

Research Article

Government And Community Collaboration in Strengthening Digital Administration Services in Ketegan Village, Taman District, Sidoarjo Regency

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Abstract: This research seeks to examine the partnership between government and community in enhancing digital administrative services in Ketegan Village, Taman District, Sidoarjo Regency. The research context centers on the local government's attempts to advance digital public service transformation, which encounter obstacles like low digital literacy, insufficient infrastructure, and poor collaborative governance at the village level. The study utilized a qualitative strategy featuring a case study technique, gathering data via in-depth interviews, participatory observation, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and reviews of policy documents related to Sidoarjo's Smart City initiative. The results show that although digital infrastructure and institutional dedication are in place, execution is still obstructed by restricted technological capability, unreliable internet access, and poor public digital literacy. Collaboration between the government and community is starting to develop through local projects, but it remains informal and does not have a sustainable coordination structure. The research suggests improving the digital skills of officials and citizens, creating organized digital collaboration platforms in villages, and adopting participatory assessment methods to guarantee an inclusive and flexible digital transformation. These results are anticipated to act as a guide for local authorities in enhancing governance of digital-based public services.

Keywords: Community Participation; Digital Administration; Digital Governance; Government Collaboration; Public Service.

1. Introduction

The digital transformation of administrative services has become a focus of national and local policy in recent years, driven by the need to improve efficiency, transparency, and access to public services. National policy frameworks such as the Electronic-Based Government System (SPBE) encourage local governments to integrate applications and population data and other administrative services, while policy literature emphasizes the importance of accelerating digital transformation, supported by strengthening human resource capacity and local infrastructure, so that the benefits of digitalization can be felt by the public (Mayasiana et al., 2024; Sangaji & Irianto, 2025). Research on digital economy policy and advice emphasizes the importance of collaboration between policy, technology, and community engagement to ensure inclusive and sustainable transformation (Firdaus et al., 2023).

Sidoarjo Regency has declared itself as one of the regions implementing the smart city program and digitalization of public services, with various priority programs listed in the Regional Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMD) and strengthening the governance of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) through regional regulations as the basis for implementing digital services. In Taman District, the focus of this research, digital access to population administration services has been implemented and has been promoted through platforms such as 'Plavon Dukcapil' and the sub-district application, while several villages, including Ketegan Village, have official portals that show the initial steps of adopting online services at the village level. However, the results of the smart city program are also

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acknowledged to still require evaluation regarding implementation in frontline service units, so efforts are needed to improve coordination between regional apparatus organizations and between the government and the community to improve services.

Although the potential exists, problems arise, both general and specific: in general, many regions still experience infrastructure constraints (connectivity and devices), digital literacy of the community and apparatus, and bureaucratic business processes that have not been fully aligned with digital flows; research in various areas shows similar obstacles that reduce the effectiveness of e-government implementation if not balanced with ongoing training, socialization, and technical support (Rizky et al., 2025; Rusnita et al., 2023). In Sidoarjo Regency, particularly in Ketegan Village, issues that require attention include the lack of equitable utilization of the village portal, the capacity of village officials to run and maintain service applications, data integration between systems (e.g., between villages, sub-districts, and population offices), and low public participation and trust in online services, resulting in a tendency for some services to still be delivered in person. The regional evaluation also demonstrates the need for a more transparent collaboration mechanism between the regional government, local communities, and other stakeholders to ensure that digital services are not merely technical but also socially legitimate.

Previous article (Mandar et al., 2022; Seta, Theresiawati, & Indarso, 2023; Seta, Theresiawati, & Jayanta, 2023) Research related to OpenSID offers the empirical basis and key concepts for this research: some studies review the implementation of OpenSID (village information system) and village/sub-district service platforms as a means of improving access to public services and transparency, while other studies on collaborative governance and digital transformation highlight the role of various stakeholders in addressing the challenges of technology adoption (Mahardhani et al., 2021). Case studies in urban and district areas emphasize the importance of training for officials, communication strategies for the public, and secure and interconnected data integration models; recent literature also mentions the urgency of regional policies and smart city roadmaps as frameworks that need to be adapted to practice on the ground (Yang & Zhen, 2024). In the context of Sidoarjo Regency, an assessment of smart city programs and local government documents indicates that initiatives already exist, but their implementation at the village level requires in-depth research to ensure more focused and implementable policy recommendations.

Based on these conditions, this article will analyze how collaboration between the government (regency, sub-district, and village) and the community (residents, community leaders, youth groups/digital communities) can be strengthened to improve the quality of digital administration services in Ketegan Village, Taman District, Sidoarjo Regency. The focus will include aspects of infrastructure readiness, village apparatus resource capabilities, citizen participation mechanisms, and models for integration and management of administrative service data. The objectives are to map collaborative barriers and opportunities, formulate a best practice model for public-community collaboration appropriate to the context of Ketegan Village, and develop concrete technical policy recommendations and training/socialization programs to improve the accessibility, speed, and accountability of digital administration services at the village level. The research findings are expected to serve as a reference for district policymakers in refining their smart city roadmap and implementing SPBE in the field.

2. Theoretical Review

The theoretical basis for improving digital administrative services at the sub-district level must begin with the e-government framework and the Electronic-Based Government System (SPBE), which serve as the normative foundation in Indonesia. SPBE emphasizes that the use of information and communication technology in governance is essential for achieving clean, effective, transparent, and accountable governance, as well as accessible public services. (Kennedy et al., 2024); This policy emphasizes system capabilities, data security standards, and continuous evaluation as critical elements in implementing digital services at all levels of government. In the context of sub-districts, the implementation of SPBE requires adapting conventional bureaucratic processes to a connected digital flow, not just providing applications but also ensuring that services such as population administration, simple permits, and information publication can be carried out quickly, documented, and recorded in the local government system (Wardana et al., 2025). This concept is crucial as a guideline for designing collaborative models because it requires alignment of technical (systems and data) and organizational policies at the district, sub-district, and village levels.

Collaborative governance theory has emerged as a second important framework when discussing the roles of government and society in digitalizing public services. This approach highlights collaboration between public, private, and civil society actors interacting within both formal and informal structures to set goals, make decisions, and manage public services. The success of digital transformation often depends on the ability of local actors to build collaborative networks, share resources, and agree on mechanisms for public participation (Mahardhani, 2023). At the sub-district level, collaborative governance outlines the reasons why initiatives such as the participation of cadres, local digital communities, and NGOs can accelerate the implementation of online services, this is because they act as a bridge for socialization, technical assistance, and a source of relevant input for system improvement (Emerson et al., 2012). This theory also guides analysis of how coordination structures between regional government organizations and cross-sectoral forums in districts or sub-districts can be used to support the implementation of sustainable digital services.

The concept of co-production or co-creation of public services enriches the idea of collaborative governance by emphasizing active community participation in service creation—rather than simply being passive recipients (Alfita et al., 2024). Co-production involves activities in which the public provides information, time, or social capital that strengthen the effectiveness of services. In the context of digital village administration, this could include self-entering data, engaging in data verification, or community contributions to monitoring the quality and transparency of digital services. Empirical evidence across countries suggests that co-production can improve user satisfaction and service accountability when complemented by simple interface design, rapid feedback mechanisms, and incentives for participation. This theory encourages the development of interventions that balance the workload between village officials and community participation, so that the proposed digital service model focuses not only on digitizing internal processes but also on creating functional participatory spaces.

Theories of public digital transformation need to be clearly linked to research on the digital divide and digital literacy at the local level, as technology adoption does not automatically lead to inclusion (Latifah et al., 2024). Several literatures show that available infrastructure (connectivity and devices), digital literacy skills of the community and apparatus, and economic constraints are the main factors in the use of e-government services (Ibad & Lolita, 2020; Nurfadillah et al., 2025); This phenomenon requires the design of training strategies, public access locations (such as digital service centers in sub-districts), and easily accessible software support to ensure that no group is marginalized. Conceptually, access and capability emphasize that technical interventions need to be accompanied by human resource competency improvement programs and ongoing socialization to create a balance of adoption that leads to a state where infrastructure, skills, and user motivation are mutually supportive (Herwanto et al., 2023). For Ketegan Village, this framework serves as a basis for arguing why collaborative programs need to include capacity-building elements and public access facilities.

In the context of public organizations and change management, innovation adoption theory and capability management (Cholagi et al., 2025; Utomo et al., 2024) indicates that the sustainability of digital services requires investment in human resources at the sub-district level, streamlined business processes, and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms based on SPBE metrics. The use of technology in front-line service units is often resisted due to additional administrative burdens, unclear tasks, and lack of motivation; therefore, a change management approach including the involvement of local leaders, phased training, peer-to-peer learning at the sub-district level, and a technical transition plan is crucial so that the transformation focuses not only on technical aspects but also changes the bureaucratic culture. Furthermore, data governance plays a crucial role in ensuring that sub-district systems can communicate securely with the sub-district systems, the Population and Civil Registration Office, and the district platform, so that administrative services can run accurately, be verified, and be accountable (Biagi & Russo, 2022). Metadata standards, application usage guidelines, and privacy policies should be integrated into the implementation framework as technical policies.

Ultimately, the integration of all these theoretical foundations yields a practical, evidence-based approach: strengthening digital administration services in Ketegan Village requires integrating (1) compliance with SPBE policies and national technical standards, (2) collaborative governance mechanisms that support active community participation (co-production), (3) digital divide mitigation programs through access and literacy support, and (4) change management and data governance strategies to ensure capacity and sustainability.

This theoretical framework further provides a foundation for developing evaluation indicators (e.g., service acceptance rates, user satisfaction, data validity, HR training outcomes) and mapping multi-level interventions from district policies to operational practices at the village service desk, ensuring that recommendations are grounded in proven theory and current empirical evidence.

3. Method

This study applies a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study design. (Pahleviannur et al., 2022) focused on the collaborative process between the government and the community in improving digital administrative services in Ketegan Village, Taman District, Sidoarjo Regency. This approach was chosen because it allowed researchers to deeply investigate the social, institutional, and technological dynamics that influence the efficiency of digital service implementation at the village level. The research location was deliberately selected considering that Ketegan Village has great digitalization potential but faces challenges in digital literacy, data integration, and community participation. Initial data were collected through in-depth interviews with village officials, district representatives, application developers, community leaders, and service users; participant observation of digital administrative service activities and citizen interactions at the village office; and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) to gain a shared perspective on challenges and opportunities for collaboration. Secondary data were obtained from Sidoarjo Regency's SPBE policy documents, smart city program evaluation reports, village digital service archives, and previous research related to e-government and collaborative governance. Analysis was conducted through data reduction techniques, data display, and interactive conclusion drawing according to the model. Huberman & Miles (2012), with a focus on triangulation of sources and methods to ensure data validity. All findings are then grouped into analytical themes, namely: (1) readiness of digital infrastructure and village institutions, (2) human resource capacity and community digital literacy, (3) collaboration mechanisms between communities and the government, and (4) sustainability strategies for digital services based on citizen participation. The output of this research is expected to create a conceptual model of collaboration that can be applied to improve digital administrative services in villages and serve as a reference for local governments in formulating inclusive digital transformation policies that are in line with local needs.

4. Results and Discussion

Institutional Readiness and Digital Infrastructure Of The Village

Institutional readiness is the key to the success of digital transformation of public services. Research findings indicate that in Ketegan Village, initial steps have been taken to implement a digital administration system, such as the use of internal applications for document recording, certificate services, and population data reporting. However, this system is not yet fully connected to the Taman District system or the Sidoarjo Regency Population Service. Some hardware, such as computers and internet connections, are available, but with limited capacity, resulting in slow service processes during peak hours. This situation indicates that institutional preparation does not fully meet SPBE standards, which require interoperability and data efficiency between agencies.

From the perspective of digital governance theory, institutional readiness must encompass technical aspects (ICT infrastructure), organizational aspects (human resources and digital work structures), and policy aspects (procedures, standards, and data management). (Hanisch et al., 2023). Observations indicate that the lack of a dedicated work unit managing information technology in Ketegan Village is a major obstacle. Village officials still perform digitalization functions incidentally, relying on individuals with basic computer skills. This supports the Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform's assertion that institutions not prepared for digitalization will face challenges in maintaining the sustainability of e-government programs. Therefore, improving organizational structures and establishing village digital teams is an urgent need to create effective and targeted data management.

Furthermore, field findings indicate that policy support from the sub-district and district levels is not fully aligned with practice on the ground. The digitalization program for community administration is still in the project or pilot stage and has not been integrated into village operational regulations. For example, there is no digital Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) governing online service processes and data backup systems. Based on the concept of government data governance, the lack of official guidelines results in low data consistency

and the potential for duplication of services (Herwanto et al., 2023). This lack of integration indicates poor vertical coordination between regional government agencies, as is often the case in regions with still-developing SPBE systems.

In terms of infrastructure, the study revealed that the internet connection at the sub-district office relies on a single service provider with limited bandwidth, resulting in frequent issues when multiple users use applications simultaneously. The computers used are largely donated or purchased privately by sub-district employees. This infrastructure demonstrates the digital inequality at the local government level, as highlighted in the digital study (Hadimulyo & Pratiwi, 2021). Differences in technology access between regions directly impact the effectiveness of digital services. For systems to function efficiently and reliably, investment support from local governments is crucial through budget schemes focused on digital needs.

This situation demonstrates the importance of implementing change management principles in the digital transformation process in Ketegan Village. Institutional change is not only achieved by providing tools but also by instilling a work culture focused on data and digital efficiency. The transformation process must involve all employees in training and communication, in accordance with Kotter's theory (Jasmine et al., 2025). The eight steps of organizational change, from creating a sense of urgency to building a guiding coalition to institutionalizing a new culture, are discussed. Village institutions must transform to become adaptive, results-focused, and collaborative so that digitalization can truly improve service performance.

In general, the institutional and infrastructure readiness in Ketegan Village is in a transitional phase: they already understand the importance of digital services but are not yet supported by mature systems, human resources, and policies. The implementation of SPBE at the village level will be effective if the district government provides a coordinating framework, technical resources, and clear supporting regulations. These results confirm that digitalization is not simply a technological issue, but also a management transformation that requires visionary leadership and collaboration across levels of government.

Human Resource Capacity and Community Digital Literacy

Human resource capacity is a key factor in the success of digital administrative services at the village level. The study indicated that of the ten active village staff, only four individuals had intermediate computer skills, while the rest still needed guidance in using digital administration and archiving applications. Public service users showed differences in digital literacy levels—productive-age residents tended to adapt more quickly, while the elderly and housewives often required staff assistance to use online services. This phenomenon indicates a gap in digital skills between officials and the public.

In the context of digital literacy theory and the capability approach by Sen (Purnama et al., 2025), The ability to access technology is not always accompanied by the ability to utilize it significantly. Interviews with village officials indicate that some residents still do not understand the process of submitting online certificates or uploading supporting documents. In fact, the main goal of digitalization is to build independence in services (self-service). This lack of preparedness indicates the need for a planned community-based digital literacy program, in accordance with central government recommendations to reduce the digital divide in semi-urban areas such as Sidoarjo Regency (Mahardhani et al., 2025).

In addition to the community, village officials also need ongoing training. Findings indicate that training provided by the Communications and Information Agency is general in nature and not focused on the context of village services. According to the co-production theory by Bovaird & Loeffler (Rustiyana et al., 2025), Effective public service delivery requires the active participation of both users and providers to improve the quality of outcomes. In this context, staff training should focus on two aspects: improving technical skills (system utilization) and enhancing social skills (interacting with the community). Training methods that focus on local issues have proven more successful in improving the readiness of human resources in urban villages.

Limitations in community digital literacy also contribute to low citizen engagement in e-government programs. FGD results showed that many residents still prefer in-person meetings because they feel digital processes are "more complicated" or "unclear." This finding is consistent with research on collaborative governance by Ansell & Gash (2008) which emphasizes that public participation in service innovation only thrives when there is trust in the government. Therefore, strategies to improve digital literacy must be integrated with

efforts to create transparent and informative public communication so that the public feels in control of the digital services they access.

In a more in-depth discussion, the human resources capabilities of the village and the community are two aspects of a single digital learning ecosystem. The digitalization process should build a shared learning ecosystem where the village functions not only as a service provider but also as a literacy driver. Initiatives such as opening digital corners, deploying support staff, or involving university students in mentoring can be effective strategies to reduce disparities. The World Bank (2022) noted that a co-learning model between the community and local officials is the most effective strategy for increasing community digital capacity.

Therefore, improving human resource capacity and digital literacy in Ketegan Village is essential for the continued digitalization of public services. Community-focused training methods, ongoing technical assistance, and inclusive public communication will strengthen public trust and engagement. In line with the theories of capability and collaborative governance, improving digital literacy is not merely a technical investment but also a strengthening of social capital in participatory digital governance management.

Collaboration Mechanism Between Government and Community

The research results indicate that collaboration mechanisms in Ketegan Village remain informal, limited to working interactions between village officials and community leaders in social or administrative activities. However, with the digitalization of services initiative, new types of collaboration have emerged, such as technical support from the local youth community to improve the network and training for the community on application usage. This indicates the significant potential of local community collaboration as a driver of digital change in the village. However, this collaboration still lacks a formal structure and has not yet been implemented in institutional plans.

Based on the theory of collaborative governance by Ansell & Gash (2008) Successful collaboration requires three key elements: trust between parties, clear rules of engagement, and a collectively agreed-upon results orientation. Interviews revealed that urban villages tend to view digital communities solely as technical partners, rather than strategic ones. This situation hinders the formation of collaborative forums focused on the development of sustainable digital systems. These discussions confirmed the theory that without a formal deliberative space, collaboration risks stalling at the technical implementation stage and neglecting its strategic value.

Previous research on public collaboration indicates that community involvement in the digitalization of public services can improve innovation and efficiency, especially when supported by social incentive mechanisms. In Ketegan Urban Village, this potential is evident in the youth group (karang taruna) and citizen groups that are passionate about digital literacy activities. Within the co-production framework, they can contribute to creating socialization content, supporting residents in accessing services, or providing input on digital applications (Negoro et al., 2025). However, this study shows that there is not yet an efficient two-way communication channel between the government and the community to convey these ideas.

From the perspective of adaptive collaborative governance, the creation of a multi-stakeholder forum at the village level could be a strategic solution. This forum could involve village officials, community representatives, community youth, and representatives from relevant agencies, with a consistent agenda of evaluating digital services. Such a forum aligns with the SPBE principle, which emphasizes collaboration between parties to achieve service efficiency. According to the FGD results, the public and community welcomed this idea, with the caveat that the forum must be open, communicative, and focused on tangible benefits for the community.

Active community participation in the collaborative process also strengthens a sense of ownership of the digital service system. This supports the research findings Rahmadina (2025) regarding community-based public resource management, where active citizen involvement enhances sustainability because they feel involved in the process, not simply as recipients of policies. In the context of Ketegan Village, collaboration can be focused on fostering a sense of shared responsibility for maintaining the continuity of digital services.

Therefore, collaboration mechanisms in Ketegan Village must be formalized and expanded so that they focus not only on technical activities but also become strategic platforms for joint innovation. The theories of collaborative governance and co-production offer a solid foundation that planned collaboration between the public and communities can accelerate digital transformation and ensure the inclusiveness of services. This confirms that

developing participatory governance is a crucial prerequisite for the successful implementation of SPBE at the village level (Nur et al., 2024).

Strategy For Sustainable Digital Services Based on Community Participation

Sustainability is a key focus in the final stages of public service digitalization in Ketegan Village. Observations show that despite digitalization efforts, some services revert to manual operations after a few months due to resource constraints, lack of evaluation, and limited follow-up technical support. This indicates that sustainability has not been integrated into the village's strategic planning. Digital sustainability depends not only on access to technology but also on sustainable management, financing, and citizen engagement.

Sustainability governance theory (Suhardjo et al., 2024) emphasized that the success of sustainable digital transformation is influenced by three elements: system adaptability, institutional commitment, and community engagement. In the Ketegan context, system flexibility is still minimal because the applications used cannot be upgraded independently by the sub-district; any technical issues must await assistance from the sub-district or other parties. Institutional commitment has also not been internalized, as evidenced by the lack of a specific work plan for digital system maintenance. Therefore, a multi-level management model is needed that allows sub-districts to carry out independent maintenance under supervision from the Communications and Information Technology Agency.

Community engagement is a crucial element in ensuring service continuity (Gadzali et al., 2022). Interviews revealed that a number of citizens involved in digital communities have acted as informal agents in helping fellow citizens gain access to service applications. This phenomenon demonstrates an early form of co-production that can be developed into a mechanism for social sustainability. Co-creation theory suggests that when citizens feel directly involved in public innovation, they are more likely to maintain the program's sustainability (Aastvedt & Higdem, 2022). Thus, empowering the community as digital literacy agents could be a key strategy for maintaining the sustainability of digital administrative services in Ketegan.

Sustainability strategies must also consider policy and funding factors. Results from focus group discussions with village officials revealed that budget allocation for digitalization activities has not been a priority in village development planning meetings because it is considered a technical matter, not a direct community need. This indicates a divergent perspective on the relationship between digital innovation and community well-being. According to policy alignment theory (Yoho & Simons, 2012), The sustainability of public programs requires alignment between macro policies (regional medium-term development plans, SPBE) and micro policies (village work plans). Therefore, a policy advocacy mechanism is needed to ensure digitalization processes are incorporated into annual planning and receive clear budgetary support.

Furthermore, monitoring and assessment elements are crucial components of a sustainability strategy. Research indicates that a routine evaluation system for assessing digital service performance is not yet in place. The implementation of SPBE-based performance indicators such as service speed, user satisfaction, and system effectiveness must be introduced at the village level. A performance management approach (Fauzi & Rusi, 2020) can be used as a guideline to ensure every digital activity has measurable targets and that the results are used as a basis for policy improvement. This evaluation also plays a role in building public accountability.

Therefore, the sustainability of digital administrative services in Ketegan Village can only be achieved through a combination of technical, institutional, social, and policy strategies. Continuous community engagement, support from local regulations, and a results-based assessment system are three key pillars for maintaining the sustainability of digital transformation. This study emphasizes that sustainability is not the culmination of the digitalization process, but rather a continuous cycle that requires collaboration, learning, and collective innovation between the government and the community.

5. Conclusion

The findings of this study conclude that collaboration between the government and the community in strengthening digital administrative services in Ketegan Village, Taman District, Sidoarjo Regency, has shown positive progress, despite still facing various structural and cultural obstacles. In general, the village already has institutional commitment and basic infrastructure to support digital transformation, but its effectiveness is not optimal due to

limited devices, networks, and a lack of system integration between agencies. Human resource capacity, both apparatus and community, still needs to be improved so that the application of technology is not only at the administrative level, but also becomes part of a sustainable public service culture. Collaboration mechanisms between the government and local communities are currently informal and require development through organized digital village forums to enhance synergy between actors. This study also emphasizes the importance of sustainable digital services supported by active community participation, collective oversight, and financial and policy support from local governments. Based on these findings, this study addresses key issues regarding the nature of collaboration between the government and communities in strengthening digital administration. It also provides recommendations for local governments to enhance digital literacy training, strengthen interregional communication, and develop participatory evaluation systems to ensure that digital transformation at the village level is truly inclusive, adaptive, and community-oriented.

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