



## **Bureaucratic Performance in the service of Public Complaints in the Social Service Office of Langkat Regency**

Dedy Irawadi<sup>1</sup>, Budi Hartono<sup>2\*</sup>, Maksum Syahri Lubis<sup>3</sup>  
Universitas Medan Area

**Corresponding Author:** Budi Hartono [budihartono@staff.uma.ac.id](mailto:budihartono@staff.uma.ac.id)

### ARTICLE INFO

*Keywords:* Bureaucratic Performance, Public Complaint Services, Social Office, Langkat District

*Received :* 7, January

*Revised :* 13, February

*Accepted:* 28, March

©2024 Irawadi, Hartono, Lubis: This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Atribusi 4.0 Internasional](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).



### ABSTRACT

Performance is the result achieved by an employee in carrying out their duties and functions as a bureaucratic official. Performance can be used as a measure of the success of an organization or agency in performing its tasks and functions. The current implementation of public complaint services demands prompt resolution from service providers, making it one of the indicators of bureaucratic performance in handling complaints. The aim of this study is to understand and analyze Bureaucratic Performance in public complaint services at the Langkat District Social Office. To achieve this objective, a qualitative method was employed in this research. This study is of a qualitative descriptive nature. Data collection was conducted through interviews, observations, and documentation. The data sources used were both primary and secondary data. The results show that Bureaucratic Performance in public complaint services at the Langkat District Social Office meets the standards of complaint services according to the Performance Theory by Pollit & Bouckaert used in this study. The conclusion drawn from this research is that the bureaucratic performance in public complaint services at the Langkat District Social Office can generally be considered satisfactory and is moving towards an even better level. However, infrastructure and facilities need to be further improved, and officials need to enhance their performance in public complaint services.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Public services serve as the most tangible measure of government performance (Dwiyanto, 2017; Saputro, 2015). The quality of public services directly reflects government performance, as it is of great interest to many and directly impacts individuals from all walks of life (Aziz et al., 2021). In this context, public service is also the most crucial duty of government officials as servants of the state and the people. The provision of public services needs to adhere to principles, standards, implementation patterns, and costs to ensure that the needs and interests of those requiring the services are met (Sari & Rahayu, 2021; Triyanto et al., 2022).

In Law Number 25 of 2009 concerning Public Services, it is stated that "activities or series of activities aimed at meeting service needs, which constitute service for goods, services, and/or administrative services provided by public service providers" (Undang-Undang (UU) Nomor 25 Tahun 2009 Tentang Pelayanan Publik, 2009). Often, public services provided by the government neglect and disappoint their citizens. Even for obtaining simple services, people are often faced with convoluted processes and long queues, leading to considerable wait times and discomfort. Therefore, public complaints play a crucial role for the government to gauge the success of its programs (Hedyanti & Fathurrahman, 2022).

Public complaints are a vital element in every institution providing public services, as they aim to address shortcomings in implemented activities. Ensuring continuous and sustainable quality of public services requires complaint management that addresses the interests of both service providers and service recipients (Mulyadi, 2016).

In handling complaints, public service standards and procedures are crucial. Improving the quality of public services can be achieved through prompt resolution of complaints by service providers, whether at the central or local government level. So far, the government's efforts to enhance service quality by establishing complaint mechanisms for dissatisfied citizens have not been fully optimized (Kurniawan, 2005; Rohman, 2010).

As a bureaucracy with a pivotal role in governance and national development through public service provision (Hardyansah, 2011), it plays various roles as a planner, supervisor, and implementer of public administration. Bureaucratic personnel are expected to deliver good performance in carrying out their duties and providing complaint services to the public at the Department of Social Affairs of Langkat Regency.

The primary goal of performance evaluation is to enhance performance and achieve desired outputs. Several models have been developed for performance evaluation. According to Carter & Long (1991), performance is a complex and debated concept whose meaning varies depending on the organization and its usage context across different jurisdictions (Carter & Long, 1991).

The performance assessment model based on Pollit and Bouckaert's (2000) performance assessment approach is more comprehensive compared to other performance assessment theories. The input/output model is an evaluation strategy developed by Pollit and Bouckaert under the assumption that programs

and institutions are designed to meet specific socio-economic requirements (Pollit & Bouckaert, 2000). The performance evaluation parameters in this input-output model include:

- 1) Relevance, specifically measuring the connection or relevance between established goals and needs;
- 2) Efficiency, or the input-to-output ratio;
- 3) Effectiveness, the degree of compatibility or how well the goals and intermediaries (outputs) align with the final outcomes (impacts);
- 4) Utility and sustainability, particularly determining how useful and enduring the requirements and final outcomes (impacts) are.

Organizational performance, particularly in delivering public services, can be measured using these indicators. Additionally, performance measurement is primarily used to gauge the success or failure of activities in achieving the established goals and objectives to realize the organization's vision and mission. The decision to employ the performance measurement theory by Pollit and Bouckaert (2000) was made because it is deemed more appropriate and capable of measuring bureaucracy performance in handling public complaint services at the Department of Social Affairs of Langkat Regency (Pollit & Bouckaert, 2000).

To provide novelty value related to this research, here are some previous studies that share similar themes with this research:

Research by Suri et al. (2022) indicates that the effectiveness of the SP4N Lapor! in Kota Metro has not been satisfactory. This is evident from the number of unaddressed complaints and the lack of prompt responses to assist in handling the complaints and aspirations of the community, resulting in a status of unresolved complaints. Fundamental issues faced by the SP4N Lapor! in Kota Metro during the service implementation process include a lack of commitment and strong sanctions among related government agencies, hindering the achievement of the service's objectives (Suri et al., 2022).

Research conducted by Yahya & Setiyono (2022) suggests that the public service complaint management system through the SP4N-LAPOR application has not been effectively implemented. This is evident from the need for adaptation to increase the number of inputs into the application, the absence of clear standards for categorizing reports, and the necessity for additional time for community socialization (Yahya & Setiyono, 2022).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Furthermore, research by Tumundo et al. (2023) reveals that the effectiveness of public services at the Department of Population and Civil Registration in Kota Manado for e-KTP registration, based on the Public Satisfaction Index using a rating of 9 (Nine) elements of public services, obtained a score of 83.79 with a category of good performance and service quality B (Tumundo et al., 2023).

The purpose of this study is to analyze the bureaucracy's performance in handling public complaints at the Department of Social Affairs of Langkat Regency. Additionally, this research aims to understand and analyze the factors that may hinder or support the bureaucracy's performance in handling public complaints at the Department of Social Affairs of Langkat Regency.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This research employs a qualitative approach, which is deemed appropriate for addressing the research questions and ensuring data relevance to the existing conditions (Sugiyono, 2017). The aim is to depict the reality of Bureaucratic Performance in Handling Public Complaints at the Department of Social Affairs of Langkat Regency in detail. The research design used is qualitative descriptive (Mukhtar, 2013). This study utilizes both primary and secondary data. Primary data are obtained directly from the research subjects, including individuals, groups, and organizations (Bah et al., 2020a, 2020b). This information is gathered through direct interviews with key informants, which include the Head of the Department of Social Affairs of Langkat Regency as the key informant, the Secretary of the Department of Social Affairs, complaint service officers, staff, and five recipients of services as primary and additional informants. Meanwhile, secondary data are obtained through mass media, journals, documents, reports, and articles related to the research issue.

The research location is where the researcher obtains valid, accurate, and reliable data as required for the study. The research site is the object of focus, where the researcher observes and analyzes the phenomena at hand. This study takes place at the Department of Social Affairs of Langkat Regency, located at Jl. Imam Bonjol No.67 Stabat, Kelurahan Kwala Bingai, Kecamatan Stabat, Kabupaten Langkat, Provinsi Sumatera Utara, during the period from September to December 2023.

Research informants are individuals who possess relevant knowledge and information related to the subject under investigation and are asked to provide detailed information about the topics discussed in the study. Moleong (2018) explains that informants are individuals who provide information about the background and conditions of the research. In the context of this study, research informants include several groups, namely key informants such as the Head of the Department of Social Affairs of Langkat Regency, primary informants such as the Secretary of the Department of Social Affairs and Complaint Service Officers, and additional informants such as staff and five community members who are service recipients.

This study employs various data collection methods, including observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation is conducted directly at the Office of Social Affairs of Langkat Regency to gain a deeper understanding of Community Complaint Services. Researchers conduct open observations where they observe activities and record their findings. Additionally, face-to-face interviews are conducted with the Head of the Department of Social Affairs, Secretary, Complaint Service Officers, staff, and service recipients to gain a more in-depth perspective. Documentation is also utilized to support data collection through the recording of written and electronic documents related to Community Complaint Services at the Office of Social Affairs of Langkat Regency.

The data analysis technique in this study involves a systematic process of collecting and compiling data from various sources such as interviews, observations, and documentation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). These data are

then organized, synthesized, and conclusions drawn to ensure a clear understanding of the phenomena under investigation. The data analysis model used refers to the method developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, which consists of stages of data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification (Miles et al., 2014). This process is interactive and ongoing, starting from data collection to drawing valid and credible final conclusions.

## **RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### ***Bureaucratic Performance in Community Complaint Services at the Department of Social Affairs of Langkat Regency***

#### **1) Relevance**

The Department of Social Affairs of Langkat Regency has embarked on a series of initiatives to ensure the alignment between community needs and established goals through their complaint services. Interviews with key figures like Mr. Taufik Rieza, the department's head, illuminate the pivotal role these services play in evaluating bureaucratic performance and program effectiveness. According to Mr. Rieza, serving the community is the primary duty of government officials, and the responsiveness of complaint services serves as a critical benchmark in fulfilling this duty. He emphasizes the importance of these services in addressing community challenges and ensuring the success of government programs aimed at improving social welfare.

Furthermore, insights from Mr. Hasrul and Mr. Arif Pranala underscore the department's commitment to adhering to standard operating procedures in delivering complaint services. They emphasize the significance of procedural compliance in ensuring the quality and effectiveness of service delivery. By following established protocols, the department aims to optimize its response to social issues and enhance overall service outcomes. This commitment to procedural integrity reflects a systematic approach to addressing community concerns and underscores the department's dedication to serving the public interest.

Moreover, feedback from community members, including Ms. Karsini and others, provides valuable insights into the impact of these complaint services on the ground. Their testimonials highlight the tangible benefits of the department's efforts, particularly in facilitating access to social assistance and administrative support. By effectively addressing the needs of residents, the department demonstrates its responsiveness and commitment to fostering positive outcomes for the community. These firsthand accounts serve as compelling evidence of the relevance and effectiveness of the department's complaint services in meeting the diverse needs of Langkat Regency's residents.

In conclusion, the Department of Social Affairs of Langkat Regency's commitment to relevance and effectiveness in its complaint services is evident through various initiatives and stakeholder feedback. By aligning its efforts with community needs and established goals, the department demonstrates a proactive approach to governance and service delivery. Through continued adherence to best practices and responsiveness to community feedback, the

department is well-positioned to further enhance its impact and contribute to the well-being of Langkat Regency's residents.

## **2) Efficiency**

Efficiency in bureaucratic services, as defined by the comparison between service outputs and inputs, is crucial for ensuring optimal service delivery to the public. Insights gleaned from interviews with key, main, and additional informants shed light on the efficiency of complaint services provided by the Department of Social Affairs of Langkat Regency. According to Mr. Taufik Rieza, the department head, bureaucratic performance efficiency is achieved through a variety of channels, including direct interaction at the department, communication via telephone or WhatsApp, and utilization of social media platforms. These avenues facilitate the receipt and resolution of complaints from the public in a timely and effective manner, thus reducing the burden on service users.

Similarly, Mr. Hasrul and Mr. Arif Pranala underscored the importance of ease of interaction and sophisticated information media in providing efficient services to the public. By leveraging these communication tools, the department can streamline its processes and improve accessibility for service users. Additionally, feedback from recipients of complaint services, such as Ms. Karsini and others, highlights their satisfaction with the ease and speed of the service process. However, occasional delays in response time were noted, potentially attributable to the high volume of complaints or limited availability of service officers.

Overall, the interviews suggest that the department's complaint service is generally effective in delivering high-quality service products while minimizing user burdens. Nevertheless, there is room for improvement, particularly in terms of addressing occasional delays and enhancing accessibility. Conducting assessments and evaluations of standard operating procedures (SOPs) could provide valuable insights into areas for enhancement, ultimately leading to more efficient and effective complaint services that better meet the needs of the public in Langkat Regency.

## **3) Effectiveness**

Insights gathered from interviews with key, main, and additional informants underscore the effectiveness of complaint services rendered by the Department of Social Affairs in Langkat Regency. Mr. Taufik Rieza and other informants emphasized that bureaucratic performance effectiveness is realized through the seamless execution of complaint services, bolstered by well-established service standard operating procedures (SOPs) and dedicated service officers. The unwavering commitment and compassion exhibited by these officers towards the community play a pivotal role in ensuring the smooth operation of the complaint service process, ultimately leading to the attainment of service objectives for recipients.

Recipients of complaint services echoed sentiments of contentment with the services provided, citing the department's adeptness in addressing community needs and resolving complaints in strict adherence to SOPs. The satisfaction expressed by these recipients underscores the efficacy of the department's approach in effectively catering to the community's needs and

delivering timely resolutions to their grievances. Overall, the congruence observed between objectives, intermediate outcomes, and final impacts serves as a testament to the effectiveness of the complaint services dispensed by the Department of Social Affairs in Langkat Regency, thereby affirming its commitment to meeting the diverse needs of the community in a proficient manner.

#### **4) Utility and Sustainability**

It evaluates the effectiveness and longevity of the connection between needs and final outcomes (impacts). Insights gleaned from the interview with Mr. Taufik Rieza, the Head of the Department of Social Affairs in Langkat Regency, underscore the importance of bureaucratic performance in continually enhancing public service implementation. He emphasizes the necessity of ongoing evaluations by pertinent ministries/agencies to guide future enhancements, ensuring improved service outcomes over time. Similarly, perspectives shared by Mr. Hasrul and Mr. Arif Pranala highlight the department's dedication to sustainable enhancement and innovation in complaint services, with the goal of achieving superior service outcomes and infrastructure upgrades.

Moreover, feedback from recipients such as Ms. Karsini and others serves to illustrate the positive impact of the department's innovative service initiatives and adherence to SOPs, accentuating the benefits received and the community's dependence on these complaint services. Overall, these interviews provide insights into the effectiveness and endurance of community complaint services at the Department of Social Affairs in Langkat Regency, effectively meeting the community's needs with optimal outcomes, while also underscoring the community's desire for the continued provision of these indispensable services.

#### ***Factors Influencing Bureaucratic Performance and Community Complaint Services at the Department of Social Affairs of Langkat Regency***

##### **1) What are the factors influencing external factors (economic, social, and political factors) on bureaucratic performance in community complaint services at the Department of Social Affairs of Langkat Regency**

According to Atmosoeparto, external factors will significantly influence bureaucratic performance, namely:

- a) Economic factors represent the level of economic development that affects the community's income level as purchasing power to drive other sectors within a larger economic system.
- b) Social factors involve the prevailing values within society that influence their work ethic needed for organizational performance improvement.
- c) Political factors relate to the balance of state power affecting security and order.

Mr. Taufik Rieza, the Head of the Department of Social Affairs in Langkat Regency, underscores the significant influence of community dynamics on bureaucratic performance in complaint services. He points out that economic factors, such as low purchasing power and the distribution of social assistance, play a pivotal role in shaping the effectiveness of these services. Mr. Rieza stresses the importance of Social Affairs officers utilizing data and references to effectively address community complaints within this context.

Similarly, insights from Mr. Hasrul and Mr. Arif Pranala further highlight the impact of both internal and external factors, particularly economic and social issues, on the execution of complaint services. These factors are identified as primary concerns raised by the community and significantly shape the day-to-day delivery of services. Additionally, feedback from recipients like Ms. Karsini and others reinforces the prevalence of issues related to social assistance, poverty, and social problems among community complaints. This underscores the necessity for clear information and criteria regarding social assistance recipients to address these concerns effectively.

## **2) Factors Affecting Internal Factors (Human Resources, Organizational Culture, Organizational Goals, and Structure) on Bureaucratic Performance in Community Complaint Services at the Department of Social Affairs of Langkat Regency**

According to Atmosoeparto, internal factors significantly influence bureaucratic performance, namely:

- a) Human resources refer to the quality and management of organizational members as drivers of the organization's overall functioning.
- b) Organizational culture encompasses the style and identity of an organization in its established work patterns, shaping its image.
- c) Organizational goals define what an organization aims to achieve and produce.
- d) Organizational structure results from the design between the functions to be carried out by organizational units and the existing formal structure.

Key Informant Mr. Taufik Rieza highlights the pivotal role of internal factors in ensuring the Department of Social Affairs in Langkat Regency delivers excellent service. These factors encompass proficient complaint service officers adept at addressing issues based on community data, facilitated by IT tools like the SIKS NG application. Additionally, the allocation of officers and follow-up services, coupled with established service products and SOPs, contribute to the effectiveness of complaint services.

Main Informants Mr. Hasrul and Mr. Arif Pranala echo the importance of internal factors, emphasizing the role of quality facilities, infrastructure, and human resources readiness in facilitating complaint services. They underscore the necessity of clear SOPs to streamline service delivery. Further, Additional Informants, including Mr. Muhammad Asep and recipients of complaint services, affirm the conducive environment within the Department of Social Affairs. They attribute this environment to officers' readiness, access to facilities, commitment to service, and the provision of free services, collectively enhancing the department's capacity to address community complaints effectively.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the research findings on the variables supporting the Bureaucratic Performance of the Social Affairs Department in Langkat Regency, several conclusions can be drawn: (1) the services provided are relevant to the needs of the community, efficient in terms of input-output ratio, and of high quality in terms of cost and time. However, an evaluation of SOPs is necessary to improve access and meet the community's needs for complaint services; (2) obstacles such

as delays in responding to complaints can affect bureaucratic performance. Therefore, by utilizing existing facilities and infrastructure, as well as innovating in the provision of information and solutions through electronic and social media, it is expected that the Social Affairs Department of Langkat Regency can continue to improve its system and provide the best possible service to the community in line with the research objectives.

To enhance complaint services at the Social Affairs Department of Langkat Regency, the researchers offer several recommendations. First, there is a need to evaluate the handling of complaint responses that are not optimal, especially those originating from communication, electronic, and social media channels. Second, the Community Complaint Service Department should improve service quality by maintaining friendliness and providing excellent service to the public. Additionally, it is important to provide assistance to individuals wishing to lodge complaints so they can prepare the necessary data or documents required for completeness of requirements in obtaining complaint services at the Social Affairs Department of Langkat Regency. Third, innovation in complaint services to the public is needed to provide the best service to the community as a whole.

#### ADVANCED RESEARCH

Every research certainly has limitations. Limitations in the sense of research limitations that influence the researcher's ability to explore the data being studied, limited data available, or external research factors such as limited time and resources. So further research is needed to complete this research.

#### REFERENCES

- Aziz, F. N., Mubin, F., Hidayat, R. J. P., Nurjaman, A., Romadhan, A. A., Sulistyarningsih, T., & Hijri, Y. S. (2021). Bagaimana Teknologi Informasi dan Komunikasi Bertransformasi Menjadi Inovasi Pelayanan Publik? *PERSPEKTIF*, 10(2), 616–626. <https://doi.org/10.31289/perspektif.v10i2.4905>
- Bah, Y. M., Ridwan, M., Suharyanto, A., & Amal, B. K. (2020a). Introduction to The Fundamentals of Social Work. Medan: Bircu Publisher.
- Bah, Y. M., Ridwan, M., Suharyanto, A., & Amal, B. K. (2020b). Social Work Research. Medan: Bircu Publisher.
- Carter, R., & Long, M. N. (1991). *Teaching Literature*. Longman.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (5th Edition). Sage Publications.
- Dwiyanto, A. (2017). *Manajemen Pelayanan Publik: Peduli Inklusif dan Kolaborasi*. Universitas Gadjah Mada Press.
- Hardyansah. (2011). *Kualitas Pelayanan Publik*. Gava Media.
- Hedyanti, F., & Fathurrahman, R. (2022). Analysis of Success Factors of the Electronic Building Permit Service System through the Public Values Approach. *PERSPEKTIF*, 11(3), 936–943. <https://doi.org/10.31289/perspektif.v11i3.6439>
- Kurniawan, A. (2005). *Transformasi Pelayanan Publik*. Penerbit Pembaharuan.
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, J. (2014). *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*. SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Moleong, L. J. (2018). *Metodologi penelitian kualitatif* (Edisi revisi). PT Remaja Rosdakarya.

- Mukhtar. (2013). *Metode Praktis Penelitian Deskriptif Kualitatif*. Reference.
- Mulyadi, D. (2016). *Studi Kebijakan Publik dan Pelayanan Publik: Konsep dan Aplikasi Proses Kebijakan Publik Berbasis Analisis Bukti Untuk Pelayanan Publik*. Alfabeta.
- Pollit, C., & Bouckaert, G. (2000). *Public Management Reform: Comparative Analysis*. Oxford University Press.
- Rohman, A. A. (2010). *Reformasi Pelayanan Publik*. Averroes Press.
- Saputro, H. E. (2015). Kualitas Pelayanan Publik. *Profesional: Jurnal Komunikasi Dan Administrasi Publik*, 2(1).
- Sari, R. P., & Rahayu, A. Y. S. (2021). Faktor-Faktor yang Mempengaruhi Implementasi Kebijakan Penyelenggaraan Mal Pelayanan Publik. *PERSPEKTIF*, 10(1), 230–238. <https://doi.org/10.31289/perspektif.v10i1.4355>
- Sugiyono. (2017). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*. Alfabeta.
- Suri, A. I., Maarif, S., & Atika, D. B. (2022). Efektivitas Layanan Pengaduan Terpusat (Studi Tentang Layanan Pengaduan SP4N Lapor! Kota Metro). *Jurnal Administratioa*, 4(1), 33–44. <https://doi.org/10.23960/ADMINISTRATIVA.V4I1.113>
- Triyanto, D., Kismartini, K., Aprianty, H., & Novelia, P. (2022). Penerapan Aplikasi Pendaftaran Antrean Paspor Online dalam Upaya Meningkatkan Pelayanan Publik di Bengkulu. *PERSPEKTIF*, 11(2), 527–532. <https://doi.org/10.31289/perspektif.v11i2.5876>
- Tumundo, B. Y., Rumagit, G. A. J., & Pakasi, S. E. (2023). Efektifitas Pelayanan Publik pada Pelayanan Perekaman KTP-EL di Dinas Kependudukan dan Pencatatan Sipil Kota Manado. *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai*, 7(2), 18253–18265. <https://doi.org/10.31004/JPTAM.V7I2.9257>
- Undang-Undang (UU) Nomor 25 Tahun 2009 Tentang Pelayanan Publik, Pub. L. No. 25, [peraturan.bpk.go.id](http://peraturan.bpk.go.id) (2009).
- Yahya, A. S., & Setiyono, S. (2022). Efektivitas Pelayanan Publik Melalui Sistem Pengelolaan Pengaduan Aplikasi SP4N-LAPOR. *Jurnal Media Birokrasi*, 4(1), 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.33701/jmb.v4i1.2432>