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Between Bureaucratic Rigidity and Entrepreneurial Spirit: Reinventing Government at Banda Aceh Disdukcapil

Abstract

Applying the idea of Reinventing Government (RG) in government organizations that are limited by legal regulations creates a conflict between the demands of innovation and flexibility on the one hand, as well as the need to maintain the legitimacy, accountability, uniformity, and reliability of services on the other. This research seeks to examine how the principles of RG are applied in population administration offices, as well as how institutional structures impact differences in the adjustment process. Through the use of qualitative descriptive methods, this study was carried out at the Population and Civil Registration Office of (Disdukcapil) Banda Aceh. Data collection was obtained through partially structured interviews with eight resource persons consisting of five internal employees and three service consumers, as well as additional data taken from archives and related institutional reports. Data analysis was carried out through the data depreciation phase, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and checking. The results show that RG principles are not adopted uniformly but are filtered through regulations and authority, organizational capacity, technology, and dependence on SIAK, as well as user characteristics. This process results in three forms of selective adaptation: direct adoption, transformative adaptation, and limited adaptation. These findings develop the concept of institutionally filtered selective adaptation, which explains how institutional conditions shape the translation of reform principles into organizational innovation.

Keywords: reinventing government; selective adaptation; institutional filters; Organizational innovation

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Introduction

The quality of public services is increasingly determined by the ability of government organizations to respond to societal needs without disregarding legality, accountability, or administrative certainty (Harisa & Wang, 2026; Irfan et al., 2023; Setyawan et al., 2025). Public organizations are required to implement procedures correctly and provide user-friendly, fast, responsive, inclusive, and adaptive services (Ramdhan & Kusumawati, 2026).

In population administration, these demands are increasingly important because services relate to legal identity, data validity, and the fulfillment of citizens administrative rights. While innovation can improve convenience, speed, and public satisfaction, it continues to face limitations in infrastructure, procedures, and equitable access (Mali & Maulidyah, 2025). Therefore, public sector innovation depends not only on an organization's willingness to change but also on institutional conditions that shape the space for change (Listanto et al., 2023; Pradana, 2025).

These conditions create tension between bureaucracy, which emphasizes rigidity, and entrepreneurial governance, which prioritizes flexibility, innovation, results orientation, and responsiveness to users. Public innovation does not necessarily mean reducing bureaucracy but rather concerns how organizations utilize the space for change within bureaucratic structures.

One approach that explicitly connects changes in government with these orientations is RG (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992), which emphasizes mission orientation, results, service users, anticipation, innovation, flexibility, decentralization, and entrepreneurship (Afrijal et al., 2024). Although RG has received criticism, it has important analytical value for tracing how these orientations toward change are translated into organizational practices.

The development of public administration shows that reform orientations do not necessarily replace bureaucratic foundations but can coexist with them. Post-New Public Management (Post-NPM) emphasizes coordination and integration, while Digital Era Governance (DEG) emphasizes reintegration, needs-based approaches, and digitalization (Dunleavy et al., 2006), while Public Value Management (PVM) and Collaborative Governance emphasize the creation of public value and collaboration between government and non-state actors (Ansell & Gash, 2008; Moore, 1995).

Furthermore, the Neo-Weberian state perspective also shows that modernization can combine legality, professionalism, state capacity, and service orientation. Thus, administrative reform is more appropriately understood as a process of combining various government logics rather than the complete replacement of one paradigm by another (Christensen & Lægreid, 2011; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017). This study uses RG not as a superior paradigm, but as an analytical framework to examine organizational orientations toward change.

These issues become increasingly complex in population administration, which operates within a framework of law, administrative standards, data security, and integrated technological systems. In Indonesia, this rule refers

and empowerment for several years. This experience made him interested in learning how public policies are formulated and implemented, as well as finding solutions to address the country's challenges and the development of village government by continuing his studies a master's degree in the Department of Government Affairs and Administration, University of Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta.

to Law Number 23 of 2006. This law has been corrected by Law Number 24 of 2013 concerning Population Administration. There is also Law Number 25 of 2009 concerning Public Services, which is the basis.

At the local level, the Population and Civil Registration Office (Disdukcapil) of Banda Aceh City has the flexibility to develop service methods and channels. However, this is still limited by administrative authority, service standards, data management, and dependence on the national population system. Innovation in the way of service does not mean that it can change the main mandate, legal authority, or administrative system itself.

However, digitalization opens up opportunities for change but also creates new boundaries for public organizations (Hafel, 2023; Pratama, 2020; Silitonga, 2023). Technology can improve access to and the efficiency of services. However, its success depends on infrastructure, staff capabilities, system integration, data security, and how people use digital services (Mali & Maulidyah, 2025; Martino, 2024; Meiyenti et al., 2026). Thus, technology is not only a tool for innovation but also a part of the organization that determines the limits of change (Mergel et al., 2019; Vial, 2019).

Various studies show that the implementation of digital governance and innovation in the public sector is not the same. Research on administrative reform in the regions shows differences in the application of principles (Mustaming et al., 2024). Studies of public sector innovation highlight the influence of organizational context, resources, leadership, and external networks (Listanto et al., 2023; Pradana, 2025). Population administration research also shows that digital innovation can improve access and efficiency, but depends on infrastructure, system stability, staff capabilities, and user skills (Mali & Maulidyah, 2025; Martino, 2024).

These findings emphasize the importance of examining the implementation of reform in the institutional context in which it occurs. There is a gap in research on how reform principles are connected to the way organizations work. The institutional view looks at how external rules, norms, and pressures affect organizational (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Scott, 2014); the contingency view highlights how the organization adapts to the surrounding environment (Donaldson, 2001); while the translation view describes changes in ideas or practices when used in different places (Ansari et al., 2010).

While these views help explain institutional pressures, organizational adjustments to context, and changes in practice as they move from one place to another, they do not adequately explain the specific ways in which institutional circumstances relate to differences in the application of reform principles. In particular, there is no complete explanation of how rules, mandates, organizational capabilities, technologies, and user characteristics filter reform principles before they are transformed into organizational practice, particularly in public organizations constrained by law.

This shortcoming raises an important question: If bureaucracy and rules limit organizational flexibility, how can entrepreneurial approaches in public

administration emerge in the provision of services, and why can the same RG principles apply differently when faced with various legal, administrative, technological, and social constraints? Therefore, this study does not aim to determine whether bureaucracy or entrepreneurial administrative styles are better, but to understand how the willingness to change is negotiated within the framework of institutional constraints.

With this in mind, this study uses the concept of RG as a basis for analysis to understand how reform principles are applied in public service organizations constrained by law. This study examines the relationship between the principles of RG, institutional frameworks, and organizational innovation practices. The aim is to analyze how public service organizations bound by legal constraints manage the conflict between bureaucratic rigidity and entrepreneurship-style management, as well as how institutional frameworks influence this adjustment process.

Methods

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach to describe and analyze how the principles of RG were adapted in population administration service innovations within a public organization with a mandate (Doyle et al., 2020; Hall & Liebenberg, 2024). This approach was selected because the study focused on the experiences and practices of service providers and users, particularly regarding changes in services, considerations for implementing innovations, and conditions affecting the adaptation process (Bleiker et al., 2019).

The study was conducted at the Department of Population and Civil Registration (Dinas Kependudukan dan Pencatatan Sipil/Disdukcapil) of Banda Aceh City. The study involved eight informants selected purposively (Campbell et al., 2020). They consisted of five internal informants, namely, the secretary, two heads of divisions, and two implementing staff members, as well as three service users.

1. Informant 1 (Nurhasanah, S.E., M.Si., Secretary)
2. Informant 2 (Miftahul Jannah, S.E., MM., Head of Civil Registration Services)
3. Informant 3 (Yeva Emmilia, Head of Data Utilization and Service Innovation)
4. Informant 4 (Ali Imransyah, staff member)
5. Informant 5 (Masrul, staff member)
6. Informant 6 (Siti Rahma, service user)
7. Informant 7 (Rizky Maulana, service user)
8. Informant 8 (Ahmad Fauzan, service user)

The internal perspective was used to understand organizational decisions, innovation implementation, regulations, capacity, technology, and authority, while the user perspective was used to understand experiences related to convenience, speed, accessibility, vulnerable groups, and digital services (Bouncken et al., 2025; Kumar et al., 2022).

Primary data were collected through semi-structured interviews using a guide covering service innovation; adaptation of policies and systems from the central government; considerations and limitations in implementing innovations; rules and authority; human resources; budgets and facilities; technology and information systems; the community's ability to use digital services; and dependence on the centralized population administration system. Each interview lasted 15–30 min and used main questions and probing to obtain explanations regarding experiences and the reasons behind a particular practice. The interview procedure included an explanation of the research objectives, obtaining informant consent, asking the main questions, conducting probing, recording important information, providing opportunities for additional information, and closing the interview (Magaldi & Berler, 2020; Robinson, 2023).

The data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana through data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification (Asipi et al., 2022). The analysis began by repeatedly reading the interview results, identifying relevant statements, and conducting coding. The initial codes included IP (service innovation), KM (ease for the community), KP (service speed), SDM (human resources), AT (rules and authority), TD (digital technology), LS (vulnerable groups), SP (central system/SIAK), SM (socialization), and MP (employee motivation). The related codes were then grouped into themes. For example, KM, KP, and LS were grouped as an orientation toward serving the community, whereas AT, SDM, TD, and SP were grouped as institutional and operational conditions.

Next, the empirical themes were mapped onto the principles of RG to identify how these principles were manifested in practice. Each principle was then analyzed together with the institutional conditions affecting its implementation, including regulations and authority, human resource capacity, budgets and facilities, technology, user characteristics, and dependence on the centralized SIAK. Based on this mapping, adaptation was classified into (1) direct adoption, (2) transformative adaptation, and (3) limited adaptation.

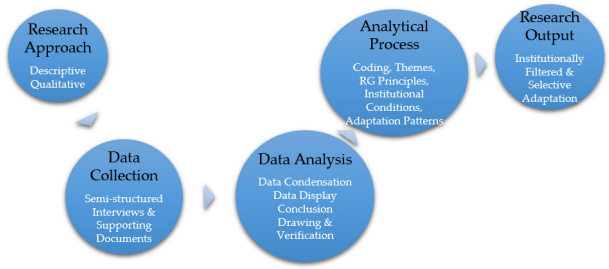


Figure 1. Research Methodological and Analytical Flow
Source: Processed by Author, 2026

The credibility of the findings was strengthened through source triangulation by comparing managerial perspectives, the perspectives of the Secretary, heads of divisions, implementing staff, and service users, as well as by using written information, such as documents/reports from relevant institutions concerning innovations, as supporting sources (Santos et al., 2020; Yip & Zeng, 2025). Triangulation was used to identify consistent patterns and differences in perspectives regarding the ease and speed of services, compliance with regulations, human resource capacity, technology, and the needs of different user groups (Schlunegger et al., 2024). Internal data emphasized that innovations must continue to comply with regulations and are influenced by human resource capacity and technological systems, while service users emphasized ease, speed, accessibility, and the need for alternatives to direct services.

Reflexivity was conducted by distinguishing informants' statements as empirical data, the researcher's interpretation of data patterns, and theoretical interpretations based on RG. Conclusions were constructed through comparisons across sources, thematic grouping, and mapping against institutional conditions (Maher et al., 2018). An analytical trail from coding to the categorization of forms of adaptation was maintained to enhance the traceability of the interpretation process (Carcary, 2020).

Results and Discussion

Between Bureaucratic Rigidity and Entrepreneurial Government

The service provided by Disdukcapil in Banda Aceh that is related to population management poses the problem of the need to maintain administrative security and provide good quality of services at the same time.

This idea can be observed in the organization's handling of new ideas. Informant 3 stated:

> "The main focus of any service offered is to make things easy for the public, ensuring that current policies or services do not create unnecessary difficulties for the people. At the same time, every service should follow the established rules and procedures to maintain order, clarity, and responsibility" (Interview, 2026).

This statement indicates that a community-oriented approach is not positioned in opposition to compliance with regulations. Convenience is the objective of innovation, while regulations set the boundaries for how it is achieved. At the level of implementation, Informant 4 emphasized:

> "When there is an innovation, the Population and Civil Registration Office must be able to adjust its working methods to the changes that occur so that they remain effective and continue to develop and meet the needs of the community, while still adhering to the established rules, procedures, and SOPs" (Interview, 2026)

Thus, entrepreneurial government in the context of the Population and Civil Registration Office does not mean the freedom to change regulations or authority, but rather the ability to adjust working methods to improve services within the administrative framework. This room for change is particularly evident in service mechanisms. Informant 2 explained to the researcher that this included spatial arrangement, the separation of KTP-el collection

counters based on users' needs, and KTP-el recording for persons with disabilities, older people, and people with mental disorders (ODGJ). These changes do not alter the organization's mandate but rather adjust the way services are provided to the needs of users. The users' perspectives reinforce this finding. Informant 8 stated:

> "Users of population administration services emphasize that every service provided to the community must be flexible despite the various obstacles and limitations faced by the community so that the necessary information is clearer" (Interview, 2026).

A similar tension emerges in the context of digitalization. The utilization of IKD expands service options for people accustomed to using technology, but not all users have the same level of digital capability. Informant 7, a user of digital services/ IKD, stated that digital services are more practical for users who are accustomed to technology, while some members of the community still require information and assistance from health workers. Therefore, in-person services must be maintained so that digital innovation does not create new barriers for certain groups.

These findings indicate that organizational flexibility is not unlimited. The organization can change service mechanisms, adjust service channels, and respond to user characteristics, but it remains within the boundaries of regulations, authority, capacity, and the broader population administration system. In other words, the flexibility that develops is bounded flexibility (Al Rashidi et al., 2019).

Based on this interpretation, the relationship between bureaucratic rigidity and entrepreneurial government at the Population and Civil Registration Office of Banda Aceh City is more appropriately understood as a negotiated rather than a substitutive relationship. Bureaucracy establishes legal, procedural, and administrative boundaries, whereas an entrepreneurial orientation encourages the organization to make use of the available room for action to improve service mechanisms. Bureaucracy determines the boundaries of action, whereas an entrepreneurial orientation determines how that space is utilized (Kraus et al., 2019; Vivona et al., 2024).

Translation and Variations of Selective Adaptation to Reinventing Government Principles in Legally Bound Organizations

The implementation of RG at Disdukcapil Kota Banda Aceh does not occur through the uniform adoption of all principles but rather through a process of translating them into service mechanisms that are appropriate to the characteristics of population administration organizations. As an organization operating under a legal mandate, the scope for change within Disdukcapil is shaped by regulations, administrative authority, service standards, organizational capacity, technology and dependence on the Population Administration Information System (SIAK), as well as the characteristics of the community as service users

These conditions imply that the principles of RG do not automatically produce the same forms of practice. Principles that are relatively compatible with the service mandate can be implemented more directly, while principles whose mechanisms are less compatible with the organizational structure undergo adjustments or are limited. Thus, the translation of RG within legally bound organizations occurs selectively and contextually, resulting in three forms of selective adaptation: direct adoption, transformative adaptation, and limited adaptation.

Direct Adoption

Direct adoption occurs when the main orientation of an RG principle is relatively compatible with the mandate and service objectives of Disdukcapil, allowing it to be implemented without fundamental changes to the mechanisms required by the principle. Research shows that the influence of these principles on the activity of civil registration and population administration institutions can be best understood through the following principles: the principle of mission-orientedness, results-orientedness, customer-orientedness, and forward-looking administration. These four principles coincide with the features of civil registration and population administration and find expression in the desire of civil registration

institutions to ensure the realization of administrative rights of the public, improve the quality of services rendered, and satisfy the needs of the citizens.

For example, "being results-oriented" is interpreted as the organization's capacity to ensure timely registration of civil documents, without referring to the pursuit of profit or other economic objectives (Sabar et al., 2021). Informant 5, the staff member said:

> "We must remember that people come to the Disdukcapil to use their rights and get the civil registration services, and we must deliver them with the help of rules, and we must simplify people's lives" (Interview, 2026).

This statement clarifies that results-oriented management is intrinsically linked to protecting citizens' rights in civil registration and population administration. It also emphasizes how organizational evaluation contributes to achieving these aims. Based on an interview with Informant 1, she stated:

> "In efforts to improve the quality of institutional and employee performance, Disdukcapil conducts periodic employee performance assessments. The results of these assessments serve as the basis for providing rewards and punishments to employees, including giving rewards to employees with the best performance and discipline, as well as reprimanding employees who violate the applicable provisions." (Interview, 2026).

One of the efforts undertaken by government institutions to ensure improvements in employee performance is the provision of rewards and punishments. Employees who demonstrate dedication and good performance need to be appreciated and rewarded, as this can motivate other employees and foster competitiveness in the workplace. In addition, government institutions can also impose punishments and sanctions on employees whose performance is inadequate. The provision of rewards and punishments has an impact and contributes to accountable governance. Thus, a results-oriented approach is also translated through evaluation mechanisms in the form of rewards/sanctions and through internal control, rather than through the relinquishment of bureaucratic control.



DINAS KEPENDUDUKAN DAN PENCATATAN SIPIL

Piagam Penghargaan

Diberikan Kepada :

NASIBAH, SE

Sebagai
Pegawai Negeri Sipil Dinas Kependudukan dan Pencatatan Sipil
Terbaik Triwulan I Tahun 2024
Atas Kinerja, Disiplin, Prestasi Kerja, Integritas dan Tanggung Jawab

Banda Aceh, 05 April 2024
Kepala Dinas Kependudukan dan Pencatatan Sipil
Kota Banda Aceh

Dra. Emila Sovayana, M.Si
Pembina Utama Muda
NIP. 19740604 199302 2 001

Figure 2. Results Orientation through Internal Rewards
Source: Disdukcapil Kota Banda Aceh

Under the principle of a customer-driven government, the community is not positioned entirely as "customers" in the market sense. In population administration, the community holds administrative rights, while the government has an obligation to provide services (Sabar et al., 2021). Therefore, customer orientation is translated into an orientation toward the needs and experiences of the service users. Based on interviews with Informants 2 and 3:

> "Comfort for the community, convenience for users, and conformity with applicable procedures, SOPs, and regulations are the main considerations in developing innovations at Disdukcapil Kota Banda Aceh." (Interview, 2026).

This customer orientation is subsequently translated through various service adjustments, including the arrangement of service spaces, the separation of KTP-el collection counters, and KTP-el recording services for groups such as persons with disabilities, the elderly, and people with mental disorders (ODGJ). This is further supported by the 2024–2025 Performance Report of Disdukcapil Kota Banda Aceh, which shows that the Community Satisfaction Survey (SKM) recorded a score of 99.11% and was categorized as Very Good.

Meanwhile, the anticipatory government principle is reinforced through the 2025–2029 Key Performance Indicators (IKU) document. The attainment of population document ownership is pursued not only through passive services at the office but also through proactive outreach strategies, services in schools, health facilities, integrated health service posts (posyandu), and gampong, as well as through strengthened socialization and coordination. Thus, (Ramadani et al., 2026) the organization does not merely wait for people to come but develops mechanisms to expand service coverage to groups that may not yet have obtained population documents.

In line with this, mission-driven government orientation is also supported by the organization's performance planning documents (Kharisma & Yulianti, 2018). This can be found in the Performance Tree, Work Plan (Renja), and Strategic Plan (Renstra) of Disdukcapil Kota Banda Aceh, which positions increasing ownership of population administration documents as an organizational objective, with targets that include increasing the coverage of document ownership and meeting the level of community satisfaction.

Transformative Adaptation

Transformative adaptation occurs when the orientation of an RG principle is maintained, but the mechanism of its implementation is modified to suit the conditions of the organization and society. In this pattern, the organization does not literally copy the principle but rather reinterprets how the principle is realized. This pattern is most clearly reflected in the principles of catalytic government, community-owned government, competitive government, and entrepreneurial government

For example, the catalytic principle is translated through interorganizational direction and coordination rather than through the transfer of core service functions(Li & Cao, 2024). This can be seen in the collaboration between Disdukcapil, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and the Banda Aceh District Court. The SIDATIN innovation was developed into CINTAKAH PADA MAS TUKIMAN by adjusting the service mechanism to the marriage patterns of communities in three particular mosques. Similarly, SENTIMENTIL was developed into SIDARLING through changes in the coordination mechanism between Disdukcapil and the Banda Aceh District Court.

Under the community-owned government principle, community involvement does not translate into the transfer of ownership or control of services. Instead, its translation is more evident through socialization, communication, feedback, and attention to user experience. In this way, the community plays a role in shaping service adjustments, while the authority to administer the services remains with the government (Bojang, 2022).

The competitive government principle is also translated differently. Because population administration services are public functions provided within the framework of government obligations, competition among providers, as found in market mechanisms, is not the primary mechanism for their provision. However, the orientation toward

performance improvement can be translated through internal evaluations and recognition. Thus, the competitive element shifts from competition among organizations to the encouragement of performance improvement within the organization (Afrijal et al., 2024).

A similar pattern applies to entrepreneurial government. Organizational entrepreneurship is not manifested through unrestricted freedom in decision-making, but through the ability to modify service mechanisms, establish cooperation, and seek solutions to community needs. On this basis, the entrepreneurial aspect lies primarily in how the organization utilizes the available scope of authority, rather than changing the authority itself (Prasetyo, 2022).

Limited Adaptation

Limited adaptation occurs when the orientation of an RG principle can still be utilized, but its implementation is constrained by particular institutional conditions. In this study, this pattern is particularly evident in decentralized government and market-oriented government, although institutional constraints also affect the implementation of other principles related to flexibility and digitalization

For example, the principles of decentralized government and flexibility face stronger limitations because population administration services are connected to a national system. Disdukcapil can adjust service channels and mechanisms at the local level, but does not have the same degree of discretion to modify the core population administration system. Based on interviews with Informant 1 and Informant 5, they explained:

> "It has a significant influence. Population administration services use an integrated system. If the system experiences disruptions, the service process can also be disrupted because it is connected to the national system. Therefore, the system, network, and data security are important parts of service delivery" (Interview, 2026).

Therefore, these results prove that digitalization is not necessarily equal to decentralization. Although the Disdukcapil can develop various service channels, such as IKD and SIHATI Online, they continue working within the framework of the SIAK, which is controlled by the Directorate General of Population and Civil Registration under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Additionally, the characteristics of the users contribute to the process of making digital services more flexible. As it was explained by Informant 7, digital services are more convenient for users who already know how to use technology, while other members of the community require additional information and help. Therefore, the flexibility of digital services is achieved by offering multiple channels of service instead of replacing all the services with digital ones (Rey-Moreno et al., 2018).

Market-oriented principles can be observed in the way Disdukcapil provides population services. In contrast to other spheres of public services in the country, in the case of Disdukcapil, the market principle of organization does not operate due to the lack of competition among providers, market prices, and profit generation. However, it is possible to apply certain elements of the market principle such as efficiency, ease of access, and orientation towards customers in this sphere of public services.

Thus, instead of implementing the market mechanism itself, the author points out the implementation of certain management approaches which originate from this model. Services remain subject to the legal framework, state regulations, and duties of the public bodies, while market management tools are used to increase the efficiency of the services provided and enhance user-centricity (Nasif et al., 2020). This understanding is important, as it makes clear that the implementation of RG in case of legally mandated organizations is not the adoption of a market approach per se.

However, it should be mentioned that such a partial adoption does not mean that RG principles are completely rejected; they still provide a direction of change, but their implementation is restricted by the existing organizational structures, centralized administration, and specifics of the public service. Thus, such adaptation should be described as a partial implementation, where some principles of RG are adapted to the needs of public service

Based on the above discussion, the ten RG principles do not form a uniform pattern of implementation. The principles of mission-driven, results-oriented, customer-driven, and anticipatory government are relatively easy to translate because they are compatible with public service delivery objectives. The principles of catalytic, community-owned, competitive, and entrepreneurial government continue to be utilized, but their mechanisms are adjusted to the structure and characteristics of public organizations. Meanwhile, the principles of decentralized and market-oriented governments face stronger constraints due to the distribution of authority, integrated administrative systems, and the mandatory nature of services.

On this basis, translating RG and determining the variations of selective adaptation at Disdukcapil Kota Banda Aceh does not mean replacing bureaucracy with an entrepreneurial model, but rather integrating reform orientations into a bureaucratic structure that continues to maintain legality, authority, standardization, and accountability. Legal regulations do not merely function as external constraints on RG but also determine how reform principles can be translated into concrete service mechanisms.

These findings provide a basis for explaining why the translated principles produce different levels and forms of adaptations. These differences are subsequently analyzed through three forms of selective adaptation: direct adoption, transformative adaptation, and limited adaptation

Institutional Mechanisms as Institutional Filters

The researchers identified four main conditions that function as institutional filters at the Disdukcapil: regulations and administrative authority, organizational capacity, technology and dependence on the SIAK, and the characteristics of the community as service users. These four conditions do not operate separately but interact with one another in determining how reform principles can be realized in organizational practice.

In this study, institutional filters are understood as institutional mechanisms that filter reform principles before they become organizational practices. RG principles provide the direction of change, while institutional conditions determine the space of possibilities, modes of implementation, and limits of change. Thus, institutions do not merely function as external constraints on innovation. Institutions also shape organizational choices regarding what changes can be made, at what level changes can be made, and what mechanisms can be used (Acciai & Terlizzi, 2025; Chakrabarty, 2022).

First, Disdukcapil faces regulations and administrative mandates from the government as it performs its legal duties. Thus, its population administration service is regulated by Law No. 23 of 2006, as amended by Law No. 24 of 2013 on Population Administration and Law No. 25 of 2009 on Public Services. In addition, the status, duties, functions, powers, and operational procedures of the agency are described by Banda Aceh Mayor's Regulation No. 20 of 2021. This means that the agency does not have the right to freely modify its powers and duties.

In fact, there are no restrictions on innovation in the healthcare institutions in question, but these two types of innovations can be distinguished by the substance of agency mandates and innovative delivery mechanisms (Acciai & Terlizzi, 2025). In this respect, the following words should be mentioned.

> "Regulation and mandates become necessary tools in the process of innovating since they ensure that innovations developed are coherent with regulations and mandates and they are appropriately conducted" (Interview, 2026).

Thus, regulation works in two directions: it prevents actions that are out of an organization's jurisdiction and legitimizes necessary changes within its scope. As a result, the closer an innovation is to the heart of the organization's mandate and central administrative system, the harder will be the legislative evaluation of it. Innovations at the level of service processes, channels, locations, and mechanisms allow for a greater scope of change (Schedler et al., 2019). For instance, various service innovations in Disdukcapil can change interactions with the public, but they will not change the basic mandate of the department.

However, it is worth noting that there exist several prerequisites for the implementation of an innovation and the fulfillment of all requirements stated above, and regulations may be viewed as one of such prerequisites rather than as an obstacle. It should be recognized that the availability of the right legal framework is vital for the success of any innovation initiative. It should be admitted that the existence of an adequate amount of flexibility in terms of the implementation of an innovation is vital for the success of this initiative. Furthermore, it should be mentioned that there are other prerequisites for successful innovation in organizations, such as the existence of certain organizational capacities. In other words, such capacities include personnel, competencies, infrastructure, and budget, which are needed to realize an innovative strategy in the given organization (Obasa, 2019).

The need for organizational capacity adjustment appears especially clearly during the introduction of new policies or information systems into an organization. The staff of the organization should be provided with information and some training on the new issue. In her interview, Informant 4 explained the issue as follows:

> "Employees play a huge role, as they are directly providing the service to the public. The implementation of an innovation requires changes in their way of working while following the regulations" (interview, 2026).

Therefore, the described case proves that the capacities of an organization are a type of operating filter: an organization can have a legal possibility to implement some innovation, but its successful realization depends on its capacities. In other words, regulation specifies a range of permitted actions, whereas the capacities of an organization determine how this range can be operated. Consequently, capacity limitations do not prevent the implementation of some innovation, but they may require the implementation of changes in a limited scope or by means of the simplest innovations (Obasa, 2019).

Third, the use of technology serves as a filtering mechanism. On the one hand, the digitalization of Disdukcapil can provide the opportunity to make access easier. On the other hand, population administration technology runs on an integrated system of infrastructure, network, and data security and does not depend entirely on the local organization.

This problem is manifested in the usage of the SIAK, the nationally integrated population administration system. Although Disdukcapil can develop certain digital mechanisms for offering its services, such as IKD (digital population identity) or SIHATI Online, it lacks the latitude to change the system of population administration itself. Informant 5 said:

> "The system is closely integrated with other systems used in population administration services. Hence, any disruptions within the system can negatively influence the service delivery process. In addition, system security, network security, and data security are extremely important aspects of such services" (Interview, 2026).

These findings indicate that digitalization does not automatically result in decentralization. An organization may have discretion over channels and mechanisms for interaction with users, but remains dependent on a broader system architecture. When the system, network, or security experiences a disruption, the organization's ability to maintain service flexibility is also limited. Thus, technology functions as a technical-structural filter that determines what can technically be carried out locally and what remains dependent on a centralized system (Sion et al., 2026).

The fourth filter originates from the characteristics of the community as service users. Differences in digital capabilities, age, physical conditions, and administrative needs mean that a single service mechanism is not always suitable for all users (Liu et al., 2025). Therefore, a user-oriented approach cannot be sufficiently translated through digitalization alone but must consider the community's ability to access and use each service channel. Based on an interview with Informant 7, he explained:

> "Digital services are more practical for people who are accustomed to using technology, but some people still need information and assistance in using the available services so that they can use them properly" (Interview, 2026).

These findings indicate that user characteristics filter innovation based on the compatibility between service mechanisms and users' capabilities. The same can be seen in the need for services for vulnerable groups such as older people, persons with disabilities, and ODGJ. Therefore, service flexibility is not realized by replacing direct services with digital services but through the availability of multiple channels and adjustments to service mechanisms. Thus, the community is not merely the recipient of innovation but also constitutes a condition that influences innovation design (Liu et al., 2025).

The four institutional filters do not operate separately but simultaneously determine the possibility of innovation. An innovation must comply with regulatory boundaries, be operationalized according to organizational capacity, be technically feasible within the SIAK architecture, and be compatible with the user characteristics. For example, service digitalization does not depend solely on the availability of technology, but also on data security, dependence on SIAK, employee competencies, and the digital capabilities of the community. This interaction explains why the same RG principles can be realized through different service mechanisms, such as adjusting services to local needs, inter-institutional integration, providing services for vulnerable groups, and combining digital and face-to-face channels.

On this basis, institutional filters not only determine whether a reform principle can be applied but also how and in what form the principle is realized. RG principles provide an orientation for change, whereas institutional conditions filter the space for their application based on legal, organizational, technological, and social considerations. The result is not a complete reproduction of the RG principles but rather an implementation that is adapted to the organization's conditions. This filtering mechanism subsequently explains the emergence of variations in the direct adoption, transformative adaptation, and limited adaptation of each RG principle.

Institutionally Filtered Selective Adaptation as a Theoretical Mechanism

Institutionally filtered selective adaptation, as a theoretical mechanism of RG principles, first encounters institutional conditions that filter the scope and manner of their applications. Regulations and authority determine the legal boundaries of organizational action, capacity determines the ability to operationalize change, technology and dependence on SIAK determine the scope for change at the system level, and user characteristics determine the suitability of service mechanisms. Therefore, the same reform principle may produce different forms of practice when confronted with different institutional configurations in different countries.

The presented study, on the basis of the discussed results, suggests the concept of "institutionally filtered selective adaptation" for explaining the linkage between reform principles and organizational innovations. This concept sees an institutional framework as a filtering mechanism between an orientation towards reforms and organizational practices. Thus, the principles of RG dictate the direction of development but do not determine its final version automatically.

Before becoming a practice, the principle interacts with what is legally permissible, organizationally feasible, technologically possible, and socially appropriate to users' needs. Thus, organizational innovation results from the interaction between reform drivers and the conditions that simultaneously enable and constrain organizational action (Waheduzzaman, 2026).

In this relationship, institutional filters do not merely function as barriers. These filters differentiate reform mechanisms. When a principle is relatively compatible with the organization's mandate, its application may take the form of direct adoption. When the objective of a principle can be maintained but its initial mechanism is incompatible with the context, transformative adaptation occurs. Meanwhile, when the scope of application is constrained by authority, capacity, systems, or user characteristics, limited adaptation emerges. These three forms are the result of different filtering processes, rather than different levels of implementation success.

This finding has important implications for the understanding of selective adaptation. Selectivity does not primarily occur at the stage of deciding whether to accept or reject a reform but throughout the process of translating the principle into organizational practice.

A principle may be normatively accepted, yet undergo changes in its mechanisms, scale, channels, or manner of implementation after encountering institutional conditions (Schedler et al., 2019). Selective adaptation is a process of shaping the form of reform, rather than merely the final outcome of reform implementation.

This position distinguishes the contribution of this study from several perspectives used to explain organizational change. Institutional Theory explains how rules, norms, and institutional pressures shape organizational behavior (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Scott, 2014). Contingency Theory emphasizes that the effectiveness of organizational practices depends on their fit with contextual conditions (Donaldson, 2001). Meanwhile, the translation perspective explains that ideas or practices may undergo changes when they are transferred and implemented in different contexts (Ansari et al., 2010). These three perspectives help explain pressures, contextual fit, and changes in context, respectively; however, this study focuses on the filtering mechanism that connects reform principles with the forms of innovation produced.

Thus, the contribution of this study is not merely to demonstrate that some principles of RG are easier to implement than others. In addition, our findings prove that the implementation of a single reform principle can lead to multiple innovations that depend on the configurations of institutional settings. In particular, the principle of customer orientation does not lead to uniformity of service delivery in the Disdukcapil of Banda Aceh. Thus, it is possible to implement the customer orientation principle by offering customized services, integrating with other institutions, offering services to vulnerable groups, or using a combination of digital and in-person service delivery. The existence of such variation in implementation depends on the context.

This mechanism also explains the relationship between bureaucratic rigidity and entrepreneurial government, as identified in this study. Organizations do not face the choice of maintaining bureaucracy or replacing it with an entrepreneurial government (Vivona et al., 2024). Instead, organizations use entrepreneurial orientation to utilize the scope for change available within the bureaucratic structure (Kraus et al., 2019). Bureaucracy maintains legality, accountability, standardization, and data security, whereas the principles of RG encourage changes in how services are delivered. This condition indicates the existence of bounded agency, namely, the ability of organizations to act and innovate while remaining shaped by institutional boundaries.

From this perspective, innovation in legally bound organizations cannot be understood as a linear reduction in bureaucracy. Innovation can emerge through selective changes in the bureaucracy. This means that the more strongly an organization is bound by laws and administrative systems, the more important it becomes to distinguish between what can be changed by the organization and what must be maintained as part of its authority and administrative control. Therefore, flexibility does not mean freedom from rules but rather the ability to utilize the space available within those rules (Al Rashidi et al., 2019).

Theoretically, institutionally filtered selective adaptation therefore extends the understanding of RG from a reform model oriented toward organizational change to a framework capable of explaining the differentiation in the application of reform. RG remains useful for identifying directions of change in terms of outcome orientation, user orientation, innovation, flexibility, and entrepreneurship. However, this study demonstrates that these orientations do not automatically determine the form of innovation. Institutional conditions determine how these orientations are translated, the extent to which they can be implemented, and the organizational forms that ultimately emerge.

This mechanism demonstrates that institutions are not merely the context in which reform takes place but are part of the process that shapes the outcomes of reform itself. This explains why innovation in population-administration organizations can develop without eliminating their bureaucratic foundations.

From Reinventing Government to Governance Hybridization

Based on the research findings, service innovation at Disdukcapil Kota Banda Aceh does not result in a shift from rigid bureaucracy toward entrepreneurial government, but rather in a hybridization of governance. Rigid bureaucratic/administrative components

are still required to guarantee legality, data correctness, procedural dependability, accountability, and information security; simultaneously, the ideas of RG promote a results- and citizen-oriented approach as well as innovation, digitization, and flexibility within the limits of available resources. This tendency corresponds with those in public administration reform that lead to layering and hybridization instead of the total replacement of one theory by another (Christensen & Lægreid, 2011; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017).

This hybridizing shows features that parallel several changes in public administration. Post-New Public Management (Post-NPM) is seen in the use of solutions such as SIDARLING to improve cross-organizational coordination and integration. Although it is limited by reliance on current systems (SIAK), system security needs, and the degree of digital literacy, the use of ICT and digital services helps define Digital Era Governance as digitalization does not automatically replace in-person services (Mergel et al., 2019; Vial, 2019). Meanwhile, Public Value Management is reflected in the attention given to convenience, clarity of information, accessibility, and the needs of vulnerable groups. However, the creation of public value continues to take place within the framework of the state's obligation to fulfill citizens' administrative rights.

At the same time, the characteristics of the Neo-Weberian state remain strong, as reflected in hierarchy, legality, standardization, professionalism, and accountability. Thus, the modernization identified is not total de-bureaucratization, but rather the modernization of bureaucracy from within. This finding reinforces the view that RG does not need to be positioned as a paradigm that replaces bureaucracy, but rather as a framework for identifying mechanisms of change that are subsequently negotiated with institutional conditions. This hybridization is a consequence of institutionally filtered selective adaptation: the principles of RG are selected and reshaped through regulations, organizational capacity, technology, coordination, and user needs.

Based on these findings, the emerging pattern can be understood as bureaucratic-entrepreneurial hybridization. Bureaucracy continues to provide boundaries and legitimacy, while an entrepreneurial orientation encourages the organization to utilize the

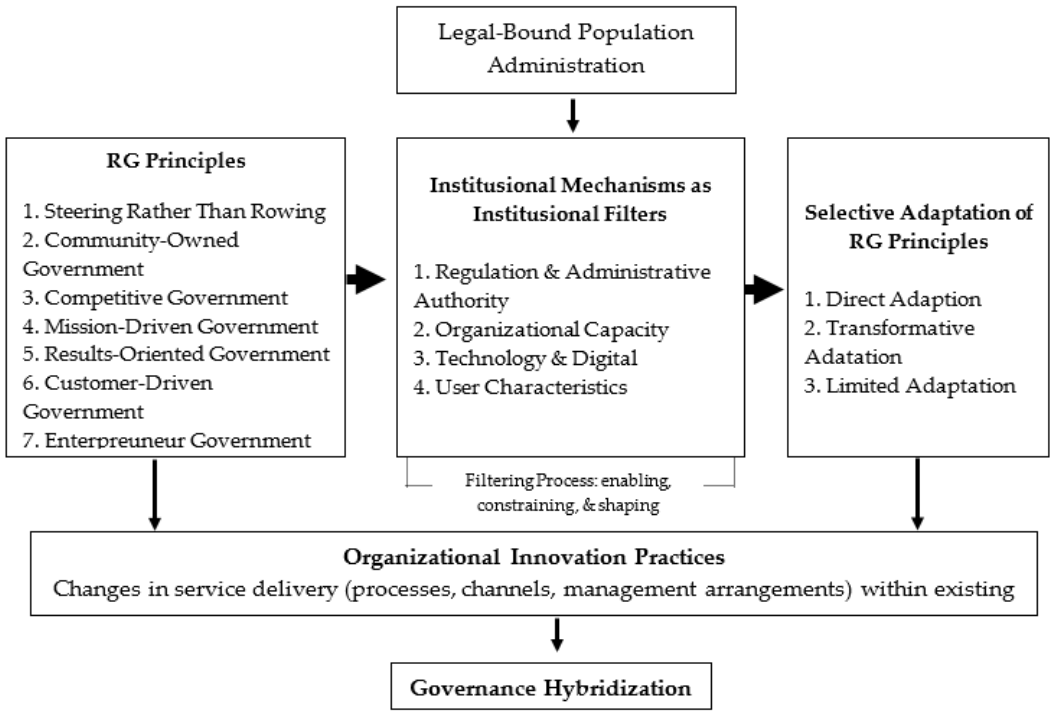


Figure 3. The Mechanism of Institutionally Filtered Selective Adaptation of Reinventing Government Principles in Legal-Bound Population Administration
Source: Process by Author, 2026

available space to undertake innovation. Post-NPM, Digital Era Governance, Public Value Management, and the Neo-Weberian State do not replace RG but rather help explain how coordination, digitalization, orientation toward society, and the bureaucratic foundation jointly shape service innovation at Disdukcapil Kota Banda Aceh.

Conclusion

Based on the discussion, this study shows that a legally bound population administration organization can develop innovations without abandoning its bureaucratic foundations. At the Disdukcapil of Banda Aceh City, the tension between bureaucratic rigidity and entrepreneurial government is not resolved by replacing bureaucracy but through adjustments in ways of working within the available scope of authority. Regulations and authority, organizational capacity, technology, dependence on SIAK, and user characteristics constitute institutional conditions that shape the space and boundaries of innovation.

Theoretically, this study develops the concept of institutionally filtered selective adaptation to explain that the principles of RG do not move directly from ideas into practice but are first filtered by institutional conditions. This process leads to three main forms: first, direct adoption, in which a principle is in line with the mandate of the service; second, transformative adaptation, in which the objectives of the principle are maintained even though the mechanism undergoes modifications; and third, limited adaptation, in which implementation is limited by authority, capacity, technology, or vertical dependence. Thus, the contribution of this study not only shows the extent to which the principles of governance reorganization are implemented but also explains how and why the same principles can generate different forms of innovation in certain institutional settings.

These findings suggest that innovation in the public sector in legally bound organizations is best understood as a combination of bureaucracy and entrepreneurship. Bureaucracy provides a foundation for legality, accountability, and standardization, while the entrepreneurial spirit allows organizations to improve their service mechanisms. Therefore, the implementation of governance restructuring in public organizations should not be viewed as an attempt to reduce bureaucracy, but rather as a step to make room for change within existing institutional boundaries. Further research can explore the concept of institutionally transformed selective adaptation in various regulatory contexts in public organizations to determine whether the same adaptation patterns emerge or evolve into different configurations.

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