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## Public Service Performance: A Case Study in Public Relation Information and Communication South Sulawesi Province

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**Abstract.** One of the tasks of the government is fulfilling community rights by providing services. Services provided should follow existing laws and regulations; fast, reliable, and appropriate services are the main foundation for fulfilling community rights. Service performance can be measured using a theory proposed by Dwiyanto; the theory presents five indicators: productivity, service quality, responsiveness, responsibility, and accountability. Our study employed a qualitative descriptive method and would provide a systematic, factual, and accurate description of the object under study. We described public services from the point of view of service performance and factors supporting and inhibiting the performance of bureaucratic services. Our finding showed that public service performance had no standard operating procedure, resulting in time uncertainty for the services provided. There was also a problem related to the low ability of human resources, resulting in constraints on responsiveness. However, public employees showed good accountability and responsibility in providing services. Thus, it is necessary to have standard operating procedures and include education and training staff.

**Keywords:** public service, community, standard operating procedures, social science

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## Introduction

The community generally connotes that government officials do not provide good enough services to the community. This can be seen from the many complaints submitted by the public related to community services. Two

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of the most often submitted complaints by the public are about the unclear procedure for getting services, and the unprofessional ways officials show in delivering services; it is so common to find people getting into arguments or even physical contact with the officials because people are so fed up with the way the officials treat them.

Public services have been regulated in the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 25 of 2009 concerning Public Services [1], Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 96 of 2012 concerning the Implementation of Law Number 25 of 2009 on the Implementation of Public Services [2], and Government Regulation Number 2 of 2018 concerning Minimum Service Standards [3]. For the Province of South Sulawesi, public relations services are regulated by the Governor of South Sulawesi Regulation Number 18 of 2019 concerning Position, Organizational Structure of Duties and Functions, and Work Procedures of the Office of Communication, Informatics, Statistics and Inventory of South Sulawesi Province [4]. Article 9 Paragraph 1 mentions the following functions of the Information and Public Communication Public Relations Division: (a) formulating technical policies in public relations, information, and public communication; (b) implementing technical policies in public relations, information, and public communication; (c) evaluating and reporting activities in public relations, information, and public communication; (d) administration of public relations, information, and public communication; and (e) implementing other official duties.

The duties of the Information and Public Communication Public Relations Division as mandated by Article 9 Paragraph 1 are: (a) plan activities for the Information and Public Communication Public Relations Division as a guideline in carrying out the tasks; (b) distribute and give instructions on the implementation of tasks; (c) monitor, supervise, and evaluate the implementation of tasks within the Information and Public Communication Public Relations Division to find out the progress of task implementation; (d) provide the draft as well as correct and signing official documents; (e) attend meetings following their duties; (f) coordinate the management of information and public media; (g) coordinate the management of media communication channels; (h) compile the results of the management of public complaints; (i) formulate the pattern of fostering public information services; (j) carry out the documentation and classification of information and public communication; (k) coordinate the processing of national and regional information and policies; (l) coordinate the re-supervision of national content into regional content; (m) coordinate the dissemination of policy information through regional government and non-government media; (n) carry out monitoring, evaluation, and reporting of public information; (o) provide technical administrative services to officials related to their duty following the provisions; (p) coordinate and implement the publication, printing, and distribution of activity information and welcoming remarks by the governor and deputy governor, and facilitate the provision of reading materials

(newspapers, magazines, articles, and other forms); (q) carry out monitoring, control, and evaluation of technical policies in public relations, information, and public communication including management of public opinion, public communication, public media, and public information services; (r) coordinate and consult with government agencies and non-governmental organizations in carrying out tasks and functions; (s) evaluate the performance of civil officials following the applicable laws and regulations; (t) compile a report on the implementation results of the duties of the Head of the Information and Public Communication Public Relations Division, and provide advice and considerations to superiors as material for policy formulation; and (u) perform other official duties ordered by superiors following their duty.

The main task of modern government, according to [5], is essentially providing services to the community; in other words, the government is not held to serve itself but to serve the community and create conditions that allow every member of society to develop their abilities and creativity to achieve common goals. Public organization, as an element of public administration, is the place to carry out public administration tasks. Public organizations are formed to provide services to the public or citizens.

This requires concern from the officials to provide excellent community services to gain public approval and acknowledgment. For this reason, it is necessary to study service categories that satisfy the community as customers following the rapid changes in society. As such, we need strategies related to planning, implementing, and evaluating excellent services. Unfortunately, public services have a vast dimension, delivered in various circumstances to people with multiple needs and characteristics. If we are to examine all the mistakes found in all types of public services the government provides to the community, we may end up frustrated, as there will be too many shortcomings. The public even tends to say that the officials themselves have caused all the problems in the services provided by the government — for not being professional and not having the exact standards. It is hard to deny the public's opinion since facts show that the unprofessional behavior of the officials has led to malpractice in public services [6]. Ideally, bureaucracy serves and facilitates relations among citizens and between citizens and the state. Bureaucracy is often considered complicated and even challenging.

Unfortunately, public services are not supported by open decision-making mechanisms and democratic political processes. Therefore, it is not surprising that public services in Indonesia tend to be corrupt and of very low quality, especially those related to the procurement of obligatory public service products such as public information services and community complaint services [7]. In empowering the community, the government's function is more of a regulator than an implementer or service actor. The government must empower community groups as providers or implementers of public services to balance the situation. In other words, the government's job is to help people to help themselves. Public services have been a maze for everyone—

there are too many unclear things the public has to figure out themselves. Service users are often faced with so much uncertainty when dealing with bureaucracy. Questions commonly found asked by people when they deal with public services are what the public needs to prepare to get the service, how long it will take for things to finish, and the procedure they must go through, yet there seem to be no clear answers. Our public services in Indonesia are of poor quality, so the government, both at the central and local levels, is interested in improving public services. Various complaints submitted by the public must be immediately addressed and responded to by the relevant government agencies. In this regard, the government has established an online complaint service managed by the Office of Communication, Informatics, Encryption, and Statistics at all government levels. The complaint service in South Sulawesi Province is Baruga-SP4N-LAPOR, which stands for *Sistem Pengelolaan Pengaduan Pelayanan Publik Nasional — Layanan Aspirasi dan Pengaduan Online Rakyat* (The National Public Service Complaints and Management System — the People’s Online Aspiration and Complaint Service (<https://sulselprov.go.id>)).

The service quality in public relations must be reviewed due to the many complaints submitted. Research on the quality of public services is essential because the community is not satisfied in terms of time, cost, and quality of service provided. For this reason, this research aims to improve public service quality, especially in the Information and Public Communication Public Relations Division of South Sulawesi Province.

### Literature Review

The State Civil Officials (*Aparatur Sipil Negara* — ASN) in public services should understand more about work dimensions to improve public service quality. The work dimensions are responsibility, ability to cooperate and work accuracy [8].

1. *Responsibility* is assessing the willingness of employees to be accountable for the work that has been done. An employee in a bureaucracy or institution has interrelated rights and obligations. Obligations are what must be done, while rights are related to what they can get after they carry out their obligations.
2. *Willingness to cooperate* with other organization members refers to the willingness and ability to work with colleagues, superiors, and subordinates in their work units and other agencies to complete a task and responsibility to achieve maximum efficiency and effectiveness.
3. *Work accuracy* is the ability of individuals to do something quickly, carefully, and thoroughly. Accuracy influences performance because accuracy is a personality characteristic to identify an individual’s work performance. It is a personality trait widely measured. In addition to accuracy, what is needed in community service is discipline. Discipline means submission and obedience to applicable rules, including carrying out duties and functions assigned.

There are several indicators to measure the performance of the public bureaucracy in providing services [9]:

- a. *Productivity* measures not only the level of efficiency but also the effectiveness of services. Productivity is generally understood as the ratio between input and output. The concept of productivity was too narrow, and then the General Accounting Office (GAO) tried to develop a broader measure of productivity by including how public services have the expected results as one of the critical performance indicators.
- b. *Service quality* is the result of work assessed from the quality and quantity of activities done, which creates a sense of satisfaction for the community; thus, community satisfaction with services can be used as an indicator of the performance of public organizations. The main advantage of using community satisfaction as a performance indicator is that information on community satisfaction can often be obtained from the mass media or public discussions. As access to information regarding public satisfaction with service quality is relatively very high, it can be used to measure the performance of public organizations.
- c. *Responsiveness* means measuring the organization's ability to recognize community needs, develop service agendas and priorities, and develop public service programs according to community needs and aspirations.
- d. *Responsibility* means measuring the suitability of the implementation of public organization activities with the administration principles or organizational policies.
- e. *Accountability* is how much the policies and activities of public organizations are subject to political officials elected by the people or a measure that shows the level of conformity of service delivery with external values or norms in the community or those of stakeholders.

## Methods

This research was carried out in the Information and Communication Public Relations Division of South Sulawesi Province. The informants were employees and service recipients in the information and communication public relations sector. This study was conducted in August 2022. The research location was selected purposively. The public service in the Information and Communication Public Relations Division has not been implemented in a structured, systematic, and massive manner (*Terstruktur, Sistematis, dan Massif* — TSM) to increase the service quality. Thus, it is necessary to improve public services. This research was qualitative descriptive research since it would give an overview or describe the object under study systematically, factual, and accurately [10]. Qualitative research is used to examine the condition of natural objects (as opposed to experiments) where the researcher is the key instrument, and the analysis is inductive. The research results emphasize meaning rather than generalization.

## Findings and discussion

### 1. Public Service Performance

The Information and Communication Public Relations Division of the Office of Communication, Informatics, Encryption and Statistics (Kominfo) of South Sulawesi Province is in charge of (1) *Pejabat Pembuat Informasi dan Dokumentasi* (PPID) or officials in charge of information production and documentation, (2) SP4N Lapor, (3) *Komisi Informasi* (KI) or information commission, and (4) branding for the office's leaders.

Informants provided information about the service provided (Bharata in [11]), including (1) *service providers* (parties who can provide a particular service to consumers, both in the form of supply and delivery of goods or services); (2) *service recipients* (those who are referred to as consumers who receive various services from service providers); (3) *types of services* (services that can be provided by service providers to parties who need services), and (4) *customer satisfaction* (In providing services, service providers must refer to the primary goal of service, customer satisfaction). This is important because customer satisfaction is closely related to the quality standards of the goods and/or services they get. The following subsections describe the informant's statements:

#### a. Service Productivity

Process productivity can be interpreted as a system component with a significant role in processing inputs to produce valuable outputs for users in each service. The process is about processing the input as well as possible so that the results conform with the planned goal. Process productivity consists of communication or good interactions and decision-making about the exact time to finish the product. Socialization is to provide understanding and development of officials to improve their performance in implementing services [12].

The productivity of services at the Information and Communication Public Relations Division has been running well, especially in the 4 service units (PPID, SP4N Lapor, KI, and branding), as revealed by informants based on the results of interviews regarding service productivity below.

“The service is carried out properly, the employees from 4 service units are very responsive in providing services, and they pay attention to the principles of discipline and speed in service. However, it must still be equipped with Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and supporting facilities and infrastructure for the best service.”

Thus, it could be concluded that the service in the Information and Communication Public Relations Division ran well—employees were very competent in providing services to all service recipients by taking into account the principles of discipline and speed. The interviews also revealed that even though the service was relatively good, some aspects needed improvement, including the

availability of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) so every service provided could be measured for its quality based on the standards it has.

The Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is a guideline for the implementation of office administration in improving the service and performance of government organizations; as [13] states, an SOP is a document that contains a series of standardized written instructions regarding various processes of administering office, including how to do work, time of implementation, place of implementation, and the implementers.

In addition, supporting facilities are also crucial. Our findings confirmed that human resources were not suitable in quantity with available equipment to keep work and performance high. There was a shortage of laptops and printers completed with scanners in the office. A complete office facility will have direct effects in the form of better employee work, leading to higher performance (Moenir in [14]).

### **b. Service Quality**

Service quality is a result of a comparison between customer expectations and actual performance. In other words, two main factors influence service quality: expected and perceived service. The main components of service quality are technical quality (consisting of search quality, experience quality, and credence quality), functional quality, and corporate image (Gronroos in [15]). Service quality is seen as ideal for services exceeding the expectations and desires of service recipients.

The service provided by the Information and Communication Public Relations Division is good since people could easily and quickly get the services, as shown in the following interview result.

“Employees have shown good attitude in serving—they smile, are polite and friendly. Employees have demonstrated high responsibility for their tasks. The staff at the SP4N Lapor service, in particular, were very respectful of me when I was being served.”

The results of other interviews with informants reveal the need for service improvement.

“The quality of service still needs improvement, especially in showing service standards, explaining the procedure in advance, and explaining the things to do in advance. And most importantly, they maintain a friendly behavior.”

Based on the results of interviews with informants above regarding the description of service quality in the implementation of services carried out by employees in the field of Public Relations, communication, and public information. Behavior or attitude in service is essential in driving the performance of the services provided to the community and greatly influences the achievement of tasks and organizational goals [16]. In addition, behavior and attitudes also provide awareness of rights and obligations, freedom or authority, and responsibility, both personal and group, supporting the implementation of public services [17].

### **c. Service Responsiveness**

In improving public services, transparency and responsiveness are essential to creating a sound service system. Transparency is the openness of information channels between the public and public service providers. Meanwhile, the Information and Communication Public Relations Division seeks to promote responsive service through the 4 units it manages.

The Information and Communication Public Relations Division conveys responses or answers to the information submitted by service recipients. The community and government interact and exchange information by prioritizing information from the community to the government. Creating a transparent government will increase access to excellent services, enable a system of checks and balances, and increase the effectiveness and efficiency of services. Responsiveness is the government's ability to identify and make the needs and demands of the community the basis for creating policies and providing public services [18]. The following are the results of interviews with informants regarding the implementation of responsiveness in the Information and Communication Public Relations Division.

“Employees are attentive—they smile, they ask us how they can help us. They explain what documents we need to prepare. The employees also seem to have a good system of working. However, there is still a need to increase the capacity of service operators. I think that the operators often find it difficult to provide an easy-to-digest explanation when there is a problem in the service server.”

Our finding confirmed that, in general, the employees showed high responsiveness in carrying out their task of providing services. The employees cared about the people needing the service, and they provided good guidance for the people. Our finding, however, also revealed the need for improving the capacity of employees, especially the operators, because the people sometimes found it hard to understand their explanation when problems happened to the server. It is always necessary to pay attention to the basic principles: responding to every customer who wants to get service, officials performing services quickly, officials conducting services appropriately, officials performing services carefully, officials performing services promptly, and all customer complaints are responded to by officers [19].

### **d. Service Responsibility**

Responsibility related to public services greatly supports the implementation of services and performance in an organization. According to Friedrich in [20], responsibility is a concept that relates to professional standards and technical competencies owned by public administrators to carry out their duties. Being responsible for the service means paying attention to the principles of (1) clarity of responsibility and authority, (2) commitment to the responsibility and authority, (3) having a policy for human resource management, (4) having a policy for financial



management, (5) having a policy for facility and infrastructure management, and (6) having a policy on work systems [20]. The following is the statement from an informant.

“The employees show a good response. Yet, I think they need SOPs so we can have the same quality service. I notice that almost all service units have no SOPs.”

The other interview result showed the following:

“If we still take seniority as a determinant in assessing our work, it will create a big obstacle to improving performance. I feel the seniors hold too much authority here, while the juniors, especially the non-permanent staff and part-timers, have too much work to handle.”

In general, the responsibility was well implemented, although innovations were needed, including creating SOPs to measure service quality. Apart from that, the SOPs also help employees measure their performance. There will be a positive impact if the government’s SOPs are more transparent regarding service procedures, administrative requirements, detailed costs, and completion times to reduce complicatedness and corrupt practices. SOPs also help when it comes to handling tasks and responsibilities from one employee to another [21].

In addition to the unavailability of SOPs, seniority was another factor hindering service quality improvement. The juniors had too much work to handle, including being responsible for the work of their seniors, and work performance is determined exclusively by the standards of the seniors, not specific criteria applied to all. Behavior like this will create an imbalance in the work of employees in an organization and negatively impact the organization itself. Besides that, it will also create an uneven distribution of work authority in government organizations. Therefore, seniority in an organization must be eliminated [22]

#### **e. Service Accountability**

Accountability in implementing public services is essential in supporting organizational capabilities and influencing employee performance. Government administrators must be accountable for their duties to the public because the government itself is formed by the public and for the public (Widodo in [23]). Therefore, accountability must be exercised in supporting organizational performance (Parker in [24]), including (1) accountability for meeting performance standards to achieve results, (2) accountability in satisfying customer preferences directly from government services, and (3) privatizing government with an emphasis on providing services and functions most cost-effectively while satisfying customers.

The following is an interview result regarding service accountability.

“I think employee accountability in providing a service so far is optimal. The employees have the steps in getting or completing a service, for example, in the online complaint unit. Employees are quick to respond to complaints.”

Thus, the accountability level is quite good. The employees responded well to the customers and were responsible for their work by providing clear guidance to service users.

Performing accountability needs to pay attention to the following basics. First, the government must (a) be accountable for what is done in open ways and (b) show what has been done in the form of a report or explanation to fulfill people's rights. Second, the people have the right to (a) obtain information about what the government officials do and (b) feel satisfied with all government policies—at every stage of the management process, the government must always inform the community and vice versa [25]. The government must be accountable for the actions of the organization's leaders.

Based on the informants' statements on the implementation of accountability in public services, it can be concluded that the service is quite good, and employees have shown accountability in providing services. Employees were quick to respond to any complaints from service users. In addition, employees were considered responsible for the service given to users. Employees have shown descriptions and provided directions to service users.

## **2. Information and Communication Public Relations**

The factors inhibiting quality service in the Information and Communication Public Relations Division, especially in the 4 service units (PPID, SP4N Lapor, KI, and branding), are elaborated below.

### **a. Unavailability of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)**

The unavailability of SOPs from the 4 service units is one of the obstacles to creating effective and efficient services. SOPs are very important for measuring the success of a service. Public services should have systems and procedures to let officials and the public as users of service products know the steps they must go through. SOPs will make it easy for users to understand and follow the steps [26].

In addition, Regulation of the Minister of Government and State Officials Number 35 of 2012 concerning Guidelines for the Preparation of Standard Operating Procedures for Government Administration [27] emphasizes the importance of an SOP in government service units as a benchmark for service delivery. SOPs are helpful to help to create effective and efficient services.

SOPs must proportionally regulate the rights and obligations of service providers and service users. In public service delivery, community rights and service obligations have never been regulated in service procedures. Procedures usually only regulate the obligations of users and ignore their rights. Even so, information about user obligations in accessing services, such as what requirements they must meet and what procedures they must take, can be challenging to obtain [28].

### **b. Lack of Education and Training**

Education and training are the other inhibiting factors for the best service quality in the Information and Communication Public Relations Division. Education and

training significantly affect the implementation of public services since it deals with the skills of employees to support the implementation of public services effectively and efficiently. Education and training affect employee performance, including target accuracy, quality results, and speed and accuracy in carrying out tasks [29].

Education and training are an effort to improve the quality of employees and develop human resources, especially intellectual development and personality. Improved expertise, skills, and attitudes will enhance current and future performance. The purpose of fostering government officials through education and training is to produce effective, efficient, skilled, productive, and innovative employees [30]. The following is the informant's statement regarding the inhibiting factors.

“The inhibiting factor based on field observations is that there is a lack of education and training for the staff. Many employees here do not fully understand the steps to provide the service in certain units and do not know the ins and outs of service, especially for non-permanent and part-time employees. But in reality, these non-permanent and part-time employees do most of the work to serve the public.”

Thus, lack of education and training hindered the Information and Communication Public Relations Division from giving the best service. Employees needed to understand the steps to provide service. This happened much to non-permanent and part-time employees, and unfortunately, they were the ones dealing much with the public.

## **Conclusion**

### **1. Conclusion**

Based on the results of the research and discussion described above, the following conclusions are drawn.

#### **1. Service Productivity**

Employees are considered very responsive. Employees have shown fast and reliable service in such a disciplined manner. However, it is still necessary to provide Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to provide more effective services.

#### **2. Service Quality**

Employees have been helpful, polite, and friendly. Employees are respectful in providing services to users.

#### **3. Service Responsiveness**

Employees are considered to be responsive. They are seen as having good skills and qualified in explaining administrative requirements for the public to get the service. However, the skills of operators need to be improved.

#### **4. Service Responsibility**

Employees show good attitudes and care in providing services but must be equipped with several service instruments, such as SOPs, in each service unit.

## 5. Service Accountability

Employees are pretty responsible for providing a service. Some employees can understand and explain to service users the flow and mechanism for obtaining services.

The factors inhibiting quality service in the Information and Communication Public Relations Division, especially in the 4 service units (PPID, SP4N Lapor, KI, and branding), are: (1) the unavailability of SOPs for all services, (2) the strong hierarchical system of authority and structure among employees, and (3) the lack of education and training for some employees.

## 2. Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are given.

1. The government of South Sulawesi needs to conduct education and training regarding the implementation of services for the employees of the Information and Communication Public Relations Division, especially front liners who work to serve the public.
2. The Information and Communication Public Relations Division must create SOPs for all its service units.
3. The Information and Communication Public Relations Division needs to control and evaluate the institutional system to reduce the tension in the hierarchical system of authority and structure.

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# Эффективность государственной службы: тематическое исследование информационных и коммуникационных аспектов сферы связей с общественностью в провинции Южный Сулавеси, Индонезия

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**Аннотация.** Одной из основных задач правительства является реализация прав общества путем предоставления различных услуг. Предоставляемые услуги должны соответствовать существующим законам и правилам; быть оперативными, надежными и способствовать соблюдению прав человека. Эффективность государственной службы можно измерить с помощью теории, предложенной Двиянто. В данной теории представлены пять показателей: производительность, качество обслуживания, оперативность, ответственность и подотчетность. Наше исследование использовало качественный описательный метод и направлено на систематическое, фактическое и точное описание изучаемого объекта. Мы описали государственные услуги с точки зрения эффективности услуг и факторов, поддерживающих и препятствующих работе бюрократического аппарата. Исследование показало, что при оказании государственных услуг в провинции Южный Сулавеси отсутствовала стандартизация процедур, что приводило к трудностям при предоставлении услуг. Также существовала проблема, связанная с низкими компетенциями кадров, что приводило к ограничению возможности реагирования. Однако государственные служащие показали хорошую подотчетность и ответственность при оказании госуслуг. Таким образом, отмечается особая важность регламентации деятельности государственных служащих и стандартизации процедур, а также подготовки и обучения персонала.

**Ключевые слова:** государственная служба, сообщество, стандартные операционные процедуры, социальная наука

**Заявление о конфликте интересов:** Автор заявляет об отсутствии конфликта интересов.

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