



Dynamics of Local Government Governance in Public Service Delivery in Lebak Regency: A Case Study of the Population and Civil Registration Office and the Investment Office (Disdukcapil & DPMPTSP)

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Abstract

This study examines the dynamics of local government governance in Lebak Regency, Banten Province, with a focus on public service delivery in Rangkasbitung City as the administrative center. The research aims to analyze the effectiveness of local government bureaucracy in providing citizen-oriented services and to identify structural and cultural barriers affecting public administration quality. A qualitative approach was used with a case study method through in-depth interviews with civil servants, community figures, and public service users. The results indicate that the institutional capacity of Lebak Regency's government still faces challenges in inter-agency coordination, low utilization of information technology in service delivery, and limited competent human resources. Nevertheless, several promising administrative innovations were found, particularly in the implementation of the one-stop integrated service system (PTSP) at the Investment Office. This study recommends more substantive bureaucratic reform oriented toward tangible outcomes in the field.

Keywords: *governance, public service, bureaucracy, Lebak Regency, administrative reform*



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INTRODUCTION

Effective and efficient local government administration is one of the main pillars in realizing the ideals of the welfare state as mandated by the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. Decentralization, strengthened through Law Number 23 of 2014 on Regional Government, provides wider space for regency and city governments to regulate and manage governmental affairs based on the principles of autonomy and co-administration. In this context, Lebak Regency, as one of the regions in Banten Province, holds a strategic position while simultaneously facing complex challenges in managing its local government.

Lebak Regency is one of the regencies with the largest area in Banten Province, encompassing 28 sub-districts with a total area of approximately 3,426.56 square kilometers. With its regency capital located in Rangkasbitung City, the region has diverse geographical characteristics, ranging from mountainous areas in the southern part to lowlands in the north. This geographical diversity directly affects the complexity of government service delivery, which must reach all areas equitably and with justice.

Based on data from the Lebak Regency Central Statistics Agency in 2023, the population of Lebak Regency exceeds 1.3 million people. The large number of people to be served places the local government before a formidable challenge: how to ensure every citizen receives equal access to population administration services, licensing, health, education, and various other public services. This situation is made even more complex by the uneven distribution of the population between urban and rural areas.

The quality of public services is the primary indicator of a local government's success in carrying out its functions. According to Agus Dwiyanto (2021), bureaucratic reform at the local level is not enough to be merely structural and procedural; it must also touch deeper cultural dimensions, namely changing the way state apparatus perceives the public as subjects, not merely objects of service. This paradigm shift is key to the success of public administration transformation in regions striving to improve their service quality.

In the context of Lebak Regency, efforts to improve public service quality have been a strategic agenda of the local government for several years. Nevertheless, various evaluations show that the implementation of bureaucratic reform policies remains far from ideal. Community satisfaction surveys conducted periodically often show stagnant or even declining figures in certain service units. This situation indicates fundamental problems that the local government has not yet managed to resolve.

The issue of governance has become the dominant discourse in contemporary public administration studies. The concept of good governance promoted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) emphasizes the importance of accountability, transparency, participation, effectiveness, efficiency, and the rule of law in government administration. In Indonesia, this concept has been adopted in various national regulations and translated into implementation guidelines at the regional level.

Research on governance in semi-urban and rural areas such as Lebak Regency is still relatively limited. Most academic studies tend to focus on more economically and infrastructurally advanced regions, creating a significant knowledge gap regarding the dynamics of public administration in transitioning areas. This gap is what motivates this research to examine more deeply the realities of governance in Lebak Regency.

The Population and Civil Registration Office (Disdukcapil) and the Investment and Integrated One-Stop Service Office (DPMPTSP) were selected as the research focus because both units serve as the frontline in the interaction between government and society. Disdukcapil handles fundamental population administrative affairs that affect almost all segments of society, from birth registration and the issuance of national identity cards to death certificates. Meanwhile, DPMPTSP plays a strategic role in facilitating investment and regional economic growth through the simplification of licensing processes.

This research is also motivated by the researcher's preliminary finding of a fairly striking discrepancy between policies formulated at the top level and implementation practices in the field. This phenomenon of the implementation gap has long been a concern among public administration experts. According to Agus Pramusinto and Erwan Agus Purwanto (2022), the distance between policy and implementation often stems from weak organizational capacity, insufficient resource support, and resistance from within the bureaucracy itself.

From a theoretical perspective, this study seeks to contribute new understanding of how local contextual factors influence the success or failure of administrative reform. The dimensions of local wisdom, the distinctive social structure of Banten's society, and local political dynamics are important variables that are often overlooked in top-down policy analyses. Integrating these dimensions into the analytical framework will produce a more comprehensive and contextually relevant understanding.

Based on the background described above, this study formulates the following main question: how do the dynamics of local government governance manifest in public service

delivery in Lebak Regency, specifically at the Population and Civil Registration Office and the Investment and Integrated One-Stop Service Office in Rangkasbitung City? To answer this question, this study establishes three main objectives: (1) to analyze the institutional capacity of Lebak Regency's government in delivering public services; (2) to identify barriers affecting the quality of governance; and (3) to formulate contextual and applicable policy recommendations.

Academically, this research is expected to enrich the field of public administration science, particularly in the sub-fields of local government governance and public service management. Practically, the findings are expected to provide valuable input for policymakers in Lebak Regency in designing and implementing more effective and sustainable service quality improvement programs.

Theoretical Review: Governance and Public Services

The concept of governance has undergone significant evolution in recent decades. From the traditional perspective that positions the state as the sole and dominant actor in managing public affairs, contemporary thinking has shifted toward a more collaborative and participatory governance paradigm. Rhodes (1997) defines governance as a self-organizing process involving networks of interdependent organizations, where the state is only one actor among many.

In Indonesia, the development of governance discourse has been strongly influenced by the wave of reform that began in 1998. Decentralization, subsequently implemented on a massive scale from the early 2000s onward, brought fundamental consequences for how governance is conducted at the local level. According to Eko Prasojó (2021), administrative reform in Indonesia is essentially an effort to transform the bureaucracy inherited from the New Order, which was highly centralistic and patronage-based, into a bureaucracy that is responsive, accountable, and oriented toward the public interest.

Public service as a concrete manifestation of the government's function has a very broad dimension. In public administration literature, there is an interesting difference in perspective between the New Public Management (NPM) paradigm, which emphasizes efficiency and markets, and the New Public Service (NPS) paradigm, which places greater emphasis on democratic values and citizenship. While NPM sees citizens as customers to be satisfied, NPS views citizens as owners of the government who must be involved in decision-making (Denhardt and Denhardt, 2003).

In the Indonesian context, Law Number 25 of 2009 on Public Services provides a strong legal foundation for the provision of quality services. This regulation requires every public service provider to develop service standards, provide a complaints facility, and conduct periodic evaluations of service quality. The implementation of this law at the regional level is an important benchmark for assessing how effectively local governance operates.

Research by Yusriadi and Rusli (2021) shows that one of the greatest obstacles to public service transformation in Indonesia's regencies is the low service-oriented organizational culture. Civil state apparatus still frequently get caught up in rigid procedural routines without being able to see the substance of the service function itself. This condition reflects the failure of existing education and training programs to fundamentally change the mentality and attitudes of the apparatus.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach deemed most appropriate for exploring governance phenomena that are complex, contextual, and cannot be reduced to statistical figures alone. As stated by Creswell and Poth (2018), qualitative research is most appropriate when the researcher intends to understand participants' experiences and perspectives, build theory from field data, or explore phenomena that have not been widely studied. All three conditions are met in the context of this research.

The selected research design is a case study, with Lebak Regency — particularly the Rangkasbitung area — as the main unit of analysis. Yin (2018) explains that case study is the most suitable research strategy when research questions are of the 'how' and 'why' type, when the researcher has minimal control over the events being studied, and when the research focus is a contemporary phenomenon in a real-life context. These characteristics are highly relevant to the objectives of this research.

Research subjects were determined through purposive sampling, namely the deliberate selection of informants based on the relevance and capacity of informants to provide the needed data. Research informants consisted of three main groups: (1) civil state apparatus (ASN) within Disdukcapil and DPMPTSP of Lebak Regency, including heads of offices, heads of divisions, heads of sections, and implementation staff; (2) community figures and academics with in-depth knowledge of Lebak Regency's local government; and (3) service-using community members selected based on variation in demographic characteristics and background.

The data collection techniques used in this study include three main methods. First, in-depth interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner, allowing the researcher to explore topics that emerge organically during the interview process. Interviews were conducted both face-to-face and through online platforms, with a duration of 60 to 120 minutes per session. All interviews were recorded with the informants' consent and subsequently transcribed verbatim.

Second, partial participatory observation was conducted during the researcher's fieldwork. The researcher spent time in public service spaces, observing interactions between apparatus and the public, service queues, the physical condition of facilities, and various other aspects relevant to service quality. Observation notes were systematically developed and became an important data source complementing interview data.

Third, a documentation study was conducted on various official government documents, including government agency performance reports (LKIP), regional apparatus strategic plans (renstra), standard operating procedures (SOPs), community satisfaction survey reports, and various local regulations related to public service delivery. These documents provide a formal perspective on formulated policies and serve as comparative material against field realities.

Data analysis was carried out using the interactive analysis model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2020), which consists of four interrelated components: data collection, data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing/verification. The analysis process is not linear but cyclical, with the researcher moving back and forth among the four components as their understanding of the phenomenon develops.

To ensure data validity, this study applies the four criteria proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985): credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was achieved through source triangulation and method triangulation, member checking, and extended researcher presence in the field. Source triangulation was performed by comparing data from different informant groups, while method triangulation was performed by comparing interview, observation, and documentation data.

Field data collection was carried out over three months, from September to November 2024. During this period, the researcher made intensive field visits to public service offices in Rangkasbitung City, including the Disdukcapil Office on Jalan Multatuli and the DPMPTSP office in the local government office complex. The researcher also attended several public forums and inter-agency coordination meetings relevant to the research focus.

Ethical considerations in this study included obtaining informed consent from all participants, ensuring the confidentiality of identities for informants who wished to remain anonymous, and reporting data honestly and impartially. The researcher also respected the right of institutions to deny access to confidential or sensitive documents. All these ethical procedures were consistently maintained throughout the research process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Institutional Profile of Disdukcapil and DPMPTSP of Lebak Regency

The Population and Civil Registration Office (Disdukcapil) of Lebak Regency was established under Regional Regulation of Lebak Regency Number 8 of 2016 on the Establishment and Organizational Structure of Regional Apparatus. This office is tasked with implementing government affairs in the field of population administration and civil registration, encompassing population registration, civil registration, management of population administrative information, and the utilization of population data and documents. Structurally, Disdukcapil is led by a head of office assisted by a secretary and a number of division heads.

Based on observational results, this office manages more than 1.3 million population records with various types of services that must be provided to the community. This high service volume demands a reliable information system, skilled human resources, and efficient procedures. In practice, however, based on the researcher's field observations, this ideal condition has not been fully realized. Long queues at service counters, information systems that occasionally experience technical disruptions, and public complaints about the lengthy process of document processing remain daily occurrences.

A similar situation was found at DPMPTSP Lebak Regency. This office, established to realize licensing services that are fast, easy, transparent, and accountable, faces a paradox that is not easy to resolve. On one hand, the office has a clear mandate to cut licensing bureaucracy in order to promote investment. On the other hand, coordination with other technical regional apparatus organizations (SKPDs) that hold substantive authority in the licensing process often becomes an obstacle that slows down the entire process.

In terms of human resources, both offices face relatively similar challenges. The Head of the Population Registration Service Division of Disdukcapil revealed in his interview that of approximately 45 employees assigned to the front lines of service, only about 30 percent have adequate technical competence in information technology and population data

management. This condition greatly affects the speed and accuracy of services provided to the public.

Institutional Capacity in Public Service Delivery

Institutional capacity is one of the main determinants of public service quality. In the context of Lebak Regency, this research found that the institutional capacity of both offices studied is still at a level that needs to be significantly improved. Using the capacity analysis framework developed by Morgan (2006), which covers five levels of capacity (individual, organizational, network, enabling environment, and society), the researcher identified systemic weaknesses. At the individual level, apparatus competence remains a crucial issue. Although the local government has organized various education and training (diklat) programs for its employees, the effectiveness of these programs is still questionable. Interviews with several employees revealed that the training attended was often not relevant to their specific daily duties and functions. One operator of the SIAK (Population Administration Information System) revealed that he only understood how to use the system optimally after years of trial and error, not because of any formal training he had attended.

This finding is consistent with research by Hardiyansyah (2021), which concludes that the quality of public services in local government is greatly influenced by the capability of apparatus human resources, and that investment in focused and relevant employee competency development will have a far greater impact than generic training programs. This recommendation has apparently not yet been fully internalized by policymakers in Lebak Regency. At the organizational level, the existing bureaucratic structure still contains many unnecessary hierarchical layers, causing decision-making to be slow and unresponsive. Every decision, even routine and operational ones, must pass through the section head, division head, and office head before it can be executed. This rigid hierarchical system creates serious bottlenecks in the service chain and contradicts the principle of agility that should characterize modern bureaucracy.

The physical condition of service facilities is also an important observation in this research. The Disdukcapil office located on Jalan Multatuli, Rangkasbitung, has a waiting room capacity inadequate to accommodate the volume of service applicants during peak hours. During the researcher's observation in October 2024, there were situations where the public had to wait outside the building because the seats in the waiting room were already full. This condition not only reduces public comfort but also reflects a lack of attention to very basic service aspects.

The utilization of information technology in service delivery is another dimension of focus in this research. In an era of increasingly rapid digital transformation, local governments are required to adopt technological innovations to improve service efficiency and accessibility. The Lebak Regency Government has several public service applications and information systems, but their implementation still faces various technical and non-technical obstacles. According to Ria Casmi Arrsa (2022), digital transformation in public services at the regional level in Indonesia is still hampered by three main problems: first, uneven information technology infrastructure; second, the digital literacy gap among apparatus and the public; and third, the lack of system interoperability among various applications developed by different agencies. All three problems were consistently found in the field research in Lebak Regency.

The digital queuing system installed at the Disdukcapil counter, for example, frequently malfunctions and is not integrated with the population information system (SIAK) used for data processing. As a result, officers must manually enter data into different systems, so the potential efficiency from technology adoption is not fully realized. This condition also increases the risk of data errors that affect the accuracy of population documents issued.

Structural and Cultural Barriers in Government Governance

One of the most significant findings in this research is the identification of structural and cultural barriers that consistently obstruct improvements in governance in Lebak Regency. Structural barriers relate to formal aspects such as regulations, procedures, and institutional arrangements, while cultural barriers relate to values, norms, and behaviors embedded in the bureaucratic organizational culture.

From the structural barriers perspective, the research found that overlapping authority between SKPDs remains an unresolved problem. In the process of issuing environmental permits, for example, there is ambiguity about who has the authority to provide technical recommendations: whether the Environment Office or DPMPTSP as the integrated service provider. This ambiguity often causes applicants to have to go back and forth between agencies, ultimately extending the overall licensing process time.

The complex regulatory framework also poses its own challenge. Based on document analysis, the process of issuing a single type of specific permit can involve more than ten regulations at different levels, from laws, government regulations, ministerial regulations, to regional regulations. This regulatory complexity not only burdens applicants but also places a heavy load on implementing apparatus who must ensure compliance with all applicable provisions.

From the cultural barriers perspective, this research found that a paternalistic and hierarchical culture remains deeply rooted in the bureaucratic organizations of Lebak Regency. Lower-level apparatus are reluctant to take initiatives or provide innovative suggestions to their superiors, fearing they will be perceived as overstepping their authority. This culture creates an organizational climate that is not conducive to innovation and continuous learning.

This finding is consistent with research by Hardianto Djanggih and Kamri Ahmad (2021), who analyzed bureaucratic culture in the context of public services in several regencies in Indonesia. They found that bureaucratic cultural values oriented toward power and status, rather than toward performance and service, are the most difficult obstacles to overcome in the process of public administration reform.

Additionally, patterns of employee rotation and transfer that are not yet competency-based also constitute a serious obstacle. Several informants revealed that employees who have developed expertise and experience in a certain field are often transferred to positions irrelevant to their competence, rendering investments in human resource development ineffective. The Head of Disdukcapil himself acknowledged that this phenomenon is a real challenge in maintaining consistent service quality.

Administrative Innovations and Service Improvement Efforts

Amid various challenges, this research also identified a number of administrative innovations that deserve appreciation and further development. These innovations reflect the

creativity and spirit of change within the Lebak Regency bureaucracy, although they remain partial and not yet systemic.

One of the most prominent innovations is the mobile Disdukcapil service program conducted periodically in remote sub-districts. This program aims to bring population administrative services closer to residents living far from the city center and with limited mobility. Based on data obtained from Disdukcapil, this program succeeded in serving more than 15,000 residents in remote areas of Lebak Regency during 2023.

Another innovative program is the implementation of an online queuing system through a mobile application downloadable from digital platforms. Although its implementation still faces some technical challenges, the core concept of this innovation is highly relevant to community needs. With this system, residents can register in the queue from home and estimate when to come to the office, eliminating the need to wait for hours on-site. This innovation shows that there is a growing understanding among the apparatus of the importance of thinking from the service user's perspective.

At the DPMPTSP level, the most significant innovation is the implementation of the Online Single Submission (OSS) system integrated with the national platform managed by the Ministry of Investment/BKPM. Through this system, business license applicants can submit applications online without having to visit the office in person. According to the Head of DPMPTSP, the OSS implementation has successfully reduced business license issuance time from an average of 14 days to approximately 5 working days for certain types of licenses that do not require field verification.

Within the theoretical framework of New Public Governance developed by Osborne (2010) and adapted to the Indonesian context by several researchers, the innovations found in Lebak Regency can be understood as early steps toward more collaborative and outcome-oriented public governance. However, Osborne also warns that technocratic innovation unaccompanied by changes in apparatus values and orientation will only produce improvements that are superficial and unsustainable.

Cross-sector coordination is also beginning to show improvement, particularly since the formation of the Integrated Service Coordination Team (TKPT) at the regency level. This team brings together representatives from various SKPDs with authority related to certain services and attempts to directly resolve coordination obstacles. Although its effectiveness still needs improvement, the existence of this coordination forum is an important step forward in building a more cohesive public service ecosystem.

Community Perspectives on Service Quality

One of the most important aspects of this research is exploring the perceptions and experiences of the community as users of public services. Unlike the internal evaluations conducted by the government itself, the community's perspective provides a more authentic and honest picture of the quality of services actually received.

Of the 25 community informants interviewed, the majority expressed dissatisfaction with waiting times and service procedures. A trader at the Rangkasbitung Market who was processing a KTP renewal recounted his experience: he had arrived at the Disdukcapil office at 7:30 AM, but only received a queue number after more than an hour of waiting because the

queue had already been very long before the office opened. Experiences like this, he said, had occurred many times and made him reluctant to process population documents.

However, this study also found that community satisfaction with the friendliness of service officers is relatively better compared to technical aspects such as speed and time certainty. Several informants acknowledged that counter officers are generally quite friendly and helpful when asked for explanations, although they do not always have comprehensive information about service procedures.

The gap between community expectations and services received is an illustration of what in service management literature is called the service gap. Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry, in their SERVQUAL model, identify several types of gaps that can occur in the service delivery process. In the context of Lebak Regency, the most prominent gap is the delivery gap — the gap between the established service standards and the service actually delivered.

It should be noted that community perceptions of public services are also influenced by demographic and social factors. Communities with higher education levels and better access to information tend to be more critical in assessing service quality. Conversely, less educated groups often accept existing conditions as inevitable and are unaware that they have the right to better services. This imbalance of knowledge is also an issue that needs to be addressed within the framework of democratic governance.

Pramusinto and Purwanto (2022) in their research on public service reform in Indonesian regions affirm that community involvement in service evaluation and feedback mechanisms is not merely a formality, but is an essential component of the continuous service improvement cycle. Without genuine feedback from service users, the bureaucracy will lose the most accurate compass for knowing where the problems that need to be prioritized actually lie.

Comparative Analysis with Other Regions and Theoretical Implications

To reinforce the significance of this research's findings, a comparative analysis with governance conditions in other regencies of similar characteristics is necessary. This comparison is not intended to make judgmental assessments, but rather to identify general patterns that can provide broader theoretical insights.

Compared to Pandeglang Regency, which is also located in Banten Province with fairly similar geographical and demographic characteristics, Lebak Regency shows a relatively comparable level of progress in digital service innovation. However, in terms of inter-SKPD coordination, Pandeglang Regency appears to have a more mature mechanism due to the existence of regular coordination forums that have been institutionalized more formally.

Comparison with more advanced areas such as South Tangerang City reveals how large the remaining capacity gap is. The South Tangerang City Government has developed an integrated digital service ecosystem where various types of services can be accessed through a single unified platform. This achievement reflects long-term investment in technology infrastructure and human resource development that has not yet been adequately carried out in Lebak Regency.

From a theoretical perspective, the findings of this research provide empirical support for the argument that state capacity at the local level is a very important moderating variable in determining the success of decentralization policies. As affirmed by Miftah Thoha (2022),

decentralization that is not accompanied by the strengthening of institutional capacity at the local level can actually result in greater service deficits than if such affairs remained centrally managed.

Another theoretical implication relates to the relationship between legitimacy and governmental effectiveness. This research shows that although the people of Lebak Regency generally still extend trust to the local government, this trust is fragile and highly dependent on concrete experiences in service interactions. When repeated experiences demonstrate bureaucratic inefficiency and unresponsiveness, the social capital of trust in the government will gradually erode.

The concept of social capital developed by Robert Putnam offers a useful analytical lens for understanding these dynamics. The high social capital of Lebak Regency's community, reflected in the strong networks of mutual cooperation and inter-citizen trust, should be able to serve as an asset leveraged by the government in building a more participatory and collaborative governance model. This potential has unfortunately not yet been strategically optimized.

CONCLUSION

This research has produced a comprehensive picture of the dynamics of local government governance in public service delivery in Lebak Regency, with a focus on the Population and Civil Registration Office and the Investment and Integrated One-Stop Service Office in Rangkasbitung. Based on the findings presented, this study draws several main conclusions that are interrelated and mutually reinforcing.

First, the institutional capacity of Lebak Regency's government in delivering public services is still at a level that requires substantial improvement across various dimensions, from human resource competence, information technology infrastructure, inter-SKPD coordination, to bureaucratic organizational culture. These limitations are not merely technical problems solvable with additional budget, but are also systemic issues requiring a more comprehensive and sustained reform approach.

Second, governance barriers in Lebak Regency are layered, involving structural factors such as overlapping regulations and rigid bureaucratic hierarchy, as well as cultural factors such as paternalistic culture and apparatus orientation that has not fully shifted toward service excellence. Overcoming these barriers requires integrated and consistent interventions, not a partial approach that only addresses symptoms without treating the root causes.

Third, despite facing various limitations, there are a number of promising administrative innovations in Lebak Regency, such as the mobile Disdukcapil service program, the online queuing system, and integration with the national OSS system at DPMPPTSP. These innovations demonstrate that there is real potential and creativity within the regional bureaucracy, which needs to be more systemically supported and developed in order to deliver broader and more sustainable impact.

Fourth, the community's perspective as service users reveals that the level of satisfaction with public service quality in Lebak Regency is still fairly low, particularly regarding waiting times, procedural certainty, and information accessibility. The gap between established service standards and the service actually received by the community is a real challenge that must be addressed through more effective evaluation and feedback mechanisms.

Based on these findings and conclusions, this study recommends several actions to the Lebak Regency government. First, a comprehensive audit of employee competence and distribution across all SKPDs is needed, followed by the development of a focused and relevant human resource development program aligned with actual needs. Second, inter-SKPD coordination mechanisms need to be strengthened through the formation of cross-functional teams with the authority to quickly resolve coordination obstacles. Third, investment in information technology infrastructure needs to be significantly increased, accompanied by digital literacy programs for apparatus and the public. Fourth, mechanisms for community participation in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of public services need to be institutionalized in a more formal and meaningful way.

This study has limitations in terms of the scope of area covered and the number of informants involved. For future research, it is recommended to expand the scope to all sub-districts in Lebak Regency to obtain a more representative picture. Additionally, longitudinal research following the development of governance over time would be highly valuable for understanding the dynamics of change that occur.

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