

COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF E-PROCUREMENT IN INDRAGIRI HULU REGENCY

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Received : 01 November 2022, Revised: 08 December 2022, Accepted : 08 December 2022

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to understand communication activities in implementing E-procurement in Indragiri Hulu Regency. This research is interesting in understanding communication activities in the implementation process in frontier, outermost, and underdeveloped (3T) regions. E-Procurement is an application for managing goods/services procurement data, including internet-based procurement data, designed to achieve an effective, efficient, and integrated procurement process. This research is qualitative research to explore communication activities in implementing E-Procurement. The subjects of this study amounted to 8 people involved in the Implementation of e-procurement. Data analysis was carried out in three steps: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. The study results show that communication activities occur in 4 stages of the auction process carried out by the Electronic Procurement Agency. This process involves regional apparatus organizations in Indragiri Hulu Regency with suppliers who provide goods and services registered in the electronic procurement system in Indragiri Hulu Regency. The process of procuring goods starts with a proposal process from each Regional Apparatus Organization based on their respective Performance Plans to carry out the bidding process. The auction process is carried out by a working group team formed by the Head of LPSE, which suppliers of goods and services will follow. The Working Group team will evaluate the documents proposed by the supplier and determine the tender winner.

Keywords : *Communication, Implementation, E-Procurement, Indragiri Hulu.*

1. Introduction

The need for governance based on e-government is one of the pillars of democracy in administering good governance. E-government is essential to administering Government and providing transparent, fast, inexpensive and quality public services. Several studies also show that implementing e-government reduces unfair and corrupt practices in various countries (Zhao et al., 2021).

Implementation of e-government in realizing good governance requires a commitment to reform the bureaucracy. Bureaucratic reform can be carried out by improving institutions by creating a streamlined, effective and efficient organizational structure. Increasing Human Resources is the primary indicator for maximizing the Implementation of e-government. In addition, management is also needed to create an efficient and effective process of bureaucracy followed by supervision and accountability to create transparency and accountability. The Implementation of e-government will be carried out successfully if the public services are carried out quickly, precisely, cheaply, easily, non-discriminatory, and satisfactorily (Turner et al., 2022).

Indonesia is moving towards a government system that uses an E-Government-based government information system. E-Government is a form of implementing public services based on information and communication technology that aims to make work processes between agencies and within agencies simpler, more accurate, responsive and transparent (Rubiyanto, 2019). This consequence has led the Indonesian Government to implement the E-Procurement system to procure goods and services.

In addition to the process of bureaucratic reform, the Implementation of communication is also very important in carrying out public services. Equality of meaning is needed in every action taken to achieve political goals in public service in a government. Therefore, the communication process is essential to implementing government policies (Riauan, 2013). Communication activities in the Implementation of e-procurement must be well understood to avoid causing mass communication. Effective communication can be done with openness, support, empathy, a positive attitude, and equality (Devito, 2011).

Indragiri Hulu, as a district in Indonesia, also implements a government system based on E-Government. The Regional Secretariat of Indragiri Hulu Regency implements the E-Procurement system for procuring goods and services. In practice, the procurement of goods and services has yet to be done optimally. This is caused by the need for more infrastructure and human resource capabilities that can support the Implementation of the e-procurement process properly.

The existence of E-Procurement is expected to provide convenience to the Government in the process of procuring the goods and services needed (Nurmandi, 2012). Therefore, every government agency, both the central Government and local governments, must implement this E-Procurement program properly. Policy implementation, in principle, is a way for a policy to achieve its goals, nothing more and nothing less. To implement public policy, two steps exist, namely directly implementing in the form of programs or through the formulation of derivative policies as implementing regulations. Public policies that can be directly operationalized include Presidential Decrees, Presidential Instructions, Ministerial Decrees, Regional Head Decrees and Head of Service Decrees. In particular, public policy is often understood as a government decision.

The Indragiri Hulu government should build an E-procurement system in order to acquire products and services electronically. In reality, however, there is still a procurement procedure, including the direct nomination of suppliers of products and services. According to a study by researchers, this is related to a number of difficulties that are often faced. There still needs to be more communication between the procurement department, LPSE, and entities who want products and services. For the acquisition of products and services, there has been little intensive contact between agencies or institutions and suppliers or contractors. This is evident by the need for a designated point of contact for suppliers to conduct questions and answers with LPSE. In addition, there are no other channels for disseminating information on purchasing products and services save the LPSE website.

The resources needed for the Implementation of e-procurement still need to be improved. The need for human resources who have an educational background and information technology capabilities sthat can operate computers and the LPSE system. Facilities and infrastructure need to be improved, such as computers, internet networks and other means of communication are still often constrained. However, the condition of facilities and infrastructure still needs to be improved, as there are still employees who use personal laptops at work and personal smartphones as a means of communication with various parties within the framework of the e-procurement process.

In solving problems in the e-procurement process, there have been many studies that previous researchers have carried out. The research results found in Malaysia stated that the Implementation of e-procurement had yet to find a definite and reliable technical pattern. The e-procurement system is stated to be not optimal and cannot guarantee the sustainability of the procurement system in a sustainable manner (Singh et al., 2020). Implementation of systems that can be used in e-government must have sustainability for the Implementation of systems that are integrated (Habibullah, 2010). Ensuring the reliability of e-procurement implementation is influenced by many variables based on legal and economic approaches. Therefore, in its Implementation, physical infrastructure for information and communication technology is needed (Afolabi et al., 2019). Research in developed countries in the Netherlands and Portugal shows that the e-System is reliable for procuring goods and services (Mélon & Spruk, 2020). Other research shows that the Implementation of e-procurement must involve third-party companies so that the Implementation can run well. This is due to the low level of digital literacy of government workers who run e-procuring systems (Belisari et al., 2020).

The two studies show differences in the research results obtained from the two countries, which have different characteristics. Developed countries with good and reliable information systems show positive results from e-procurement. Meanwhile, in developing countries, the Implementation still needs help finding reliable patterns in the Implementation of e-procurement.

The use of e-procurement can assist the Government in eradicating corruption. This can be found in the results of research conducted in Nigeria, Indonesia, Israel, Nepal, Albania, Georgia and South Korea (Luijken & Martini, 2014); (Nurmandi, 2012); (Neupane et al., 2014); (OECD, 2016). It cannot be denied that implementing e-procurement is very beneficial for eradicating corruption. Procurement of goods and services is carried out more transparently and credibly through an online goods and services procurement system. State commitment is needed so that the e-procurement system can be implemented optimally. Reliable infrastructure regulations and policies are needed to realize eradicate corruption using e-procurement.

The deployment of the e-purchase system in the Indragiri Hulu Regency's procurement of goods and services is comparable to previous studies. This study focuses on communication activities associated with introducing E-procurement in the Indragiri Hulu Regency. The fascinating aspect of the study undertaken by researchers is that it was conducted in the 3T region, which still confronts severe infrastructural and human resource difficulties. Based on the above context, the purpose of this study was to describe the Implementation of e-purchase in Indragiri Hulu Regency's planning for the procurement of goods and services.

2. Literature Review

a. Communication

In the communication process, the sender of the message or communicator expects others to participate or act following the goals. The message conveyed through the channel or communication media to the communicant will produce a communication effect and elicit feedback from message recipients. It is thus impossible for humans to survive without verbal or nonverbal communication. The communicator desires that all parties engaged in the communication process grasp his message, so the communication process goes well.

According to Harold D. Lasswell, communication is "The proper approach to describe a communication is to answer the question, "Who communicated?" What was communicated? Using what channels? Toward whom? what is the consequence?" (Cangara, 2014). Wilbur Schramm. "Communication involves at least three components at all times: source, message, and recipient" (Suhandang, 2005). A. Joseph Devito "Communication refers to the acts of one or more persons who send and receive messages, occur in a specific context, have a particular consequence, and allow for feedback that is affected by the environment (context) in which the communication takes place (Devito, 2011).

Communication already has an essential role in life at this time because communication technology is now more advanced and sophisticated according to its time. With the rapid development of communication today, exchanging messages has become faster, more practical and more effective. The purpose of communication is to change the attitude, to change the opinion, to change the behaviour, to change society (Effendy, 1990).

Communication is vital in the policy implementation process since implementers must know what they will do. The implementer must receive orders to implement the policy promptly and consistently. Edwards III (1980:10) emphasizes that for Implementation to be successful, people whose role is to execute a decision must be aware of what is expected of them. Orders to execute policies must be communicated to the relevant staff clearly, consistently, and accurately. If the policies desired by decision-makers are clearly articulated, individuals to whom they are aimed may understand them. Uncertainty among implementers raises the likelihood that they will not implement a policy as intended by those who enacted or directed it.

Communication can ensure that policies are implemented. Effective policy implementation is possible if individuals responsible for policy implementation know what to do. Orders to execute policies must be communicated clearly, precisely, and consistently to those capable of carrying them out (Kadji, 2015). Misunderstandings will emerge at the level of the selected policy implementer if the signals and policy directions issued by policymakers are ambiguous and vague.

There would be uncertainty at the implementer level, particularly about the comprehension of the required activities.

This condition will allow them to apply the policy differently than the mandate-givers or policymakers intend. Communication pertains to how policies are conveyed to organizations or the public, the availability of resources to execute policies, the attitudes and reactions of the parties concerned, and the organizational structure of executing the policy (Mustari, 2015). Communication is crucial because a program can only be correctly executed if the executor understands it. This pertains to the procedure or Transmission of information, the clarity of information (clarity), and the concentration of information sent (Subianto, 2020).

According to communication factors (Suparno, 2017), communication is a significant factor in determining the efficiency of public policy implementation. Effective policy implementation strongly relies on decision-makers comprehension of what must be done, which is decided by effective communication. Therefore, each policy decision and regulation must be effectively communicated to policymakers and implementers. There are three indications of the communication variable: (1) effective transmission, (2) clear communication, and (3) consistent Implementation of communication by the Government.

Edward outlines three indicators that may be used to measure communication elements (Mustari, 2015). Among these indications is Transmission. Good communication distribution will lead to effective Implementation. Consistency The instructions supplied for the execution of communication must be consistent and unambiguous (to be carried out) (Kadji, 2015).

b. E-Procurement

E-Procurement is an application for managing goods/services procurement data, including internet-based procurement data, to achieve an effective, efficient, and integrated procurement process. Article 37 of the Regulation of the President of the Republic of Indonesia Number 70 of 2012 defines E-Procurement as the acquisition of goods and services using information technology and electronic transactions by statutory provisions .

E-Procurement is defined as "the execution of procurement of products and services using electronic networks (internet or intranet networks) or electronic data exchange (EDI)" (Davila et al., 2003). "E-Procurement is implemented in a website information system that is an auction system for the government's acquisition of commodities using Internet-based technology, information and communication capabilities." Decree of the President of the Republic of Indonesia, Number 54 of 2010, as amended by Presidential Regulation Number 70 of 2012 of Guidelines for Government Procurement of Goods/Services, states: "Electronic procurement or E-Procurement is the procurement of goods/services using information technology and electronic transactions following statutory provisions.

From the many definitions of e-procurement provided above, it can be deduced that e-procurement is an internet-based method of acquiring products and services to conduct an effective, efficient, and transparent auction. E-Procurement refers to using the internet and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to facilitate the procurement of products and services at all levels.

The e-procurement system is only an application, tool, and technology for Internet-based procurement transactions (Afolabi et al., 2019). This definition is consistent with research references and is supported by prior research indicating that this activity is performed in the context of construction activities ranging from the placement, submission, and acceptance of bids to the electronic search and ordering of materials (Lawther, 2005). This activity is an innovation of the e-government system designed to facilitate the Implementation of the procurement of goods and services based on the e-procurement technology's attribute factors, organizational characteristics factors, environmental factors, and influence factors from other industries. The circumstances of each organization define the e-procurement implementation capabilities of each organization.

E-procurement is an electronically performed activity (Devaraj et al., 2007). (Mutangili, 2019) show this technology is used to handle information technology-integrated purchase requests. This makes it simple and inexpensive for contractors to engage in online auctions to acquire products and services at an agency (Nawi et al., 2017). E-procurement is an integral

component of assured inventory management and ensures the smooth operation of the manufacturing (Davila et al., 2003).

3. Research Methods

This study describes the communication activities of the E-Procurement process for the procurement of goods and services in Indragiri Hulu Regency. This research is qualitative research based on the philosophy of postpositivism, used to examine the condition of natural objects where the researcher is the key instrument, sampling of data sources is carried out purposively, collection techniques are triangulation, data analysis is inductive/qualitative, and the results of qualitative research emphasizes meaning rather than generalization (Sugiyono, 2012). This study uses a descriptive qualitative research design that will produce descriptive data. Descriptive data is the form of words, pictures and not numbers (Moleong, 2019). Measuring or accurately describing certain social phenomena, the relationship between theory and observation. It is said that the descriptive approach is a type of research intended to explore and clarify a phenomenon or reality. The data analysis technique in this study refers to the interactive model initiated by Miles and Huberman. The method is part of the strategy, meaning a technique or method for carrying out a job or activity that has been planned in the strategy (Moleong, 2017).

This research was conducted at the Regional Secretariat of Indragiri Hulu Regency, especially in Development Economics. This research's object is to apply E-Procurement in procuring goods and services in Indragiri Hulu Regency. The subject of this study amounted to 8 people. One key informant is the head of the District Secretariat, Indragiri Hulu, Head of Development Economics, LPSE Secretariat, Contractor Partners, and the Community.

Data collection techniques in this study were carried out using FGDs, observations, interviews, and documentation to obtain data on minimum service standards that had been carried out in the Indragiri Hulu district. Based on this, the data analysis technique used in the qualitative data analysis technique is based on Miles and Huberman's theory through 3 steps: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion (Kriyantono, 2019).

Data reduction is summarizing, choosing the main things, and focusing on the essential things. After that, the reduced data will have a clearer picture, and make it easier for researchers to carry out further data collection, or look for it if needed. By reducing data, researchers will sort out which data are considered essential and discard data that are considered unimportant. In addition, researchers will also check the validity of the data by using triangulation of data, methods, sources, and theory (Moleong, 2019).

4. Results and Discussions

Indragiri Hulu Regency consisted of 4 Kewedanaan and 17 Districts, namely Kewedanaan Indragiri Hilir Selatan, Indragiri Hulu Utara, Indragiri Hulu and Kewedanaan Kuantan Singing. Based on government regulation number 50 of 1963, the status of kewedanaan was abolished along with the abolition of four kewedanaan in Indragiri Regency. By law number 61 of 1958, Riau Province was formed with the capital city of Pekanbaru consisting of five level II regions each of Kampar, Indragiri, Bengkalis, Riau Archipelago Regencies and Pekanbaru Municipality.

The Goods and Services Procurement Section is located under and is responsible to the Assistant for the Economy and Development. The Goods and Services Procurement Section is led by the Section Head, who has the task of assisting the Assistant in carrying out the preparation of regional policy formulation, coordinating regional policy formulation, coordinating the Implementation of regional apparatus tasks, implementing monitoring and evaluation in the management of goods and services procurement, managing procurement services electronically, coaching and advocacy for procurement of goods and services.

Electronic Procurement Services are information technology management services to facilitate the Implementation of electronic procurement of goods/services. UKPBJ/Procurement Officials at Ministries/Institutions/Regional Apparatuses who do not have Electronic Procurement Services can use the Electronic Procurement Service facilities closest to their domicile to carry out electronic procurement. Procurement of goods/services electronically will increase transparency and accountability, increase market access and fair business competition, improve the level of efficiency of the procurement process, support monitoring and auditing

processes and meet the need for access to accurate time information in order to realize clean and Good Governance in the procurement of goods/services government services.

The legal basis for establishing Electronic Procurement Services is Article 73 Number 16 of 2018 concerning government procurement of goods/services whose technical operational provisions are regulated by LKPP Institution Regulation Number 14 of 2018 concerning Electronic Procurement Services. Electronic Procurement Services, in carrying out an electronic procurement of goods/services system, must meet the requirements as stipulated in Law Number 11 of 2008 concerning Information and Electronic Transactions.

a. Communication activities on the Implementation of e-procurement in Indragiri Hulu

Communication activities in the Implementation of the provision of goods and services in Indragiri Hulu district are carried out as follows:

1) Input the General Plan for Procurement of Goods and Services

The process of implementing goods and services starts with inputting the general procurement plan, which the commitment-making official at the organizational level of the regional apparatus carries out. Communication activities are carried out to ensure that all the needs of the respective regional apparatus are included. Plans for the procurement of goods and services are input based on the work plans of each regional apparatus organization that have been approved. The approved work plan is a document that determines that all needs for goods and services in each Regional Apparatus Organization can be met. Commitment officials must be careful to input procurement plans to meet the organization's needs.

Communication activities are carried out through a website-based electronic procurement system involving Regional Apparatus Organizations through Commitment Making Officials with Electronic Procurement Agencies (LPSE). The Procurement General Plan will be accepted by the commitment-making official at the LPSE level, who is part of the assistant 2 for the economy and development sector coordinated by the Head of Goods and Services Procurement. The general procurement plan is input based on the authority of the budget user who needs the procurement of goods and services. Based on the need, the general procurement plan is inputted and sent to LPSE.

This communication process must be carried out clearly, and consistently and use good channels. Communication channels are generally carried out through the LPSE system. In using the LPSE system, there are still areas for improvement in the transmission process of sending electronic information because the internet network is less stable and causes several input and receiving activities. Procurement and receiving plans are delayed. The need for goods and services is also carried out clearly and consistently. Commitment-making officials at the regional apparatus organizational level must be able to explain the specification of needs clearly. This is done to make it easier for LPSE at the Indragiri Hulu Regency level to carry out the tender later.

2) Formation of a Working Group

The following communication activity is the formation of a working group responsible for implementing the procurement of goods and services. Procurement of goods and services may not be carried out directly by each regional apparatus organization. However, it must be carried out by the Electronic Procurement Agency at the district level under the regent through assistant 2 in the field of economy and development.

In this stage, after the proposal for the procurement of goods and services has been submitted, it will then be followed up by the Head of the Institution. The Head of LPSE will form a team to carry out the goods and services procurement process. The general procurement plan must carry out the Implementation of the Procurement of goods and services. The head of the LPSE then forms a procurement team consisting of three members of commitment-making officials. The division of tasks is carried out based on incoming proposals. The appointed team will later be tasked with carrying out the process of procuring goods and services.

3) Implementation of Procurement of Goods and Services

The procurement of goods and services is carried out by the proposals inputted into the LPSE system of the Indragiri Hulu Regency Government. The Working Group will carry out the tender with a team of 3 staff members who have the authority and functional position as Commitment Making Officers. Auction processes that have a value of Zero Rupiah up to Fifty Million Rupiah can be done outside the system by making direct purchases. In addition, the procurement of goods and services worth Fifty Million Rupiah to Two Hundred Million Rupiah must be carried out online. It is permissible to carry it out with a direct and permanent appointment system through the LPSE system. At the same time, implementing tenders with a value of more than Two Hundred Million Rupiah must be carried out with an open and transparent tender process.

The Working Group will produce election documents in the procurement system electronically. The required documents will be prepared and announced online on the goods and services procurement website (SPSE). The selection document contains the conditions bidders must prepare to participate in the tender for procuring goods and services in the Indragiri Hulu district. The Working Group will input the Auction Packages that will be tendered based on the needs of Regional Apparatus Organizations, determine the completeness requirements, make a schedule and announce the auction in the SPSE system. After the required documents are complete, the auction process can be carried out and seen by all companies providing goods and services.

In addition to ensuring documents, schedules, and announcing the auction, the LPSE must ensure that all bidders participating in the tender must have previously registered and have an account at the LPSE of Indragiri Hulu Regency. Companies must have an account before participating in the auction to discipline bidders and ensure the legality of bidders. The account creation process is carried out at LPSE by preparing company documents that each company carries out.

Auction participants who already have an account will register their company to participate in the auction. Each company must complete the requirements set out in the auction process as a condition for winning the procurement of goods and services that are followed. These conditions will be assessed by working group members and determine the winning bidder.

4) Determination of Tender Winners

The auction can be completed after document determination, schedule determination, and auction announcement. Companies will provide an offer by completing the required documents and requirements. Bid documents must be uploaded through the electronic procurement system (SPSE). Then the documents will be assessed. The working group will assess incoming documents. The completeness of uploaded documents will be evaluated one by one. Complete documents and offering the lowest price will win the auction process.

After the evaluation and assessment process is carried out, the tender winner who has the complete documents will be announced. The working group team will announce the three companies with the best complete documents. After that, the auction winner will be determined based on the company with the lowest price. The winner of the tender for the procurement of goods and services is determined to be responsible for ensuring that the procurement of goods and services sourced from local government finances is carried out under the offer and work contract.

Preparation for procurement and preparation for the selection of providers is crucial in determining the success or failure of obtaining the goods/services needed by users in supporting the success of achieving programs and activities. Therefore, this stage becomes unique in basic-level goods/services procurement education and training. With the proper understanding regarding preparation, either by PPK or Procurement Officers/Selection Working Groups, these procurement actors can work effectively by using available resources, and ultimately value for money as one of the objectives of procurement can be achieved.

Goods/Services Procurement Planning is planning the types of goods/services to be procured through specifications or terms of reference, how procurement will be carried out, and the potential providers to be invited. The process organizing goods and services functions is determine who will implement the procurement of government goods and services, starting from

the person in charge to the executor of procurement program. After the planning and organization are carried out, procuring goods and services can be procured by tender or purchasing (purchasing). After the goods and services are purchased or tendered, the last step is to supervise the goods received so that they goods and services received follow the standards set in the planning process.

With the enactment of Presidential Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia, Number 12 of 2021, concerning Amendments to Presidential Regulation Number 16 of 2018 concerning Government Procurement of Goods/Services, 2021, the Indragiri Hulu Regional Secretariat should carry out the procurement of goods and services needed in these agencies using the E-Procurement, both in the form of e-purchasing and e-tendering.

5. Conclusion

Electronic Procurement Services are information technology management services to facilitate the Implementation of electronic procurement of goods/services. UKPBJ/Procurement Officials at Ministries/Institutions/Regional Apparatuses who do not have Electronic Procurement Services can use the Electronic Procurement Service facilities closest to their domicile to carry out electronic procurement. The existence of E-Procurement is expected to provide convenience to the Government in the process of procuring the goods and services needed. Therefore, every government agency, both the central Government and local governments, must implement this E-Procurement program properly.

Communication activities occur at four stages of the auction process carried out by the Electronic Procurement Agency. This process involves regional apparatus organizations in Indragiri Hulu Regency and suppliers who provide goods and services registered in the Electronic Procurement System in Indragiri Hulu Regency. The process of procuring goods starts with a proposal process from each Regional Apparatus Organization based on their respective Performance Plans to carry out the bidding process. The auction process is carried out by a working group team formed by the Head of LPSE, which suppliers of goods and services will follow. The Working Group team will evaluate the documents proposed by the supplier and determine the tender winner.

Acknowledgement

Thank you to the Government of Indonesia for funding this research. This research is a Dikti grant from the Student Thesis Research scheme of the Directorate General of Higher Education, Research and Technology, Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology.

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