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Optimizing Public Services to Achieve Good Governance

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Abstract: Public service is one of the main functions of the state in realizing the welfare of society. However, in practice, there are still problems of maladministration, such as discrimination against the community, prolonged delays, and illegal levies that burden the community. This situation clearly contradicts the principles of public service as stipulated in Article 4 letter l of Law Number 25 of 2009 concerning Public Services, namely the principles of speed, convenience, and affordability. The objective of this study is to analyze forms of maladministration that violate the principles of speed, convenience, and affordability, and the optimization of public services in realizing good governance. The method used is a normative juridical method, with a legislative and analytical approach. Research shows that maladministration of public services violates the principles of speed, convenience, and affordability, namely prolonged administrative delays, discrimination in service, and illegal fees. These practices violate Article 4 letter l of Law Number 25 of 2009 concerning Public Services. Synergy between internal and external oversight will strengthen the system of checks and balances in public services, including the role of the Ombudsman and public participation through easily accessible complaint channels. This study confirms that maladministration in public services, such as prolonged delays, discrimination, and illegal fees, is contrary to the principles of speed, convenience, and affordability as stipulated in Law No. 25 of 2009. To realize good governance, it is necessary to strengthen internal and external oversight.

Keywords: Administrative Malpractice, Public Services, Principles of Speed, Convenience, and Affordability

INTRODUCTION

Public service is one of the essential functions of the state in fulfilling the goals of the state as stipulated in the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, namely to protect the entire Indonesian nation, advance the general welfare, educate the nation, and participate in maintaining world order based on social justice. Therefore, public service is not merely understood as an administrative bureaucratic activity, but rather as a concrete manifestation of the state's presence in fulfilling the basic rights of citizens. The

quality of public service reflects the effectiveness of government administration and is a key indicator of the success of bureaucratic reform.

Good governance fundamentally requires the involvement of all stakeholders, including the bureaucracy within the government, the private sector as an extension of the government, and the public. Good governance is a government that is close to and protects the people, and in providing services that are aligned with their needs. The essence of good governance can be seen in the implementation of effective public services. This aligns with the spirit of decentralization and regional autonomy policies, which aim to provide flexibility to regions to regulate and manage their respective areas to improve public services (Rahmadana et al., 2020).

Efforts to improve the quality of public services have become a focus of attention at both the central and regional levels. However, regulatory differences between the central and regional governments often hinder the implementation of reforms. The primary goal of these reforms is to achieve good governance and better serve the public. Law Number 23 of 2014 has provided a strong legal framework for improving the quality of public services throughout Indonesia. The principle of decentralization allows regional governments the freedom to develop service innovations tailored to local conditions and community needs (Mendrofa et al., 2025).

However, in practice, the provision of public services in Indonesia still faces various serious problems that undermine public trust in government officials. One crucial issue is the continued prevalence of maladministration practices, such as discrimination in services, prolonged delays, procedural irregularities, and illegal levies that burden the public. Among state officials, there is still a perception that services are difficult, leading to the emergence of the notion that if it can be complicated, why make it easier; if it can be slowed down, why speed it up; state affairs cannot be resolved by us alone, and so on. Such mindsets and attitudes are certainly inconsistent (Bazarah et al., 2021). This phenomenon creates uncertainty, injustice, and inefficiency in service processes that should be simple and fast. Yet, Law Number 25 of 2009 concerning Public Services explicitly regulates the principles that underlie the provision of public services, including the principles of speed, convenience, and affordability, as stated in Article 4 letter 1. This provision implies that every public service agency is required to provide fast, uncomplicated, easily accessible, and affordable services without any form of discrimination. Slow administrative procedures and reliance on manual or traditional systems are common problems (Sahrudin, n.d.).

The fact that these principles have not been optimally implemented indicates a persistent gap between legal norms and service delivery practices. Bureaucracy, which should serve as an instrument of service delivery, often becomes a structural obstacle due to an inefficient work culture, low staff integrity, weak oversight, and a lack of innovation in the service system. Bureaucratic transformation is not only about organizational restructuring, but also touches on aspects of work culture, service values, leadership, and digital systems that integrate service processes from the central to the regional levels (Thasman et al., 2025). On the other hand, increasing public expectations for fast and high-quality public services in the digital era pose a challenge for the government to transform adaptively and responsively.

Within the framework of good governance, public services play a crucial role as an indicator of success. The transformation of public services has become increasingly urgent as advances in information technology have shifted the paradigm of the relationship between government and the public. The public now demands services that are not only fast, but also transparent, easily accessible, and digitally based. Governments, both at the central and regional levels, are required to shift their service orientation from rule-driven bureaucracy to service-oriented governance, where public satisfaction is the primary measure of successful service delivery. Implementing e-government systems, strengthening internal oversight

systems, improving staff competency, and ensuring public participation in the service process are strategic steps in optimizing effective and equitable public services (Farhanuddin et al., 2021).

Furthermore, optimizing public services cannot be separated from the role of external oversight institutions such as the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia, which functions to follow up on public reports of alleged maladministration. Based on Law Number 37 of 2008 concerning the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia, the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia is authorized to provide public services by state and government officials to the public. These state officials include the Judicial Institution, the Prosecutor's Office, the Police, the National Land Agency, Regional Governments, Departmental and Non-Departmental Agencies, State-Owned Enterprises (BUMN), and State Universities, as well as private entities and individuals whose budgets are wholly or partially funded by the State Budget (APBN/APBD). The existence of the Ombudsman is a crucial element in strengthening public service accountability. However, the effectiveness of this oversight institution depends heavily on political commitment, the integrity of the apparatus, and public awareness in fighting for their rights as citizens (Abbas & Lodan, 2020).

Therefore, this study aims to analyze various forms of maladministration that still occur in public services in Indonesia that violate the principles of speed, convenience, and affordability, and to formulate strategies for optimizing public services in realizing good governance. This study is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of public service concepts based on the values of social justice and utility, as well as provide practical recommendations for bureaucratic reform in Indonesia to be more adaptive, efficient, and oriented towards public welfare. Thus, efforts to optimize public services are not only a technical administrative issue, but also a moral, legal, and social issue that requires the commitment of all elements of state administrators. Public services that are just and transparent are the entry point for realizing clean and integrated governance—an important foundation in the nation's journey towards a government oriented towards people's welfare and the values of true good governance.

METHOD

This study uses a normative legal approach, which focuses on the analysis of laws, regulations, and legal principles related to the financial obligations and protection of healthcare professionals (Marzuki, 2019). The normative approach emphasizes the examination of relevant statutory provisions, legal doctrine, and jurisprudence to determine legal boundaries and responsibilities in managing financial risks within healthcare institutions (Mertokusumo, 2019). This study identifies public service practices that still suffer from maladministration, such as discrimination against the public, prolonged delays, and extortion that burden the public. This condition clearly contradicts the principles of public service as stipulated in Article 4 letter l of Law Number 25 of 2009.

This study comprehensively examines various forms of maladministration in the provision of public services in Indonesia that violate the principles of speed, convenience, and affordability as stipulated in Article 4 letter l of Law Number 25 of 2009 concerning Public Services. The main focus of this study lies in an effort to understand the gap between ideal legal norms and the practice of service delivery that often falls far short of public expectations. Although the government has committed to realizing the principles of good governance and improving the quality of public services, in reality, many discriminatory practices, prolonged delays, procedural deviations, and even illegal levies are still found that hinder public access to basic services.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of Forms of Maladministration That Violate the Principles of Speed, Ease, and Affordability

This study confirms that various forms of maladministration occurring in the provision of public services constitute a clear violation of the principles of speed, convenience, and affordability as stipulated in Article 4 letter l of Law Number 25 of 2009 concerning Public Services. This principle requires that every public service provider provide services efficiently, uncomplicatedly, easily accessible to the public, and affordably without burdening service users with unnecessary costs or procedures. However, in practice, these ideal principles are often ignored by bureaucratic officials, resulting in a disparity between legal norms and the reality of implementation. Implementing good governance practices can be done gradually according to the capacity of the government, civil society, and market mechanisms. One strategic option for implementing good governance in Indonesia is through the provision of public services. Public services serve as a benchmark for the success of task implementation and the measurement of government performance through the bureaucracy. Public services, as the primary driver, are also considered essential by all actors within the elements of good governance (Azan et al., 2021).

Through various efforts and actions, the public strives to provide criticism and suggestions for the implementation of good governance and also maximum public services. The existence of public participation in the supervision of public services is felt by the public to be very helpful in creating the implementation of quality public services and also accessible to all levels of society without discrimination from the government. In its implementation, maladministration is often clashed with criminal acts of corruption, even law enforcement itself still has difficulty distinguishing and proving acts of maladministration and corruption, because the difference between the two is very thin, even some maladministration is categorized as corruption (Fajar, 2019).

The first form of maladministration identified is unreasonable delay. This phenomenon occurs when public service processes are not completed within the stipulated or reasonable timeframe, either due to official negligence or inefficient bureaucratic procedures. Prolonged delays cause direct harm to the public, such as delays in permit issuance, delays in social assistance disbursement, or delays in population administration services. The principle of speed in public services requires that every service process be completed within the time standards stipulated in the service announcement. This situation demonstrates weak time management, low employee discipline, and suboptimal service monitoring and evaluation systems in many government agencies.

The second form is discrimination in public services, both direct and indirect. Discrimination occurs when people are treated unequally in obtaining services, for example, based on social status, economic status, political background, ethnicity, religion, or personal proximity to officials. Such practices clearly contradict the principle of convenience, which mandates that public services must be equally accessible to all levels of society without distinction. In this context, discrimination not only generates public dissatisfaction but also undermines the principles of justice and equality, the foundation of democratic public service. Poor service can result in the loss of opportunities to gain economic benefits (e.g., the opportunity to receive a salary). Similar to the concept of mismanagement, this social disadvantage remains unpopular. The public is sometimes unaware of the extent of the suffering caused by mismanagement (Rahmadhan et al., 2024).

The third most common form of extortion is illegal levies (pungli). Extortion is the imposition of fees in places where fees should not be charged or collected. The practice of illegal levies (pungli) is not new (Sonatra et al., 2019). The term "pungli" is widely known to the public as "salam tempel," "percin (grease money)," "sojokan uang," and several other

terms. Extortion results from interactions between the public and workers or officials, often revealing personal concerns. The practice of lying has undermined the principles of communal life in communities, nations, and ethnicities. The negative outcomes of this practice encourage efforts to be comprehensive, effective, and efficient and can have negative impacts on the parties involved (Aditiya et al., 2024). Extortion often occurs due to weak internal oversight systems, gaps in administrative procedures, and a culture of corruption that remains entrenched in some public service officials. This practice not only burdens the public economically but also violates the principle of affordability, which demands that public services be accessible at a reasonable cost and in accordance with regulations. Extortion erodes public trust in the government and reinforces the negative image of the bureaucracy as an institution that is corrupt, non-transparent, and not oriented towards the interests of the community.

From these forms of maladministration, it can be concluded that violations of the principles of speed, convenience, and affordability are not solely caused by individual factors of government officials, but also by structural and systemic factors. Structurally, service procedures that remain convoluted and unadaptive to technological developments hinder service efficiency. Culturally, the persistently strong bureaucratic mentality that positions the public as those in need, rather than those who should be served, slows down public service reform. Systemically, weak oversight mechanisms, minimal sanctions for perpetrators of maladministration, and low public participation in public service oversight exacerbate this situation.

This study also shows that Law Number 25 of 2009 provides a comprehensive legal framework for creating quality and equitable public services. However, the implementation of these legal norms has not been accompanied by strong enforcement of bureaucratic ethics and an effective oversight system. In this regard, the role of the Indonesian Ombudsman is crucial in ensuring that all forms of maladministration are identified and addressed through public complaints mechanisms. Strengthening the Ombudsman's function, increasing public legal literacy regarding their rights in public services, and reforming state apparatus management are crucial steps to prevent future maladministration practices. Firm and authoritative law enforcement is essential for legal life in Indonesia. Firmness and fairness in law enforcement create a sense of security and trust in the community. This builds confidence that the law applies to everyone and that any violations will be handled fairly and promptly. As a result, the public is more likely to comply with the law because they see that the law is effective and consistently applied (G. Putra & Lewoleba, 2024).

Thus, this study concludes that prolonged delays, discrimination, and extortion not only contradict the principles of speed, convenience, and affordability as stipulated in Law Number 25 of 2009, but are also major obstacles to the realization of good governance in Indonesia. Therefore, optimizing public services needs to be directed at improving the bureaucratic system to be efficient, transparent, and based on integrity and accountability, so that public services truly become a means of realizing public welfare and social justice, as envisioned by national law.

The role of the ombudsman in service delivery is crucial because it serves as an independent and objective representative of the public to handle complaints and issues related to public services. The following is a narrative about the importance of the ombudsman's role. Amidst the complex dynamics of modern society, public service delivery often faces challenges and difficulties that can impact the quality and fairness of services provided to the public. In this context, the presence of an ombudsman is very important as an independent control mechanism that is able to ensure accountability and transparency in the provision of services. The preventive role of the ombudsman is a very important aspect in maintaining the integrity and quality of public services, including proactive supervision of various

government institutions and agencies to ensure that public service processes run according to established standards (F. Putra et al., 2025).

Optimizing Public Services to Achieve Good Governance

Achieving fast, easy, and affordable public services as mandated by Law Number 25 of 2009 requires strategic and systematic steps that are not only administrative but also encompass institutional, cultural, and technological aspects. Public service reform cannot be implemented in isolation; it must be an integral part of the implementation of good governance, which emphasizes transparency, accountability, efficiency, and public participation.

1. Implementation of an Integrated Service System and Bureaucratic Digitalization

One of the most fundamental solutions to address protracted delays and improve bureaucratic efficiency is the implementation of an integrated service system based on information technology. A one-stop service model integrated between ministries, institutions, and local governments can reduce time and procedural steps that often contribute to delays. Digitizing the bureaucracy through the implementation of e-government not only accelerates administrative processes but also increases transparency and reduces the potential for illegal levies. The digital service system allows the public to track the status of applications, make payments electronically, and provide direct feedback on the quality of services received. Thus, bureaucratic digitalization is a key instrument in upholding the principles of speed and ease of public service. The bureaucracy can no longer position itself as an arrogant institution untouched by criticism from outside the bureaucracy. It needs to revitalize itself to provide services in a democratic, efficient, responsive, and non-partisan manner. Otherwise, the public will abandon the public, thereby failing to fulfill its mission of providing services to the public (Sunarya, 2018).

2. Improving Civil Service Competence and Integrity

Optimizing public services also depends heavily on the quality of human resources serving as service providers. State apparatus, as the primary implementers, must possess professional capacity, a service orientation, and high moral integrity. The government needs to strengthen a meritocracy-based recruitment system, prioritize continuous professional development, and reinforce ethical values in public service. The Human Resources Development and Personnel Agency (BKPSDM) is the institution responsible for managing civil servant resources in various regions. BKPSDM's role is crucial in ensuring the availability of qualified civil servants with competencies appropriate to the demands of public service. In the context of economics and public policy, sound human resource management not only impacts bureaucratic effectiveness but also the efficiency of budget allocation and government performance.

However, the challenges faced in human resource management in the government sector remain quite complex. Some of these include the low effectiveness of civil servant training, the inadequate use of information technology in personnel management, and the lack of incentive policies that can increase civil servant motivation. In some cases, human resource development policies in government agencies are still administrative in nature and not fully based on performance and the actual needs of the organization (Anggraeni et al., 2025). Furthermore, a fair and consistent reward and punishment system needs to be enforced to foster a results-oriented work culture. High-performing civil servants should be commended, while perpetrators of maladministration must be dealt with firmly in accordance with civil servant disciplinary regulations. This approach aligns with the spirit of bureaucratic reform, which places integrity as the primary foundation of public service.

3. Strengthening Public Oversight and Accountability Mechanisms

Effective oversight is a key element in preventing and prosecuting various forms of maladministration. In this context, oversight mechanisms must operate at two levels: internal and external. Internal oversight is carried out through the establishment of compliance units, public service audit systems, and strengthening the role of inspectorates general and regional oversight bodies. Meanwhile, external oversight should involve independent institutions such as the Indonesian Ombudsman, non-governmental organizations, and the mass media as a means of social control. Strengthening public participation in overseeing public services can be achieved through online complaint channels, public consultation forums, and periodic publications on service performance standards and achievements. By opening up space for public oversight, the accountability of public service providers will increase and the opportunity for irregularities can be minimized.

4. Simplifying Regulations and Standardizing Service Procedures

A classic problem that often leads to delays and discrimination in public services is overlapping regulations and inconsistent service standards across agencies. Therefore, the government needs to simplify regulations by eliminating irrelevant regulations, developing more operational service guidelines, and ensuring uniform Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) across all service units (Siahaya et al., 2024). Each agency is required to have a Service Information Sheet containing clear time, cost, and procedural standards, and to provide compensation for services that do not meet standards. This regulatory reform aligns with the principles of good regulatory governance, which emphasize legal efficiency and procedural certainty for the public.

5. Encouraging Public Participation in the Formulation and Evaluation of Public Services

The implementation of good governance positions not only the government as a service provider, but also the public as active partners in the public policy process. From a democratization perspective, public participation is considered the primary foundation of popular sovereignty (Sitorus, 2023). Public involvement is essential from the planning stage through to the evaluation of services to ensure that the resulting policies truly align with the needs and expectations of service users. Public hearing mechanisms, public satisfaction surveys, and user communication forums are effective participatory instruments for building a sense of ownership of public policies. Public participation also serves as a form of social oversight that promotes transparency and strengthens the government's moral legitimacy in the delivery of public services.

6. Integrating Good Governance Principles in Every Aspect of Service

Optimizing public services will not be achieved without the comprehensive application of good governance principles. Good governance involves all actions or behaviors that direct, control, or influence public affairs to realize good values in daily life (Nurhidayat, 2023). The principle of accountability ensures that every action of the apparatus is accountable, transparency ensures the openness of information to the public, responsiveness ensures prompt service to community needs, effectiveness and efficiency ensure optimal use of resources, and the rule of law affirms that every service policy must comply with applicable legal provisions. The integration of these principles will create an adaptive, clean, and just bureaucracy.

7. Developing a Humanistic and Equitable Service Culture

Optimizing public services is not only about procedural efficiency, but also about developing a service culture oriented toward humanity. Every civil servant must recognize that serving the public is a form of devotion, not power. Therefore, it is crucial to cultivate the values of empathy, equality, and social justice in every service interaction. Humanistic public services will strengthen public trust and foster social solidarity between the government and the community.

With these various strategies, it can be emphasized that optimizing public services is not merely an administrative agenda, but rather part of the transformation of the government system toward just, efficient, and transparent governance. This effort requires strong political commitment, cross-sector coordination, and moral awareness from all state officials. Only with fast, easy, and affordable public services—as mandated by Law Number 25 of 2009—can Indonesia realize the ideals of good governance oriented toward public welfare and social justice for all citizens. Public service is a key pillar in realizing the state's presence for all citizens and serves as a benchmark for the success of government administration oriented toward public welfare.

Bureaucratic transformation, one of which is the utilization of digital technology, strongly supports the implementation of good governance, which requires collaboration between three main pillars: government, the business world (private sector), and civil society. Good governance will be considered successful when a harmonious relationship has been established between these three pillars. Furthermore, the basic principles of good governance must also be met, such as participation, legal certainty, transparency, accountability, consensus-oriented, strategic vision, and effectiveness and efficiency (Kusmiyati et al., 2023). This research shows that the fundamental problem hindering the realization of quality public services in Indonesia is the continued prevalence of maladministration practices such as prolonged delays, discrimination in service delivery, and extortionate charges that burden the public. These practices clearly contradict the principles of speed, convenience, and affordability as stipulated in Article 4(1) of Law Number 25 of 2009 concerning Public Services and undermine the spirit of justice and the principles of good governance that underpin modern governance. Optimizing public services must be carried out through a comprehensive approach that encompasses institutional, technological, legal, and ethical dimensions of service. Possible strategies include:

1. Implementation of an integrated service system and bureaucratic digitization to accelerate administrative processes and reduce opportunities for irregularities;
2. Improving the competence and integrity of civil servants through human resource management reform and the implementation of a firm reward and sanction system;
3. Strengthening internal and external oversight mechanisms that involve the active participation of the Indonesian Ombudsman and the public;
4. Simplifying regulations and standardizing service procedures to create legal certainty and efficiency; and
5. Developing a service culture that is humanistic, participatory, and socially just.

Quality public services cannot be achieved solely through procedural improvements, but must be grounded in a moral, political, and legal commitment to placing the public at the center of all government activities. From a good governance perspective, fast, easy, and affordable public services are a key instrument in upholding the principles of accountability, transparency, efficiency, and the rule of law. Implementing these principles will create a government that is responsive to the needs of the people and strengthen the state's social legitimacy in the eyes of the public. Therefore, this research confirms that optimizing public services is a strategic step towards clean, effective, and equitable governance. Public services oriented toward the principles of speed, ease, and affordability not only fulfill positive legal requirements but also manifest the fundamental values of Pancasila and the constitutional mandate to achieve general welfare.

Therefore, public service reform must continue to be pursued as a sustainable national agenda to create a bureaucratic system that is adaptive, trustworthy, and pro-people interests.

Consequently, strengthening the oversight system, both internal and external, is necessary through more integrated and transparent legal instruments, institutions, and

evaluation mechanisms. This strengthening is not merely technocratic in nature, but must also be accompanied by cultural reform within the bureaucracy so that every official understands the oversight function as part of an ethical and moral responsibility, not merely an administrative one. Internal oversight needs to be directed towards building multi-layered and preventative control mechanisms, for example through a digital-based reporting system, regular performance audits, and increasing the capacity of the Government Internal Oversight Apparatus (APIP) to detect and take action against potential irregularities early on.

Conversely, external oversight involving independent institutions such as the Ombudsman, civil society, and the mass media needs to be strengthened within a framework of checks and balances to ensure transparency and public participation in service delivery. Public complaints mechanisms must be easily accessible, promptly acted upon, and have a tangible corrective effect on policies and official behavior that do not align with public service standards. Furthermore, the involvement of academics and research institutions also plays a crucial role in providing evidence-based policy recommendations for continuous improvement of the oversight system. Strengthening the oversight system must be directed at creating accountability for the performance of state officials, where every action, decision, and policy taken can be legally, administratively, and morally accounted for. This accountability is the foundation for improving the quality of public services, not only prioritizing procedural efficiency but also ensuring substantive justice for the public as service recipients. Therefore, transparency, accountability, and integrity must be the three main pillars in building an oversight system oriented toward the public interest.

Oversight reform is not merely an effort to improve the administrative system, but also a fundamental prerequisite for building good governance. This reform must position oversight as a controlling instrument and a driver of bureaucratic innovation toward effective, efficient, and equitable public services. The implementation of comprehensive and participatory oversight will strengthen the legitimacy of a democratic, rule-of-law state and encourage the realization of public welfare as the ultimate goal of governance. In this way, the state exists not only as a regulator, but also as a protector and servant of all citizens.

CONCLUSION

Based on this research, it is known that maladministration practices in public services, including prolonged delays, discrimination, and extortion, constitute violations of the principles of speed, convenience, and affordability as stipulated in Law Number 25 of 2009 concerning Public Services. These violations not only reflect weak bureaucratic governance but also indicate the suboptimal implementation of good governance principles in the provision of public services. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the oversight system, both internal and external, through legal instruments, institutions, and evaluation mechanisms that are more integrated and transparent. This strengthening must be directed at creating accountability for the performance of the apparatus, improving the quality of service, and ensuring the fulfillment of the rights of the community as recipients of public services. Thus, oversight reform is a fundamental prerequisite for realizing effective, efficient, and equitable public services in accordance with the principles of a democratic state based on the rule of law and oriented towards the welfare of the people.

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