



Public Administration and Good Governance as Foundations for Achieving Sustainable Development Goals

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Abstract

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Public administration is a vital instrument in achieving sustainable national development. As a connector between government policies and their implementation in the field, public administration plays a central role in ensuring the quality of public services, efficiency, and transparency in the use of resources. The effectiveness of public administration becomes a decisive factor in the success of development, particularly in integrating the principles of good governance, which include transparency, accountability, participation, and responsiveness. The application of good governance is also aligned with the global agenda of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which emphasize inclusiveness and the principle of leaving no one behind. Various studies indicate that sound public governance enhances public trust, strengthens institutional capacity, and accelerates the achievement of sustainable development objectives. Therefore, strengthening public administration serves not only as the foundation of modern governance but also as a guarantee of sustainable national development in the context of globalization and ongoing social transformation.



1. Introduction

Public administration holds a central role in the success of national development because it serves as the bridge between state policy and its implementation in society. Through effective public administration mechanisms, policy goals can be realized in the form of quality, transparent, and accountable services. The effectiveness of public administration is often measured by its ability to address societal needs fairly and efficiently, thereby maintaining government legitimacy and social stability. In the context of sustainable development, public administration is demanded not only to manage resources but also to ensure that every policy aligns with the principles of inclusivity and sustainability.

The role of public administration in supporting sustainable development cannot be separated from the concept of good governance. This concept emphasizes the importance of transparency, accountability, effectiveness, and public participation in government administration. Research indicates that applying good governance principles in the public sector can strengthen public trust, enhance service efficiency, and accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).¹ Thus, the quality of public governance becomes a crucial indicator for measuring a nation's development effectiveness.

Furthermore, studies on the role of public management assert that good governance is the driving factor in successfully achieving sustainable development goals. An administrative system oriented towards transparency and accountability

¹ Nadirah Zabidi, Mohd Mahadee Ismail, Zajul Himmah Adnan, and Mohd Izani Mohd Zain. "Good Governance Practices for Sustainable Development in the Public Sector Services in Malaysia." *Akademika* 94, no. 2 (2024): 252-266.

ensures a fairer distribution of development benefits. This reinforces the idea that public institutions are not merely tools for policy implementation, but rather the main pillars of modern national development². Therefore, increasing the capacity of public administration must be a priority in the bureaucratic reform agenda.

The efficiency of public administration is also a concern in the context of regional development. A study shows that the effectiveness of public administration at the regional level significantly influences the successful achievement of the SDGs, as policies implemented at the local level are closer to the needs of the community. Evaluating this effectiveness includes aspects of planning, resource management, and the involvement of local actors in development.³ In other words, sustainable development is determined not only by central policies but also by the capacity of public administration in the regions.

Moreover, the relationship between the SDGs and good governance asserts that the achievement of sustainable development will not be optimal without good governance. The integration between development goals and good government principles creates synergy to produce policies that are more inclusive, just, and sustainable.⁴ Therefore, public administration must internalize the values of good governance in every decision-making process.

² Fredrick Kariithi Githui and Jane Wangari Njuru. "The role of public management in the achievement of sustainable development goals." *International Journal of Science and Business* 31, no. 1 (2024): 64-75.

³ Inna Irtysheva, Olena Pavlenko, Yevheniia Boiko, Marianna Stehnei, Iryna Kramarenko, Natalia Hryshyna, and Olena Ishchenko. "Evaluation of efficiency of regional public governance in the context of achieving goals of sustainable development." *Management theory and studies for rural business and infrastructure development* 44, no. 4 (2022): 497-505.

⁴ Andrew Massey. "Sustainable development goals and their fit with good governance." *Global Policy* 13 (2022): 79-85.

Another challenge is maintaining the balance between stability and innovation in public administration. According to Meuleman⁵ public administration needs to adapt to dynamic global changes, including the demands of digitalization, environmental crises, and social changes. However, while adapting, public administration must also maintain institutional stability to avoid creating uncertainty in public services. This indicates that public administration plays a dual role as both the engine of policy implementation and the guardian of governmental stability.

Based on the description above, it is clear that public administration, good governance, and sustainable development are closely interconnected. Effective public administration ensures policies are executed well, good governance provides a normative framework for fair governance, and sustainable development becomes the ultimate goal to be achieved. Therefore, this research aims to examine in depth the relationship between these three concepts, focusing on the importance of strengthening public administration capacity as the foundation for inclusive and sustainable national development.

2. Literature Review

The literature review on public administration and the application of good governance principles shows that good government governance is a fundamental requirement for achieving sustainable development. According to Zabidi et al.⁶ the

⁵ Louis Meuleman. "Public administration and governance for the SDGs: Navigating between change and stability." *Sustainability* 13, no. 11 (2021): 5914.

⁶ Nadirah Zabidi, Mohd Mahadee Ismail, Zajul Himmah Adnan, and Mohd Izani Mohd Zain. "Good Governance Practices for Sustainable Development in the Public Sector Services in Malaysia." *Akademika* 94, no. 2 (2024): 252-266.

practice of good governance in the public sector not only increases public trust in the government but also directly impacts the efficiency and effectiveness of public services. Optimal service performance ultimately accelerates the achievement of national development goals. This perspective highlights that professional, transparent, and accountable public administration plays a crucial role as the main instrument in realizing social justice, equity, and the welfare of the broader community.

Furthermore, the research by Githui and Njuru⁷ highlights that the contribution of public management to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) lies not only in the aspect of policy formulation but also in the consistency of implementing policies that favor the principle of inclusivity. Information disclosure, active public participation, and the involvement of various stakeholders in the policy process prove that development success is significantly influenced by the quality of interaction between the government and society. In other words, government governance that prioritizes transparency and collaboration will encourage the achievement of fairer, more sustainable, and equitable development.

From another perspective, several studies also show that the effectiveness of public administration at the local or regional level plays a significant role. Irtysheva et al.⁸ found that effective local government governance can support the

⁷ Fredrick Kariithi Githui and Jane Wangari Njuru. "The role of public management in the achievement of sustainable development goals." *International Journal of Science and Business* 31, no. 1 (2024): 64-75.

⁸ Inna Irtysheva, Olena Pavlenko, Yevheniia Boiko, Marianna Stehnei, Iryna Kramarenko, Natalia Hryshyna, and Olena Ishchenko. "Evaluation of efficiency of regional public governance in the context of achieving goals of

achievement of the SDGs more concretely. This is primarily because local governments have direct proximity to the community, so the resulting policies tend to be more responsive, adaptive, and in line with real needs on the ground. Therefore, public administration at the regional level can be viewed as a crucial factor ensuring the realization of inclusive development and the ability to address local challenges in a timely manner. Massey⁹ asserts that the link between good governance and the SDGs must be seen as the main key in building a just and sustainable society. The integration of good governance principles into all public policies is a necessity so that global development goals can be optimally achieved. Thus, good governance is not merely a normative discourse but must be made a practical foundation in every development process.

Meanwhile, Meuleman¹⁰ argues that public administration needs the capacity to navigate the dynamic between the need for institutional stability and the demands for change and innovation. On the one hand, rapid global developments require bureaucratic creativity and flexibility, but on the other hand, institutional stability must not be ignored to ensure policy continuity. This balance between innovation and stability is what enables public administration to adapt to changing times while maintaining public trust. Referring to these various studies, it can be affirmed that public administration and good governance are important foundations in directing development towards achieving the SDGs. The combination of transparency,

sustainable development." *Management theory and studies for rural business and infrastructure development* 44, no. 4 (2022): 497-505.

⁹ Andrew Massey. "Sustainable development goals and their fit with good governance." *Global Policy* 13 (2022): 79-85.

¹⁰ Louis Meuleman. "Public administration and governance for the SDGs: Navigating between change and stability." *Sustainability* 13, no. 11 (2021): 5914.

accountability, participation, and responsiveness to community needs makes good government governance an absolute prerequisite for realizing inclusive, just, and sustainable development.

3. Method

This research employs the library research method as the primary approach in analyzing the relationship between public administration, good governance, and sustainable development. The library research method was chosen because it provides a strong conceptual foundation through the collection, evaluation, and synthesis of various relevant academic literatures. This approach focuses not only on tracing basic theories but also on the latest empirical findings related to the effectiveness of public administration and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Thus, this research emphasizes the importance of a comprehensive analysis of previous studies to build valid and scientifically evidence-based arguments.

The initial stage of this method is the identification of relevant literature sources, including journal articles, academic books, and research reports. The selection process was carried out by considering the publication year, thematic relevance, and connection to the research topic. In this study, the main literature sources were collected and made comprehensively available to align with the latest developments in public administration and good governance. However, classic literature was also considered to strengthen the theoretical foundation. This ensures that the analysis performed is not only current but also maintains continuity with

previous studies. The next stage is conducting a critical analysis of each selected literature source.

Critical analysis is performed by comparing and contrasting the authors' views, assessing the relevance of concepts to the research context, and identifying existing research gaps. From this process, a conceptual framework can be constructed that explains the role of public administration in strengthening good governance and its relationship with achieving the SDGs. This literature synthesis process helps identify general patterns, trends, and the unique contributions of each analyzed study. Furthermore, the data obtained from the literature is used as the basis for constructing arguments in the research results and discussion section. Since this research does not use primary data, the validity and reliability of the study heavily depend on the quality of the literature sources used. Therefore, only literature originating from reputable academic publications is used as a reference. This approach provides a clear methodological framework to ensure the research has a strong and accountable scientific basis.

4. Results

4.1. The Role of Public Administration in Realizing Good Governance

Public administration holds a highly strategic function as the main instrument in connecting government policy with concrete implementation on the ground. Within the framework of modern government governance, public administration can no longer be viewed merely as a bureaucratic entity carrying out orders. More than that, public administration is the driving force that determines the quality of

services to the public, the level of transparency in resource utilization, and the degree of accountability of government administrators. Several recent studies prove that the consistent practice of good governance in the public sector is capable of significantly boosting the quality of public services.¹¹ This effectiveness arises from the application of principles of transparency, participation, and accountability, which makes public administration increasingly responsive to the real needs of citizens across various segments.

The strategic role of public administration is also reflected in efforts to strengthen professional and competitive institutional capacity. State Civil Apparatus (*Aparatur Sipil Negara/ASN*) who possess competence, integrity, and good work ethics become the main foundation for achieving good governance principles. When public officials are able to execute their duties and authority effectively and uphold integrity values, public trust in the government will increase. This growing trust will directly contribute to government legitimacy. In the long term, this legitimacy supports social stability, which is an important prerequisite for the continuity of sustainable development.¹² Thus, the role of public officials is not only administrative but also a symbol of the state's credibility and integrity in the eyes of its citizens.

Furthermore, robust public administration also functions to ensure public services are fair, equal, and inclusive. For instance, providing basic services such as

¹¹ Nadirah Zabidi, Mohd Mahadee Ismail, Zajul Himmah Adnan, and Mohd Izani Mohd Zain. "Good Governance Practices for Sustainable Development in the Public Sector Services in Malaysia." *Akademika* 94, no. 2 (2024): 252-266.

¹² Andrew Massey. "Sustainable development goals and their fit with good governance." *Global Policy* 13 (2022): 79-85.

health, education, and civil registration administration that are accessible to all segments of society is a tangible manifestation of applying good governance principles. In this context, public administration acts as the driver for creating public value, which is the added value truly felt by the community through the policies and services provided by the government.¹³ In other words, public administration is the foundation for establishing state governance oriented towards public interest and prioritizing community welfare.

In addition, a major challenge for public administration today is how to adapt to the dynamics of global development, especially in the era of government digitalization. The utilization of digital technology opens opportunities for increasing transparency, efficiency, and accountability in the provision of public services. However, the use of technology also presents challenges in the form of potential digital gaps between regions and social groups. Therefore, public administration is demanded to be adaptive, so that technology can be utilized as a means of strengthening good governance principles without sacrificing the aspect of inclusivity. This view aligns with Berezovska et al.¹⁴ who asserts that public administration must be able to maintain a balance between the need for institutional stability and the demands for innovation arising from the times.

¹³ Inna Irtysheva, Olena Pavlenko, Yevheniia Boiko, Marianna Stehnei, Iryna Kramarenko, Natalia Hryshyna, and Olena Ishchenko. "Evaluation of efficiency of regional public governance in the context of achieving goals of sustainable development." *Management theory and studies for rural business and infrastructure development* 44, no. 4 (2022): 497-505.

¹⁴ Nina Berezovska, Volodymyr Zahorskyi, Nadiia Kalashnyk, Larysa Novak-Kalyayeva, Andriy Lipentsev, Olha Olefirenko, Volodymyr Oliyarnyk, and Oleksandr Sushynskyi. "Implementing an ecosystem approach in public administration: achieving sustainable development goals in crisis and recovery." *Cadernos de Educação Tecnologia e Sociedade* 17, no. se4 (2024): 334-347.

Furthermore, in the context of national development, the role of public administration in realizing good governance is also evident through the implementation of anti-corruption policies. A government free from corrupt practices not only enhances the effectiveness of public policies but also strengthens government legitimacy in the eyes of the people. Therefore, public administration must possess strong and credible internal oversight mechanisms. Furthermore, community involvement in monitoring the course of government must also be facilitated. This asserts that good government governance is not only the responsibility of state officials but also the result of collaboration and synergy between the government, civil society, and the private sector.¹⁵

Thus, from the description of these various views, it can be affirmed that public administration is the backbone in realizing good governance. Through the integration of the principles of transparency, accountability, participation, and innovation, public administration does not only function to run the bureaucracy but also becomes the main instrument in directing development towards achieving social justice, political legitimacy, and national sustainability.

4.2. The Interrelation of Public Administration, Good Governance, and Sustainable Development

The interrelation between public administration, the principles of good governance, and sustainable development can be clearly understood through the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs emphasize

¹⁵ Ana Filipa Silva , M. Isabel Sánchez-Hernández, and Luisa Cagica Carvalho. "Local public administration in the process of implementing sustainable development goals." *Sustainability* 15, no. 21 (2023): 15263.

that effective, transparent, and accountable government governance is a vital foundation for realizing inclusive and sustainable development. In this context, public administration plays a strategic role as the main facilitator in implementing policies aligned with the direction of global development.¹⁶ This role makes public administration not merely a policy executor but also the driving force for achieving fair and equitable development goals.

One of the most tangible contributions of public administration to sustainable development is the provision of public services that prioritize the principle of inclusivity. This concept aligns with the fundamental principle of the SDGs: *no one left behind*. This means public administration is obliged to ensure that all segments of society, including marginalized and vulnerable groups, have equal access to basic services such as education, health, and social welfare.¹⁷ If public services are implemented inclusively, the success of sustainable development can be realized more effectively and equitably.

Furthermore, public administration also plays a role in maintaining the balance between economic, social, and environmental interests. For example, infrastructure development policies must not only be oriented towards economic growth but also consider potential social and environmental impacts to align with

¹⁶ Anis Omri and Nejah Ben Mabrouk. "Good governance for sustainable development goals: Getting ahead of the pack or falling behind?" *Environmental Impact Assessment Review* 83 (2020): 106388.

¹⁷ Inna Irtysheva, Olena Pavlenko, Yevheniia Boiko, Marianna Stehnei, Iryna Kramarenko, Natalia Hryshyna, and Olena Ishchenko. "Evaluation of efficiency of regional public governance in the context of achieving goals of sustainable development." *Management theory and studies for rural business and infrastructure development* 44, no. 4 (2022): 497-505.

sustainability principles. Berezovska et al.¹⁸ suggests that public administration is demanded to have the capacity to navigate between institutional stability and the need for change, especially in facing increasingly complex global environmental issues. Thus, public administration is positioned not only as a mere policy executor but also as a strategic actor ensuring that development proceeds sustainably.

Jamil et al.¹⁹ emphasize that the application of good governance principles in public administration serves to strengthen the integration of development policies with the SDGs objectives. Accountability in managing public budgets, for instance, ensures that available resources are used efficiently and appropriately to support various sustainable development programs. Transparency in budget management also opens opportunities for the community to directly monitor the allocation and use of public funds. This process not only increases government legitimacy but also strengthens the public's sense of trust in state institutions.

Furthermore, Silva et al.²⁰ underscore that the practice of good governance not only yields more effective policies but also accelerates the achievement of inclusive development. This is because good governance can create synergy between the government, civil society, and the private sector. This collaboration is crucial for strengthening participatory development. Thus, strengthening public administration

¹⁸ Nina Berezovska, Volodymyr Zahorskyi, Nadiia Kalashnyk, Larysa Novak-Kalyayeva, Andriy Lipentsev, Olha Olefirenko, Volodymyr Oliyarnyk, and Oleksandr Sushynskyi. "Implementing an ecosystem approach in public administration: achieving sustainable development goals in crisis and recovery." *Cadernos de Educação Tecnologia e Sociedade* 17, no. se4 (2024): 334-347.

¹⁹ Amira Jamil, Nazli Anum Mohd Ghazali, and Sherliza Puat Nelson. "The influence of corporate governance structure on sustainability reporting in Malaysia." *Social Responsibility Journal* 17, no. 8 (2021): 1251-1278.

²⁰ Ana Filipa Silva, M. Isabel Sánchez-Hernández, and Luisa Cagica Carvalho. "Local public administration in the process of implementing sustainable development goals." *Sustainability* 15, no. 21 (2023): 15263.

based on good governance principles can be viewed as the main path to realizing sustainable national development. Matos et al.²¹ also add that the effectiveness of public administration at the local or regional level plays a significant role in the successful achievement of sustainable development goals.

Local governments capable of implementing inclusive policies will directly contribute to equitable development across all regions. This shows that the success of national development cannot be separated from the role of public administration at the local level as the spearhead of public service. Thus, the interrelation between public administration, good governance, and sustainable development forms a mutually reinforcing cycle. Professional and effective public administration will encourage the creation of transparent and accountable government governance.²² Subsequently, the practice of good governance will strengthen government legitimacy in the eyes of the public. Ultimately, sustainable development becomes the final goal that ensures welfare, equity, and the survival of future generations. This cycle indicates that without quality public administration, the achievement of good governance and sustainable development goals will not be optimal.

5. Discussion

The results of this research affirm that public administration holds a central position in building a close connection between government policy, the application

²¹ Sandra Matos, Susana Jorge, and Patrícia Moura e Sá. "Measuring local public expenditure effectiveness using sustainable development goals." *International Journal of Public Sector Management* 36, no. 4/5 (2023): 440-462.

²² Hafiez Sofyani, Hosam Alden Riyadh, and Heru Fahlevi. "Improving service quality, accountability and transparency of local government: The intervening role of information technology governance." *Cogent Business & Management* 7, no. 1 (2020): 1735690.

of good governance principles, and efforts to achieve sustainable development. Without effective public administration, the implementation of good government governance and the achievement of sustainable development goals will be difficult to realize optimally. Strong public administration not only ensures that policies do not stop at the conceptual or formulation level but also guarantees that these policies are truly implemented to address community needs. Thus, public administration can be seen as the heart of government, playing a critical role in providing fair, equitable, and quality public services for all citizens.

One of the main findings shows that the principle of good governance plays a role in strengthening government legitimacy while increasing the effectiveness of public policies. When the principles of transparency, accountability, and public participation are consistently applied, public trust in the government will increase.²³ This growing trust not only encourages public acceptance of policies but also enhances their active participation in supporting development implementation. Therefore, community involvement cannot be seen as a complementary factor but as a determining element of a policy's success. Without strong public participation, policies formulated by the government are potentially ineffective in their execution.

In addition, the link between public administration and sustainable development can also be seen in how the government manages resources in a way that is both efficient and inclusive. According to the findings of Jamil et al.²⁴ the

²³ Anis Omri and Nejah Ben Mabrouk. "Good governance for sustainable development goals: Getting ahead of the pack or falling behind?" *Environmental Impact Assessment Review* 83 (2020): 106388.

²⁴ Amira Jamil, Nazli Anum Mohd Ghazali, and Sherliza Puat Nelson. "The influence of corporate governance structure on sustainability reporting in Malaysia." *Social Responsibility Journal* 17, no. 8 (2021): 1251-1278.

application of good governance in public administration is proven to increase the efficiency of public services and accelerate the achievement of the SDGs objectives. This fact shows that professional public administration does not only deal with internal bureaucratic matters but also functions to deliver direct benefits to the community through responsive, equitable, and just services. This management efficiency becomes increasingly crucial amid the resource limitations faced by many countries, thus public administration is demanded to be capable of using resources appropriately.

Furthermore, the importance of public administration's role in the context of regional development also receives special attention. Local governments, as the spearhead of public service, have a great responsibility to ensure that inclusive development proceeds in line with the principles of the SDGs. Matos et al.²⁵ assert that the effectiveness of public administration at the local or regional level has a significant influence on the success of sustainable development. By providing wider space for local community participation and ensuring equitable resource distribution, regional public administration can strengthen the synergy between central policies and regional needs. This ultimately solidifies the achievement of sustainable national development goals. From these various descriptions, it can be concluded that public administration is not merely understood as bureaucracy but as a strategic actor in realizing both good government governance and sustainable development. Adaptive, transparent, and accountable public administration becomes an essential

²⁵ Sandra Matos, Susana Jorge, and Patrícia Moura e Sá. "Measuring local public expenditure effectiveness using sustainable development goals." *International Journal of Public Sector Management* 36, no. 4/5 (2023): 440-462.

foundation for achieving community welfare and addressing constantly evolving global challenges.

6. Conclusion

Public administration is proven to have a very crucial role in national development and development sustainability. As the main link between government policy and the community, public administration ensures that policies do not just stop at the formulation stage but can be implemented effectively and comprehensively. Well-functioning public administration guarantees fair, transparent, and accountable public services, while strengthening government legitimacy. Thus, public administration becomes the backbone for the creation of professional and trustworthy government governance. The application of good governance principles strengthens the capacity of public administration to face both global and local challenges. Transparency, accountability, participation, and inclusivity are vital pillars supporting the achievement of sustainable development.

Adaptive public administration is also capable of utilizing information technology developments to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of services. Furthermore, the role of local government as the spearhead of public service is highly determining of the success of equitable and inclusive development. The interrelation of public administration, good governance, and sustainable development forms a mutually reinforcing cycle. Good public administration yields transparent governance, good governance strengthens government legitimacy, and sustainable development becomes the final goal to realize community welfare. With

continuous strengthening across these three aspects, national development can be realized inclusively, justly, and sustainably.

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