



# Inclusive Education in Pasuruan Municipality: Looking for Strategic Management?

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**Abstract.** Over a few decades, strategic management has been viewed as a promising change in public bodies. Institutional and substantial progress has been made to improve general operations most effectively and efficiently through strategic mechanisms. Unfortunately, this has not been made any uniform advancement. We conducted a case study on how the government manages inclusive education in Pasuruan. Towards narrative analysis that has been collected, there was a tendency to cut down on applying strategic management principles, especially for concerns that do not receive direct attention in political interest. Pasuruan municipality claimed to be an inclusive city in 2017, but several factors affect its inclusive education, including priority changes in planning. We discovered difficulties in strategizing long-term goals, a low ability to estimate medium-term objectives, and a lack of performance measurement, which causes inadequate monitoring and evaluation. This study shows that small municipalities lack comprehensive knowledge and strategic management awareness. The thoughtfulness of leaders and unit managers is much needed to oversee strategic management principles operation—a commitment to escalate organizational learning on discovering and processing inputs and improving the managerial system to minimize repetitive tasks and accommodate desirable future. Further research could present in-depth development of unified strategic management for unique traits of public institutions.

**Keywords:** Strategic Management · Governance · Inclusive Education

## 1 Introduction

Public organizations adopt strategic management to create shared value through effective and efficient decision-making mechanisms [1, 2]. Its emergence aligned as a result brought by NPM, which has been through a lengthy discourse for decades, but its actualization is facing a few glitches up until now [2–4] as it is known that the implementation of management strategies has not been represented in public organizations. The personality of public organizations tends to fulfill various internal and external interests simultaneously. Hence, it causes tension in strategic work and often has the potential to hinder the operation of strategic management.

The public sector has a particular mentality that tends to set up several tensions when practicing strategic management. These tensions are caused by pluralistic handling,

which is more deep-rooted in this kind of organization. There are three specific tensions, namely (1) short or long-term goal setting; (2) parts or the whole approach; (3) reactivity or proactivity responses [2]. A particular institution indicated they had not gained enough strong ability and attention in strategic management as it pictured when environmental and other external dynamics were not adequately measured. It makes strategic planning only concentrated at the central, so it does not have a derivative strategy in the form of goals, objectives, shared values, or even performance assessment and evaluation within local authorities, causing government activity to be just business-as-usual [4].

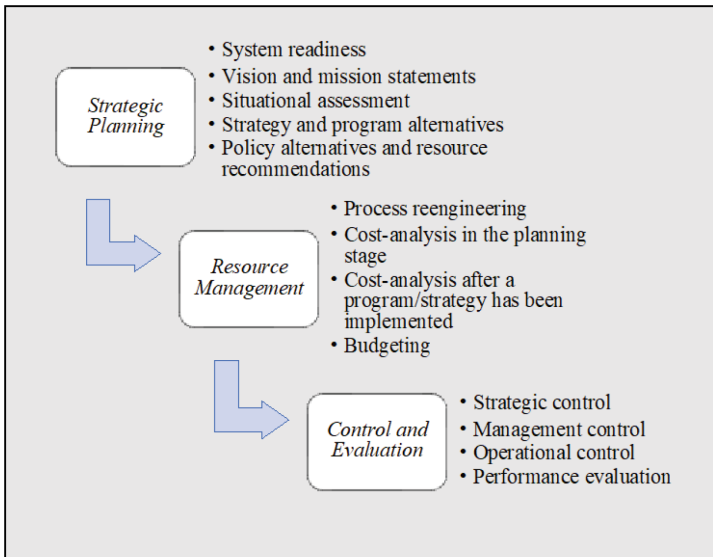
Bureaucratic reforms that claimed were often just a legal necessity. Improvements were found in the planning process, but the overall strategic management has not shown any significant results. There was inertia in the diffusion of strategic management in public institutions influenced by a lack of support for planning capacity development, low level of participation and awareness to implement the broad principles, limited coordination, and misaligned national and institutional goals [3]. The former greatness story of strategic management convinced its adoption in public institutions for decades. It turns out the records have not been as reliable to many. In some cases, it often happens in suburban or small municipalities.

Previous research has shown that the bureaucratic-command model is still being applied to upper-level administrators such as a ministry [3], so it is inevitable that local authorities still have not touched on strategic reforms. For example, about 60% of Mississippi local authorities have not complied with the planning strategy [5]. The same thing happened in Turkey. When planning documents were only seen as policy advisories rather than technical guides, the centralistic bureaucratic mentality was still entrenched [4]. This becomes a bias when strategic management is just a pious wish that does not work indeed.

Since the old bureaucratic system was considered a spendthrift on its budget and caused expansion of public dissatisfaction demanded a change, a new terminology within the value for money or performance management proposed grounds for adjustment [6]. It discussed identifying determining factors for a sound performance system in public bodies. Later, it was generally stated that there should be a strategy to align performance measurement instruments with current organizational circumstances, a strong commitment from the leader, cultural work change, and a continuous improvement of control and evaluation [3].

Here comes strategic management developed more detailed and chronological. Thus far, public organizations tend to be reactive, but strategic management brings a broader view by forecast the future that will be faced so it can act more proactively. Strategic management clarifies the flow of organizational performance through input, process, and output instruments in the strategic management continuum (Fig. 1) [7].

A certain number of studies above have discussed the latest discovery of strategic management but mainly only examine what is done by the central government [2–4, 8–10]. There are differences between strategic processes at the central level and local authorities regarding political climate, complex characteristics and issues, also further related to the amount of budgeting. Analyzing how local authorities strategize their priority is an essential matter because the issues captured were closest to the community's needs. This study responds to exploration requests in local authorities [11] and fulfills the



**Fig. 1.** Components of each strategic management process.

analysis of strategic management principles in the local work units [1, 4, 5, 12, 13]. By focusing on strategic management, this study is a step forward in contributing beneficial literature on the urgency of organizational changes in public bodies—especially the local work unit.

## 2 Methods

This study explored the strategic management processes in managing inclusive education in Pasuruan. A case study was chosen for detailed phenomenon results in a municipality that claims to be an inclusive city since 2017. As a qualitative study, we proceed with some narrative data, primarily field notes and interview transcripts, and secondary ones, such as documents and published reports. The qualitative method depends on a systematic approach influenced by the research question, who will take advantage of the information, and the resources used [14].

Our fundamental question is how strategic management operates in small municipalities, like Pasuruan, among the complexity of public affairs and priorities attached to a small town. The local authority was where each issue of humankind back to its roots with a particular discrepancy of political, economic, and historical backgrounds [11]. Inclusive education was chosen as our core issue in response to additional research on multicultural education, segregation, and inclusion in Indonesia to promote equitable learning rights for all children [15–17]. Strategic management is used as a comparative theory to determine strategic planning, resource management, monitoring, and evaluation of inclusive education performance.

Data was collected from a structured interview in Education and Culture Office (ECO) and an inclusive state school in Pasuruan. Data triangulation got from questioning

one chief officer, one head of the junior high school division, one junior high school division employee, and one planning division employee, and the opportunity to talk with an exceptional assistant teacher for disabled students in school. According to Powell and Renner's analyzing qualitative data, we went through a series of data analysis techniques.

First, we get to know our data by separating meaningful data and writing some impressions. After that, we identify the critical questions by comparing the group's responses to any questions and topics. Categorizing information became the next step by using NVIVO to organize themes and subcategories found. Then we classified each category by its patterns and connections to assist in data interpretation to bring it all together.

### 3 Results and Discussions

#### 3.1 Strategizing Inclusive Education: Challenges Between Other Priority

Inclusive education arrangement in Pasuruan was regulated in Mayor Act No. 9/2017, providing planning terms of strategic documents, resources, and slightly budget plans and monitoring evaluation. This regulation resulted from past decision-making processes, a pervasive part of overall strategic management mechanisms [7]. After five years, it indicated that this regulation was not running optimally as it affected its strategic management due to the change of regional heads. The discussion below presents the current discovery of strategic management principles in inclusive education.

**An Absence of Appropriate Strategic Plan Learning Amid Rapid Development Changes.** UNICEF findings show the disparities in the distribution of public education, notably for inclusive education in Indonesia, where 3 out of 10 children with disability have never received an education in school, approximately 140.000 children between 7–18 years. Even though ones who attend school also present high gaps in graduation rates compared with children without disabilities [16]. We found that the strategic plans for either five or annual years have not shown directly inclusive education objectives because of current regional heads' development vision and mission. The absence of medium-term objectives has remarkably suggested a vacancy for performance targets advancement.

The latest five-year plan document indicated a less logical and systemic, whereas, as stated, "if we do not know where we are going, no road will get us there" because planning is requisite for whole successful management [7]. An illogical strategic plan ensued; it to be just technocratic decisions as happened to a prior study [3, 4]. Avoiding the dysfunctional aspects of technocratic planning is required a dynamic-open system of organizational interaction with its broader surroundings continuously.

Determining system readiness by operating an assessment to gather baseline data, establish issues, and define clear roles and responsibilities among stakeholders;

- Specify organizational goals and objectives to solve the captured issues and compose an internal change desired consists of identifying program objectives etc.;
- Oversight of internal and external environmental analysis to specify needs and trends;
- Establish a strategy and program alternatives to encourage demands and their impact on organization effectiveness and efficiency;

- The last one is interpreting goals and objectives into a set of policies and recommendations, which includes guidelines for allocating resources [7].

We assured that the medium-term plan did not re-establish since the regulation was enacted without any significant increase in performance targets. Nonetheless, inclusive education is held as a routine task in their activities, such as ensuring that all schools accept a student with disabilities allowed to the quota, assessing prospective student's level of disability, mapping special assistance teachers for an inclusive student in schools, conducting special assistance teachers training and capacity building.

Lastly, inclusive education is not a priority agenda. Therefore, specialized work units like ECO were not required to analyze current needs, so there is no innovation or in-depth attempt to eradicate the education gap for the disabled community. Not to mention that the statistical data of school-age children with disabilities has never been calculated by the regions, making it unable to know how far the absorption is undertaken in the field of education.

**Repetitive and Sluggish Work in Resource Management.** Talking about the resources in a public institution always faces limitations, particularly on their finances. Besides, it is more about turning goals and objectives into specific actions (programs and activities), arranging an exact process to accomplish those programs and activities approved, and designing every essential resource needed to implement them. As previously explained, strategic documents do not show the recent necessity of inclusive education. It causes the resources to be managed only through repetitive work with slow progress due to the absence of significant changes.

Prior study has determined that there was low coordination among their administrator-level [3, 4], admittedly, it coming from tension which likely to hand over critical mechanisms, for instance, the process reengineering that considers an organizational set of business processes to achieve final results. Nowadays, governance requires business processes to picture the process of achieving objectives based on output-driven projections of stakeholders involved and how they function in the arena. The work unit at our research site does not seem to have that in advising their mandate and task as a leading education sector.

In inclusive education, ECO arranges its resources as defined in the previous mayor act: their special assistance teachers who create particular need curriculum. There were special rooms for disabled students that each school directly managed. The financial source of inclusive education in schools receives funds from ECO, nearly 10 million per year only for state elementary and junior high schools.

The imperative work of resource management was to ensure its efficient use. However, before being efficient, it should be sure that the designed programs and activities in strategic plans lead to effectiveness early. Linkages between the determined strategy dan the whole process might have been constructed in this stage by specific focus efforts essentially;

- Provide an instrument that measures overall performance by considering the successful process from a Critical Success Factors (CSF) set. CSF should be aligned through organizational core values and ultimate user or society values;

- Once the CSF has been attained, several measurements should be done using Key Performance Indicators (KPI). It builds from a long list of data gathered from an interview or focused group discussion to know which indicators could be added and how the organization can monitor and report;
- Estimating budget and performance targets may also be applicable;
- Periodically discussing KPI attainment is influential in knowing further about ongoing attempts to reach desired objectives [7].

**Inability to Perform Ideal Monitoring and Evaluation.** The last stage of Steiss's strategic management continuum was controlling and evaluating strategy. In maintaining a strategy, we might assess how far the system has worked to select the best corrective actions [7]. Any capable performance and evaluation did not seem adequately conducted in inclusive education. It is related to the nonappearance of progressive strategic plans and no eager-beaver to bring about target estimates.

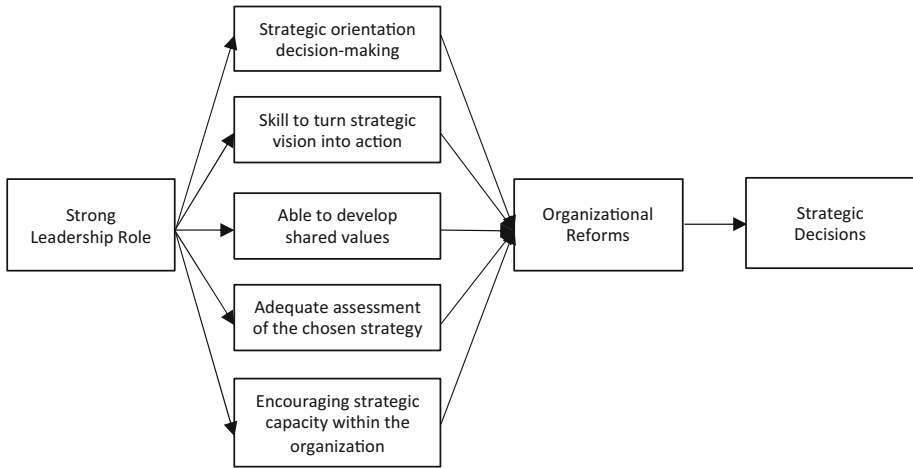
The monitoring process is carried out by ECO only at the output level, like ensuring special assistance teachers available at all schools. There has been no effort to ensure whole inclusive education mechanisms being an effective and efficient work. To put all the processes together, successful performance measurement should be a systemic endeavor through three determining factors; relevant tools to the fundamental purposes, stability in organizational operation, and focus on a total entity. When an organization has understood these systemic concerns, it will do formative and summative evaluations as double-loop learning toward the existing condition and improving its strategic management [7].

### 3.2 A Holistic Endeavors in Rectifying Strategic Management: What is to Be Done in the Public Organization

**Strengthening the Leadership Role.** Leadership has a significant impact on strategic management. Even though it was not elaborated further in Steiss, leadership is the starting point. As mentioned in Kose and Kose [4], administrators must have strategic roles; as stated by Davies and Davies, a leader needs to have a strategic orientation, have the skills to turn strategy into action, be able to develop shared values, adequate assessment of the chosen strategy, and strengthen strategic capacity within the organization [4]. It is also a proven indicator of various bureaucracy and administration reforms [5].

Strategic management is the art of formulating, implementing, and evaluating cross-practical decisions to meet organizational objectives (Fig. 2). Therefore, it takes decision-makers who can construct appropriate decisions, including strategic, management, and operational objectives. Strategic objectives are defined as a leader's ability to expect future changes to provide alternative programs and activities to solve issues and impact a group of people. Management objectives involve allocating particular resources, budgets and employee commitments to specific tasks. Then, operational objectives similarly arrange the fulfillment and controlling of strategic actions to oversee performance measures in accomplishing final goals [7].

**Discovering and Processing Inputs.** Demands as the inputs of the decision system should be viewed through a systematical examination. In a broader environment,

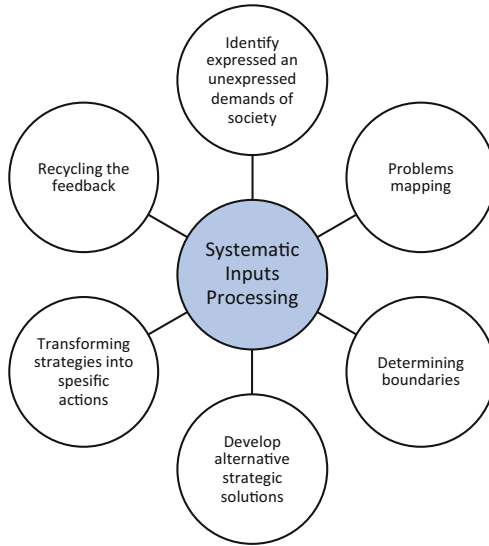


**Fig. 2.** Leadership roles in actualizing strategic decisions.

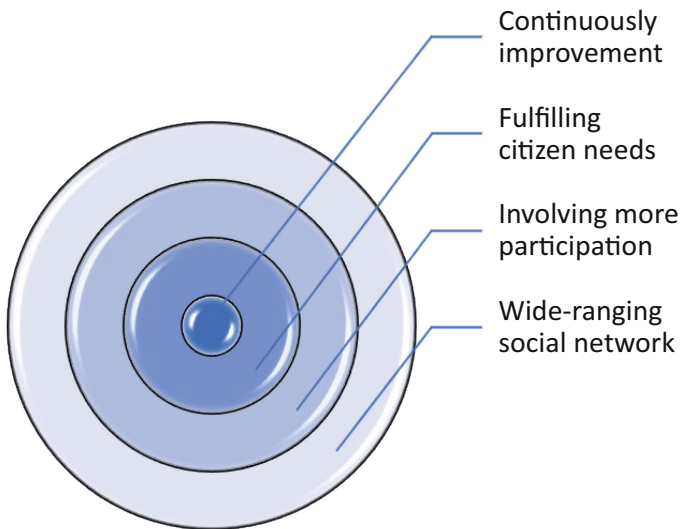
expressed demands brought more specific expectations. This is similar to the inclusive education arrangement, which encourages schools to allow disabled students. Besides, there were also unexpressed demands in which alternative corrective actions should be drawn up from the beginning of strategic planning. Typically, the local work unit like ECO did not seem to have enough capacity for these unexpressed demands as things go by a reactive response. This shows that when an agenda is no longer a development priority due to changes in political interests brought by the new regional head, the arrangement will loosen up. Hence, it becomes a routine activity that is not adequately guarded.

In response to these traits, it is required to have a systematic approach to processing inputs. As shown in Fig. 3, systemic suggests starting by classifying the demands of society to outline the problems. The next step involves a straightforward question in identifying boundaries to get understandable organizational goals and objectives regarding specific agendas. Prospering alternative strategic solutions is quite challenging because public institutions must have a broader view of the risks faced in the coming years and how to solve them. Of course, it should be translated into managerial, operational, and tactical strategies to make it more practical. Furthermore, completing this systematic circle requires sound feedback processing to adjust the integration of all aspects of strategic management.

**Improving the Managerial System of Work Unit through Organizational Learning in TQM.** Total quality management (TQM) is not only discussed in the business sector but also an appropriate concept to implement in public bodies. Build on four basic notions, specifically the continuous improvement towards dynamics world, focusing on citizen or service user needs in shifting their requirement, involving more participation in strategic work to emphasize the quality of process reengineering and quality of methods used in assessing performance, thereupon a call for social networking to reinforce systemic organizational learning from both inside and outside environment.



**Fig. 3.** Systematic approach in processing inputs.



**Fig. 4.** TQM learning in public institution.

By having these four understandings the knowledge of TQM's concepts, a local work unit can comprehensively arrange the particular issue more strategically (Fig. 4). However, we know that actualizing appropriate learning processes for the public sector is challenging. Therefore, we hope that future studies can contribute to the discussion of concrete lessons for the public sector in increasing its strategic management capacity to achieve the bureaucratic reform that has been favored so far.



## 4 Conclusions and Recommendations

Poor quality of strategic plans, resource management, monitoring, and evaluation is still a big problem for public institutions. Non-priority agendas, like inclusive education in this paper, gradually become routine tasks with no clear goals and objectives. Regulations enacted five years ago are still an integral basis of the process without any details on operational, management, or tactical strategies for adopting common changes. This study elaborated on several procedures that should have been done within the strategic management continuum.

The results of this study might be understood with carefulness. First, this research objective is not a priority agenda of current region heads. Consequently, these issues cannot be summarized by all local authorities. Second, this research juxtaposes the selected phenomenon with a set of theories from Steiss. Future research should intend a clarify test to these findings in other municipalities with various strategic management theories. It also aims to develop more research on strategic management processes in public institutions, which remain a minority among other topics in governance. Third, a leader's participation and awareness are much needed to oversee the whole operation of strategic management. Furthermore, in-depth development of unified strategic management for unique traits of public institutions would benefit the micro-level government.

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