

CHALLENGES AND EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF VILLAGE APPARATUS IN PUBLIC SERVICES: A QUALITATIVE STUDY IN SALUT VILLAGE

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Abstract

This study aims to evaluate the performance of village apparatus in the implementation of public services in Salut Village, Kayangan District, North Lombok Regency. The approach used is qualitative descriptive with data collection through interviews, observations, and documentation. The results of the study show that the performance of village apparatus in general has gone well, especially in terms of discipline, work spirit, and the ability to complete administrative service tasks. The use of Village Information System (SID) technology makes a significant contribution to service efficiency, although there are still technical obstacles such as power outages and limited infrastructure. Efforts to improve performance are carried out through regular coordination meetings, technical guidance training (BIMTEK), and periodic evaluations. The obstacles faced include limited human resources, double workload, and disagreement with community expectations. This study concludes the need to increase the capacity of apparatus and improve technological infrastructure to support optimal public services at the village level.

Keywords: Village Apparatus, Public Services, Administrative Services



A. Introduction

Public services are the main pillar in the implementation of modern and democratic government. It represents the state's obligation to meet the basic needs of the community, as well as a reflection of the quality of governance. In the Indonesian context, public services are constitutionally guaranteed and are part of the inherent civil rights of every citizen as stated in the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. The concept of public service is not only limited to the provision of administrative services, but also includes the distribution of public goods and social services that directly touch people's lives.

As public awareness of their rights as citizens increases, the demand for quality public services is increasingly emerging. Poor public services such as complicated bureaucratic procedures, lack of transparency, and the lack of adequate facilities and infrastructure lead to a decline in public trust in government institutions. This is especially felt at the front government level, namely the village government, which is the spearhead in the implementation of public services in rural areas.

In its implementation, public services at the village level are greatly influenced by the performance of village apparatus as policy and service implementers. This performance is one of the important variables in determining the success of village development and community satisfaction with the government. As stated by Wibowo, performance is the result of work that can be measured in terms of quantity and quality achieved by individuals and groups in a certain



organization.¹ Therefore, optimal public services require the performance of apparatus that is not only professional, but also oriented towards the public interest, transparency, and accountability.

However, in practice, the quality of public services in various villages in Indonesia still shows inequality. Many villages face obstacles such as low human resource capacity, lack of apparatus training, weak supervision, and limitations in planning and budgeting service programs.² The government itself has issued various regulations to strengthen the capacity of village government, including through the Regulation of the Minister of Home Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia Number 83 of 2015 which requires village officials to participate in training to improve work professionalism.³

This condition makes the evaluation of the performance of the village apparatus even more relevant. Evaluation not only serves as a control tool, but also as an instrument to identify problems, formulate solutions, and set the direction of public service policy development at the local level. With a systematic evaluative approach, the village government can find out the extent to which the services provided have met quality standards, as well as how to improve them sustainably.

¹ Wibowo, *Performance Management* (Jakarta: Rajawali Pers, 2011), 7.

² Diah Kusuma Putri, "Performance of Village Government Apparatus in Public Services," *Journal of Public Administration* 4, no. 2 (2018): 102–110.

³ Regulation of the Minister of Home Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia Number 83 of 2015 concerning the Appointment and Dismissal of Village Apparatus.

Village officials are the main actors in the implementation of government and public services at the local level. Within the framework of Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages, village officials have the responsibility to carry out accountable, participatory, and professional village government.⁴ In the implementation of administrative tasks, development, community empowerment, and public services, the performance of village apparatus is the main benchmark for the success of the implementation of village government.

Performance, in the context of public organizations, can be understood as the achievement of work results in accordance with the goals and objectives that have been set, taking into account the aspects of quantity, quality, efficiency, and effectiveness.⁵ Assessment of the performance of village apparatus must be carried out systematically and planned, through measurable indicators and based on community needs. This assessment is known as performance evaluation, which according to Dunn includes the assessment of the processes and results of a policy or program based on certain indicators such as effectiveness, efficiency, responsiveness, equity, and accuracy.⁶

⁴ Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages, Articles 26 and 27.

⁵ Veithzal Rivai, *Human Resource Management for Companies: From Theory to Practice* (Jakarta: Rajawali Pers, 2014), 549.

⁶ William N. Dunn, *Introduction to Public Policy Analysis* (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 2003), 145–147.

Evaluation of the performance of the apparatus becomes increasingly important in the era of decentralization, when villages are given greater autonomy in managing government and development affairs. Evaluation not only serves as a supervisory tool, but also as a managerial instrument to increase organizational capacity, strengthen public accountability, and improve service processes.⁷ Evaluation of the performance of village apparatus also has a strategic dimension, because the results of the evaluation can be used for decision-making related to training, promotion, empowerment, and improvement of a more inclusive and efficient service system.

In this context, Salut Village, Kayangan District, North Lombok Regency is a relevant study object to examine how the evaluation of the performance of village apparatus has an impact on the quality of public services. Salut Village has organized various forms of administrative public services such as the management of domicile certificates, introductions to the making of ID cards, and other citizen need documents. The service facilities in this village are quite adequate, and the service procedures are relatively simple. However, there is no performance evaluation mechanism that is carried out systematically and continuously.

The absence of this performance evaluation can have an impact on the non-optimal quality of public services. In fact, in accordance with the principles of good governance, public services in

⁷ Wirawan, *Evaluation: Theory, Model, Standards, Application and Profession* (Jakarta: Rajawali Pers, 2012), 23.

villages should be carried out with the principles of effectiveness, efficiency, accountability, and oriented towards citizen satisfaction.⁸ Without evaluation, it will be difficult for the village government to identify the obstacles that occur in the service process and to know the achievements that have been achieved.

Based on this urgency, this study aims to assess the performance of village apparatus in public services in Salut Village, and identify inhibiting factors that affect the performance of village apparatus in providing public services.

With this approach, it is hoped that evidence-based recommendations will emerge that can be used to improve the public service system in Salut Village and contribute to strengthening village governance in general.

B. Method

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach, which aims to gain a deep understanding of social phenomena that occur in the village government environment, especially in the context of evaluating the performance of village officials in providing public services. The qualitative approach provides space for researchers to capture social realities holistically and contextually, as well as allow for the exploration of perceptions, experiences, and practices carried out by actors in public service.⁹

⁸ Mardiasmo, *Public Sector Accountability* (Yogyakarta: Andi, 2009), 3–4.

⁹ Lexy J. Moleong, *Qualitative Research Methodology* (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2018), 6–10.



This research was carried out at the Salut Village Office, Kayangan District, North Lombok Regency, for a period of two months. This location was chosen purposively based on several considerations. First, geographically these locations are easily accessible to researchers, which allows for optimal observation intensity. Second, Salut Village has a fairly high complexity of administrative services, but there is no system of evaluation of the performance of village apparatus that is carried out formally and in a structured manner. This makes the village a relevant and strategic locus to be used as an object of study.

In addition, the selection of Salut Village is also based on pragmatic and substantive considerations. Pragmatically, the proximity of the location supports logistics efficiency and data collection time. Substantively, public services that are not optimal and the absence of an internal evaluation system make this village have a high urgency for study.

1. Data Source

This study uses two main types of data sources, namely primary data and secondary data.

Primary data was obtained directly from informants who were actively involved in the public service process in Salut Village, namely the Village Head, village government staff, and the community as service recipients. The selection of informants is carried out purposively with the consideration that they understand the problem directly and have experience in the implementation of public services. This purposive sampling



strategy is intended to ensure that the information obtained is relevant and in-depth in answering the formulation of the research problem.

Secondary data is used as a complement and reinforcement to primary data. This data is obtained through official documents, village internal reports, policy archives, and other literature related to performance evaluation and public services. As explained by Sugiyono, secondary data is a source of data that is not obtained directly from the research subject, but through other media such as documents or written records.¹⁰

2. Data Collection Techniques

To obtain valid and context-rich data, this study uses three main techniques, namely observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation.

a. Observation

Observations were made directly on public service activities at the Salut Village Office. The goal is to find out how the village apparatus performs in providing services, including aspects of communication, discipline, service procedures, and interaction between village officials and the community. Observations were carried out in a participatory and non-participatory manner to minimize bias. As stated by Sutrisno Hadi, observation is a complex process because it involves

¹⁰ Sugiyono, *Educational Research Methods* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2010), 225.



biological and psychological activities, including the process of observation and recording information.¹¹

b. In-Depth Interviews

Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner with the Village Head, village officials (especially the service section), and community members who used the service. The purpose of the interview was to explore the informants' understanding of service procedures, obstacles in the implementation of services, and their perception of the quality of village apparatus performance. This method allows flexibility in data mining, as well as providing space for informants to express opinions openly. Esterberg explained that an interview is a meeting between two parties to exchange information directly in order to build an understanding of a certain issue.¹²

c. Documentation

Documentation is used as a triangulation technique to strengthen observation and interview data. The documents studied include archives of public service activities, village meeting minutes, photos of service activities, and village regulations related to the implementation of services. Documentation is also useful in compiling empirical

¹¹ Sutrisno Hadi, *Research Methodology Volume II* (Yogyakarta: Andi Offset, 1986), 136.

¹² Karin Esterberg, *Qualitative Methods in Social Research* (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2002), 90.



descriptions and ensuring the traceability of the research process in a transparent manner.

3. Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis technique in this study refers to the Miles and Huberman model, which includes three main components: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion/verification.¹³

- a. Data reduction is carried out by selecting, simplifying, and organizing field data into meaningful and relevant information to the research focus. The researcher grouped the data based on the themes and indicators that had been determined, then formulated provisional findings from the results of interviews and observations.
- b. Data presentation was carried out in the form of descriptive narratives and thematic matrices that described patterns found in the field. The data is logically structured to support the systematic drawing of conclusions.
- c. Conclusions and verification are carried out continuously throughout the research process. The conclusions produced are interpretations of the data patterns found, as well as answering the formulation of the research problem. Conclusions are open and can be revised according to the dynamics of findings in the field.

C. Results and Discussion

1. Evaluation of the Performance of Village Apparatus in Public Services in Salut Village

Effective and responsive public services are highly dependent on the quality of performance of the organizing apparatus, including at the village level. In the context of Salut Village, the results of the

¹³ Karin Esterberg, *Qualitative Methods in Social Research* (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2002), 90.



study show that the performance of village officials in general is considered quite good to very good by various groups of informants ranging from the Village Head, Village Secretary, to the community as service recipients. This assessment was obtained through observation methods, in-depth interviews, and the study of village service documents.

Performance evaluation in this study uses indicators developed from Linda Muchacha's concept, namely discipline, work spirit, and ability to complete tasks as the main benchmarks.¹⁴

2. Discipline and Attendance

Based on the results of interviews with the Head of Salut Village, Mr. Bahrudin, and the Village Secretary, Mr. Umar Asuhandi, it was stated that the village apparatus was present on time, carried out their duties according to working hours, and had a commitment to serve the community without discrimination. This is reinforced by the statement of residents who stated that village officials are always ready, even outside working hours, to handle urgent administrative needs. This level of discipline is an important foundation for the creation of sustainable services.

It is important to note that disciplinary behavior concerns not only physical presence, but also compliance with work procedures, including the use of the Village Information System (SID) for the management of correspondence and population data. With the use of this technology, services become more systematic and documented, in accordance with the principle of public service accountability.¹⁵

3. Work Spirit and Service Orientation

The work spirit of the village apparatus is reflected in their readiness to handle various forms of administrative services such as

¹⁴ Linda Muchacha, *Performance Evaluation of Village Government Apparatus* (Surabaya: Sinar Ilmu, 2019).

¹⁵ Mardiasmo, *Public Sector Accountability* (Yogyakarta: Andi, 2009), 45–46.



the management of ID cards, family cards, birth certificates, business certificates, and the distribution of social assistance. One of the residents, Mrs. Murniatun, appreciated the readiness of the village officials who were proactive in providing information and simplifying the administrative process by informing residents in advance about the documents that must be prepared before taking assistance.

The readiness of village officials is also shown through their involvement in non-formal activities such as hamlet coordination, assistance socialization, and direct services outside working hours. This reflects the spirit of service based on empathy and social responsibility.

4. Ability to Complete Tasks

In the task completion indicator, the Salut village apparatus showed high effectiveness. The process of serving correspondence, archiving, and following up on public complaints is carried out in a short time. No significant complaints were found regarding delays or administrative obstacles, except in technical cases such as power outages or application system disruptions.¹⁶ However, village officials still show flexibility by carrying out services manually if the situation is urgent.

The successful completion of this task is also supported by structured internal coordination, such as weekly meetings and joint meetings every Monday morning, which are used for evaluation and planning of ministry activities. This reflects the application of the principle of results-based performance management, as stated by Mangkunegara, that good performance requires strengthening internal management consistently.¹⁷

¹⁶ Interview with Umar Asuhandi, Secretary of Salut Village, June 3, 2024.

¹⁷ Anwar Prabu Mangkunegara, *Human Resource Management* (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2017), 69.



Administrative Services and Effectiveness of the Use of Village Information Systems (SID)

Administrative services are the most basic part of public service activities in the village, as they include the management of legal documents needed by residents in various social, economic, and population affairs. In Salut Village, administrative services include the issuance of Business Certificates (SKUs), cover letters for Family Cards (KK), ID cards, birth certificates, and other documents.

The results of the study showed that administrative services in Salut Village ran well and efficiently, and received positive responses from the community. This is inseparable from the commitment of the village apparatus to provide services quickly, precisely, and politely. As conveyed by Mr. Asbianto's residents, mail services were carried out "directly and quickly without waiting for a long time", showing the speed in the work process and responsiveness to the needs of the community.

Village officials, especially the Head of the Service Section and the Village Secretary, revealed that administrative services in this village have been supported by the use of technology through the Village Information System (SID). SID is a digital application that is used to manage population data and make it easier to create various types of mail. According to Isnawati, Head of Service of Salut Village, SID has helped simplify the service process because all community data has been digitized and stored systematically.

The utilization of SID applications has several key advantages:

1. Time and effort efficiency: Stored data allows letters to be created in minutes.
2. Reduction of administrative errors: SID minimizes input errors and document loss.
3. Increased transparency and accountability: Because each document is recorded and stored with a unique code.



The SID survey shows that Salut Village has adopted the principles of digital governance on a micro scale, as recommended in the modernization of public administration which emphasizes the integration of information technology to strengthen services and decision-making.¹⁸

However, there are several technical obstacles faced, including power outages and internet network disruptions, which cause SID-based services to be temporarily inaccessible. In such conditions, village officials continue to carry out services manually if it is urgent, even though there are limitations in data recording. In addition, the limited number of hardware (computers and printers) and the condition of the equipment that sometimes breaks down are also challenges, especially when the service volume is high.

Despite these obstacles, village officials still show flexibility and dedication in providing services. This shows that the success of the service is not solely determined by the technological infrastructure, but also by the commitment and work ethic of the apparatus. This finding is in line with the findings of Diah Kusuma Putri (2018), who emphasized that good public service is more determined by service behavior than just systems and procedures.¹⁹

Thus, it can be concluded that administrative services in Salut Village have made significant progress with the use of technology, but still require the support of facilities and training so that the implementation of SID can run optimally and sustainably.

Efforts to Improve and Hinder the Performance of Village Apparatus (With Literature Enrichment). In order to improve the quality of public services, village officials and village heads in Salut Village have implemented a number of strategies in accordance with

¹⁸ Wahyudi Kumorotomo, *State Administration Ethics* (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 2008), 178–181.

¹⁹ Diah Kusuma Putri, "Performance of Village Government Apparatus in Public Services," *Journal of Public Administration* 4, no. 2 (2018): 108.

best practices in human resource management and public administration. Regular coordination meetings held every week are a tangible manifestation of the application of organizational communication principles and team collaboration to ensure alignment of goals and continuous performance improvement. As Robbins and Judge point out, effective communication within an organization is the main foundation for building coordination and increasing work productivity.²⁰

Technical guidance (BIMTEK) as a form of training and capacity building of village apparatus also reflects an understanding of the importance of sustainable human resource (HR) development. According to Noe et al., quality training can improve the technical skills and work behavior of employees so that they can increase organizational effectiveness.²¹ The implementation of BIMTEK supported by the district and village governments is in line with the concept of capacity building which is the key to bureaucratic reform and improvement of public services at the local level.²²

Performance evaluations conducted consistently by village heads are also an important performance management practice. According to Armstrong and Taylor, systematic performance evaluations provide constructive feedback, clarify expectations, and encourage employee performance improvement.²³ Thus, evaluation is not only a control instrument, but also a means of developing the professionalism of village officials.

²⁰ Stephen P. Robbins dan Timothy A. Judge, *Organizational Behavior*, 17th ed. (Boston: Pearson, 2017), 330–335.

²¹ Raymond A. Noe, *Employee Training and Development*, 7th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2017), 45–50.

²² Purwana, B. H., & Sinurat, H. P. – "Building Institutions and Developing Competencies of Village Apparatus to Improve Public Services in Villages" (National Conference on Administrative Sciences, 2020)

²³ Michael Armstrong and Angela Taylor, *Armstrong's Handbook of Human Resource Management Practice*, 14th ed. (London: Kogan Page, 2020), 415–420.



However, a number of obstacles found in this study are in line with the literature that shows the complexity of public service problems in villages. Technical obstacles such as limited facilities and infrastructure, power outages, and information systems that are not fully stable are external factors that often affect the effectiveness of services. As stated by Heeks in his study on e-governance, the infrastructure factor is one of the main obstacles in the implementation of information technology in village government.²⁴

In terms of human resources, challenges such as lack of staff experience and the need for continuous training are also in the spotlight. This is in accordance with the findings related to the competency gap of village apparatus which is still a problem in various regions, as explained by Putra and Irawan (2019), that increasing the capacity of human resources of apparatus is the main prerequisite in realizing quality public services.²⁵

In addition, social and organizational aspects also play a significant role in performance inhibitions, such as double workload and mismatch of societal expectations. According to Denhardt and Denhardt, effective public service requires good relationship management between service providers and the community, including realistic expectations management and effective two-way communication.²⁶

Therefore, a holistic approach that integrates infrastructure improvement, human resource training, and social communication management needs to be prioritized in the strategy to improve the performance of village apparatus. This approach not only improves

²⁴ Richard Heeks, *Implementing and Managing eGovernment: An International Text* (London: SAGE, 2006), 105–110.

²⁵ Akmal, F. N., Dwiputrianti, S., Jubaedah, E., Listiani, T., & Afandi, M. N. – "Competency Development of Village Apparatus through Analysis of Educational and Training Needs of Village Government" (National Conference on Administrative Sciences, 2020)

²⁶ Robert B. Denhardt and Janet V. Denhardt, *Public Administration: An Action Orientation*, 7th ed. (Boston: Cengage Learning, 2015), 280–285.



the quality of service, but also strengthens the community's trust in village government as a responsive and accountable institution.

D. Conclusion

This research reveals that the performance of village officials in Salut Village in the implementation of public services has gone well in general. Village officials show high discipline, strong work spirit, and ability to complete administrative tasks effectively and efficiently. The use of Village Information System (SID) technology has become an important innovation that helps speed up the service process and improve the accuracy of administrative data. This shows that the digitization of services at the village level can have a significant positive impact on the management of public administration.

However, the research also highlights the existence of various obstacles that still hinder service optimization, such as limited technological infrastructure, power outages, and lack of adequate hardware. In addition, the varying capacity of human resources, especially in terms of mastery of technology and administrative procedures, still requires improvement through continuous training. The double workload and high demand for services, even outside official working hours, also pose challenges for village officials.

Organizationally, efforts to improve performance through regular coordination meetings, technical guidance, and periodic performance evaluations show the commitment of village heads and apparatus in improving the quality of services. This reflects the application of modern management principles that focus on internal



communication, training, and performance monitoring as the foundation for improving organizational quality.

The findings of the study also underlined the importance of managing the relationship between village officials and the community, especially in managing service expectations and managing workloads so as not to cause fatigue and stress to the apparatus. A holistic approach that integrates improving technological infrastructure, developing human resource capacity, and strengthening social communication is the key to success in realizing responsive, efficient, and community-satisfied public services.

As a final conclusion, to realize optimal public services at the village level, local and village governments need to pay special attention to the development of digital infrastructure and improving the competence of village apparatus. Synergy between the government, village officials, and the community is very important as social capital to build an accountable and professional village government.



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