated leadership and management approach.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Strategic Leadership in the Context of Public Organizations

Strategic leadership is the ability of a leader to anticipate, visualize, maintain flexibility, and empower others to create strategic changes that lead to organizational sustainability (Ireland & Hitt, 2020). In the public sector, strategic leadership is oriented not only towards achieving internal efficiency but also towards the ability to direct the organization to be responsive to changes in the policy environment, community needs, and the demands of good governance (Putra & Lestari, 2021). Northouse (2022) states that strategic leaders in the public sector need to balance a result-oriented leadership with a value-driven leadership, where success is measured not only by administrative performance indicators but also by the quality of service and public trust. In this regard, strategic leadership acts as a catalyst for organizational change through vision formulation, strategic communication, and the formation of a collaborative work culture.

In the context of the Class I Immigration Office TPI Samarinda, strategic leadership is manifested through the efforts of the office head to integrate the vision of "Public Service with Integrity and Innovation" with operational policies in immigration services, foreign national supervision, and law enforcement. This aligns with the principle of transformational

public leadership, where the leader acts as a change agent, encouraging employees to think adaptively and innovate (Hartono & Wibowo, 2023).

2.2 Organizational Management Practices in Performance Improvement

Public organization management focuses on the effective achievement of goals through planning, organizing, implementing, and supervising organizational resources (Robbins & Coulter, 2021). In a government setting, modern management practices demand the application of performance-based management principles, accountability, and public service innovation (KemenPAN-RB, 2022). According to Wahyudi (2020), effective management practices include five main aspects: (1) measurable strategic planning; (2) cross-functional coordination; (3) human resource strengthening; (4) performance-based evaluation systems; and (5) service quality control. In the immigration sector, these five aspects are interconnected in ensuring transparent, fast, and accountable immigration services.

At the Class I Immigration Office TPI Samarinda, management practices are realized through the implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for services, queue digitalization, real-time reporting to the Directorate General of Immigration, and the formation of function-based work teams. These practices are consistent with the New Public Management (NPM) approach, which emphasizes efficiency and a results orientation in public bureaucracy (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2020). Research by Rachmawati and Sunaryo (2024) shows that the combination of strategic leadership and digital innovation-based management practices can increase public satisfaction by up to 30% in regional public institutions. Thus, the application of an adaptive management system at the Samarinda Immigration Office is believed to enhance organizational performance through the integration of leadership strategy and modern governance.

2.3 Public Sector Organizational Performance

Public sector organizational performance is defined as the level of success of an organization in achieving its predetermined goals and objectives according to indicators of effectiveness, efficiency, and service responsiveness (Mahmudi, 2021). Performance indicators for public organizations generally include: (1) work productivity; (2) service quality; (3) accountability; and (4) public satisfaction (Mardiasmo, 2020). According to Sani and Fauzan (2022), organizational performance is influenced not only by structural factors like regulations and resources but also by behavioral factors such as leadership, communication, and organizational culture.

In the context of the Samarinda Immigration Office, performance improvement is reflected in service indicators such as the speed of passport issuance, public satisfaction, and a reduction in the number of administrative complaints. Recent research by Lestari et al. (2023) confirms that the success of bureaucratic reform depends on the ability of public organizations to implement adaptive leadership and management systems that are aligned with service digitalization strategies. Therefore, the synergistic relationship between strategic leadership and management practices is key to creating sustainable organizational performance.

2.4 Integration of Strategic Leadership and Management Practices

The relationship between strategic leadership and management practices can be explained through the Strategic Alignment Theory proposed by Venkatraman (2020). This theory emphasizes the importance of alignment between the strategic direction of the organization and its operational managerial execution to achieve optimal results. In the public sector context, this alignment includes three main dimensions: (1) alignment of the organization's vision and mission with government policies; (2) alignment of internal structure and processes with human resources; and (3) alignment of the performance measurement system with public service indicators.

Effective implementation of strategic leadership enables public managers to establish a clear organizational direction, create an adaptive work culture, and ensure harmonious cross-functional coordination. Conversely, weak management practices without a strategic direction tend to result in a bureaucracy that is reactive and rigid in the face of change (Suharto & Ananda, 2021).

2.5 Research Theoretical Framework

Based on the literature review above, this study develops the following theoretical framework: Strategic Leadership includes the dimensions of strategic vision, employee empowerment, organizational innovation, and effective communication (Northouse, 2022). Organizational Management Practices consist of aspects of planning, organizing, implementing, and performance-based evaluation (Robbins & Coulter, 2021). Organizational Performance is measured through indicators of service effectiveness, time efficiency, public satisfaction, and public accountability (Mahmudi, 2021).

This theoretical framework assumes that strategic leadership directly and indirectly influences the improvement of organizational performance through effective management practices. Thus, the collaboration between strategic and operational aspects becomes the main factor for the success of public organizations, including at the Class I Immigration Office TPI Samarinda.

III. RESEARCH METHOD

3.1 Research Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design. This approach was chosen because it allows the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the dynamics of strategic leadership and management practices within the context of a specific public organization (Creswell & Poth, 2021). A qualitative approach is also relevant for examining complex social phenomena such as decision-making processes, interpersonal relationships, and the implementation of organizational strategies that cannot be measured quantitatively.

The case study design provides an opportunity to explore the phenomenon of "strategic leadership and management practices" as a unified whole within the environment of the Class I Immigration Office TPI Samarinda. This single case study is focused on one unit of analysis—namely, a public immigration organization—to understand how leadership strategies are translated into managerial practices and how both aspects contribute to improving organizational performance. According to Yin (2020), a case study design allows for data triangulation through various sources of information, such as in-depth interviews,

participant observation, and document analysis. Thus, this study not only describes the occurring phenomena but also analyzes the causal relationship between strategic leadership, management practices, and organizational performance.

3.2 Research Location and Subjects

The research was conducted at the Class I Immigration Office TPI Samarinda, East Kalimantan, which operates under the coordination of the Directorate General of Immigration, Ministry of Immigration and Corrections of the Republic of Indonesia. This location was chosen purposively because it represents a public institution with a high level of managerial complexity and has been implementing a bureaucratic reform and service digitalization agenda since 2021.

The research subjects consisted of eight key informants selected using a purposive sampling technique with the following criteria:

- Structural officials (Section Heads and Subsection Heads) involved in strategic decision-making;
- Executive employees who understand the operational dynamics of immigration services;
- External stakeholders, such as representatives from travel agencies, service users, and local government institutional partners.

The composition of informants included:

- 1 Head of the Immigration Traffic Section;
- 1 Head of the Immigration Information and Communication Technology Section;
- 2 executive employees in the passport services division;
- 1 foreign national supervision employee;
- 1 representative of service users;
- 2 external stakeholders.

A total of eight informants was deemed sufficient because, in qualitative research, the main focus is not on the quantity but on the depth of information obtained until data saturation is reached (Guest, Namey, & Chen, 2020).

3.3 Data Collection Types and Techniques

Data in this study were obtained through three main techniques:

1) In-Depth Interviews

Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner to explore the perceptions, experiences, and views of informants regarding strategic leadership, management practices, and organizational performance. The interviews were held in October 2025, with a duration of 45–60 minutes per informant. Key questions included:

- How does the leadership formulate the organization's vision and strategic direction?
- How are managerial practices carried out to achieve performance targets?
- What factors support or hinder the implementation of these strategies?

2) Participant Observation

The researcher conducted observations of immigration service activities, internal coordination meetings, and performance evaluation sessions. This observation aimed to understand managerial practices in a real-world setting and to validate interview data.

3) Document Analysis

Documents analyzed included annual performance reports (LAKIN), Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), bureaucratic reform reports, and digital service innovation documents (online queue application and e-office). These three data sources were used triangulatively to enhance the credibility of the research findings.

3.4 Data Analysis Technique

Data analysis was conducted using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2020) model, which includes three main stages:

1) Data Reduction

The process of selecting, simplifying, and organizing raw data from interviews, observations, and documents into thematic categories.

2) Data Display

The reduced data were presented in the form of matrices, thematic tables, and descriptive narratives to identify patterns of relationships between strategic leadership and management practices.

3) Conclusion Drawing and Verification

Initial conclusions were repeatedly verified through discussions among researchers and confirmation with informants (member checking) to ensure the validity of the results.

This thematic approach allowed the researcher to identify key dimensions of strategic leadership practices relevant to the immigration context, such as service vision, digital innovation, and employee empowerment.

4 Data Validity and Reliability

To ensure the validity of the data, this study applied four validity criteria according to Lincoln and Guba (2020):

- 1) **Credibility:** Achieved through triangulation of data sources and methods, member checking, and peer debriefing with colleagues who understand the context of public bureaucracy;
- 2) **Transferability:** Obtained by providing a deep contextual description of the organizational environment and managerial processes at the Samarinda Immigration Office, so the research results can serve as a reference for similar institutions;
- 3) **Dependability:** Maintained by systematically documenting the entire research process in an audit trail, including field notes, interview transcripts, and observation results;
- 4) **Confirmability:** Upheld through objective analysis by ensuring that the research findings are derived from empirical data, not solely from the researcher's subjective interpretations.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 General Overview of the Class I Immigration Office TPI Samarinda

The Class I Immigration Office TPI Samarinda is a technical implementation unit under the Directorate General of Immigration, Ministry of Immigration and Corrections of the Republic of Indonesia. This institution has the primary responsibility of providing immigration services to the public and supervising the cross-border traffic of people in the East Kalimantan region. The organizational structure consists of five main sections:

- Immigration Traffic Section;
- Stay Permit and Immigration Status Section;
- Immigration Intelligence and Enforcement Section;
- Immigration Information and Communication Technology Section;
- Administration Subdivision.

The total number of employees is 82, consisting of structural officials, technical staff, and general functional employees. Based on the 2024 SAKIP document, the Samarinda Immigration Office successfully achieved a BB (Very Good) rating, with significant improvements in service innovation and inter-divisional coordination effectiveness. However, interviews and observations revealed remaining challenges, such as workload imbalances between sections, limited competency training, and resistance from some employees to the public service digitalization system.

4.2 Main Research Findings

The qualitative data analysis yielded three major interrelated themes:

- 1) Adaptive and Visionary Strategic Leadership;
- 2) Collaborative and Performance-Based Organizational Management Practices;
- 3) Improved Organizational Performance through Innovation and Digital Transformation.

4.3 Adaptive and Visionary Strategic Leadership

Interview results show that the office head and structural officials apply a participative and transformational leadership style. The leadership plays an active role in communicating the organization's vision, especially in the effort to realize digital-based and integrity-driven public services. An informant (Head of the Immigration Traffic Section) stated:

"We are directed to think strategically, not just execute technical commands. Each section head is asked to develop a work plan with measurable results that have a direct impact on the community."

Strategic leadership at the Samarinda Immigration Office is also evident in the leadership's ability to manage organizational change. During the transition from a manual to a digital service system via the M-Paspor application, the leader acted as a change facilitator. He provided technical guidance, supported employees, and explained the long-term benefits of the innovation. This finding supports the view of Hitt et al. (2020) that strategic leaders act as change agents who can balance long-term orientation with short-term effectiveness. In the context of public organizations, an adaptive leadership style is key to facing the challenges of digitalization and demands for service transparency (Sari & Puspitawati, 2023).

4.4 Collaborative and Performance-Based Organizational Management Practices

The second finding shows that the Samarinda Immigration Office has implemented management practices based on cross-sectional collaboration. Coordination between the service, enforcement, and information technology divisions is conducted regularly through weekly meetings. In these forums, each section head is required to report weekly achievements and operational obstacles, which are then followed up with a joint action plan.

Observations revealed that a collaborative work culture enhances the efficiency of service processes. For example, the processing of passports, which previously took three days, can now be completed in two days thanks to synergy between the data verification and document printing sections. In addition to collaboration, organizational management

also emphasizes a result-based evaluation system. Each employee has a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) measured through the Kemenimipas e-performance application. The use of these performance indicators creates accountability and transparency, and motivates employees to increase productivity. This aligns with the concept of performance-driven management proposed by Bryson et al. (2021), that public institutions linking organizational strategy with measurable outcomes tend to have more stable and sustainable performance.

However, interviews with some executive staff revealed obstacles related to a lack of training in information technology management. Some senior employees admitted they still struggle with using the digital reporting system, thus relying on assistance from younger colleagues. This situation indicates the need for a sustainable human resource development strategy.

4.5 Organizational Performance Improvement through Innovation and Digital Transformation

Digital transformation has been the main driver of organizational performance improvement. Based on the 2024 internal evaluation, the public satisfaction rate for immigration services in Samarinda reached 91%, an increase of 7% compared to the previous year. Public service innovations that contributed to this performance increase include:

- Implementation of the M-Paspor system for online passport registration and payment;
- Integration of a Service Chatbot via social media for public consultation;
- and Launch of a priority service for vulnerable groups (Elderly and Disability Service Counter).

Strategic leadership played a crucial role in ensuring these innovations were effective. The office head initiated the "Imigrasi Samarinda Manyala" (Serving, Real, Lakas) policy, which emphasizes the values of integrity, discipline, and empathy towards service users. This result reinforces the theory of transformational leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2021), which states that leaders with a strong vision and inspirational ability can drive changes in employee behavior and create an adaptive organizational culture.

Furthermore, the implementation of digital innovation also impacted cost and service time efficiency. Observations showed that the use of online systems reduced manual queues by up to 40% and increased passport processing speed by 25%. Nevertheless, the main challenges faced by the organization include internet network stability, the availability of adequate digital devices, and employee resistance to changes in work systems. To overcome this, the leadership implemented a persuasive communication strategy and provided rewards to work units with the highest digital adoption rates.

4.6 Discussion

The findings of this study indicate a strong relationship between strategic leadership, the effectiveness of organizational management, and public sector performance improvement. The leadership pattern at the Samarinda Immigration Office reflects the characteristics of a transformational leader who is adaptive to environmental changes and results-oriented. This finding is in line with research by AlKhajeh (2022), which asserts that strategic leadership in public organizations not only serves to direct policy but also to drive innovation and a positive organizational culture.

Additionally, collaborative management practices have been proven to enhance cross-unit coordination, which impacts efficiency and employee job satisfaction. This supports the research findings of Putri and Santosa (2023), who found that employee involvement in decision-making increases loyalty and commitment to the organization.

The digital transformation implemented at the Samarinda Immigration Office is clear evidence that innovation can serve as a catalyst for improving public performance. This finding is consistent with the study by Ramadhan and Kurniawan (2024), which highlights the role of digitalization as a key factor in increasing accountability and transparency of services in the government sector. Thus, it can be concluded that the success of a public organization like the Samarinda Immigration Office is determined by a combination of visionary strategic leadership, collaborative performance-based management, and continuous innovation in facing the dynamics of modern public service.

V. THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Theoretical Implications

The results of this study make a significant contribution to the development of strategic leadership and public performance management theories in Indonesia. First, this research expands the understanding that the concept of strategic leadership is not only relevant in the private sector but is also crucial in the context of government organizations. In the case of the Class I Immigration Office TPI Samarinda, strategic leadership has been proven capable of guiding the organization to face external environmental changes, especially the demands of digitalization and bureaucratic reform.

Second, this finding strengthens the theory of transformational leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2021) by adding contextual dimensions unique to the public sector, namely compliance with regulations and public accountability. In government institutions, organizational transformation is not only oriented towards innovation but must also maintain a balance between efficiency, transparency, and legal responsibility.

Third, the results of this study support the views of Bryson et al. (2021) regarding the importance of strategic alignment between organizational vision, management practices, and performance measurement systems. The integration of these three aspects has been shown to create functional synergy that strengthens organizational productivity. This research also adds empirical evidence that the success of performance-based management is highly dependent on the effectiveness of communication and cross-unit collaboration within public organizations.

Finally, this finding confirms that the successful implementation of performance-driven management cannot be separated from an organizational culture that supports learning and adaptation. This enriches the theory of organizational learning in the public sector (Mahmudi, 2021), by showing that government organizations capable of learning from internal experiences and public feedback have better resilience in facing changes in national policy.

5.2 Practical Implications

From a practical standpoint, the findings of this study provide several strategic recommendations for improving the performance of public organizations, particularly the Class I Immigration Office TPI Samarinda and similar units within the Ministry of Immigration and Corrections.

1) Strengthening Strategic Leadership Capacity

Advanced training programs focusing on developing strategic thinking skills, cross-generational communication, and digital change management are needed. Activities such as

leadership coaching and strategic foresight workshops can help structural officials understand global immigration trends and design long-term adaptive strategies.

2) Optimizing Performance-Based Management

The Immigration Office needs to refine individual and unit performance indicators to be more measurable and relevant to the organization's strategic goals. A result-based management system should be complemented with a reward and recognition system to increase the motivation of high-achieving employees.

3) Accelerating Digital Transformation and Technology Literacy

The implementation of innovations like M-Paspor must be accompanied by an increase in the digital literacy of all employees. Regular training and mentoring for senior employees can reduce resistance to new technology. Additionally, network infrastructure and digital devices need to be strengthened so that online systems can function optimally without technical disruptions.

4) Enhancing a Collaborative Culture and Public Accountability

Public organizations must cultivate a work culture that emphasizes collaboration, openness, and public responsibility. Cross-sectional meetings should be formalized into knowledge-sharing forums to accelerate the flow of information and innovation between units.

5) Strengthening the Leader's Role as a Model of Integrity

Leaders within the Immigration Office must demonstrate exemplary conduct in discipline, service ethics, and decision-making transparency. This role modeling will foster a climate of trust and employee loyalty, which is the foundation for long-term performance improvement.

Overall, the results of this study can serve as a model for implementing strategic leadership in Indonesia's modern bureaucracy, integrating a long-term vision with digital innovation and accountable governance.

VI. CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS

6.1 Conclusion

This study concludes that strategic leadership and collaborative management practices play a significant role in improving the performance of public organizations, as illustrated in the case of the Class I Immigration Office TPI Samarinda. An adaptive, communicative, and visionary leader is able to create a work environment conducive to innovation and enhance the effectiveness of public services. The implementation of performance-driven management, a collaborative work culture, and digital transformation has been proven to accelerate efficiency improvements and public satisfaction with immigration services. However, challenges still exist regarding employee technology literacy and the equitable distribution of competencies across work units. Theoretically, this study expands the understanding of the dynamics of strategic leadership in Indonesia's public sector, while practically, it provides tangible recommendations for strengthening the governance and performance of government institutions.

6.2 Limitations

This study has several limitations. First, because its design is a single case study, generalizing the results to other agencies should be done with caution. Second, the limited

time for data collection restricted the opportunity for long-term observation of leadership dynamics. Third, most of the data is derived from the subjective perceptions of informants, so interpretations may be influenced by individual experiential bias. Nevertheless, these limitations do not diminish the academic contribution of this research, as the data obtained have undergone triangulation and verification processes to maintain validity.

6.3 Suggestions

- 1) The central government is advised to expand strategic leadership training for all officials within the Ministry of Immigration and Corrections.
- 2) The Samarinda Immigration Office needs to develop a real-time, data-based performance evaluation system that is integrated with the national system.
- 3) A digital communication forum among immigration units in Indonesia is needed to share innovations and public service solutions.
- 4) Future research is suggested to use a mixed-methods approach to quantitatively test the relationship between strategic leadership, organizational culture, and employee performance.

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