

Beyond administrative compliance: optimizing village apparatus performance for responsive public service delivery

Gede Budi Widiawan*, Kadek Dede Junaedy, Made Artayasa

Universitas Ngurah Rai, Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia

*Correspondence author: gedebudi26@gmail.com

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.65881/integration.v2i1.201>

ARTICLE INFO

History:

Received: 09-13-2026

Revised: 09-17-2026

Accepted: 09-18-2026

Published: 09-24-2026

Keywords:

village apparatus
performance;
public service;
service optimization;
digitalization;
new public service.

ABSTRACT

Purpose: to analyze the performance of village apparatuses in optimizing public service delivery in Batubulan Kangin Village and to identify the key factors influencing such performance.

Method: this study employed a descriptive qualitative approach using interviews, observations, and documentation. Data were analyzed using Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña's interactive model and Mangkunegara's performance indicators.

Findings: village apparatus performance is generally good but not yet optimal. Key strengths include clear task allocation, SOP implementation, internal coordination, and responsive service. However, improvements are needed in document accuracy, service-time consistency, public information, queue management, complaint handling, digital competence, and technological infrastructure.

Implications: optimizing village public services requires strengthening apparatus competence, service discipline, information transparency, digital capacity, and supporting infrastructure to ensure more accurate, responsive, and consistent service delivery.

Originality: lies in integrating Mangkunegara's performance framework with five operational factors; competence, discipline, facilities, communication, and service procedures; to explain the optimization of village apparatus performance beyond administrative compliance.



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Introduction

Public service delivery at the village level represents one of the most immediate points of interaction between citizens and the state (Zulfachry & Rachmat, 2026). At this level, government performance is experienced directly through everyday administrative services, including population administration, correspondence, social facilitation, and other forms of assistance required by local communities (Shen et al., 2023). The quality of these services therefore extends beyond the successful completion of administrative

procedures; it also shapes citizens' perceptions of government legitimacy, accountability, responsiveness, and professionalism (Bokhari et al., 2025). From the perspective of the New Public Service, public officials are expected to serve citizens and promote the public interest rather than merely process citizens as administrative customers (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2015). This orientation is consistent with Law No. 25 of 2009 on Public Services, which emphasizes legal certainty, transparency, accountability, timeliness, accessibility, and equal treatment as essential principles of public service delivery. At the village level, these principles have become increasingly important following Law No. 6 of 2014 on Villages, as amended by Law No. 3 of 2024, which reinforces the role of village governments as public institutions responsible for administering government affairs and serving local communities. Consequently, the capacity and performance of village apparatuses constitute a critical determinant of whether public service principles are translated into citizens' actual experiences (Maulidia et al., 2026).

The importance of village apparatus performance becomes particularly evident because administrative compliance alone does not necessarily guarantee responsive and high-quality service delivery (Rahmadhani & Khumayah, 2026). An apparatus may complete administrative tasks while citizens continue to encounter delays, inconsistent information, unclear procedures, limited access to service information, or inadequate communication (Ducman et al., 2025). In this regard, service performance should be understood not only in terms of whether an administrative output is produced, but also in terms of its quality, timeliness, accuracy, responsiveness, and accountability. Previous studies demonstrate that the quality of village public services remains closely associated with the competence and responsiveness of apparatuses, the reliability of procedures, the adequacy of facilities, and the quality of interaction with citizens. Wibowo & Mursyidah (2022), for example, identify tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy as important dimensions in assessing village government service quality. Similar concerns are reported by Utami & Mursyidah (2024); Anggraeni & Mursyidah (2025); and Mulyaningsih & Rahmaningtyas (2025), who emphasize the importance of service speed, information accuracy, service facilities, and the attitude of village personnel in shaping citizens' experiences.

The empirical literature further indicates that the performance of village apparatuses cannot be separated from their individual capabilities and work behavior. Ainiha & Prakoso (2023) found that limitations in technological knowledge, initiative, responsibility, and discipline can constrain the implementation of village apparatus performance in public services. Aminuddin et al. (2022) similarly identified capacity and discipline as important issues in evaluating village apparatus performance. Rosandy & Rodiyah (2022) and Khirom & Mursyidah (2024) demonstrate that productivity, service quality, timeliness, and accountability are important elements in assessing village apparatus performance, particularly in population administration services. Wulansari et al. (2024) further show that the effectiveness of village apparatus performance is influenced by ability, motivation, organizational support, and government policy. The relationship between apparatus performance and citizens' satisfaction has also been demonstrated by Khatimah et al. (2021), while Nawawi (2019) emphasizes that the quality of village government personnel is an important foundation for strengthening village governmental capacity. These findings suggest that improving public service delivery requires more than procedural compliance; it requires the development of apparatus performance as an integrated organizational and human-resource capability.

Another important dimension of contemporary village public service delivery is technological transformation. Digitalization provides opportunities to improve administrative efficiency, information accessibility, transparency, and service accuracy, but its effectiveness depends substantially on the readiness of village apparatuses and supporting infrastructure (Geohansa et al., 2025). Hulu et al. (2023) demonstrate that the utilization of technology and administrative applications can accelerate public services. However, its benefits remain dependent on apparatus capability and the availability of adequate support systems. Similar evidence is provided by Hayati et al. (2023); Hanasi (2025); and Fauziah et al. (2025), who show that digitalization can improve administrative organization, access to services, and information provision when accompanied by appropriate capacity development and infrastructure. More recently, Nursaleh et al. (2026) found that digitalization contributes positively to the speed, accuracy, accessibility, and transparency of village public services. Nevertheless, digital transformation should not be interpreted merely as the introduction of technological applications. Lumbanraja (2020) emphasizes that digital transformation requires corresponding improvements in digital literacy, institutional arrangements, and public-service governance. Thus, technological adoption may generate limited benefits when village apparatuses do not possess sufficient competencies to operate and integrate digital systems into everyday service processes.

In addition to individual competence and technology, the quality of village public services is shaped by organizational governance, communication, coordination, and collaboration. Azizah et al. (2025) highlight the importance of supervision, service ethics, community participation, and collaboration among stakeholders in addressing service pathologies. Mozin & Isa (2023) emphasize apparatus professionalism as a prerequisite for effective village service governance, while Tuaputimain & Palijama (2024) identify human-resource limitations, infrastructure constraints, and coordination problems as persistent barriers to service delivery. Communication is likewise central to responsive public service. Zulmasyhur et al. (2024) demonstrate the importance of effective communication in clarifying service information and strengthening the responsiveness of village apparatuses. Meanwhile, Rapita et al. (2020) show that assistance in utilizing village websites can strengthen the capacity of village apparatuses to provide more accessible and transparent service information. At the institutional level, Muchtar et al. (2024) demonstrate the interrelationship between village government management and apparatus performance in determining the effectiveness of village programs. Taken together, these studies indicate that village service performance is multidimensional and influenced by the interaction of human resources, organizational practices, facilities, communication, technology, and governance mechanisms.

These conditions are also relevant to the empirical context of Batubulan Kangin Village, Sukawati District, Gianyar Regency. The village has relatively intensive public service activities and faces increasingly diverse demands from its community. Preliminary observations and research data indicate several service-related issues, including the limited dissemination of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to citizens, the possibility of errors in recording information on administrative documents, variations in service completion times, temporary queues during certain periods, limitations in information-technology support, and the need to strengthen the digital competencies of village apparatuses. These conditions indicate that the central challenge is not simply whether services are administratively provided, but whether the existing apparatus performance is sufficiently consistent, accurate, responsive, and adaptive to

changing public needs. At the same time, the village has several positive practices, including hierarchical verification of administrative documents, division of responsibilities, coordination among apparatuses, relatively friendly and responsive service behavior, and a commitment to providing services without illegal charges. The coexistence of these strengths and weaknesses makes Batubulan Kangin Village an important context for examining how village apparatus performance can be optimized beyond basic administrative compliance.

Although previous studies have extensively examined village public services from the perspectives of service quality, apparatus performance, digitalization, communication, governance, and organizational effectiveness, an analytical gap remains. Much of the existing literature tends to examine these dimensions separately, for example, service quality as a measure of citizens' experiences, digitalization as a technological intervention, or apparatus performance as an organizational outcome. Fewer studies simultaneously connect the core dimensions of apparatus performance with the operational factors that shape the day-to-day delivery of village services. This study addresses this gap by placing village apparatus performance at the center of analysis and examining it through four performance indicators derived from Mangkunegara (2021): work quality, work quantity, task implementation, and responsibility. These performance dimensions are then examined in relation to five operational factors identified from the empirical context: apparatus competence, work discipline, service facilities, service communication, and the implementation of service procedures. This integrated perspective enables the study to move beyond the question of whether village services are functioning and instead examine why performance remains suboptimal, how operational conditions influence performance, and which aspects require strengthening.

The novelty of this study therefore lies in its integrated analytical approach to village apparatus performance and public service delivery. Rather than treating service quality, human-resource capacity, digitalization, communication, facilities, and procedures as independent issues, the study brings these dimensions together to explain the conditions under which village apparatuses can deliver services that are accurate, timely, responsive, accountable, and accessible. The study also extends the application of Mangkunegara's (2021) performance framework to the specific context of village-level public service delivery, where administrative work is characterized by close interaction with citizens, relatively limited organizational resources, and increasing demands for digital and transparent services. In this respect, the study contributes to filling the empirical and analytical gap between the assessment of individual apparatus performance and the operational realities of village public service delivery.

Theoretically, this study is grounded in the New Public Service perspective, which views public administration as a process of serving citizens and advancing the public interest rather than merely steering or controlling administrative processes (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2015). This perspective provides an important conceptual basis for understanding responsiveness, accountability, communication, and citizen-oriented service as integral elements of village governance. The perspective is complemented by Mangkunegara's (2021) framework of employee performance, particularly the dimensions of work quality, work quantity, task implementation, and responsibility. The combination of these perspectives allows performance to be examined not simply as an internal organizational output but as a capability that directly affects the quality and responsiveness of services experienced by citizens. The study consequently positions

apparatus performance as a bridge between internal administrative capacity and the realization of citizen-oriented public service principles.

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the optimization of village apparatus performance in improving public service delivery in Batubulan Kangin Village and to identify the factors that influence such performance. The analysis focuses on how competence, discipline, service facilities, communication, and service procedures interact with the quality, quantity, implementation of tasks, and responsibility of village apparatuses. The study is important because strengthening village public services requires an understanding of the operational conditions underlying performance rather than merely evaluating whether administrative procedures have been completed. Identifying these conditions can provide a more practical basis for improving administrative accuracy, consistency in SOP implementation, queue management, apparatus professionalism, information transparency, digital service capacity, and citizen complaint mechanisms.

The expected contribution of this study is both theoretical and practical. Theoretically, it contributes to the public administration literature by extending the application of the New Public Service perspective and Mangkunegara's performance framework to the empirical setting of village-level public services and by connecting apparatus performance indicators with concrete operational determinants of service delivery. Empirically, the study provides evidence concerning the interaction between apparatus capacity and the everyday realities of village administration in Batubulan Kangin Village. Practically, the findings are expected to provide a basis for village government evaluation and improvement by identifying priority areas for strengthening apparatus competence, work discipline, administrative accuracy, SOP transparency, service communication, technological utilization, service facilities, and mechanisms for citizen feedback and complaints. Ultimately, the study seeks to demonstrate that optimizing village public service is not merely a matter of achieving administrative compliance, but of developing an apparatus capable of delivering public services that are consistently accurate, timely, transparent, responsive, and oriented toward the needs of citizens.

Method

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research approach to examine the empirical conditions of village apparatus performance in the delivery of public services. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the study sought to understand service processes, interactions between village apparatuses and citizens, users' experiences, organizational practices, operational constraints, and strategies for optimizing performance, dimensions that cannot be adequately captured through statistical measures alone (Moleong, 2021). The research was conducted at the Office of the Village Head (Perbekel) of Batubulan Kangin Village, Sukawati District, Gianyar Regency, Bali. The research setting was selected because the village provides various administrative and public services that involve direct interaction between village apparatuses and community members, thereby providing an appropriate context for examining the relationship between apparatus performance and service delivery.

The study utilized both primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained directly from individuals who were involved in, or had experience with, the delivery and receipt of public services in Batubulan Kangin Village. The informants included the Village Head (Perbekel), Village Secretary, village apparatuses, heads of administrative divisions or sections, and community members who had utilized village public services.

Informants were selected purposively based on their involvement, experience, knowledge, and ability to provide relevant information concerning the implementation and performance of village public services. This purposive selection enabled the study to obtain information from both service providers and service users and to capture different perspectives on the implementation of public services.

Secondary data were obtained from relevant documentary sources, including the village profile, organizational structure, public service documents, applicable regulations, village government administration reports, service-related records, and other administrative documents relevant to the research objectives. The use of secondary data served to complement the information obtained from interviews and observations and provided documentary evidence for interpreting the empirical conditions of village apparatus performance. Data were collected through three complementary techniques: observation, semi-structured in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observation was conducted to examine the actual implementation of public services, including service procedures and flows, interactions between apparatuses and citizens, staff behavior, service facilities, waiting conditions, and the utilization of supporting technologies. Particular attention was given to situations that could illustrate the consistency between established procedures and actual service practices.

Semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with selected informants to explore their experiences, perceptions, and assessments of public service delivery. The interviews addressed several aspects relevant to apparatus performance, including the implementation and dissemination of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), administrative accuracy, service timeliness, division of responsibilities, task implementation, accountability, citizen complaints, digital competence, work discipline, communication, and technical or organizational constraints. The semi-structured format provided sufficient direction to ensure consistency across interviews while allowing informants to elaborate on issues arising from their individual experiences. Documentation was used as a complementary data collection technique to verify and strengthen information obtained through observation and interviews. Relevant documents included organizational structures, administrative and service records, applicable regulations, village government reports, and documentary evidence of service activities. The combination of observation, interviews, and documentation enabled the researcher to examine the phenomenon from multiple sources and to reduce reliance on a single form of evidence.

Data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles et al. (2020), consisting of data collection, data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Data collection and analysis were conducted interactively throughout the research process rather than as completely separate stages. During data condensation, information obtained from interviews, observations, and documents was selected, organized, coded, and grouped according to its relevance to the research questions. Data were then displayed thematically to identify patterns, relationships, similarities, and differences among the findings. The final stage involved drawing conclusions and continuously verifying them against the available empirical evidence to ensure that the interpretations remained grounded in the data.

The analytical process was centered on four indicators of employee performance derived from Mangkunegara (2021), namely work quality, work quantity, task implementation, and responsibility. These four dimensions were used as the primary analytical framework for assessing the performance of village apparatuses in public

service delivery. The findings related to these performance dimensions were subsequently interpreted in conjunction with five contextual factors identified from the empirical setting: apparatus competence, work discipline, service facilities, service communication, and service procedures. This analytical approach enabled the study to examine not only the extent to which village apparatuses performed their responsibilities but also the operational conditions that supported or constrained such performance.

The trustworthiness of the findings was strengthened through source and technique triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from different categories of informants, particularly village government officials, village apparatuses, and community members as service users. Technique triangulation was conducted by comparing findings derived from interviews, observations, and documentary evidence. When discrepancies occurred, the researcher examined the relevant evidence across sources and techniques before concluding. This process was intended to ensure that the findings represented the empirical conditions of public service delivery as comprehensively as possible and were not based solely on the perceptions of a particular group of informants. Through this methodological design, the study sought to produce an in-depth and contextually grounded account of village apparatus performance in Batubulan Kangin Village. The integration of multiple data sources, interactive qualitative analysis, triangulation, and the Mangkunegara (2021) performance framework provided a systematic basis for identifying existing performance conditions, operational constraints, and opportunities for optimizing village public service delivery.

Results and discussion

The findings indicate that the performance of village apparatuses in Batubulan Kangin Village is generally functioning well, but has not yet reached an optimal level. The existing service system is supported by Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), a relatively clear division of responsibilities, internal coordination, hierarchical document verification, and generally friendly and responsive interactions between village apparatuses and citizens. These practices indicate that the village government has established a basic organizational and procedural foundation for delivering administrative services. However, several aspects still require improvement, particularly the public dissemination of service information, document accuracy, consistency in service completion times, queue management, professional conduct during service hours, the management of citizen complaints, digital literacy, and information-technology infrastructure. The overall findings are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1 summary of findings on village apparatus performance

Indicator	Main findings	Priority areas for optimization
Work quality	SOPs and hierarchical verification have been implemented; services are generally clear and responsive. However, document errors, variations in completion time, and limited dissemination of service information are still identified.	Strengthen final document verification, publicly disseminate SOPs and service standards, and establish clearer service completion standards.
Work quantity	Three main service officers and flexible task allocation are generally adequate under normal conditions, but waiting times increase when the number of applicants rises.	Conduct periodic workload analysis, strengthen cross-functional capabilities, prepare substitute personnel, and improve queue management.

Indicator	Main findings	Priority areas for optimization
Task implementation	Task allocation and internal coordination are relatively clear, and apparatuses are generally responsive. However, professional consistency and complaint handling are not yet systematic.	Strengthen service discipline and professionalism and establish an accessible and documented complaint-management mechanism.
Responsibility	Services are relatively transparent, and no reports of unofficial charges were identified. However, service continuity remains dependent on the availability of particular personnel and technological resources.	Strengthen digital competence, infrastructure reliability, and institutionalized mechanisms for service continuity.

Source: primary data, processed (2026).

As shown in Table 1, the four performance dimensions proposed by Mangkunegara (2021), work quality, work quantity, task implementation, and responsibility, provide a useful framework for identifying both the strengths and limitations of village apparatus performance. The findings also demonstrate that these dimensions are interconnected with the operational conditions of service delivery. Competence, work discipline, facilities, communication, and service procedures do not function as isolated factors; rather, they jointly shape the ability of village apparatuses to provide consistent and responsive services. This finding is consistent with the New Public Service perspective, which emphasizes that public administration should be oriented toward serving citizens and the public interest rather than merely completing administrative tasks (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2015). Thus, the optimization of village apparatus performance needs to be understood as an effort to strengthen both administrative effectiveness and citizen-oriented service delivery.

Work quality

Work quality concerns the accuracy, reliability, clarity, and timeliness of the outputs produced by village apparatuses. In this study, work quality was examined through the implementation of SOPs, document accuracy, the provision of service information, and the timeliness of service completion. The findings show that SOPs have been used internally as an important reference in delivering administrative services. In general, the service process begins with checking the completeness of requirements, verifying applicant data, processing the requested document, and conducting further examination by the authorized official before the document is released to the applicant. Community members generally perceived the service process as orderly and relatively straightforward.

The implementation of SOPs represents an important strength because it provides a procedural basis for maintaining consistency and controlling service quality. However, the findings also reveal a distinction between internal procedural compliance and external procedural transparency. Although village apparatuses use SOPs in carrying out their duties, information concerning requirements, service flows, and service standards has not yet been disseminated optimally to citizens. Some informants expected the village government to provide more active information through social media, notice boards, village websites, or other accessible information channels. This finding is important from the perspective of the New Public Service because citizens should not merely be recipients of administrative outputs; they should have sufficient information to participate effectively in and understand the service process (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2015).

The finding is consistent with Rapita et al. (2020), who demonstrated that the utilization of village websites can expand access to public service information and strengthen the capacity of village governments to communicate service standards. Similarly, Zulmasyhur et al. (2024) emphasize that effective communication is important for clarifying information and reducing misunderstandings between service providers and citizens. Therefore, the quality of an SOP should not be assessed solely by whether village officials comply with it internally. Its effectiveness also depends on whether citizens can understand the requirements, procedures, estimated completion times, and mechanisms for obtaining assistance or submitting complaints.

Document accuracy constitutes another important dimension of work quality. The study found that the village has implemented layered verification to reduce administrative errors. Nevertheless, one community member reported having received a Family Card containing incorrect information and subsequently having to repeat the administrative process. Although this represents an isolated experience within the findings, it demonstrates that layered verification does not completely eliminate the possibility of human error. From Mangkunegara's (2021) perspective, work quality involves the accuracy and quality of work results. Accordingly, the final verification stage should function as a stronger quality-control mechanism, particularly before documents are handed over to citizens.

This finding is consistent with Khirom & Mursyidah (2024), who emphasize the importance of accuracy, productivity, and accountability in assessing the performance of village apparatuses in population administration services. It also reinforces the argument that administrative quality cannot be measured only by the completion of a document. A document that is completed quickly but contains incorrect information may generate additional costs, time, and inconvenience for citizens. Therefore, optimization should focus on reducing errors at the source rather than merely accelerating document processing. Service completion time represents another issue within the quality dimension. The findings indicate that some administrative services can be completed in less than one hour, whereas services such as birth certificates may require approximately one to two days. Under conditions of increased demand, some citizens reported waiting for approximately three hours. These findings suggest that village services are generally responsive under normal conditions, but service completion times are not yet sufficiently standardized across different types of services and workload conditions.

This issue corresponds with Wibowo & Mursyidah (2022); Utami & Mursyidah (2024); and Mulyaningsih & Rahmaningtyas (2025), who identify speed and responsiveness as important dimensions of public service quality. However, the findings of this study indicate that improving speed should not simply mean reducing processing time. More importantly, citizens need predictability concerning when their service will be completed. Therefore, the village government should establish and publicly communicate realistic service completion standards for different types of administrative services, while also providing information when a service requires additional processing time. Overall, work quality in Batubulan Kangin Village can be characterized as functionally adequate but requiring stronger consistency and transparency. The main optimization priorities are strengthening final document verification, establishing clearer service-time standards, and actively disseminating SOPs and service information through both digital and non-digital channels.

Work quantity

Work quantity refers to the capacity of village apparatuses to complete the volume of work within available time and organizational resources. The findings show that administrative services in Batubulan Kangin Village are primarily supported by three main service officers, with responsibilities distributed according to their respective functions. Under normal service conditions, this arrangement is considered sufficient to handle the routine volume of administrative requests. The flexibility of the apparatuses in assisting one another when a particular service unit experiences increased demand is an important organizational strength. The findings demonstrate that work quantity should not be interpreted merely as the number of documents processed or the number of personnel available. In the village context, the ability to maintain service continuity depends on the relationship between the volume of applicants, the complexity of administrative tasks, staff competencies, technological resources, and the availability of personnel who can provide temporary support. The presence of flexible coordination allows the village government to absorb moderate fluctuations in workload without immediately requiring additional personnel.

This finding is consistent with Ainiha & Prakoso (2023), who identify competence, initiative, responsibility, and discipline as factors influencing the implementation of village apparatus performance. Aminuddin et al. (2022) similarly emphasize the importance of capacity and discipline in public service performance. Wulansari et al. (2024) further demonstrate that apparatus effectiveness is influenced by ability and organizational support. These findings suggest that increasing work quantity does not necessarily require increasing the number of personnel. In certain circumstances, performance can first be improved through better workload distribution, cross-functional competence, scheduling, and organizational support. Nevertheless, the occurrence of waiting times of approximately three hours during periods of increased demand indicates that the existing capacity has a threshold. This finding is important because an organizational arrangement that performs adequately under normal conditions may become less effective during peak periods. Therefore, workload adequacy should be assessed dynamically rather than based solely on the normal number of applicants.

A more systematic workload analysis would allow the village government to identify peak service periods, types of services that generate the highest workload, tasks that require specialized competence, and functions that can be temporarily supported by other apparatuses. The preparation of substitute personnel is also important to reduce dependence on particular individuals. Such arrangements would strengthen organizational resilience while maintaining the principle that each apparatus continues to operate within its authority and competence. Work quantity is also closely related to service facilities and technology. Computers, printers, administrative applications, and internet connectivity directly affect the number of administrative tasks that can be processed within a given period. When internet connectivity is unstable, or equipment is inadequate, the productive capacity of the apparatuses may decline even when the personnel themselves are available and competent. This finding supports Hulu et al. (2023); Hayati et al. (2023); and Hanasi (2025), who demonstrate that technology can accelerate village public services when accompanied by adequate infrastructure and human-resource capacity. Thus, optimization of work quantity in Batubulan Kangin Village should emphasize workload management rather than simply personnel expansion. Periodic workload mapping, cross-functional capacity development, peak-

hour staffing arrangements, substitute personnel, and reliable technological infrastructure can help maintain service productivity when demand fluctuates.

Task implementation

Task implementation concerns the extent to which village apparatuses understand and perform their duties according to their responsibilities, established procedures, coordination mechanisms, and professional service standards. The findings indicate that the division of tasks in Batubulan Kangin Village is relatively clear. The Perbekel, Village Secretary, and other apparatuses understand their respective responsibilities, while community members can generally identify where they should obtain assistance for different types of administrative services. Clear task allocation contributes to organizational coordination and reduces overlapping responsibilities. This is particularly important because some village services require the involvement of more than one official. The existence of document checking and authorization before completion indicates that the village government has an internal control mechanism. The apparatuses were also generally perceived as polite and responsive when explaining administrative requirements and procedures to citizens.

These findings support Mozin & Isa (2023), who emphasize professionalism as an important prerequisite for effective village public service governance. They also correspond with Rosandy & Rodiyah (2022), who identify service quality and timeliness as important components of village apparatus performance. From the perspective of Mangkunegara (2021), appropriate task implementation requires employees to carry out their responsibilities in accordance with their assigned duties and organizational expectations. In the context of this study, the relatively clear division of work provides a foundation for maintaining task implementation, but organizational procedures alone do not guarantee consistent professionalism. One area requiring further improvement concerns professional behavior during service hours. Some community members expected village apparatuses to minimize conversations unrelated to service activities during working hours. Although this issue does not indicate a fundamental failure of service delivery, it is relevant to citizens' perceptions of professionalism and organizational seriousness. In a citizen-oriented public service environment, professional behavior involves not only completing assigned tasks but also maintaining attention, availability, and respectful interaction throughout the service process.

Complaint management is another weakness identified under this dimension. Citizens can submit criticism or complaints, but these are still predominantly communicated directly or through conventional channels. A systematic mechanism for recording, classifying, following up, and documenting complaints has not yet been fully established. This limits the ability of the village government to transform individual complaints into organizational learning. This finding is consistent with Azizah et al. (2025), who emphasize supervision, service ethics, community participation, and stakeholder collaboration as important elements in addressing service problems. Tuaputimain & Paliyama (2024) similarly identify coordination and human-resource capacity as important determinants of village service effectiveness. Complaint management should therefore be regarded not merely as a mechanism for responding to dissatisfied citizens but as an organizational feedback system that enables the village government to identify recurring problems and improve service processes. Consequently, task implementation in Batubulan Kangin Village requires strengthening in two complementary areas: professional consistency and institutionalized feedback. The first requires reinforcing service discipline and ethical standards, while the second

requires establishing an accessible complaint mechanism with clear procedures for recording, responding to, and monitoring complaints.

Responsibility

Responsibility represents the extent to which village apparatuses demonstrate accountability, integrity, transparency, and commitment to the outcomes of the services they provide. The findings show several positive practices in this area. Community informants did not report experiencing unofficial charges when obtaining administrative services. This finding indicates a commitment to providing services according to applicable provisions and constitutes an important foundation for public trust. Responsibility was also reflected in the willingness of apparatuses to explain service constraints, coordinate when technical problems occurred, and participate in capacity development. These practices indicate that responsibility is not limited to completing assigned tasks but also involves the willingness to address problems encountered during service delivery.

However, the findings also reveal an important distinction between individual responsibility and organizational responsibility. Service delivery can still be affected by the absence of particular personnel, unstable internet connectivity, or limitations in supporting equipment. This means that although individual apparatuses may demonstrate responsibility, the service system remains partially dependent on particular individuals and resources. From an organizational perspective, sustainable responsibility requires systems that allow services to continue even when particular employees are unavailable. This issue is relevant to Khatimah et al. (2021), who found a relationship between village apparatus performance and community satisfaction with population administration services. Nawawi (2019) likewise emphasizes the quality of village government personnel as an important component of governmental capacity. These findings support the interpretation that responsibility is an important element in maintaining public confidence in village government.

Technological capacity also has implications for institutional responsibility. Lumbanraja (2020) emphasizes that public-service transformation through e-government requires more than technological adoption; it requires institutional and regulatory readiness. Similarly, Fauziah et al. (2025) and Nursaleh et al. (2026) demonstrate that digitalization can improve service quality, accessibility, accuracy, and transparency when adequate human-resource and infrastructure conditions are available. Therefore, responsibility in Batubulan Kangin Village should be strengthened through a combination of individual integrity and institutional resilience. This includes improving digital competence, maintaining reliable infrastructure, documenting service processes, establishing substitute arrangements, and ensuring that citizens continue to receive services even when particular apparatuses or technological resources are temporarily unavailable.

Factors influencing the optimization of village apparatus performance

The analysis of the four performance dimensions reveals five interrelated factors that influence the optimization of village apparatus performance: apparatus competence, work discipline, service facilities, service communication, and service procedures. These factors provide a contextual explanation for why the four dimensions of performance have been relatively well implemented but have not yet reached an optimal level. First, apparatus competence determines the ability of personnel to verify documents, understand regulations, operate administrative technologies, communicate

with citizens, and handle different types of services. Competence is particularly important as village services increasingly incorporate digital tools. A competent apparatus is not only able to complete routine tasks but can also adapt to technological and procedural changes. This finding is consistent with Ainiha & Prakoso (2023); Aminuddin et al. (2022); and Wulansari et al. (2024), who emphasize the role of ability and capacity in village apparatus performance.

Second, work discipline influences the consistency of service hours, compliance with procedures, attention to citizens, and professional conduct. The findings indicate that discipline is not primarily an issue of whether apparatuses are present at work, but also whether they maintain professional behavior and attention throughout service hours. In this respect, discipline functions as a mechanism that translates formal organizational standards into consistent daily behavior. Third, service facilities, particularly computers, printers, applications, and internet connectivity, influence both work quantity and work quality. Adequate infrastructure can accelerate administrative processing and reduce unnecessary delays, whereas technological disruptions can constrain the productivity of even competent personnel. This finding reinforces the arguments of Hulu et al. (2023); Hayati et al. (2023); and Hanasi (2025) concerning the relationship between technological utilization, infrastructure, and service performance.

Fourth, service communication determines whether citizens understand requirements, procedures, completion times, and available channels for obtaining assistance or submitting complaints. Communication is therefore not simply an interpersonal skill but an important component of transparency and responsiveness. This finding is consistent with Zulmasyhur et al. (2024), who emphasize effective communication as a means of strengthening village apparatus responsiveness, and with Rapita et al. (2020), who demonstrate the potential of digital information channels to improve access to village service information. Fifth, service procedures and SOPs provide the institutional framework for controlling service quality, ensuring consistency, and clarifying responsibilities. Nevertheless, the findings demonstrate that SOP effectiveness depends on their implementation, communication, and accessibility. A well-designed SOP that is known only to internal officials cannot fully support citizen-oriented service. This is particularly relevant to the New Public Service perspective, which places citizens and the public interest at the center of public administration (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2015).

Importantly, these five factors operate as an interconnected system rather than as independent variables. A well-designed SOP may not produce consistent outcomes if apparatuses lack competence or discipline. Similarly, competent personnel may be unable to maintain service quality when facilities and digital infrastructure are unreliable. Effective communication may also be limited when service information has not been formally standardized. This interdependence supports Muchtar et al. (2024), who demonstrate that village government management and apparatus performance are closely connected in determining the effectiveness of village programs. It is also consistent with Wati & Sukmana (2022), who emphasize the importance of reliable administrative processes in population administration services. Digitalization illustrates particularly clearly why these factors need to be considered together. Technology can increase speed, accuracy, accessibility, and transparency, but its benefits depend on the capacity of apparatuses and the availability of supporting infrastructure. Fauziah et al. (2025) and Nursaleh et al. (2026) show that digitalization can strengthen service delivery, while Lumbanraja (2020) emphasizes the importance of institutional and human-resource readiness in digital public-service transformation. Thus, digitalization

should not be treated as a stand-alone solution but as part of a broader organizational capability-building strategy.

Synthesis of findings and optimization strategy

The findings demonstrate that the main challenge faced by Batubulan Kangin Village is not the absence of a public service system but the need to strengthen its consistency, predictability, transparency, and institutional resilience. The existing system has several important strengths: SOP-based service procedures, relatively clear task allocation, internal coordination, layered verification, responsive interaction, and a commitment to services without unofficial charges. These strengths provide a foundation upon which further improvements can be built. At the same time, several weaknesses prevent the system from achieving full optimization. The first is the gap between internal SOP implementation and public access to service information. The second is the residual risk of document errors despite layered verification. The third is variation in service completion times, particularly during periods of increased demand. The fourth is the absence of a fully institutionalized complaint-management system. The fifth concerns dependence on individual personnel and technological infrastructure. Finally, the increasing use of digital administration creates a need for stronger digital competence among village apparatuses.

Based on these findings, optimization should therefore be directed toward several mutually reinforcing interventions. First, the village government should strengthen final document verification and introduce clearer quality-control procedures before documents are released. Second, service standards and estimated completion times should be publicly communicated through accessible digital and non-digital channels. Third, workload should be periodically assessed to identify peak periods and determine appropriate staffing and substitute arrangements. Fourth, professional service behavior and discipline should be reinforced through clear internal expectations and continuous evaluation. Fifth, a documented complaint-management mechanism should be established so that complaints can be recorded, followed up, and used for organizational learning. Sixth, digital competence and supporting infrastructure should be strengthened so that technology contributes effectively to service efficiency rather than becoming an additional source of vulnerability. These measures are consistent with the New Public Service perspective because they shift the focus of optimization from merely completing administrative transactions toward creating a service system that is responsive to citizens' needs (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2015). They are also consistent with Mangkunegara's (2021) performance framework because improvements in quality, quantity, task implementation, and responsibility require both individual capability and supportive organizational conditions.

Overall, the findings suggest that optimizing village apparatus performance should not be understood as an attempt to correct a failed service system. Rather, it is a process of strengthening an existing service system that already functions but requires greater consistency and institutionalization. The central issue is therefore how the village government can transform existing good practices into standardized, transparent, reliable, and sustainable service arrangements. In this sense, moving beyond administrative compliance means ensuring that village apparatus performance is reflected not only in the completion of administrative outputs but also in the accuracy of those outputs, the predictability of service processes, the professionalism of interactions, the accessibility of information, the responsiveness to complaints, and the continuity of service regardless of individual or technological constraints.

Conclusions

This study concludes that the performance of village apparatuses in Batubulan Kangin Village is generally well implemented but has not yet reached an optimal level. The four performance dimensions based on Mangkunegara's framework, work quality, work quantity, task implementation, and responsibility, indicate that the village has established several positive practices, including the implementation of SOPs, relatively clear task allocation, internal coordination, hierarchical document verification, responsive service interactions, and a commitment to providing services without unofficial charges. Nevertheless, several areas require further strengthening, particularly the accuracy of administrative documents, consistency of service completion times, public dissemination of service information, queue management during periods of increased demand, professional conduct during service hours, systematic complaint handling, digital competence, and information-technology infrastructure. The findings further demonstrate that apparatus competence, work discipline, service facilities, communication, and service procedures are interrelated factors that shape the effectiveness and sustainability of village public service delivery.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the application of Mangkunegara's performance framework within the context of village-level public service delivery by demonstrating how work quality, work quantity, task implementation, and responsibility are influenced by operational and organizational conditions. The findings also reinforce the relevance of the New Public Service perspective, particularly the principle that public service should be oriented toward citizens, responsiveness, transparency, accountability, and the public interest rather than merely administrative compliance. Practically, the study provides an evidence-based basis for village governments to strengthen final document verification, standardize and publicly communicate service completion times, improve workload and queue management, reinforce professional discipline, institutionalize complaint-management mechanisms, strengthen digital competencies, and improve technological infrastructure. The central contribution of the study is therefore the identification of optimization as a process of strengthening an existing service system rather than simply correcting service failure: village apparatus performance needs to move beyond procedural compliance toward service that is accurate, predictable, transparent, responsive, and sustainable.

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting its findings. First, the research was conducted in a single village, namely Batubulan Kangin Village. Hence, the findings are context-specific and cannot automatically be generalized to villages with different organizational structures, resource capacities, demographic characteristics, or service demands. Second, the qualitative design relies substantially on the experiences and perceptions of selected informants and therefore may not capture all variations in service performance across different periods or categories of service users. Third, the study focuses primarily on four performance dimensions and five contextual factors. In contrast, other potentially relevant dimensions, such as leadership style, organizational culture, budget capacity, citizen digital literacy, and intergovernmental coordination, were not examined in depth. Future research could address these limitations through comparative studies involving several villages with different characteristics, longitudinal research to examine changes in apparatus performance over time, or mixed-method designs combining qualitative evidence with quantitative measures of service performance and citizen satisfaction. Further studies could also examine the effectiveness of specific interventions, such as digital complaint systems, workload-based staffing, SOP dissemination, or digital

competency development, to determine which institutional strategies most effectively strengthen responsive and sustainable village public service delivery.

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