



# Government Village Competency in Realizing Digital Government through Simpeldesa Application in Bandung District

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**Abstract .** The purpose of this study is to describe and analyze the implementation of digital government through the Simpeldesa application with the dimensions of ability, knowledge, and attitude. Simpeldesa has three functions, namely regarding public services and administration, village community social interaction, and village digital economy. By using qualitative methods and choosing informants purposively, the results of the study show that village administrations are generally competent in terms of abilities, knowledge, and attitudes. But there is a gap attitude between the village officials and the community involved, even though the success or failure of the Simpeldesa application depends on whether the community wants to use it or not. This research concludes that skills and knowledge in using the application should not only depend on what the government thinks is necessary for the community, but whether the community needs it or not. The gap attitude can be overcome by gradually reducing the reliance of face-to-face services, encouraging people to gradually adapt to utilizing the application for accessing various services within the village.

**Keywords:** Simpeldesa, Village Government, Competency, Community

## 1 INTRODUCTION

It began with the issuance of Presidential Instruction Number 3 of 2003 regarding the National Policy and Strategy for the Development of E-Government [1]. As a result, local governments are required to utilize information technology in serving the public. The relationship between the government and its citizens is no longer limited to face-to-face interactions but is built through technology that transcends time and space. In the era of digital governance, the barriers between those who govern and those who are governed have been eliminated. Consequently, a synergistic two-way relationship will be established [2] and government will become more accessible [3].

The term "E-Government" was replaced with "Electronic-Based Government System" or Sistem Pemerintahan Berbasis Elektronik (SPBE) following the issuance of Presidential Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 95 of 2018 concerning the Electronic-Based Government System (SPBE)[4]. The implementation of SPBE extends to the villages, as mandated by Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages, especially Article 86, which mandates Regional District Governments to:

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1. Develop information access through the village information system.
2. Develop the village information system and rural area development.
3. Provide information on the development planning of the District for the Villages.

The village information system facilities include hardware and software facilities, networks, and human resources. This information system is managed by the Village Government and can be accessed by the villagers and all stakeholders. Therefore, the provision of SPBE at the village level should be facilitated by the District/City Government, starting from software/hardware, human resources, and the provision of development planning information.

One form of Electronic-Based Government System (SPBE) at the village level is the Village Management and Service Information System or Sistem Informasi Manajemen dan Pelayanan Desa (Simpeldes), designed to support and streamline the performance of the Village Government. Simpeldes comes in the form of a cloud-based application (web and smartphone) with the spirit of digitization, participation, and self-reliance[5]. Similarly, the Bandung District Regional Government, aiming to optimize services for the community, has undertaken a number of innovations, including the launch of the Simpeldes application[6].

Furthermore, according to the Bandung District Regent, Dadang Supriatna, the Simpeldes application can be accessed using a mobile phone. In addition to making it easier for the public to access administrative and business services, citizens can also directly communicate their complaints to the village government or Pemerintahan Desa (Pendes). This will undoubtedly enhance the effectiveness of services for the community and contribute to the realization of a smart village. Moreover, it can facilitate two-way governance at the village level.

The current technological advancements are bringing about many changes in various aspects, including the aspect of public administrative services[7]. Village government plays a key role in the provision of public services. "The village government is the first touchpoint for the community to access services. The community's experience when receiving services at the village office influences public satisfaction and the government's image," said Deputy Diah[8].

From various quotes, it appears that e-government is not only intended to facilitate services for the community but also to create a two-way village governance system and respond to changes in information technology. However, in reality, after the Simpeldes application was launched in the Bandung District, only one village successfully used this application, and most of the villages that attempted to use it were not successful. From the observations conducted by the researchers, it turns out that the community is not yet accustomed to receiving digital services. People still go to the village office to request administrative services.

Heeks divides e-government issues into 5 Ps, namely:

1. Position (the location of the IT function within public sector organizations);
2. People (recruitment and retention of staff involved with e-government);
3. Pelf (dealing with the financial aspects of e-government);
4. Projects (the ways in which e-government projects are managed);

Politics (the role of organizational power and politics in e-government [9]). In this research, only "people" are the focus of analysis, as Heeks argues that humans are the critical factor in technology. A leader must pay attention to the individuals involved in e-government in three arenas: skills, knowledge, and attitude.

Skills indicate the readiness of village officials to adopt the Simpeldes application, and in terms of knowledge, village officials have mastered the Simpeldes application due to training. However, when it comes to attitude, there is a difference in attitude between village officials and the community. Village officials are ready to serve the community digitally, but some members of the community are still unwilling to use this application.

## 2 METHOD

The data in this research consist of secondary data and primary data. Primary data is collected through interviews, while secondary data is obtained from observations and documentation [10]. The selection of informants in the research follows the criteria proposed by Nasution [11], which include being intensively and actively involved in the activities of the research area, having the time to provide information when requested, and being able to provide valid information. Data analysis follows the pattern outlined by Miles and Huberman [12], which involves data reduction, presentation, and drawing conclusions. The informant selection technique is done purposively, as outlined by Sugiyono [13].

## 3 DISCUSSION

E-Government at the village level is a concept of electronic governance that integrates information and communication technology (ICT) in providing public services and administration at the village level. This digital transformation of governance is the primary focus of village e-government [14]. As the front line in public service, village governments are required to prepare the capabilities of village officials in community-based service and development planning to create self-reliant villages by utilizing information technology [15]. The terminology of e-government includes various diverse terms:

*"The development of technology and information devices raises various concepts, both at a substantial level, but also from the terms used. The term Electronic Government (E-Government) often experiences several terms that are often developed, including Electronic Administration, Digital Government, Online Government, e-Service, and Mobile Government which are used interchangeably as a form of utilizing information and communication technology (ICT)". [16].*

Simpeldesa is not directly related to the Vision of Bandung District. The vision, which is "BEDAS" in Sundanese, meaning "great energy," includes 13 priority programs:

1. Incentives for Quranic teachers, along with health and labor insurance incentives.

2. Interest-free and collateral-free revolving loans.
3. Protection and empowerment of farmers.
4. Incentives for local security (Hansip) and labor insurance.
5. Incentives for neighborhood chiefs (RT), community unit chiefs (RW), and Village Family Welfare Empowerment (PKK) along with labor insurance.
6. Increase in fixed income for village officials and Village Consultative Body (BPD) members, along with labor insurance.
7. Bupati Scholarships (Besti).
8. Construction of five Regional Hospitals in Kertasari, Cimaung, Ciwidey, Arjasari, and Bojong Soang.
9. Construction of decent housing.
10. Addition of junior high and high schools.
11. Three local subjects for elementary, junior high, and high schools, including Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution, Sundanese Language and Local Culture, and Quranic recitation and study[17].

Therefore, Simpeldesa, as one of the e-government applications for direct village-level services, is not included in the priority programs.

This research utilizes the theory proposed by Heeks, which consists of skills, knowledge, and attitude. *All of the stages and techniques of systems development and operation require skills in order to put them into practice. Organizations may therefore find a skills gap in anything from spotting opportunities for new e-government systems, to analyzing current use of information, to process redesign, to software programming, to system installation and use. In addition, there can be 'meta-level' development skill requirements relating to project and change management, communication and negotiation, problem solving, and so on.*

*Knowledge: eGovernment systems development and operation requires knowledge. Organizations may therefore find a knowledge gap where staff do not know about systems development methods, or about the nature and role of information and information systems, or about organizational systems and processes, or about the basics of IT, or about the design options that could be applied to the new e-government system, or about why the new system should be operated in a particular way. Attitudes: Where different stakeholders have different attitudes to the new e-government system, one could talk of an 'attitude gap'. In many ways this reflects the different values and objectives of different stakeholders.*

The informant, who also serves as the operator of the Simpeldesa application, states that the skill of analyzing various information circulating in the Ganjar Sabar village community is indeed required to know what information is circulating in the village. Although each official has different skills, some are accustomed to processing information, some engage directly with the villagers in the field, and some also monitor social media used by the community. They use the Simpeldesa application through the status update feature.

The task of data input has become the job description of the village operator. In data input, if there is a failure, the results of the upload can be checked first. If an error occurs during data input into the web-based/dashboard-based Simpeldesa application, the result of the input will be blank, and the data will not appear or be saved in the

application's database. Consequently, if this happens, the villagers will face obstacles and difficulties when logging into the Android application. Input errors usually occur when the operator fills in the data incorrectly and not in accordance with the format provided by the Simpeldesa application team. This is evidence that the operator, who is also a government official, needs to review if data input is unsuccessful, but officials cannot program the application in case of errors.

Knowledge about the Simpeldesa application is generally possessed by the Village Head and their officials. This is because the Village Head, Facilitator, and Simpeldesa application operator have been provided with knowledge and training regarding the Simpeldesa application beforehand. The results of this training are then disseminated to other village officials. According to the Village Head, he and his officials are aware of the various information systems within the Simpeldesa application, which consists of 20 features:

**1. Status Update / Update Status**

This feature is intended for residents to be active on social media and share their experiences and the conditions in the village, especially in their respective hamlets. Village governments can also advertise or promote their village to attract the attention of both local and national residents.

**2. Village News / Berita Desa**

Similar to the previous point, in the creation of village news, only the Village Government can participate, but it can be accessed by all residents. Villages are expected to actively provide village news and innovate, aiming to bring about change and progress in every village, considering that village news can also reach a national scale.

**3. Village Information / Info Desa**

This feature helps the community obtain information about their respective villages, but its scale is local and is only visible to residents within a single village. It differs from "Berita Desa (Village News)." The Village News and Village Information features can also be beneficial for a village when disseminating accurate and positive information, making it easier for residents to understand and not fall for the spread of hoaxes.

**4. APBDes Infographic / Infografis APBDes**

Village governments can use these features to improve information about the Village Financial Statement (APBDes) of a village, eliminating the need to create a billboard. The transparency of public information regarding the use of village funds can be accessed directly by village residents up to the implementation stage.

**5. Report to PEMDES & Private Message to BPD / Laporan PEMDES & Japri BPD**

This means that in this context, if community members have issues or concerns in the village, they can directly report them to the Village Government (Pemdes) or contact the Village Consultative Body (BPD) through private messaging (Japri). Given the limitations of time, budget, and the practicality of gathering all village residents for every meeting, this feature can help residents communicate their aspirations. This is also the foundation for the formation of discussions and consultations within the village.

**6. Letter Services / Layanan Surat**

This feature can be utilized by village residents when they need to create documents, eliminating the need to physically visit the village office, stand in queues, and allowing them to easily submit requests for various documents through this Simpeldesa application. Subsequently, residents will receive notifications from the village operator when their documents have been successfully processed.

7. **Simple Donation / *Simpel Donasi***  
This feature can be used by individuals, groups, and communities when they want to conduct fundraising or fundraising activities.
8. **Simple Donor / *Simpel Donor***  
This feature is used by village residents who want to donate blood or need information about the availability of blood donors.
9. **Chat Doctor / *Chat Dokter***  
A service for village residents related to health. It allows direct communication with registered doctors through the Simpeldesa application.
10. **Healthy Village / *Desa Sehat***  
This is related to the Healthy Village House (*Rumah Desa Sehat*), which is necessary for addressing various issues related to stunting.
11. **Village Farming / *Tani Desa***  
Designed for farmers who want to sell their agricultural products to buyers through the Simpeldesa application. This feature also includes a farming calendar, allowing buyers to easily determine when farmers will harvest their crops. Buyers can view the harvest results through the Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMdes).
12. **Village Job Vacancies / *Loker Desa***  
Intended for village residents who are in need of job vacancies and for companies that require or need workers.
13. **Village Survey / *Survey Desa***  
Facilitates the Village Government in conducting surveys related to village government policies.
14. **Ask Village / *Tanya Desa***  
This feature is a consultation service for village residents with the Customer Service/Village Service.
15. **Panic Button**  
The Panic Button is designed to assist village residents in case of unwanted emergency situations. By pressing the Panic Button, notifications will be sent to relevant users regarding the information, and this feature also provides the location/position information of residents in need of assistance who pressed the button.
16. **Village Market / *Pasar Desa***  
An interesting feature for creating an online marketplace where residents can buy and sell various products by uploading them through the Simpeldesa application. This platform will be accessible and viewable by village residents on both a local and national scale.
17. **Village Wholesale / *Grosir Desa***  
Providing convenience to village residents in meeting their basic needs available at the Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes).
18. **E-Money Payment / *Pembayaran E-Money***  
Able to conduct online buying and selling transactions by utilizing the E-Money feature.

**19. Online Motorcycle Taxi / *SimpelJek (Ojek Online)***

Online motorcycle taxi service to facilitate ordering vehicles online, sending goods, and ordering food.

**20. BUMDes Partner / *Mitra BUMDes***

Becoming a partner of the Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes) facilitates residents who do not have an E-wallet and only have cash. They can utilize this service by purchasing from stores or shops that are affiliated with BUMDes partners.

This application is indeed working, with its extensive features to meet the service needs of village communities, especially public services. However, alternative methods will be used when there are obstacles to the delivery of these services. According to one of the informants, who is also the Village Head, the Village Government of Ganjar Sabar, as outlined in the RPJMDes, states that Ganjar Sabar Village will provide fast services to the community, also known as "One Touch," hence that people can upload or receive services efficiently. In addition to that, the village also has other applications provided by the Ministry through various departments in the Bandung District, including SDGS, SID (Village Information System or Sistem Informasi Desa), and others. The village is also expected to innovate and provide good and speedy services in line with government programs at the regional, provincial, and national levels.

In terms of attitude, among the officials themselves, there is no difference in attitude towards the presence of the *Simpeldesa* application. However, as village residents, the informant believes that the community is still unfamiliar with this application and its features. Different perspectives among the community members arise from differences in digital literacy, making it difficult for many to understand gadgets and facing limitations with data quotas. Therefore, many still visit the village office to request various documents. However, personally, the informant finds the *Simpeldesa* application very convenient. They have bought mobile credit through the application using e-money, and they also recently discovered that the *Simpeldesa* application can be used to sell products.

In the *Simpeldesa* application, a Smart Economy platform is indeed developed to boost the village economy by empowering and increasing the participation of residents and strengthening the Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes) sector as a platform for economic development within the village. In the villages successfully implementing *Simpeldesa*, such as Cibiru Wetan Village, Smart Economy is developed to address the digital divide and enhance the competitiveness of the community in the global online-based business arena. The features of Village Wholesale and Village Market will serve as models for developing retail business collaborations and partnerships between residents' SMEs and the Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes) of Cibiru Wetan Village[18].

The informant observes that there is an attitude gap between whether its within community members, or between the community members and village officials. This gap can be interpreted from the informant's response, as there are still many community members who request various documents from the village, while village officials are already trained to operate the *Simpeldesa* application. Some members of the community, on the other hand, feel the convenience of *Simpeldesa*'s presence

Although the village has the potential to become a digital village, with a population density and housing that are quite balanced, the willingness of the community to embrace

change and technological advancement is still in doubt. It's essential to consider that such changes need to be supported by available resources and facilities. Additionally, one must assess how many village residents currently use smartphones and whether there are still those who use basic mobile phones that may not support these changes.

## 4 CONCLUSION

The digitization of the village through the Simpeldesa application, which initially aimed to simplify services for the community, so that residents wouldn't need to visit the village office to handle their document needs, has not been fully successful. There still exists a knowledge, skill, and attitude gap between the community and village officials. While officials have received training and equipment from the government, many community members are not yet prepared for services that require new technology, specifically smartphones with internet connectivity.

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