

## Optimization of Public Services

M.Irfan<sup>1</sup>, Aiyub<sup>2</sup>, Nur Hafni<sup>3</sup> Chalirafi<sup>4</sup> Faisal Matriadi<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik, Universitas Malikussaleh, Lhokseumawe, Indonesia, [irfan.jamalani@gmail.com](mailto:irfan.jamalani@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup>Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik, Universitas Malikussaleh, Lhokseumawe, Indonesia, [drs.aiyub@unimal.ac.id](mailto:drs.aiyub@unimal.ac.id)

<sup>3</sup>Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik, Universitas Malikussaleh, Lhokseumawe, Indonesia, [nurhafni@unimal.ac.id](mailto:nurhafni@unimal.ac.id)

<sup>4</sup>Fakultas Ekonomi dan Bisnis, Universitas Malikussaleh, Lhokseumawe, Indonesia, [chalirafi@unimal.ac.id](mailto:chalirafi@unimal.ac.id)

<sup>5</sup>Fakultas Ekonomi dan Bisnis, Universitas Malikussaleh, Lhokseumawe, Indonesia, [fmatriadi@unimal.ac.id](mailto:fmatriadi@unimal.ac.id)

Corresponding Author: [chalirafi@unimal.ac.id](mailto:chalirafi@unimal.ac.id) , +628116707771

### Abstract

The article discusses the importance of public service as a crucial policy issue with strategic significance, acting as an indicator of an organization's performance. It emphasizes the government's responsibility to improve the quality of public services, ensuring they adhere to principles of general governance and protect all citizens. The article delves into the implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) in government agencies and the need for accountability, equal rights, responsiveness, and optimization of services. It also highlights the role of human resources and social media in enhancing public service quality. By combining these elements, the article aims to achieve better and more efficient public services that cater to community needs and expectations

**Keywords:** public service, good governance, North Aceh district, service effectiveness

### Introduction

Public service has become a policy issue that has an important strategic importance, because public service is an indicator of an organization's performance (Christensen & Læg Reid, 2007; Perry et al., 2010; Van Dooren et al., 2015). Herbert A. Simon, a management expert, explains that an organization is an entity that involves cooperation between participants who have certain roles and responsibilities to carry out (Gulati & Singh, 1998; March & Simon, 1993; Simon et al., 2017). In this context, the government's main task is to improve the quality of public services and ensure that the provision of these services is in accordance with the principles of general governance, with the aim of providing protection to all citizens (Elliott, 1997; Ndou, 2004). These principles have been regulated in the Regulation of the Minister for Administrative Reform Number 63 of 2003, which is a general guideline for the administration of public services.

The implementation of public services has a crucial role in providing satisfaction and welfare for the community (Crucke et al., 2022; Ochoa Rico et al., 2022; Provan & Milward, 2001; Sari et al., 2022). The government is responsible for improving the quality of service and ensuring that public services are carried out effectively, efficiently, transparently and accountably (Abd Aziz et al., 2015; Crawford & Helm, 2009; Munro, 2004; Paul, 1992). Through the general guidelines stipulated in the Regulation of the Minister for Administrative Reform Number 63 of 2003, the government is given a framework to regulate and ensure that public services are provided in accordance with established standards. By adhering to these guidelines, it is hoped that public services can provide protection and justice for every citizen, thereby creating a better and prosperous society.

Law Number 25 of 2009 stipulates that public service is a series of activities aimed at meeting community needs based on statutory regulations, which provide access for every citizen and resident to goods and services provided by public service providers. The main objective of public service, as mandated in Law Number 25 of 2009, is to create clear boundaries and relationships regarding rights, responsibilities, obligations and authorities for all parties involved in the delivery of public services.

Public service in essence is to provide satisfaction to service recipients with a close approach and provide a pleasant experience for the community (Boyle et al., 2010). Public services aim to meet the needs and expectations of the community, so it is important for service providers to focus on the satisfaction of service recipients. Good public services must be able to position themselves proactively and responsively to the needs of the community, by ensuring that service recipients feel heard, valued and treated well. In addition, pleasant public services also include clear information delivery, easy processes, and friendly and professional interactions between service providers and recipients.

In the context of government, the implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) has become a necessity after the publication of the Minister of Government and State Apparatus Regulation Number 35 of 2012. SOPs have an important role as work guidelines that help the government improve effectiveness and efficiency in providing services to the community. Service standards related to the service delivery process include several components, including requirements, systems and procedures, service period, costs, service products, and complaint handling. Through the implementation of clear and structured SOPs, the government is expected to be able to optimize the quality of services provided by adhering to predetermined standards, thereby ensuring satisfaction and fairness for the community.

The purpose of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) is to create a strong commitment related to the work carried out by work units within government agencies, with the aim of realizing Good Governance. By implementing SOP,

government agencies and institutions can provide good service to the public. Before the reform era, the government bureaucracy had a dominant role in administering government and public services. The government acts as the main actor in providing public services, while community participation in government processes is very limited.

The Lhoksukon sub-district office is a government institution that is responsible for providing services to the community. As a government agency, the Camat Office has the authority and responsibility to improve the quality of its services in serving the community. This quality service can be achieved through employees who are professional, responsible and competent in carrying out their main duties and functions according to their fields. Employees are expected to be able to master relevant technology and have a friendly and polite attitude in interacting with the public, both in their speech and behavior. Thus, the Camat office can provide good and quality services to the people it serves. The results of services in the form of services cannot be stored, hoarded, or stored in warehouses, but must be handed over directly to customers or consumers. If the service is not optimal, there is no possibility to repeat it, because the service is provided directly to the customer. Service can be interpreted as a series of activities that cannot be physically touched, which occur when there is interaction between employees or other elements and consumers, with the aim of solving problems or needs of consumers or customers.

Based on observations made, public services related to the management of transfer-in letters and recommendation letters have a significant need for the people in Lhoksukon District, North Aceh Regency. This demand arises because public services are considered as the totality of product characteristics (goods and/or services) that support the ability to meet needs. Therefore, service effectiveness is a major concern for companies and government agencies. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to describe the public services provided by the Lhoksukon District Office, North Aceh District, and to find out how these public services are carried out and accepted by the community.

## Research methods

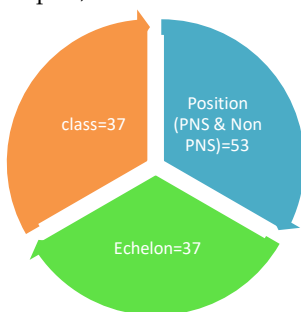
This study uses a descriptive qualitative research approach with the aim of providing a comprehensive and in-depth description of the services provided. A qualitative approach allows researchers to understand and describe in detail aspects related to services, including processes, experiences, perceptions, and interactions between service providers and service recipients (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Creswell & Poth, 2016; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Using a descriptive approach, this study aims to provide an accurate and detailed description of the service being studied, so as to provide a better understanding of the situation and challenges associated with the service.

## Research result

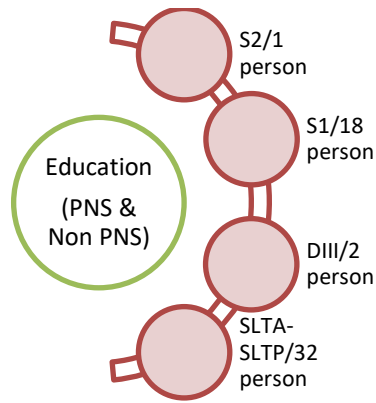
The main duties and functions of a sub-district head are regulated by Government Regulation Number 17 of 2018 concerning Districts. According to the regulation, the sub-district head has the responsibility of administering government affairs at the sub-district level. This responsibility includes coordinating community empowerment activities, maintaining peace and public order, implementing and enforcing laws and regulations, maintaining public service infrastructure and facilities, and organizing government activities at the sub-district level. In addition, the camat is also tasked with fostering the administration of village government and the implementation of community services which are included in the scope of his duties.

In addition to the main tasks and functions regulated in Government Regulation Number 17 of 2018, a sub-district head is also responsible for carrying out tasks assigned by the North Aceh Regent related to various aspects of regional autonomy. These tasks include handling permits, giving recommendations, coordinating, coaching, supervising, facilitating, as well as determining the administration and other authorities granted by the Regent. In this context, the camat has an important role in carrying out these tasks to support the development of regional autonomy in North Aceh District.

In order to achieve governance that is transparent, accountable, and responsive to change with the principles of good governance, the role of the camat as the head of the work unit (SKPK) is very important. As the head of the SKPK, the camat has the obligation to report on the implementation of regional governance. Through this report, the sub-district head provides the necessary information to ensure that local government is running according to the principles of good governance. The report submitted by the camat aims to reveal transparency, accountability, and success in carrying out local government tasks. Thus, through this report, the camat contributes to building clean and efficient governance.



As of December 31, 2021, the Lhoksukon Sub-district Office in North Aceh District had a total of 36 employees. This number of employees reflects the composition of the workforce who are active in carrying out their duties and responsibilities at the Lhoksukon District Office. With that many employees, it is hoped that the Camat Office can carry out its functions optimally in providing public services to the local community.



Based on the results of research findings conducted by the author while making observations at the Lhoksukon sub-district office, several problems were identified that affected public services in the office. These problems are as follows: [problem details have not been provided]. These findings illustrate that there are obstacles or obstacles that need to be considered and resolved in order to improve the quality and effectiveness of public services at the Lhoksukon District Office. By addressing these issues, it is hoped that the office will be able to provide better services and meet community needs more efficiently.



In the research conducted, several problems were identified that affected public services in the Lhoksukon sub-district office. Some of these problems include: a) The lack of civil servant personnel which is an obstacle in carrying out their duties and responsibilities; b) Limited budget which is still minimal for the implementation of programs and activities in the office; c) The results of the sub-district musrenbang which are often not accommodated in the implementation of regional development programs; d) Lack of optimizing coordination with and between related Technical Services in the context of public services; e) Unavailability of PATEN room as required facility; f) Low public understanding of government policies that can affect participation and acceptance of public services; g) Inadequate office conditions due to frequent flooding. These findings indicate that there are various obstacles that need to be considered and handled properly so that public services in the Lhoksukon sub-district office can be improved effectively and efficiently.

### Tangible Services

Tangible is a form of service that can be seen and felt concretely by service users. This includes the ability of service providers to provide the best for service users in various aspects, both physical and non-physical. The physical aspect includes the appearance of the building, facilities and technological equipment used to support services. Apart from that, the comfort of the place of service, the discipline of the officers, and the appearance of the apparatus are also part of tangible services. In tangible services, efforts to provide positive experiences and meet the needs of service users are the main focus, thus creating satisfaction and trust in public services.

Based on research conducted at the Lhoksukon District Office, it appears that from a physical perspective, the appearance of the building and waiting room facilities do not fully meet comfort standards. The building is still not equipped with facilities such as air conditioning which can create more comfortable conditions for visitors. In addition, there is a shortage of service equipment such as computers, printers and other electronic devices that are important to support the smooth running of services. This shows that there is a need to improve the physical facilities at the Lhoksukon District Office in order to provide a better environment for service users and improve the quality of services provided.

The presence of tangible apparatus in the sub-district office is very important for people who want to arrange transfer letters and letters of recommendation. Office facilities are one of the important elements that support service quality. These facilities act as a vital tool that influences effectiveness and efficiency in providing services to the community. With adequate facilities, such as comfortable service rooms, complete equipment, and supporting technology, sub-district office officials can provide better services and meet community needs more efficiently. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to and improve office facilities as an integral part of efforts to improve the quality of public services.

The lack of tangible or tangible services at the sub-district office is caused by a shortage of electronic devices such

as computers, printers and others. The main cause is the major flood disaster that occurred in 2021, which resulted in damage to the device. To overcome this problem, the Camat has proposed a budget to the North Aceh District Government to obtain the necessary electronic devices. The purpose of this budgeting is to maximize tangible services at the sub-district office. According to one member of the community who is processing incoming letters, tangible services at the sub-district office have not been optimal in the process of handling letters. Even though the employees at the sub-district office provided good and friendly service, problems occurred because several devices, such as computers, were damaged due to frequent flooding. As a result, the process of obtaining transfer documents at the sub-district office was hampered and took a long time.

Constraints in tangible services at the District Head Office are caused by damage to equipment owned by the office, resulting in disruptions and obstacles in service activities. This situation can be detrimental to the surrounding community who expect optimal and timely tangible services, especially in the processing of transfer documents that require a fast process. The letter will later be used to arrange identity cards (KTP) and family cards (KK) at the Office of the Population and Civil Registration Office (Disdukcapil). With the damage to the device, the letter processing process becomes hampered and results in delays in the next process. This shows the need for equipment repair and maintenance so that tangible services at the sub-district office can run smoothly and efficiently.

## **Accountability**

Responsible service in this context refers to the term "Accountability", which means accountability. Accountability can be interpreted as the ability or condition that allows services to be accounted for or held accountable. In general, Accountability refers to the obligation to provide accountability, answer, and provide explanations regarding the performance and actions of an institution to those authorized to receive such information or accountability. In the context of public services, Accountability is important to ensure transparency, integrity and quality in the services provided by government agencies or agencies. Through the Accountability mechanism, the community can obtain clarity and understanding regarding the actions and results of work carried out by these service institutions.

It is the responsibility of the Sub-District Office to complete the incoming transfer letters and letters of recommendation in a timely manner, in accordance with the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) regulated by the Regent Regulation (Perbub) number 22 concerning Standard Operating Procedures for Licensing and Non-Licensing in Districts in Aceh District North. Through this SOP, the sub-district office has clear guidelines in carrying out the process of obtaining these documents, including the time limits that must be followed. By implementing this SOP, it is hoped that the service for handling letters of transfer and recommendation letters can be carried out effectively and efficiently, and in accordance with applicable regulations. This aims to provide certainty and fairness for people who need these services, as well as maintain quality and professionalism in public services at the sub-district office.

Services to the community related to the management of transfer letters and recommendation letters have been regulated in the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) which should allow completion in one working day (Forasidah, 2022; Karwur et al., 2022). This SOP is a guide that is conveyed to the public so that they understand the procedures that must be followed. However, people often face obstacles due to incompleteness of documents or inadequate administration. This is due to a lack of understanding of the actual procedure that must be followed. Even though SOPs have been prepared, they are not installed or stored in public areas so that they are not easily accessible to the public. Services related to the management of transfer letters and recommendation letters are the responsibility of the Camat Office in completing them on time, but obstacles occur because the community cannot fulfill the requirements set by the Camat Office. As a result, the process of obtaining transfer letters and recommendation letters experienced problems and took longer than specified in the SOP.

In the observations made, there are obstacles in public services at the Lhoksukon sub-district office, namely the lack of socialization regarding the conditions that must be met by people who wish to apply for recommendation letters. This causes people to come to the Camat Office without bringing complete requirements. To overcome this problem, Accountability action is needed from the apparatus to provide information about requirements to people who want to arrange recommendation letters. One of the efforts made is to provide access to services through the WhatsApp application, which allows the public to interact directly and ask for requirements that must be met. With access to this communication, it is hoped that the public can easily find out the requirements that must be completed before visiting the Lhoksukon sub-district office in North Aceh District. This step will help improve effectiveness and efficiency in public services and facilitate public access to meet the necessary requirements.

## **Providing Equal Services (Equal Rights)**

The principle of Equal Right emphasizes the importance of providing non-discriminatory services to the public with a professional, transparent, effective and efficient approach. This is a measure in realizing good governance and accelerating the process of bureaucratic reform in the regions to achieve quality public service delivery. In this context, the regions are expected to have initiatives in improving public services so that the government's role as service provider changes from being "served" to "serving". The goal is to provide better services to the community by prioritizing the principles of equal rights, equality and justice, so that the community can experience the same benefits from the public services provided by the government.

Services at the Lhoksukon sub-district office are emphasized on professionalism and there is no discrimination in providing services to the community, especially in administrative matters such as moving-in letters and recommendation letters. In interviews with informants, the author obtained a quote that describes this approach, namely that every person who comes will be given the same service without any particular choices. Apart from that, services regarding the management of recommendation letters are also prioritized, because this is related to the interests of many people to accelerate development in the village. Thus, the Lhoksukon sub-district office is committed to providing fair and

equitable services to the community, and prioritizing administrative arrangements which are an urgent need for village development and progress.

The community acknowledges that the services provided by the apparatus at the Lhoksukon sub-district office highly uphold the principle of equal rights. Even so, they also realized that the services provided had not reached the maximum level, especially in the management of recommendation letters which experienced problems and resulted in delays. The community stated that they had to wait longer for the recommendation letter to be processed, even though they had fulfilled all the necessary requirements. This indicates that there are deficiencies in the service system that need to be improved to ensure that mail is handled in a timely and efficient manner.

Equal rights services at the Lhoksukon sub-district office have not been fully maximized by the civil servants. There are findings that service providers have not given sufficient priority to services that prioritize community affairs that take care of administration compared to other matters. This causes service recipients to feel that fast service is very important. If this principle is not applied properly, the stigma that arises from the community towards services at the Lhoksukon sub-district office is the lack of fulfillment of equal rights in providing services. To improve equitable and fair services, further efforts are needed so that civil servants can better understand and apply the principle of equal rights in every service provided.

## **Responsive Services**

Responsive or responsive service is an attitude that must be shown by service providers to service recipients. However, in the observations made, it was found that the services provided had not yet reached the maximum level. Although service users should be a priority in the service process in the District, not all employees prioritize the interests of service users. It can be seen that there are employees who prioritize personal matters such as picking up school children or other personal needs rather than serving service users who are queuing. This shows a lack of awareness and commitment in providing responsive services to the community. To improve service quality, efforts are needed to increase awareness and educate employees to pay more attention to the needs and interests of service users and uphold responsiveness in every interaction with the public.

The community also stated that the apparatus of the Lhoksukon Subdistrict Head should show a high responsiveness in providing services to the community, by prioritizing the public interest while in office. This implies that employees must always be present at the office according to a predetermined SOP schedule, rather than prioritizing personal interests. In this way, services can run more optimally when every apparatus is always present at the office, so that people do not have to wait for days to take care of a transfer letter which is only in the form of one sheet. This input provides a positive view of the importance of discipline and involvement of the apparatus in ensuring optimal public services.

## **Optimizing Services**

Public service to the community is one of the most important tasks and functions in the administration of government, especially at the district level. Public services are a crucial element in carrying out governmental tasks because they cover a wide variety of aspects of life. In the context of national and state life, sub-districts have a significant role in providing various types of public services needed by the community. The main objective of this public service is to meet the various needs of society in various fields of life, so that people can experience the benefits and prosperity resulting from an effective and responsive government. Good and quality public services in the sub-district are important indicators in maintaining public trust and satisfaction with government, as well as encouraging community active participation in development and implementation of governmental tasks at the local level.

Steps to optimize public services are elements that must be continuously updated and adapted to the times and technology. The Lhoksukon sub-district office realizes the importance of evaluating and updating its services. Even though improvement efforts have been made, there are still various problems related to optimizing public services. Some of the problems found include the arrangement of HR apparatus and the use of technology. In an effort to improve service quality, it is necessary to increase competence and place appropriate human resources in the sub-district office. In addition, it is also necessary to pay attention to the use of technology so that the service process becomes more efficient, fast and transparent. Through these steps, it is hoped that public services at the Lhoksukon sub-district office can be significantly improved to meet the needs and expectations of the community.

## **Arrangement of Apparatus Resources**

The implementation of public services carried out by the government is still faced with challenges in achieving optimal effectiveness, efficiency and quality. One of the obstacles faced is the limitation in the quality of Human Resources (HR) involved in providing these services. This can be seen from the many complaints received both directly and through the mass media, which highlight deficiencies and weaknesses in public services provided to the public. Improving the quality of public services is a very important issue, considering that good public service is a community right and is also an important indicator in assessing government performance. To overcome this problem, it is necessary to make efforts to improve the quality of human resources involved in the delivery of public services, through training, competency development, and increased motivation. In addition, it is also necessary to improve service systems and procedures, as well as the use of information technology to increase the efficiency and affordability of public services for the community.

The first step that must be taken by the Camat in improving services to the community is to make improvements to Human Resources (HR), namely the apparatus in charge of providing services. Efforts are needed to ensure that the apparatus always works optimally and with full dedication in providing services to the community. Routine evaluations are carried out every week in the form of appraisals to prepare apparatus to remain ready and responsive in carrying out their duties. This is important considering that handling transfer letters and recommendation letters is one of the services most

frequently requested by the public. Therefore, the Camat needs to pay special attention so that the apparatus can manage these letters in accordance with the established Standard Operating Procedures (SOP).

## Social Media Optimization

Utilization of social media as a means to improve public services is one of the steps in optimizing services to the public. With social media, it becomes easier for people to access services provided by the government. In addition, social media also provides an opportunity for the public to submit complaints, criticisms and suggestions directly to related parties. This indirectly encourages the community to be active as external supervisors of public services, in accordance with the mandate contained in Law Number 25 of 2009 concerning Public Services. With the use of social media, it is hoped that public services can be more transparent, responsive, and able to respond more quickly to the needs and aspirations of the community.

One of the steps in optimizing public services at the Lhoksukon sub-district office is to utilize technology, especially the use of social media. By using social media as a means of communication, the public can more efficiently process transfer-in letters and recommendation letters. The use of this technology aims to improve the quality of services provided by the apparatus, as well as speed up the process of processing letters so as to save time and transportation costs for the public. Through social media, the public can submit requests, submit complaints, and get information regarding mail processing procedures directly. Thus, public services in the Lhoksukon sub-district office can be more responsive, effective, and meet the needs of the community optimally.

Improving the quality of public services is very dependent on existing Human Resources (HR) and the use of social media as an effective means of communication. To achieve quality public services, human resources are needed who are able to understand and apply optimal service methods. With the existence of quality human resources, local governments can provide excellent service to the community and identify and develop the potential of the region. Innovation in public services is also important in creating a good experience for the community. To improve the quality of public services, steps that can be taken are to send kelurahan officials to attend quality education and training. Thus, they will acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to provide better and more competitive public services.

## Conclusion

Public services play an important role in the success of local government. To achieve optimal public services, efforts are needed that focus on several aspects. First, qualified and competent Human Resources (HR) in providing services to the community. Human resources who have a good understanding of service methods can create excellent and innovative services. Second, the use of social media as an effective means of communication can make it easier for the public to access information and submit complaints or suggestions regarding public services. In addition, optimizing the use of technology, such as education and training for sub-district officials, is also an important step to improve the quality of public services. By combining these elements, it is hoped that local governments can create quality, responsive public services that meet the needs of the community.

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