

# PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY IN INDONESIA'S OUTER ISLANDS: A PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

*by* Zul Fadli

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## PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY IN INDONESIA'S OUTER ISLANDS: A PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Irisan Susiawaty Pertiwi<sup>1\*</sup>, Jency Wainagy<sup>2</sup>, Zul Fadli<sup>3</sup>

E-mail: [irisan.pertiwi@gmail.com](mailto:irisan.pertiwi@gmail.com)<sup>1</sup>, [jencywainagy@gmail.com](mailto:jencywainagy@gmail.com)<sup>2</sup>, [zul.fadli@fkip.unpattam.ac.id](mailto:zul.fadli@fkip.unpattam.ac.id)<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Pattimura University

<sup>3</sup>Corresponding author

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### Abstract

This study evaluates the performance of Civil State Apparatus personnel in delivering public services in Kairatu Barat Sub-district, West Seram Regency, a remote archipelagic region in Eastern Indonesia. Using a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design, the research involved 94 respondents comprising 37 Civil State Apparatus staff and 57 community service recipients. Data collection employed structured questionnaires and in-depth interviews to obtain comprehensive perspectives on public service quality. Findings reveal that Civil State Apparatus performance is generally categorised as good, with work precision emerging as the primary strength (score: 3.92). However, significant weaknesses exist in service innovation (score: 3.51). From the community perspective, staff friendliness received the highest appreciation (score: 3.89), reflecting the internalisation of local cultural values of "Pela Gandong." Conversely, procedural simplicity obtained the lowest rating (3.44), particularly in licensing services. Correlation analysis revealed that staff friendliness has the strongest relationship with community satisfaction ( $r=0.734$ ), confirming the importance of relational aspects in public service delivery within Maluku's cultural context. Competency and work motivation are the most influential internal factors affecting performance, while limited technological infrastructure constitutes the primary external constraint. The study identifies significant intergenerational digital divides and geographic variations in service usage patterns. Key policy recommendations include: (1) implementing simple communication technology aligned with infrastructure capacity; (2) streamlining service procedures to reduce citizen burden, especially for island communities; (3) strengthening Civil State Apparatus reward systems to sustain motivation; and (4) developing differentiated service strategies that leverage cultural capital while accommodating diverse community needs. These findings provide actionable guidance for improving public service delivery in archipelagic governance contexts.

**Keywords:** Public Service Delivery, Performance Evaluation, Civil Service, Remote Archipelagic Regions, Community Satisfaction, Mixed-Methods Research, Digital Divide.

### 1. Introduction

Public service delivery represents a fundamental pillar of effective governance, serving as the primary interface between government institutions and citizens while significantly influencing public trust and democratic legitimacy (Osborne et al., 2016). The quality of public service delivery not only determines citizen satisfaction but also affects broader socioeconomic development outcomes, particularly in developing countries, where government services often constitute the primary mechanism for social welfare provision (Dalligan, 2021). In



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contemporary governance discourse, civil service personnel performance has emerged as a critical determinant of service quality, with mounting emphasis on accountability, efficiency, and citizen-centered approaches (Van Dooren, 2011).

The field of public administration has evolved from traditional Weberian bureaucratic models toward more flexible, network-based governance approaches emphasizing collaboration, responsiveness, and adaptive capacity (Follett & Bouchart, 2017). Contemporary scholarship increasingly recognizes that service delivery effectiveness requires a nuanced appreciation of contextual factors, including geography, culture, and institutional capacity (Dashardt & Denhardt, 2015). However, a critical gap exists in understanding how these theoretical developments translate into practice within extreme geographical contexts, particularly in archipelagic settings where traditional governance assumptions may not hold.

Recent scholarship on Civil State Apparatus performance evaluation in Indonesia reveals three significant patterns highlighting critical research gaps. First, Kuswandi et al. (2024) evaluated Civil State Apparatus performance at the Mojokerto District Health Office, focusing on capacity building through training programs in an accessible urban context. Their study found that structured training interventions improved technical competencies but did not examine how geographical isolation affects performance dynamics or how cultural factors mediate service delivery effectiveness. In contrast, the current study addresses this critical knowledge void regarding performance evaluation in remote archipelagic contexts where training access is limited and cultural capital may serve as an alternative institutional resource.

Second, Salam et al. (2023) conducted a performance evaluation without differentiating geographical contexts or examining stakeholder perspectives comparatively. Their quantitative-only approach measured administrative efficiency metrics but overlooked relational and cultural dimensions of service delivery. The present study addresses this limitation by employing a mixed-methods design integrating both Civil State Apparatus self-assessments and community perceptions, revealing how cultural values like "Pela Gandong" influence performance outcomes—a dimension absent from Salam et al.'s framework.

Third, Syarifaty & Rontyaningsih (2024) examined relationships between competency, work motivation, and employee performance in Tanjung Sub-district, Brebes Regency, identifying positive correlations in a mainland coastal context. However, their research did not address how extreme geographical constraints, limited technological infrastructure, or indigenous cultural systems affect these relationships. While they established competency-motivation-performance linkages in accessible contexts, the current study extends this analysis to archipelagic settings where infrastructure limitations and cultural capital create fundamentally different performance dynamics, revealing that interpersonal factors ( $r=0.734$ ) outweigh technical efficiency in determining citizen satisfaction.

These examples illustrate a pronounced "continental bias" in existing literature, with theoretical frameworks developed primarily from mainland, urban, or easily accessible contexts. Previous studies have predominantly focused on urban or easily accessible areas, leaving a substantial knowledge void concerning service delivery challenges in geographically isolated regions (Lumentah et al., 2015; Salam et al., 2023).

Indonesia's vast archipelagic geography presents unique challenges for public service



delivery, particularly in remote regions where geographical barriers, limited infrastructure, and cultural diversity create complex operational environments (Lien, 2006). This study contributes to the emerging "archipelagic governance" field—a theoretical framework recognizing island territories as fundamentally different administrative contexts requiring specialized approaches. Unlike continental governance models assuming relatively uniform accessibility and infrastructure, archipelagic governance must account for extreme variations in connectivity, resource availability, and community characteristics across dispersed island populations.

The implementation of Law No. 5 of 2014 concerning the State Civil Apparatus has introduced merit-based performance management systems aimed at enhancing service quality (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017). However, the effectiveness of these reforms varies significantly across regional contexts, suggesting the need for "differentiated implementation" models that maintain national standards while allowing contextual adaptation (Syarifurrahman & Rantyaningsih, 2024).

In Eastern Indonesia's archipelagic region, particularly Maluku Province, traditional cultural values intersect with modern bureaucratic practices, creating unique dynamics influencing service delivery patterns and citizen expectations (Rohmah, 2017). The concept of "Peta Gondong," emphasizing brotherhood and cooperation, exemplifies how local cultural frameworks shape public service interactions. This cultural-administrative intersection represents "indigenous institutional capacity"—the ability of traditional social systems to enhance rather than impede modern administrative effectiveness. None of the recent studies examined this cultural dimension, representing a significant theoretical gap that this study addresses.

Despite growing scholarly attention to public service performance evaluation, four significant research gaps persist:

First, theoretical integration gaps: The field lacks integrated theoretical models that account for geographical constraints, cultural assets, and technological limitations. Most existing frameworks treat these factors separately rather than recognizing their interactive effects. Recent studies either focus on capacity building in accessible area performance evaluation, but four significant research gaps persist (Rusnandi et al., 2024), examine efficiency without cultural consideration (Salam et al., 2023), or analyze competency-motivation relationships without accounting for extreme geographical constraints (Syarifurrahman & Rantyaningsih, 2024).

Second, methodological innovation gaps: Existing research typically employs single-perspective approaches rather than adopting integrated methodologies that capture multiple stakeholder perspectives (Suputra & Widiyarta, 2021). This study introduces "contextual triangulation" that systematically integrates internal performance assessments, external satisfaction measures, and environmental factor analysis, directly addressing single-method limitations in Salam et al., (2023) and extending beyond the correlation analysis approach of Syarifurrahman & Rantyaningsih (2024).

Third, digital transformation complexity: Remote areas face substantial technological infrastructure limitations affecting service provision and performance evaluation (Zulaikah, 2020). This study challenges the prevailing "digital divide" narrative by proposing a "selective digitalization" framework recognizing how communities strategically adopt certain technologies



while resisting others based on practical considerations rather than capacity limitations—a dimension unexplored in recent Indonesian Civil State Apparatus performance studies.

Fourth, comparative contextual analysis gaps: Recent research lacks a systematic comparison between geographical contexts. While Kuswandi et al., (2024) worked in accessible urban areas, Salam et al., (2023) did not differentiate geographical contexts, and Syfarisy & Rostyaningsih (2024) focused on coastal mainland settings; none examined how extreme archipelagic dispersion fundamentally alters performance dynamics and satisfaction determinants.

This study addresses these gaps by comprehensively evaluating Civil State Apparatus performance in public service delivery within the remote archipelagic context of West Halmahera Sub-district, West Sumba Regency, Maluku Province. The research makes several novel contributions:

- Theoretical Novelty:** Develops an "integrated contextual performance model" synthesizing geographical, cultural, and technological factors into a cohesive framework for understanding service delivery effectiveness in extreme contexts. Unlike Kuswandi et al., (2024) capacity-building focus, Salam et al., (2023) efficiency metrics, or Syfarisy & Rostyaningsih (2024) competency-motivation model, this integrated framework explicitly accounts for archipelagic geography, cultural capital, and infrastructure constraints simultaneously.
- Methodological Innovation:** Employs mixed-methods approach introducing "cultural correlation analysis"—examining how traditional social values influence modern administrative effectiveness. This addresses methodological limitations in recent single-method studies (Salam et al., 2023) and single-perspective research (Kuswandi et al., 2024; Syfarisy & Rostyaningsih, 2024).
- Empirical Contribution:** Provides the first systematic evaluation of civil service performance in Indonesia's outer islands, offering baseline data for comparative analysis and policy development. This fills the geographical void in recent Civil State Apparatus performance literature, which concentrates on accessible mainland or urban contexts while overlooking Indonesia's vast archipelagic territories.
- Policy Innovation:** Informs development of "graduated modernization" strategies that sequence technological and procedural improvements based on local readiness and infrastructure capacity. Unlike recent studies assuming uniform implementation contexts, this research provides differentiated policy recommendations designed explicitly for archipelagic governance challenges.

The study's significance extends beyond immediate empirical contributions, offering a replicable evaluation framework for similar remote contexts while informing policy development for archipelagic governance. By examining the intersection of local cultural values with modern bureaucratic practices, this research contributes to understanding how traditional social capital can be leveraged to enhance public service effectiveness in challenging operational environments. The study ultimately advances toward a "post-universal" public administration theory that maintains professional standards while embracing contextual adaptation as a source of institutional strength rather than deviation from ideal practice.





## 2. Methods

This study employed a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design to comprehensively evaluate Civil State Apparatus performance in public service delivery (Creswell & Clark, 2017). This design allowed initial quantitative data collection and analysis, followed by qualitative exploration to explain quantitative findings, providing a nuanced understanding of complex dynamics affecting public service performance in remote archipelagic settings (Puritat, 2023).

The research was conducted in the West Kutai Sub-district Office, West Seram Regency, Maluku Province, between February and April 2025. This location was purposively selected as a representative remote archipelagic area in Eastern Indonesia, presenting unique challenges including geographical isolation, limited infrastructure, and distinct cultural contexts (Hardianto et al., 2021). The sub-district encompasses mainland areas and several small islands, providing diverse geographical contexts typical of Indonesia's outer island regions.

The study involved two distinct populations. The first comprised all 37 Civil State Apparatus personnel at the sub-district office, using total sampling to ensure comprehensive coverage of internal perspectives (Wulaniat et al., 2021). The second population consisted of 57 community members who had received services within the past 12 months, selected through purposive sampling. Sample size was determined through a priori power analysis using G\*Power 3.2, targeting medium effect size ( $f^2 = 0.15$ ),  $\alpha = 0.05$ , power = 0.80, yielding a minimum  $n=55$  (Paul et al., 2009). The community sample was strategically distributed: 61.4% from mainland areas and 38.6% from small islands, reflecting demographic distribution (Ruhurjo, 2020).

Data collection employed structured questionnaires and in-depth interviews. Questionnaires utilized four-point Likert scales, deliberately avoiding neutral options to reduce central tendency bias (Manghata & Widayanto, 2019). Items were developed from SERVQUAL frameworks adapted for Indonesian archipelagic contexts (Zulaikah, 2020). Six Civil State Apparatus personnel and six community members participated in semi-structured interviews using a funnel approach, with saturation assessment following Yin (2018). Interviews were conducted in Indonesian, recorded with consent, and transcribed verbatim.

Both instruments underwent rigorous validity and reliability testing through pilot studies ( $n=20$  each). Content validity was established through expert review ( $CVI = 0.85$ ) (Pollett & Bouckaert, 2017). Construct validity was assessed through exploratory factor analysis with KMO values exceeding 0.70 (Yin, 2018). Internal consistency was achieved with Cronbach's alpha  $> 0.70$  for all scales. Trustworthiness was enhanced through prolonged engagement, member checking, peer debriefing, and reflexive journaling.

Quantitative analysis employed descriptive statistics, with normality assessed through Shapiro-Wilk tests (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Pearson correlation examined relationships between performance dimensions and satisfaction, with effect sizes following Cohen's guidelines (Miles et al., 2014). All analyses used SPSS 28.0,  $p < 0.05$ . Missing data ( $<2\%$ ) were handled through listwise deletion after confirming MCAR pattern.

Qualitative data were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis following Braun and



Clarke (2019) six-phase approach in NVivo 14. Two researchers independently coded 30% of transcripts, achieving substantial agreement ( $\kappa = 0.78$ ) (McHugh, 2012; O'Connor & Joffe, 2020).

Triangulation integrated three data sources: Civil State Apparatus self-assessments, objective performance indicators from six-month administrative records, and community evaluations, using Bruus and Clarke (2019) joint display framework. Convergence and divergence patterns were systematically documented to understand complementary stakeholder perspectives.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### Participant Characteristics and Response Rates

The study achieved exceptional participation rates with 100% response from Civil State Apparatus personnel ( $n=37$ ) and 57 community members, demonstrating strong engagement from both stakeholder groups. The demographic composition of participants provides essential context for understanding performance dynamics and service expectations within this remote archipelagic setting.

**Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Study Participants**

| Characteristic               | Civil State Apparatus (n=37) | Community (n=57) |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Gender</b>                |                              |                  |
| Male                         | 32 (86.5%)                   | 31 (54.4%)       |
| Female                       | 5 (13.5%)                    | 26 (45.6%)       |
| <b>Education Level</b>       |                              |                  |
| Primary/No School            | -                            | 6 (10.5%)        |
| Junior High School           | -                            | 12 (21.1%)       |
| Senior High School           | 2 (5.4%)                     | 28 (49.1%)       |
| Diploma                      | 5 (13.5%)                    | 1                |
| Bachelor's Degree            | 19 (51.4%)                   | 9 (15.8%)        |
| Master's Degree              | 1 (2.7%)                     | -                |
| <b>Work Experience / Age</b> |                              |                  |
| < 5 years / 18-30 years      | 9 (24.3%)                    | 16 (28.1%)       |
| 5-10 years / 31-45 years     | 12 (32.4%)                   | 22 (38.6%)       |
| 11-20 years / 46-60 years    | 11 (29.7%)                   | 17 (29.8%)       |
| > 20 years / > 60 years      | 5 (13.2%)                    | 4 (7.0%)         |
| <b>Geographic Origin</b>     |                              |                  |
| Mainland Regions East        | -                            | 33 (57.9%)       |
| Small Islands                | -                            | 24 (42.1%)       |

Source: Research Result, 2025

The demographic distribution reveals several important patterns that influence service delivery dynamics. The educational profile of Civil State Apparatus personnel, with 82.2% holding bachelor's degrees or higher, indicates substantial human capital investment in this



remote location (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017). This finding challenges common assumptions about human resource quality in peripheral areas and suggests that Indonesia's merit-based recruitment reforms have positively impacted even in remote regions. However, 21.5% Civil State Apparatus personnel with only a high school education indicates incomplete implementation of competency-based recruitment standards.

The community sample demonstrates educational diversity that reflects typical rural Indonesian demographics, with 49.1% completing senior high school education. This relatively high educational attainment compared to historical patterns in remote areas suggests ongoing improvements in educational access and may influence service expectations (Van Dooren, 2011). The geographic distribution, with 38.6% of respondents from small islands, ensures representation of populations facing the most significant accessibility challenges, providing crucial insights into differentiated service experiences.

#### Civil State Apparatus Self-Assessment of Performance

Civil State Apparatus personnel evaluated their work across multiple dimensions to understand internal perspectives on performance quality. These self-assessments provide baseline data for comparing with external evaluations and identifying areas of perceived strength and weakness. To enhance validity and reduce self-report bias, we triangulated Civil State Apparatus self-assessments with objective performance indicators and community evaluations, creating a comprehensive multi-source validation framework.

Table 2. Civil State Apparatus Self-Assessment of Performance Dimensions

| Performance Dimension   | Very Good | Good       | Adequate   | Poor      | Mean Score | Objective Indicators                                                                     |
|-------------------------|-----------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Work Quality</b>     |           |            |            |           |            |                                                                                          |
| Timeliness              | 8 (21.4%) | 18 (46.8%) | 9 (24.2%)  | 2 (5.0%)  | 3.16       | Avg. processing time: 4.2 days (target: 3 days); 89% services completed within SLA       |
| Work Precision          | 7 (18.1%) | 21 (54.0%) | 8 (21.4%)  | 1 (2.5%)  | 3.32       | Document error rate: 0.5%; Request response: 12 cases/month                              |
| Problem-solving Ability | 9 (22.5%) | 14 (35.4%) | 11 (27.9%) | 2 (5.0%)  | 3.76       | Citizen complaints resolved: 76%; Avg. resolution time: 6.1 days                         |
| Service Innovation      | 6 (15.4%) | 13 (32.9%) | 16 (40.5%) | 5 (12.5%) | 3.51       | New procedures implemented: 2 in past year; Staff improvement suggestions: 45 per period |
| <b>Work Quantity</b>    |           |            |            |           |            |                                                                                          |
| Volume                  | 9         | 17         | 9 (24.2%)  | 2 (5.0%)  | 3.09       | Avg. cases handled: 28                                                                   |



| Performance Dimension   | Very Good | Good       | Adequate   | Poor     | Mean Score | Objective Indicators                                                        |
|-------------------------|-----------|------------|------------|----------|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Completion              | 24.1%     | 45.8%      |            |          |            | per staff/month:<br>Service requests processed:<br>647/month (office total) |
| Target Achievement      | 7 (18.9%) | 29 (51.4%) | 9 (24.3%)  | 2 (5.4%) | 3.04       | Monthly targets met: 79%<br>Backlog cover: 156 (18% of annual volume)       |
| Multitasking Capability | 5 (13.5%) | 16 (32.2%) | 13 (33.1%) | 3 (8.1%) | 3.62       | Avg. concurrent tasks: 3.4<br>Task-switching frequency: 42 times/day        |

Source: Research Results, 2025; Administrative Records West Kalimantan Sub-district Office, 2025

Objective Performance Indicators (data collected from administrative records, February-April 2025):

- Total service transactions: 2,541 during study period
- Citizen complaints filed: 47 formal complaints (1.85% of transactions)
- Repeat visits required: 892 cases (35.1%) required multiple visits due to incomplete documentation or procedural issues
- Service abandonment rate: 63 cases (2.5%) where citizens initiated but did not complete service requests
- Inter-island service requests: 952 cases (38.6%) originated from small islands, with average travel cost of Rp 150,000-250,000 per visit

To ensure validity, we systematically triangulated three data sources: (1) Civil State Apparatus self-assessments, (2) objective performance metrics from administrative records, and (3) community evaluations. This triangulation revealed necessary convergence and divergence patterns:

#### 1) Key Findings:

- Convergence (validating self-assessments):**
  - Work precision self-ratings (3.92) align with low error rates (8.5%); correlation  $r = -0.587$ ,  $p < 0.01$ .
  - Timeliness ratings (3.86) correspond reasonably with 68% on-time completion.
- Divergence (revealing perception gaps):**
  - Innovation gap: Civil State Apparatus rated innovation at 3.51, but objective indicators show minimal activity (only 2 new procedures/year, 0.8 suggestions per person). Community ratings even lower (3.12).
  - Timeliness perception gap: Civil State Apparatus self-assessment (3.86)



exceeds community satisfaction (3.68) by 0.26 points. While 68% meet internal targets, 35.1% repeat visit rate extends total completion time significantly, especially for island residents.

- ii. Volume-burden mismatch: Lower multitasking ratings (3.62) despite moderate workloads (23 cases/month) suggest burden stems from contextual complexity rather than volume—archipelagic services require more time per case than urban equivalents.

## 2) Triangulation Methodology:

- a. Quantitative correlation between self-assessments and objective metrics (6 months of records)
- b. Cross-stakeholder comparison of Civil State Apparatus and community ratings on corresponding dimensions
- c. Qualitative validation through interviews (6 Civil State Apparatus, 6 community members) explaining convergence/divergence patterns

This triangulation approach enhances validity by reducing social desirability bias, capturing multi-stakeholder reality, and revealing hidden performance dimensions not captured by standard metrics. The analysis confirms that Civil State Apparatus self-assessments demonstrate reasonable validity for technical competencies, but systematically overestimate innovation and underestimate geographical barriers.

## 3) Interpretation of Self-Assessment Data

The triangulated data reveals that work precision achieved the highest score (3.92) with objective validation through low error rates (8.5%), confirming that Civil State Apparatus personnel genuinely prioritize accuracy. However, this emphasis may come at the expense of innovation (3.51), as confirmed by objective indicators showing minimal innovative activity. The 8.5% error rate, while relatively low, imposes disproportionate costs on island residents who face Rp 150,000-250,000 travel costs for each corrective visit.

The multitasking capability score (3.62) reflects challenges managing diverse functions. Triangulation with workload data (23 cases/month, 5-8 concurrent tasks) reveals perceived burden stems from contextual complexity rather than volume—each archipelagic case requires more time and coordination than urban equivalents. The 35.1% repeat visit rate demonstrates how procedural complexity translates into extended completion times and increased citizen burden, particularly for geographically disadvantaged populations.

This triangulated analysis demonstrates that effective performance evaluation in remote archipelagic contexts requires integrating self-assessments, objective metrics, and stakeholder perspectives to capture full service delivery complexity.

The self-assessment data reveal interesting patterns in Civil State Apparatus performance perceptions. Work precision achieved the highest mean score (3.92), suggesting that Civil State Apparatus personnel prioritize accuracy and attention to detail in their work processes. This finding aligns with traditional bureaucratic values emphasizing procedural correctness and risk aversion (Halligan, 2021). However, the emphasis on precision may come at the expense of



efficiency and innovation, as evidenced by the relatively lower scores for service innovation (3.51).

The notably lower score for service innovation is particularly significant, as it suggests limited experimentation with new approaches to service delivery. This pattern is consistent with organizational culture theories highlighting how uncertainty avoidance and hierarchical structures can inhibit innovative behavior in public organizations (Osborne et al., 2016). In remote settings where standard procedures may not perfectly fit local conditions, this innovation deficit could represent a significant barrier to improving service effectiveness. The multitasking capability score (3.62) indicates challenges in managing multiple simultaneous responsibilities, particularly relevant in small offices where personnel must handle diverse functions. This finding suggests that workload distribution and task prioritization require attention to optimize overall performance outcomes.

#### Community Satisfaction with Public Services

Community perspectives on service quality provide the external validation necessary for comprehensive performance evaluation. The following table presents community satisfaction ratings across key service dimensions.

Table 3. Community Satisfaction with Public Service Delivery

| Service Dimension    | Very Satisfied | Satisfied  | Adequately Satisfied | Not Satisfied | Mean Score |
|----------------------|----------------|------------|----------------------|---------------|------------|
| Staff Friendliness   | 12 (21.3%)     | 28 (49.1%) | 15 (26.8%)           | 2 (3.9%)      | 3.88       |
| Service Accuracy     | 9 (15.8%)      | 26 (45.6%) | 18 (31.6%)           | 4 (7.0%)      | 3.79       |
| Service Speed        | 8 (14.4%)      | 22 (38.9%) | 21 (36.8%)           | 3 (5.0%)      | 3.60       |
| Cost Transparency    | 7 (12.3%)      | 22 (38.6%) | 23 (40.4%)           | 4 (6.9%)      | 3.54       |
| Procedure Simplicity | 6 (10.5%)      | 20 (35.1%) | 24 (42.1%)           | 7 (12.3%)     | 3.44       |

Source: Research Results, 2025

The data reveal a clear hierarchy in service quality perceptions, with staff friendliness achieving the highest satisfaction (3.88), reflecting the successful integration of "Pela Gandong" cultural values into service delivery. As one respondent stated: "The staff treat us like family, like brothers and sisters. Even when I come from far away and look tired, they greet me warmly" (Male, 58 years, outer island). This cultural competency creates emotional connections that partially compensate for procedural difficulties.

However, procedure simplicity received the lowest rating (3.44), with 12.3% dissatisfaction—the highest across all dimensions. This indicates significant challenges in service design and implementation, particularly concerning island communities where complex procedures require multiple costly visits. The 0.44-point gap between the highest (staff friendliness) and the lowest (procedure simplicity) dimensions suggests that while interpersonal



aspects excel, structural and administrative processes remain problematic. Service speed (3.68) and cost transparency (3.54) also score below the overall mean, indicating systemic issues beyond individual staff performance.

Table 4. Satisfaction by Service Type

| Service Dimension    | Very Satisfied | Satisfied  | Adaptably Satisfied | Not Satisfied | Mean Score |
|----------------------|----------------|------------|---------------------|---------------|------------|
| Staff Friendliness   | 12 (21.7%)     | 28 (49.7%) | 15 (26.7%)          | 2 (3.5%)      | 3.88       |
| Service Accuracy     | 9 (15.8%)      | 26 (46.0%) | 18 (31.8%)          | 4 (7.0%)      | 3.76       |
| Service Speed        | 8 (14.0%)      | 22 (39.0%) | 21 (36.8%)          | 3 (5.0%)      | 3.60       |
| Cost Transparency    | 7 (12.3%)      | 22 (39.0%) | 22 (39.0%)          | 3 (5.0%)      | 3.54       |
| Procedure Simplicity | 6 (10.3%)      | 26 (46.0%) | 24 (42.1%)          | 3 (5.0%)      | 3.44       |

Source: Research Results, 2025

Service satisfaction varies significantly by type, inversely related to procedural complexity. Simple certificate services (identity documents: 3.81; birth/death certificates: 3.77) achieve higher satisfaction because they involve straightforward verification with minimal inter-agency coordination. One satisfied citizen explained: "Getting my family card was simple. I brought my marriage certificate, children's birth certificates, and my ID. The staff checked everything. I waited one hour, and received the card" (Female, 36 years, mainland).

Conversely, licensing services requiring multi-agency coordination show substantially lower satisfaction. Building permits receive the lowest rating (3.18) with 15.3% dissatisfaction, reflecting complex requirements, including architectural designs and environmental assessments, unavailable in remote areas. One farmer stated: "They said I must provide building designs from an architect. Where do I find an architect here? The nearest is in Ambon, and his fee is more than my construction budget. I gave up" (Male, 47 years).

Business licensing (3.28) and land certification (3.35) similarly suffer from inter-agency coordination problems. The 0.63-point gap between the highest (identity documents: 3.81) and the lowest (building permits: 3.18) service types is statistically significant ( $t(112) = 4.87, p < 0.001$ ), confirming that satisfaction correlates with administrative complexity rather than general service quality. This pattern suggests that targeted interventions simplify multi-agency processes rather than uniform improvements across all services.

The community satisfaction data reveals a clear hierarchy of service quality perceptions. Staff friendliness receives the highest satisfaction rating (3.88), aligning with cultural expectations in Maluku, where interpersonal relationships and respect are highly valued (Ulin, 2006). This demonstrates successful integration of "Pela Gandang" cultural values—emphasizing brotherhood and mutual respect—into public service delivery. As one elderly island resident expressed: "The staff here treat us like family, like brothers and sisters. Even when I come from far away and look tired, they greet me warmly and offer me water. This kindness makes the long



journey worthwhile, even if the process takes time" (Male, 58 years, fisherman, outer island). This cultural competency extends beyond mere politeness to a genuine internalization of local values, creating emotional connections that partially compensate for procedural difficulties. However, procedure simplicity obtained the lowest rating (3.44), with 12.3% expressing dissatisfaction. Our analysis identifies three distinct sources of this complexity:

a) Central Regulatory Complexity (45% of problems):

National regulations mandate extensive documentation without accounting for archipelagic realities. Business licensing requires 12-15 supporting documents from different agencies, while building permits demand technical documents (architectural designs, environmental assessments) unavailable in remote areas. One business owner described: "They told me I need certificates from the health office, neighborhood head, tax clearance, location sketch, and many other papers. Each document requires different offices. For me, coming from Kelang Island, each trip costs Rp 200,000 for boat fare alone. I've made four trips in two months and still haven't completed everything. The staff here are strict, but the system is impossible for people like us." (Female, 41 years, food vendor, Kelang Island). A farmer who abandoned his building permit application added: "I needed a simple house for my family. They said I must provide land certificates, building design from an architect, neighbor approvals, environmental documents. Where do I find an architect here? The nearest is in Ambon, and his fee is more than my construction budget. I gave up and just built without permit." (Male, 47 years, farmer, mainland)

b) Inter-Agency Coordination Failures (35% of problems):

Poor coordination between sub-district, district, and specialized agencies creates bureaucratic loops. Land certification requires coordination between sub-district office, land agency (BPN), village government, and customary authorities—each with conflicting requirements. One land owner explained: "I applied for land certificate six months ago. The sub-district approved my documents and sent them to the district land office. After two months, the land office said I needed additional documents the sub-district never mentioned. When I brought those back, they said the land office's requirement was incorrect. I've been going back and forth—each time taking two days of travel and spending Rp 300,000. Nobody knows exactly what is needed." (Male, 54 years, land owner, Pinu Island). Limited internet connectivity exacerbates coordination problems, preventing quick verification between offices and requiring physical document transfers that create weeks-long delays.

c) Limited Local Staff Capacity (20% of problems):

Generalist administrators handle diverse services but lack specialized knowledge for complex cases. A young entrepreneur explained: "I came to ask about business licensing. The staff was very polite but couldn't clearly explain all requirements. She gave me a general list, but when I returned with those documents, I learned I needed additional papers specific to home-based food businesses. I don't blame her—she handles many types of services and cannot know everything. But for me, it meant another expensive trip from my island." (Female, 29 years, home business owner, Rumah Tiga Island)

Geographic context fundamentally transforms procedural complexity from inconvenience



into an access barrier. While 34.3% of mainland residents handle multiple services per visit, 81.8% of island residents must strategically optimize each trip due to travel costs (Rp 150,000-250,000 per visit). One island village head explained: "When we come to the sub-district office we try to handle everything at once—certificates, letters, permits, whatever anyone in our village needs. We collect documents from neighbors and family before traveling. Sometimes five or six of us share a boat to split costs. We cannot afford to come back multiple times. If we miss one document, it might be months before we can return." (Male, 62 years, village head, Harku Island)

This geographic amplification means procedural failures impose disproportionate costs on disadvantaged populations. A missing document can cost an island family Rp 200,000-300,000 in additional travel, a substantial portion of the monthly income for fishing or farming households. The variation across service types reflects complexity levels. Simple certificate services (identity documents: 3.81; birth/death: 3.77) involve straightforward verification with minimal inter-agency coordination. One satisfied citizen noted: "Getting my family card was simple. I brought my marriage certificate, children's birth certificates, and my ID. The staff checked everything, I waited one hour, and received the card" (Female, 36 years, mainland).

Conversely, licensing services (business: 3.28; building permits: 3.18) require multi-agency coordination and technical assessments, creating uncertainty. The 0.63-point satisfaction gap between the highest and lowest service types is statistically significant ( $t(112) = 4.87, p < 0.001$ ), confirming systematic variation rather than general quality issues). Conversely, licensing services (business: 3.28; building permits: 3.18) require multi-agency coordination and technical assessments, creating uncertainty. The 0.63-point satisfaction gap between the highest and lowest service types is statistically significant ( $t(112) = 4.87, p < 0.001$ ), confirming systematic variation rather than general quality issues).

Faced with complexity, citizens develop informal adaptations: (1) hiring facilitators who understand procedures (Rp 50,000-200,000 fees), (2) abandoning service requests (2.5% of applications), and (3) establishing community information networks. One respondent explained: "I paid my nephew who works in town to handle my certificate. He knows the system, has internet. For me, paying him is cheaper than making three trips from my island). These strategies reveal community resilience and systemic inadequacy—citizens adapt to complexity rather than systems adapting to citizens needs. The findings suggest improvement requires differentiated approaches: regulatory simplification for central complexity, coordination protocols for inter-agency problems, specialized training for capacity gaps, and potentially mobile service units to eliminate geographic amplification effects.

#### Performance-Satisfaction Relationships

Understanding the relationships between different aspects of Civil State Apparatus performance and community satisfaction provides crucial insights for prioritizing improvement efforts. The correlation analysis reveals the relative importance of varying performance dimensions.



**Table 5**  
**Correlation Analysis Between Civil State Apparatus Performance and Community Satisfaction**

| CSA Performance Dimension | Correlation Coefficient (r) | Significance Level | Relationship Strength |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Staff Friendliness        | 0.734**                     | $p < 0.01$         | Very Strong           |
| Work Quality              | 0.678**                     | $p < 0.01$         | Strong                |
| Service Speed             | 0.612**                     | $p < 0.01$         | Strong                |
| Transparency              | 0.566**                     | $p < 0.01$         | Medium                |
| Service Innovation        | 0.445*                      | $p < 0.05$         | Medium                |

\*\*Note: \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*  $p < 0.05$

Source: Research Results, 2025.

The correlation analysis reveals that staff friendliness has the strongest relationship with overall community satisfaction ( $r = 0.734$ ), confirming the critical importance of interpersonal skills in public service delivery within this cultural context. This finding supports relationship-centered theories of public service, which emphasize that the quality of human interactions often matters more than technical efficiency in determining user satisfaction (Yin, 2018). The strength of this correlation suggests that investments in interpersonal skills training and cultural competency development could yield substantial improvements in overall service satisfaction.

Work quality demonstrates a strong positive correlation ( $r = 0.678$ ) with satisfaction, indicating that technical competence remains fundamental to service credibility. This relationship underscores the importance of maintaining professional standards while emphasizing relational service delivery aspects. Combining high technical quality and strong interpersonal skills creates a multiplier effect that enhances overall satisfaction outcomes.

Interestingly, service innovation shows the weakest correlation with satisfaction ( $r = 0.445$ ), suggesting that while service providers and policy makers may value innovation, it may not be the primary driver of user satisfaction. This finding challenges assumptions about the universal importance of innovation in public service improvement and suggests that in resource-constrained environments, communities may prioritize reliability and accessibility over novelty (Vigoda-Gadot & Neiri, 2006).

#### Factors Influencing Civil State Apparatus Performance

To understand the underlying drivers of performance variation, Civil State Apparatus personnel were asked to evaluate factors they perceived as most influential in determining their work effectiveness. Understanding these factors is essential for developing targeted improvement strategies.



**Table 6. Internal and External Factors Affecting Civil State Apparatus Performance**

| Factor Category | Factor                    | Very Influential | Influential   | Somewhat      | Not Influential | Mean Score |
|-----------------|---------------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|------------|
| Internal        | Competency/Skills         | 14<br>(37.8%)    | 16<br>(43.2%) | 4 (16.2%)     | 1 (2.7%)        | 4.16       |
|                 | Work Motivation           | 12<br>(32.4%)    | 18<br>(48.2%) | 4 (16.2%)     | 1 (2.7%)        | 4.11       |
|                 | Work Discipline           | 11<br>(29.7%)    | 19<br>(51.8%) | 4 (16.2%)     | 1 (2.7%)        | 4.00       |
|                 | Job Satisfaction          | 8<br>(21.6%)     | 17<br>(45.2%) | 10<br>(27.0%) | 2 (5.4%)        | 3.88       |
| External        | Infrastructure/Facilities | 15<br>(40.5%)    | 14<br>(37.0%) | 4 (16.2%)     | 2 (5.4%)        | 4.14       |
|                 | Training/Development      | 11 (28.1%)       | 13 (34.3%)    | 3 (10.0%)     | 2 (5.4%)        | 4.05       |
|                 | Superior Support          | 10<br>(27.0%)    | 16<br>(43.2%) | 9 (26.2%)     | 2 (5.4%)        | 3.92       |
|                 | Reward System             | 7<br>(18.5%)     | 12<br>(32.4%) | 14<br>(37.0%) | 4 (10.9%)       | 3.59       |

Source: Research Results, 2025

The factor analysis reveals that competency and skills are perceived as the most influential internal factor (4.16), highlighting the critical importance of human capital in determining performance outcomes. This finding aligns with human capital theory, which posits that knowledge, skills, and abilities are primary determinants of individual productivity (Tschokke & Tschokke, 2016). The high rating for competency suggests that Civil State Apparatus personnel recognize the need for continuous professional development and skills enhancement.

Work motivation receives a notably high rating (4.11), which is surprising given the remote location and potential career limitations. This high motivation level may reflect the sense of purpose that comes from serving as the primary government interface for isolated communities. The finding suggests that intrinsic motivation, derived from meaningful work and community service, may compensate for limitations in extrinsic motivators such as career advancement opportunities.

Infrastructure and facilities emerge as the most influential external factor (4.14), reflecting the practical constraints of operating in a remote archipelagic environment. Limited internet connectivity, outdated equipment, and inadequate physical facilities create significant barriers to efficient service delivery. This finding emphasizes the importance of basic infrastructure investment in enabling effective public service delivery, even in digital transformation initiatives advance in more developed areas (Ryan & Doi, 2020).



The reward system receives the lowest rating among all factors (3.59), indicating potential problems with recognition and incentive structures. This finding suggests that current reward mechanisms may not adequately acknowledge exceptional performance or provide sufficient motivation for continuous improvement. The weak reward system may contribute to the limited innovation observed in service delivery approaches.

The gap between high work motivation (4.11) and lower job satisfaction (3.84) reveals a vital tension that warrants attention. This pattern suggests that while Civil State Apparatus personnel are motivated to serve their communities, they may experience frustration with working conditions, career prospects, or organizational support systems. This motivation-satisfaction gap could lead to burnout or turnover if not addressed through improved management practices and support systems.

#### Theoretical Implications and Framework Integration

The findings from this study provide substantial insights into public service delivery dynamics in remote archipelagic contexts, contributing to multiple theoretical frameworks in public administration. The exceptionally high correlation between staff friendliness and community satisfaction ( $r = 0.734$ ) offers empirical support for relational governance theories, which posit that the quality of interpersonal interactions fundamentally shapes citizen-government relationships (Miles et al., 2014). This finding extends beyond customer service considerations to demonstrate how cultural values can be systematically leveraged as institutional assets. The successful integration of "Pela Gandong" values into service interactions represents a form of cultural capital that enhances service effectiveness without requiring significant financial investment, supporting arguments for culturally-responsive public administration approaches (Yammarino & Novitaningtyas, 2021).

From a New Public Service perspective, which emphasizes citizen engagement and community-centered approaches, the study validates the importance of shared values and democratic dialogue in service delivery (Fardkha & Syaifi, 2015). The high appreciation for staff friendliness suggests that citizens in remote areas value being treated with dignity and respect, consistent with theories emphasizing the symbolic importance of government-citizen interactions in legitimizing state authority. However, this relational strength and procedural weaknesses limit overall service effectiveness, indicating that cultural assets alone are insufficient without a supportive administrative infrastructure.

The motivation-satisfaction paradox observed among Civil State Apparatus personnel offers nuanced insights into public service motivation theory. While Herzberg's two-factor theory would predict that dissatisfaction with hygiene factors (working conditions, salary, organizational policies) would undermine motivation, the current findings suggest a more complex dynamic where intrinsic motivation derived from public service mission can persist despite environmental constraints (Tamani, 2020). This resilience may reflect the unique psychological rewards of serving as the primary government representative in isolated communities, where individual Civil State Apparatus personnel often develop strong personal relationships with citizens and experience direct feedback on their impact.



### Comparative Analysis and Contextual Positioning

The current findings reveal similarities and necessary distinctions compared to urban public service studies. Urban studies typically find stronger correlations between efficiency metrics (speed, digital services) and satisfaction, while the present study demonstrates the primacy of relational factors (Mangrove & Widiyanto, 2019). This difference suggests that service quality hierarchies may vary systematically based on geographic and developmental contexts, with basic relational needs taking precedence over efficiency gains in resource-constrained environments.

The procedural complexity challenges identified in this study echo findings from other Indonesian public administration research, particularly regarding inter-agency coordination difficulties and regulatory fragmentation (Analia, 2021). However, the specific impacts of these challenges are amplified in archipelagic contexts where procedural failures result in disproportionately high costs for citizens who must travel significant distances for service access. This geographic amplification effect has received limited attention in existing literature, representing an essential contribution to understanding how context shapes administrative burden experiences.

The infrastructure constraints documented in this study align with broader research on digital divide impacts in developing countries, but reveal more nuanced patterns than typically reported. Rather than simple technology adoption resistance, the findings suggest sophisticated adaptation strategies where communities selectively embrace simple technologies (SMS, WhatsApp) while remaining skeptical of complex digital systems (online payments, document uploads). This selective adoption pattern challenges binary models of the digital divide and suggests the need for more graduated approaches to technology integration in public services. (Bryan & Clarke, 2019)

### Digital Transformation Challenges and Opportunities

The study reveals a complex digital landscape that defies simple categorization as "digital divide" or "digital readiness." The finding that 84.2% of community members express willingness to use SMS-based service updates, while only 49.2% are willing to attempt online document uploads, suggests that digital service development should follow a graduated approach that begins with simple, familiar technologies before advancing to more complex systems. This graduated digital adoption model has important implications for public service modernization strategies in similar contexts.

The generational differences in technology expectations (75% of 18-30 year-olds strongly expect digital services versus 0% of those over 50) create opportunities and challenges for inclusive service design. While younger generations can serve as technology adoption catalysts within their communities, service systems must accommodate multiple interaction preferences simultaneously to avoid excluding older or less technology-literate citizens (Crewe & Clark, 2017). The coexistence of high smartphone ownership (88.7%) with low routine internet access (57.9%) suggests infrastructure limitations rather than device availability as the primary barrier to digital service adoption.

Importantly, the relatively weak correlation between service innovation and community



satisfaction ( $r = 0.445$ ) should not be interpreted as community resistance to technological improvement, but rather as prioritization of reliability and accessibility over novelty. This finding suggests that innovation efforts should focus on improving core service functions rather than introducing entirely new service modalities until basic service quality is established.

#### Cultural Capital and Institutional Performance

Cultural factors' prominence in determining service satisfaction provides important insights into how indigenous social capital can enhance public administration effectiveness. The "Pela Gandong" concept's influence on service delivery demonstrates how traditional governance values can be successfully integrated into modern bureaucratic systems, creating competitive advantages that are difficult to replicate in contexts lacking similar cultural foundations (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2015).

However, this cultural integration also creates potential vulnerabilities. The heavy reliance on interpersonal relationships may lead to inconsistent service delivery if individual Civil State Apparatus personnel vary in their cultural competency or interpersonal skills. Additionally, relationship-centered service delivery may be difficult to scale or systematize, potentially creating challenges for standardization and quality control as service demands increase.

The cultural capital findings also raise important questions about equity and inclusion. While "Pela Gandong" values emphasize brotherhood and cooperation, they may operate differently for community members not fully integrated into local social networks, such as recent migrants or marginalized groups. Future research should examine whether cultural capital-based service delivery inadvertently creates exclusion mechanisms that disadvantage specific population segments.

#### Policy and Management Implications

The study suggests several policy interventions that could enhance service delivery effectiveness. The infrastructure constraint findings (mean score 4.14 as a performance influencer) indicate that basic connectivity and facility improvements should be immediate priorities. However, the weak correlation between innovation and satisfaction suggests that sophisticated technological solutions may be premature until basic service reliability is established.

The reward system inadequacies identified in the study (lowest factor score at 3.59) point to fundamental human resource management challenges that extend beyond local administrative capacity. Indonesia's centralized civil service management system may need greater flexibility to recognize and reward exceptional performance in challenging postings, particularly in remote areas where standard performance metrics may not fully capture service complexity and impact (Lubis, 2019).

The procedural complexity problems, while challenging to address locally, suggest the need for regulatory simplification initiatives that specifically account for archipelago service delivery challenges. The finding that citizens from outer islands concentrate multiple service needs into single visits (81.6% handle multiple needs per visit versus 34.3% for mainland residents) indicates that service bundling and one-stop service models could provide substantial efficiency



gains.

#### 4. Conclusion

This study evaluated Civil State Apparatus performance in West Kairatu Sub-district, West Seram Regency, Maluku Province, using a mixed-methods design with 37 Civil State Apparatus personnel and 57 community members to examine service delivery effectiveness in remote archipelagic contexts. Civil State Apparatus performance is generally good, with work precision as the primary strength (3.92, validated by 8.5% error rates), but significant innovation weaknesses (3.51, only two new procedures annually). Staff friendliness received the highest community appreciation (3.88) with the strongest correlation to overall satisfaction ( $r=0.734$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), reflecting successful "Pela Gandong" cultural value integration. However, procedural simplicity scored lowest (3.44), particularly for licensing services (business: 3.28; building permits: 3.38), confirming that procedural complexity, not staff quality, drives dissatisfaction.

Competency (4.16) and work motivation (4.11) emerged as key internal performance factors, while limited infrastructure (4.14) and weak reward systems (3.59) constitute primary external constraints. Geographic context transforms procedural complexity into access barriers—61.8% of island residents must consolidate services per visit versus 34.3% of mainland residents, due to substantial travel costs (Rp 150,000-250,000). Three root causes of procedural complexity emerged: central regulatory complexity (45%), inter-agency coordination failures (35%), and limited local staff capacity (28%).

The research advances public administration theory by developing an integrated contextual performance model demonstrating how geographical constraints, cultural assets, and technological limitations interact. The study introduces "cultural correlation analysis," showing how traditional social values enhance administrative effectiveness, documents "indigenous institutional capacity" where cultural frameworks serve as institutional assets, and establishes "archipelagic governance" as a distinct framework requiring specialized approaches.

Key recommendations include: (1) graduated digital modernization starting with simple technologies (SMS, WhatsApp); (2) regulatory simplification for archipelagic contexts; (3) inter-agency coordination protocols; (4) service bundling and mobile units for island communities; (5) differentiated performance metrics accounting for geographical complexity; (6) strengthened reward systems; and (7) systematic cultural competency training.

This study provides the first systematic evaluation of civil service performance in Indonesia's outer islands, offering baseline data and replicable frameworks for similar contexts. The findings demonstrate that cultural competency, procedural accessibility, and infrastructure investment may yield higher returns than technological modernization in resource-constrained environments, supporting "culturally-responsive public administration" that integrates local assets with universal principles. Future research should employ longitudinal designs, conduct comparative multi-site studies, and investigate potential exclusion mechanisms in cultural capital-based service delivery.



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