



The Effectiveness of Implementing Standard Operating Procedures in Improving Service Quality at the Population and Civil Registration Office of Manado City

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ABSTRACT

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) serve as vital instruments for ensuring consistency in service delivery, predictability regarding timelines, transparency, and accountability in public service provision. However, the implementation of SOPs at the Manado City Population and Civil Registration Agency still faces various challenges, such as delays in document processing, disruptions to the population administration information system, and suboptimal staff compliance with established service procedures. This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of SOP implementation in enhancing service quality at the Manado City Population and Civil Registration Agency. The study employs a qualitative approach using a descriptive method. Research informants include the Agency Head, the Head of the Service Division, service staff, and service users. Data collection techniques involved observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. Data analysis encompassed data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results indicate that SOP implementation has positively contributed to improved service quality, particularly regarding procedural clarity, certainty of administrative requirements, and enhanced service accountability. However, its effectiveness remains suboptimal due to constraints such as limited human resources and network disruptions within the Population Administration Information System (SIAP). The study concludes that SOP effectiveness would improve with enhanced staff competence, strengthened internal supervision, service digitalization, and periodic SOP evaluations aligned with the evolving needs of the community.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Public service is one of the main indicators of the success of government administration. Law Number 25 of 2009 on Public Service states that every service provider is required to deliver quality service based on legal certainty, professionalism, accountability, transparency, and timeliness. In the context of population administration, public service is a basic need for the community because it is directly related to citizens' legal identity.

Service quality is a crucial factor determining the level of public satisfaction with and trust in the government. Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) explain that service quality can be assessed through several dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. These five dimensions demonstrate that quality service is not merely about the final outcome; it also encompasses the service process, staff competence, speed of delivery, procedural certainty, and the attention officials pay to the public's needs.

In line with this, Tjiptono (2017) defines service quality as a dynamic state involving products, services, human resources, processes, and the environment—all of which must meet or exceed the expectations of customers or service users. In the context of government organizations, the public acts as service users entitled to receive services that meet established standards. Therefore, improving public service quality requires enhancements to human resources, service procedures, facilities and infrastructure, and service management systems.



The Population and Civil Registration Office is responsible for administering population services such as issuing electronic ID cards, family cards, birth certificates, death certificates, marriage certificates, divorce certificates, and other population documents. These services need clear standards to ensure that the service process runs effectively, efficiently, transparently, and accountably.

Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) are standard guidelines that regulate the steps in carrying out a task to ensure consistency and to produce uniform service quality. According to the Regulation of the Minister of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform No. 35 of 2012 concerning Guidelines for Preparing Government Administration SOPs, the purpose of an SOP is to improve the effectiveness of government task implementation, clarify responsibilities, increase accountability, and minimize errors in the service process.

In Manado City, the Department of Population and Civil Registration has applied SOPs in all types of population administration services. However, various problems are still found, such as quite long service queues at certain times, disruptions in the National Population Administration Information System network, a limited number of officers compared to the number of applicants, and some members of the community who do not fully understand the service requirements, causing the service process to take longer.

In addition, public demand for services is increasing along with the development of digital technology. People want services that are fast, easy, transparent, and accessible electronically. Therefore, the effectiveness of SOP implementation needs to be evaluated to understand how well the SOP can improve the quality of public services.

In the actual delivery of services, the effectiveness of implementing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) can be influenced by various factors. The first factor is the staff's understanding of the SOPs' content and objectives; personnel who do not fully grasp the procedures will struggle to deliver services in accordance with established standards. The second factor is consistency in implementation; SOPs must be applied uniformly across various service situations rather than being used only under specific conditions. The third factor is the availability of resources, encompassing both human resources and supporting infrastructure. Even a well-designed SOP cannot be implemented optimally without adequate staffing, competent personnel, proper service facilities, and robust information technology systems.

Furthermore, the effectiveness of SOP implementation is closely linked to supervision and evaluation. Organizations must ensure that established procedures are genuinely followed by all service personnel. Evaluation is essential to determine whether SOPs remain relevant to evolving public service needs. In the era of digital public services, changing public demands and technological advancements require government organizations to continuously adjust their procedures.

Research on public services at the Population and Civil Registration Agency indicates that the existence of service procedures does not always guarantee the delivery of effective services. A study by Salam, Niswaty, Maulana, Jamaluddin, and Darwis regarding public service effectiveness at the Soppeng Regency Population and Civil Registration Agency found that service procedures and certain service aspects were not yet fully effective, even though services were generally operational. These findings demonstrate that the issue of service effectiveness relates not only to the availability of rules and procedures but also to implementation, staff competence, facilities and infrastructure, and the organization's capacity to meet established service standards.

Research on the effectiveness of SOP implementation is important because the results can serve as a basis for local governments to evaluate and improve the administrative service system. Based on this explanation, this study aims to analyze the effectiveness of SOP implementation in improving the quality of services at the Manado City Population and Civil Registration Office.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach and is descriptive in nature. The qualitative approach is utilized to gain an in-depth understanding of the effectiveness of implementing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in enhancing service quality at the Manado City Population and Civil Registration Agency. The study aims to provide a realistic depiction of how SOPs are implemented by staff during population administration service processes and how this implementation influences the quality of service received by the public.

A qualitative descriptive design was selected because the issues under investigation extend beyond service outcomes to encompass the SOP implementation process, staff understanding of work procedures, consistency in service delivery, obstacles encountered, and the perceptions of the public as service users. Through this approach, the researcher is able to gather information directly from informants via interviews, observation, and document analysis.

This study utilizes two types of data sources:

1. Primary data

Primary data refers to data obtained directly from research informants through interviews and observations. In this study, primary data encompasses information regarding the implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), the civil registration and population administration service process, challenges in SOP implementation, and public feedback on service quality.

2. Secondary data

Secondary data refers to data obtained from documents and written sources relevant to the research. Such data includes service SOP documents, service standards, service reports, the profile of the Manado City Population and Civil Registration Agency, organizational structure, service volume statistics, laws and regulations, evaluation reports, as well as literature and findings from previous studies concerning SOP effectiveness and public service quality.

Data collection in this study was conducted using the following techniques:

1. Observation

Observation was carried out by directly observing the service processes at the Manado City Population and Civil Registration Agency. The observation focused on service mechanisms, interactions between staff and the public, staff adherence to service procedures, service duration, the condition of facilities and infrastructure, and various obstacles arising during the service process.

2. Interviews

In-depth interviews were conducted with selected informants. These interviews utilized a guide developed based on the research focus and indicators regarding the effectiveness of SOP implementation. Through these interviews, the researcher gathered information on staff understanding of SOPs, the execution of service procedures, SOP dissemination, oversight of SOP implementation, and public perceptions of the quality of service provided.

3. Documentation

Documentation involved collecting various documents related to the research subject. These documents included service SOPs, service standards, organizational structures, service reports, photographs of service activities, data on the number of citizens served, public complaint reports, and other supporting documents.

Data analysis employed the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014) model, comprising data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data validity was verified through triangulation of sources, techniques, and time.

3. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

his study utilizes the theory of organizational effectiveness proposed by Richard M. Steers (in his book 'Organizational Effectiveness: A Behavioral View', 1977/1985):

According to Steers, there are four main groups of variables that influence the effectiveness of achieving organizational goals: Organizational Characteristics (encompassing organizational structure and the technology employed); Environmental Characteristics (covering the external environment—outside the organization—and the internal environment or organizational climate); Employee (Individual) Characteristics (including employee attitudes, abilities, needs, and roles); and Managerial Policies and Practices (involving management actions and decisions regarding resource management).

a. Organizational Characteristics

Organizational characteristics are a crucial aspect of an organization's operations. These characteristics comprise organizational structure and technology. Structure is defined as a relatively stable set of relationships—the way an organization arranges its personnel—encompassing factors such as the decentralization of control, the degree of job specialization, the extent to which interpersonal interactions are formalized, and so forth. In this context, the organizational structure—specifically the arrangement of human resources—plays a vital role in shaping the interaction patterns and behaviors of members as they work toward organizational goals. Consequently, establishing the structure of human resources is of great importance, as it directly impacts the working relationships within the organization.

In this regard, the Head of the Manado City Population and Civil Registration Agency (DKPS) explained: "The organizational structure is designed based on prevailing work systems but is tailored to available resources, with the hope that employees can engage in positive competition without feeling disadvantaged, thereby achieving better performance."

Similarly, the Head of the Population Services Division at the Manado City DKPS stated: "The structure is formed by aligning it with the agency's core aspects—namely the capabilities and competencies of the individual employees—so that the established structure fosters good working relationships and a positive work atmosphere among the staff."

Based on observations at the Manado City Population and Civil Registration Agency—an organization centered on service delivery—organizational characteristics play a key role in achieving effectiveness. The agency



strives to serve the public—including those processing investment administration and permits—by establishing effective coordination flows for carrying out support tasks, collaboration, communication, and the division of labor, all in accordance with the agency's core duties and functions regarding service mechanisms. Beyond structure, the effort to achieve organizational effectiveness is also supported by the use of technology to provide excellent service to the public, particularly to those handling permit applications. The technology in question refers to the mechanisms an organization uses to transform raw inputs into finished outputs. The use of technology at the Manado City Population and Civil Registration Agency essentially involves utilizing tools that support work activities related to the entire process of issuing permits. The use of these facilities and infrastructure significantly impacts the agency's performance outcomes; comprehensive and adequate facilities and infrastructure can facilitate the optimization of the services provided by the agency.

Conversely, inadequate equipment can hinder service procedures. Consequently, technology plays a decisive role in service quality, as it directly influences the execution of service processes. Regarding the technology and facilities available at DKPS Manado City, the infrastructure is quite comprehensive; it includes modern technology—such as computers, printers, and photocopiers—available in sufficient quantities and good working order, thereby effectively supporting staff workflows. This aligns with the statement made by the Head of the Licensing Division during an interview: "Our equipment meets the requirements of every work process; everything is technology-based, which accelerates and simplifies tasks for the staff. Key stages are no longer performed manually."

Beyond technology-based work tools, information technology is another crucial factor determining an organization's level of effectiveness. Rapid and accurate decision-making, supported by reliable information technology, is a key driver of success. Information technology-based systems are an integral part of an organization, as organizational goals cannot be fully achieved if the organizational strategy is not aligned with the information technology being utilized.

b. Environmental Characteristics

Environmental characteristics refer to factors related to the conditions influencing an organization's work environment. These characteristics encompass two aspects: the organization's internal environment and its external environment. The internal environment aspect focuses on organizational climate—the overall environment within the organization—comprising various attributes linked to specific facets of effectiveness, particularly those measured at the individual level.

The external environment consists of forces arising outside organizational boundaries that influence internal decisions and actions, such as economic conditions, market factors, and government regulations. These forces affect the environment's relative stability and complexity. The second aspect is the external environment—situated outside organizational boundaries—which significantly impacts the organization, particularly regarding decision-making and the taking of action. The environmental characteristics influencing the effectiveness of the Manado City DKPS (Population and Civil Registration Agency) comprise both the internal environment (originating from within) and the external environment (originating from outside the agency).

The internal environment of the Manado City DKPS is defined by work demands and employee work discipline. In this regard, the work demands and employee discipline involved in carrying out the agency's functions are considered suboptimal, as evidenced by low levels of work discipline alongside high work demands placed on employees.

Regarding the discipline and work demands established by the Manado City DKPS, the researcher interviewed the Head of the Population Services Division, who stated: "The Manado City DKPS indeed has quite stringent task demands because our work is closely tied to the public interest—particularly regarding investment matters that inevitably impact the regional economy—so there must be specific demands placed on employees."

The researcher also interviewed Mr. K.T., an employee in the Population Services Division, to gain an employee perspective on these task demands: "Task demands here are quite high; every employee's workload is set according to their specific duties and functions, so everyone is required to meet their task targets."

c. Worker Characteristics

Worker characteristics relate to the performance levels and achievements attained by each employee in producing work results accurately and optimally. These characteristics involve the role of individual differences among workers in relation to effectiveness; individual workers possess differing perspectives, goals, and capabilities.

This variation in worker traits drives differences in behavior among individuals. Such differences directly influence organizational effectiveness—specifically regarding organizational commitment and individual work performance. Fundamentally, personnel management encompasses two functions: managerial and technical.



Managerial functions involve cognitive processes such as planning, organizing, directing, and controlling. Conversely, technical functions involve physical activities such as recruitment (procurement), compensation, development, maintenance, and retirement processing.

In this context, personnel management at the Manado City DKPS office appears well-organized and systematic. All employees perform their duties according to designated roles and areas of responsibility, collaborating to serve the public. One indication of the Manado City DKPS's commitment to providing quality public service is its initiative to equip every employee with specific qualifications regarding the permit processing workflow. The Head of the Population Services Division at Manado City DKPS stated: "Beyond managing employee discipline, every staff member here has received specialized training on permits—developing a specific competency required to process them. They are not merely administrative staff."

Every employee at the Manado City DKPS office possesses specialized qualifications regarding permitting, ensuring they are capable and competent in handling the entire process—from initial application to monitoring the implementation of issued permits. This approach aims to deliver quality service to the public; by ensuring all staff hold these specific qualifications, the agency can effectively handle all permit-related requests without relying solely on a few highly skilled individuals, a common issue in other agencies.

d. Characteristics of Management

Management is an inseparable aspect of organizational operations. It is essential for ensuring that the organization's work activities are executed properly. A key characteristic of management is program planning; when organizational activities are guided by a pre-established plan, they proceed effectively.

Thus, it can be concluded that program planning serves as the foundation for the execution of work within an organization or institution. Given the importance of this planning role, it is imperative for all parties involved in the licensing sector to possess the requisite knowledge and skills to formulate appropriate plans for programs and activities.

Research findings indicate that the effectiveness of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) is positively correlated with improvements in public service quality. SOPs provide procedural certainty, enhance service consistency, clarify the responsibilities of personnel, and strengthen organizational accountability. These findings align with Steers' (1985) concept of organizational effectiveness, which emphasizes the achievement of organizational goals through the optimal use of resources.

On the other hand, service quality has not yet reached its full potential, as it remains influenced by factors such as human resources, information technology infrastructure, and service capacity. This demonstrates that the success of SOP depends not merely on the existence of procedural documents, but also on the organization's readiness to implement them consistently through resource support, supervision, and continuous evaluation.

4. CONCLUSION

The implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) at the Manado City Population and Civil Registration Agency has positively contributed to improving the quality of service provided to the public. Systematically developed SOPs serve as clear operational guidelines for staff, ensuring that service processes are more focused, measurable, and consistent.

The application of SOPs has proven effective in enhancing various aspects of service quality, such as timeliness, procedural clarity, and the predictability of costs and requirements. The public has experienced improvements in speed, accuracy, and ease of access—particularly regarding population administration services such as the issuance of ID cards (KTP), family cards, and civil registration certificates.

However, the study also found room for further improvement in SOP effectiveness. Obstacles such as insufficient public awareness regarding the SOPs, limited human resources, and suboptimal technology utilization have hindered their full implementation. Consequently, public complaints persist regarding long queues, delays in service completion, and inconsistencies in service quality among different staff members.

Overall, the study demonstrates that SOPs play a crucial role in enhancing service quality; however, their success hinges on consistent implementation, staff professionalism, the availability of facilities and infrastructure, and the agency's commitment to continuous evaluation and improvement. By strengthening adherence to SOPs and bolstering organizational support, the quality of public services at the Manado City Population and Civil Registration Agency can be further optimized to meet public expectations.

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