
Administrative Services Governance at Ministry Offices Religion of Palopo City

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Abstract : *This study aims to examine the governance of administrative services and the challenges faced by the Ministry of Religious Affairs Office in Palopo City. A qualitative approach with a case study design was employed. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation and analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model. The findings show that administrative service governance has implemented the principles of good governance through One-Stop Integrated Services (PTSP), Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), digital information systems, performance reporting, and complaint mechanisms. Transparency, accountability, effectiveness, responsiveness, and public participation have generally been implemented, although public participation remains limited primarily to complaints and suggestions. The implementation of administrative services is also supported by digital systems such as PUSAKA, SRIKANDI, Tasurdin, e-Kinerja, and electronic signatures. However, several challenges remain, including limited human resources, inadequate facilities and infrastructure, internet connectivity problems, coordination issues, public understanding of service procedures, regulatory changes, and budget constraints. The study concludes that strengthening human resource capacity, technological infrastructure, digital systems, and public participation mechanisms is necessary to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, transparency, and responsiveness of administrative services.*

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Introduction

Administrative service governance is a crucial element in the delivery of public services. Well-managed administration can support the creation of effective, efficient, transparent, and accountable services (Addink, 2019; Widanti, 2022). In government organizations, administration is not only concerned with managing letters and documents, but also encompasses information management,

task allocation, service mechanisms, supervision, resource utilization, and accountability to the public (Firdausijah & Priatna, 2020).

The Palopo City Ministry of Religious Affairs Office is one of the vertical agencies of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia that provides various services to the public (Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2025). These services include government administration, religious and religious education, Hajj and Umrah services, marriage services through the Religious Affairs Office, zakat and waqf services, personnel administration, and public information services. Carrying out these tasks requires administrative governance that is able to provide services accurately, quickly, openly, and in accordance with community needs (Mustikawati et al., 2024).

The issue of administrative service governance is crucial because public services are directly related to public needs. This study, based on initial conditions, identified various issues related to administrative services, including delays in the service process, differences in service flows for certain types of services, and suboptimal use of information technology (Anggraeni & Dian, 2024). The research paper also documented public complaints and public service evaluation results, which served as background information for the study.

From a Good Governance perspective, government administration must adhere to the principles of transparency, accountability, effectiveness, efficiency, responsiveness, and participation (Addink, 2019; Tethool et al., 2020). These principles are crucial because public service is not solely assessed based on the completion of administrative tasks, but also on information transparency, clarity of responsibilities, speed of service, responsiveness to complaints, and the space provided for the public to express their aspirations (Lionandiva & Triandi, 2022; Waheduzzaman & Khandaker, 2022).

In addition to Good Governance, this study uses the New Public Management (NPM) perspective to examine efficiency orientation, results achievement, user-oriented services, and service innovation (Istianto & Wahyurudhanto, 2023; Alkabi et al., 2024). This perspective is relevant to the state of administrative services, which have undergone transformation through the use of information technology (Anggraeni & Dian, 2024).

This study also uses the SERVQUAL service quality theory to examine service quality based on five dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy (Nursifa & Ekawati, 2024; Natsir et al., 2026). Using these three perspectives allows the study to examine service governance not only from the perspective of government procedures but also from the perspective of organizational performance and the quality of service received by the public.

Previous research has shown that governance and administrative service issues are also found in various government agencies. Research on technology-based public services indicates that the use of technology can support service efficiency, while research on good governance emphasizes the importance of transparency and accountability in improving the quality of public services (Tethool et al., 2020; Anggraeni & Dian, 2024). Research on services within the Ministry of Religious Affairs also shows that the use of information systems is a crucial part of supporting administrative management (Mustikawati et al., 2024).

However, research on administrative service governance specifically at the Palopo City Ministry of Religious Affairs Office is still needed because organizational characteristics, resource conditions, infrastructure, and community needs vary from region to region. Therefore, this study aims to provide an empirical overview of the implementation of administrative service governance at the Palopo City Ministry of Religious Affairs Office.

Based on the description, this research aims to: (1) determine the administrative service management system at the Palopo City Ministry of Religion Office; and (2) determine the challenges and obstacles in managing administrative services at the office. This problem formulation serves as the basis for directing the collection and analysis of research data.

From an Islamic perspective, administrative management is also linked to the principles of record-keeping, trustworthiness, and responsibility. Surah Al-Baqarah 2:282 emphasizes the importance of clear record-keeping in affairs. This principle is relevant to modern administration, which requires regular documentation, record-keeping, and information management.

Method

This research employed a qualitative approach with a case study approach. This approach was used to obtain an in-depth overview of the governance of administrative services at the Ministry of Religious Affairs Office in Palopo City. Case studies allow researchers to directly understand service phenomena within an organizational context based on information obtained from informants, observations, and documentation (Sugiyono, 2018; Tahrim, 2021).

The research was conducted at the Ministry of Religious Affairs Office in Palopo City. The research data consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through interviews and observations of parties involved in the provision of administrative services. Secondary data were obtained from office documents, reports, SOPs, organizational structures, service documentation, and literature related to administrative service governance (Sugiyono, 2018; Addink, 2019).

Informants were selected using purposive sampling, which is based on their knowledge and direct involvement in the implementation of administrative services. Informants included the Head of Office, Head of Administration Subdivision, administrative staff, information system operators, and service users. The use of several informant categories was intended to obtain information from both service providers and users (Sugiyono, 2018).

Data collection techniques included observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were used to directly observe the administrative service process, the condition of facilities and infrastructure, and employee activities in providing services. Interviews were used to obtain information on service governance, technology use, complaint mechanisms, and obstacles encountered (Sugiyono, 2018; Tahrim, 2021).

Documentation is used to supplement data through service documents, SOPs, organizational structures, performance systems, and other documentation. Data validity is carried out by examining the data obtained so that research findings can be accounted for. Data analysis uses the Miles and Huberman interactive model through three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions or verification. In the reduction stage, data related to the research focus is selected and simplified. The data is then presented systematically to identify relationships between findings. The final stage is drawing conclusions based on the results of data analysis and verification (Sugiyono, 2018; Addink, 2019).

Results and Discussion

Administrative Service Governance at the Ministry of Religion Office, Palopo City

1. Service Transparency

The research results show that transparency in administrative services has been implemented through the provision of information to the public. Service information is provided through the official social media channels of the Palopo City Ministry of Religious Affairs Office, such as Facebook and Instagram, as well as through WhatsApp groups. Additionally, the public can access information through the PUSAKA app.

The Head of the General Administration Sub-section explained:

"Now the government system is electronic, and the Ministry of Religious Affairs is no exception. So, our administration system now uses an app. Regarding public communication, we use tools like social media, as we have official social media platforms."

Transparency is also evident in the existence of standard operating procedures (SOPs) for each type of service. Services are centralized through the Integrated Service Provider (PTSP), allowing the public to receive prior guidance on the type of service and the responsible work unit. Each service also has a standard completion time, which serves as a benchmark for ensuring service assurance to the public.

Observations show that service information is available in the PTSP room via information boards, while officers provide direct explanations to the public. Thus, transparency is achieved not only through digital media but also through direct interaction between officers and service users.

However, the study found that information regarding service costs was not fully explained in the interview data. This indicates that transparency has been achieved in aspects such as procedures, time, and service information, but there is still room for increased transparency regarding all components of service information.

These findings align with the principles of Good Governance, which prioritize transparency as a crucial element in public services. Transparency provides the public with access to information about the procedures, requirements, timelines, and information related to the services they receive.

2. Service Accountability

Accountability in administrative services is demonstrated through task allocation, standard operating procedures (SOPs), a performance reporting system, and periodic evaluations. Each employee has a Work Order (SKP) as a basis for carrying out their duties. Work performance is also reported through the e-Kinerja application, providing documented evidence of implementation. An administrative staff member explained:

"All employees' duties are documented in their work schedules (SKP), so all tasks must be supported by evidence. Evidence of work is also reported electronically through e-Performance."

Furthermore, each service unit has its own SOP tailored to its specific service characteristics. Evaluations are conducted quarterly and annually. Supervision follows the organizational structure, while overall responsibility rests with the Head of Office.

These findings indicate that service accountability is not only achieved through administrative accountability but also through digital systems that allow for documentation of employee work. This aligns with the accountability principle of Good Governance, which requires clarity regarding who carries out tasks, how they are carried out, and how work results are accounted for.

3. Effectiveness and Efficiency of Services

Service effectiveness is achieved through the PTSP, which serves as the administrative service center. Applicants receive initial services through the PTSP. If technical assistance is required, they are then directed to the appropriate work unit.

The Head of the General Administration Sub-section explained:

"Every day we have a PTSP, from there we review individual matters to see whether there are administrative matters that can be resolved there or whether they require follow-up."

Service delivery is also supported by time standards. Employees are directed to complete services within the specified timeframe. Early completion can be recognized as an employee's achievement, while delays require evaluation.

However, service effectiveness is still affected by internet network disruptions, operator limitations, limited facilities, and budget constraints. These conditions demonstrate that the existence of sound procedures does not automatically guarantee effectiveness if supporting resources are inadequate.

From an NPM perspective, efficiency emphasizes the optimal use of resources. The implementation of One-Stop Integrated Service Delivery (PTSP) and digitalization demonstrate efforts to simplify administrative processes. However, limited staff, technological equipment, and internet access remain factors that impact service efficiency optimization.

4. Service Responsiveness

Responsiveness relates to employees' ability to respond to public needs, questions, and complaints. Research shows that employees have received training in handling public complaints. The organization also provides several complaint mechanisms.

The Head of the General Administration Sub-section explained:

"From the start, all employees are trained to handle public complaints. Ideally, when public complaints arise, the staff handling them should at least be able to provide solutions."

Complaint mechanisms are available through contact numbers, in-person office submissions, and the LAPOR channel. Complaints that can be resolved at the executive level will be handled directly, while policy-related issues will be escalated to the appropriate authorities.

These results indicate that responsive service delivery has been implemented through problem-solving mechanisms based on levels of authority. This finding aligns with the concept of good governance, which requires public organizations to respond to community needs appropriately and within their authority.

5. Community Participation

Public participation in administrative service management is demonstrated through the opportunity to submit criticism, suggestions, questions, and complaints. The public can submit complaints directly or use communication channels provided by the office.

Providing a complaint channel provides a platform for the public to participate in the service evaluation process. This way, the public is positioned not only as recipients of services but also as those who can provide input on service delivery.

However, research has yet to identify broader participation mechanisms in the form of regular public satisfaction surveys or public consultation forums that specifically involve the public in improving services. Therefore, existing participation still primarily involves submitting complaints rather than involving the public in service planning or decision-making.

These findings indicate that the principle of participation has been implemented, but can still be developed through more systematic mechanisms, such as satisfaction surveys, public consultation forums, and interactive digital media.

6. Utilization of Information Technology

The use of information technology is a crucial part of administrative service governance. Research results indicate the use of Tasurdin, SRIKANDI, Electronic Signatures, PUSAKA, and various information systems tailored to the needs of service units.

The administrative staff explained:

"The digitalization system for correspondence and archiving includes the Tasurdin electronic correspondence application, the Integrated Dynamic Archiving Information System (SRIKANDI), and Electronic Signatures (TTE)."

The use of technology simplifies document archiving and signing. Digitization also reduces previously manual processes, thus improving service efficiency. However, the implementation of technology still faces technical challenges. Systems can experience disruptions when used simultaneously. Furthermore, some computers and laptops are older and therefore not always capable of optimally supporting digital services.

Thus, digital transformation is underway, but its success is still heavily influenced by the quality of technological infrastructure. This finding aligns with research by Alkabi et al., which demonstrates the importance of combining management, innovation, and technology in improving the quality of public services.

7. Human Resources Quality

Human resources are a crucial element in administrative service governance. Research shows that employees work based on a division of tasks and organizational structure. Employees also receive training in handling public services and complaints.

However, the number of employees is still not commensurate with the workload. This limitation is particularly evident in the need for operators, religious leaders, and other technical personnel. As a result, some employees are required to perform tasks outside their core areas.

The Head of the General Administration Sub-section explained:

"Currently, the number of employees compared to actual work is still far from sufficient."

This condition shows that the quality of governance is not only influenced by the service system, but also by the adequacy of the number and competence of employees. Therefore, increasing competence through training and capacity development is an important need to support administrative services.

Challenges and Obstacles to Administrative Governance

1. Human Resource Limitations

Limited human resources are a major obstacle. The number of employees is not fully commensurate with the workload. This limitation can lead to one employee performing more than one task, increasing the workload.

In addition to the number of employees, the need for technological competency is also increasing along with the digitalization of services. Employees are required not only to understand administrative procedures but also to be able to use the information systems used in services.

2. Limited Facilities and Infrastructure

Technological infrastructure directly impacts service delivery. Some computers and laptops are outdated, while others rely heavily on them.

Administrative staff reported that frequent challenges include outdated computers or laptops and technical issues when accessing the system simultaneously. This situation demonstrates that digitalization must be accompanied by updates to supporting devices and infrastructure.

3. Internet Network Disruption

Internet connectivity is a crucial factor because many administrative processes use electronic systems. When the connection is disrupted, service delivery can be hampered.

The Head of the Administration Subdivision stated that internet connectivity is one of the main obstacles in implementing electronic-based services. In addition to the network, operator limitations also pose a barrier to managing the service system.

4. Service Management and Coordination

Service management is supported by standard operating procedures (SOPs), task allocation, and performance evaluation. However, some issues require cross-unit coordination or leadership decisions. This can lead to lengthy service resolution processes due to the need to follow different levels of authority.

Thus, organizational coordination needs to be continuously strengthened so that every service issue can be handled quickly without ignoring the existing authority structure.

5. Public Understanding of Procedures

Some people have obtained information through social media, the PUSAKA app, and PTSP. However, some service users still come without understanding the requirements or service flow.

This situation requires PTSP officers to re-explain the requirements and procedures. Therefore, information transparency must be accompanied by a communication strategy that is easily understood by all community groups.

6. Regulatory Changes

Administrative services in government agencies adhere to policies and regulations established by the central government. Changes in policy can lead to changes in service mechanisms, requiring employees to adjust.

The ability of an organization to adapt to regulations is important so that policy changes do not cause confusion in providing services to the public.

7. Budget Constraints

Budget constraints are another factor impacting service development. Equipment procurement, technology upgrades, staff capacity building, and digital system development require budgetary support.

The Head of the Administration Subdivision explained that as a government agency, program implementation must be aligned with the available budget. Therefore, service development needs to be based on the organization's priorities and needs.

Analysis Based on Good Governance, NPM, and SERVQUAL

The research findings show that the governance of administrative services at the Palopo City Ministry of Religion Office is related to the three theoretical perspectives used.

First, the Good Governance perspective shows that transparency has been implemented through information media, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), One-Stop Integrated Service Plans (PTSP), and service time standards. Accountability is evident in the SKP (Standard Operational Procedures), e-Performance, task allocation, and evaluation. Responsiveness is demonstrated through complaint and resolution mechanisms. Participation has been provided through communication and complaint channels, although it has not yet developed into broader participation.

Second, the NPM perspective demonstrates an orientation toward efficiency, results, fast service, and innovation. The PTSP simplifies service flows, while digital applications help reduce manual work. The SKP system and e-Kinerja demonstrate an orientation toward achieving results. However, limited human resources and infrastructure mean that efficiency is not yet optimal. These findings regarding the implementation of NPM and innovation align with research by Alkabi et al. (2024) on the relationship between NPM, innovation, and service quality in government organizations.

Third, the SERVQUAL perspective demonstrates that service quality can be measured through tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Tangible aspects are evident in the presence of the PTSP (Hospital-Owned Service Providers), service rooms, computers, networks, and information boards, although some equipment needs updating. Reliability is demonstrated through standard operating procedures (SOPs) and service time standards. Responsiveness is evident in the complaint mechanism. Assurance is supported by standard operating procedures (SOPs), the division of authority, and electronic documentation. Meanwhile, empathy is demonstrated through officers' efforts to provide direction and assist the public, although staffing limitations can limit personal attention to service users.

Thus, the research results show that administrative service governance does not rely solely on one aspect. Service success is influenced by the relationship between governance systems, performance management, service quality, human resources, and information technology.

Research Gap and Research Contribution

This study differs from previous studies because it integrates three perspectives, namely Good Governance, NPM, and SERVQUAL in analyzing the governance of administrative services at the Palopo City Ministry of Religion Office.

Previous research has generally focused on a single aspect of service delivery, such as transparency and accountability, information systems, or service quality. This study shows that digitalization of services through the Integrated Service Delivery System (PTSP) and various applications has provided support, but still faces challenges in the form of technological infrastructure, limited human resources, and system optimization.

On the other hand, internal coordination has been supported by SOPs and periodic evaluations. This illustrates that governance issues stem not only from procedures but also from the capacity of the resources available to implement them.

The contribution of this research lies in the empirical description of the relationship between governance, organizational performance, service quality, and digital transformation in the context of vertical institutions of the Ministry of Religion at the regional level.

Conclusion

The administrative services at the Palopo City Ministry of Religious Affairs Office have implemented the principles of good governance, including transparency, accountability, effectiveness, responsiveness, and participation. This implementation is supported by the Integrated Service Delivery System (PTSP), standard operating procedures (SOPs), a performance reporting system, a complaint mechanism, and the use of information technology through PUSAKA, SRIKANDI, Tasurdin, e-Kinerja, and electronic signatures.

Transparency is implemented through the provision of service information and digital media. Accountability is supported by SKP (Standard Service Units), e-Kinerja (E-Performance), task allocation, and evaluation. Effectiveness is supported by PTSP (One-Stop Integrated Service Providers) and service time standards. Responsiveness is demonstrated through complaint and problem-solving

mechanisms within authority. Meanwhile, public participation is available through communication and complaint channels, but has not yet fully developed in the form of satisfaction surveys or public consultation forums.

Governance challenges stem from both internal and external factors. Internal factors include limited human resources, facilities and infrastructure, information technology, and service coordination. External factors include public understanding of procedures, regulatory changes, budget constraints, and network and application system disruptions.

Based on these findings, improving the quality of administrative services can be directed at increasing the competence and number of employees, updating technological equipment, strengthening internet networks, optimizing digital systems, and enhancing public participation mechanisms. These steps can support more effective, efficient, transparent, accountable, and responsive service delivery.

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