



Public Service: The Pillar of Responsive and Inclusive Governance in the Ministry of Religion

Seska Vonny Langitan

Institut Agama Kristen Negeri Manado

Abstract

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The public service is the main instrument in the realization of a democratic, just, and pro-community government. The Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia as an institution in charge of religious services and religious education has a strategic role in providing responsive and inclusive services. This article aims to examine the implementation of public services within the Ministry of Religious Affairs using a descriptive qualitative approach supported by a study of the theory of the New Public Service, the principles of good governance, and the theory of social justice. The findings show that the Ministry of Religious Affairs has implemented various innovations, such as digitalization of services, strengthening of information systems, and increasing service accountability. However, challenges still exist, especially related to the access gap in remote areas and digital literacy of the apparatus. Therefore, a continued commitment is needed to strengthen public service management that focuses on the needs of a pluralistic and diverse society.

Keywords: Public service; Ministry of Religion; responsive; with; good governance; New Public Service

(*) Corresponding Author: seskalangitan01@gmail.com

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INTRODUCTION

Public service is a form of implementation of the state's duty to guarantee the fundamental rights of citizens. In Indonesia, the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Kemenag) has a strategic position as a provider of religious and educational services that directly affect people's lives. This article aims to examine the role of public services in building a responsive and inclusive government within the Ministry of Religious Affairs, by adding theoretical studies and methodological approaches to support the analysis.

In the realization of good governance, this can easily be done through the public service sector, especially by prioritizing the improvement of the government's bureaucratic performance in public services. The renewal of public service delivery can be used as an entry point and at the same time as the main driver in encouraging changes in good governance practices in Indonesia.

Therefore, the term public service is also called the term service to people (society), both social service, general service and basic service. Various efforts have been made by public service providers to realize quality services, especially



through openness, accountability, effectiveness, and efficiency that promote the supremacy of law, and open public participation.

This will ensure orderliness, harmony, and integration of management and development activities and functions, ultimately achieving Good Governance. Public Service Reform can be carried out as long as there is concern from all stakeholders to make it happen (Dwiyanto, digitalization 2018). Basically, the foundation of Public Service is: 1) Public service is a right of a citizen as mandated by the constitution. So, it is the government's obligation to fix it alone (by the government bureaucracy) or in collaboration with the private sector; 2) Public services are organized using taxes paid by citizens (State Administration Institute, 2017). All important elements in the public service (organizers, both government or private and the community as users of the service) must open a space for dialogue to understand the differences between them. Through this process, it is expected that consensus and synergy will grow in the implementation of good governance programs in society where each has its own characteristics but the three cannot stand and develop alone. They lead to one goal, a better life for every level of society. In general, every renewal and change in the life of the country and state, is intended to realize a democratic government to realize good governance. The first steps of public service can also come from bureaucracy. This is because bureaucratic officials position themselves more as leaders in need of services than as public servants, which causes the development of the orientation and tradition of serving the people in the orientation of the government that always experiences poverty.

In this writing, the author is looking for sources of data to use as a basis of thinking, this is through articles from the internet, or from print media or libraries. The Data Collection Technique used by the author uses secondary data.

Theoretical Studies

Every government agency is formed to achieve the goal of providing satisfaction to the community, if the goals set can be said to be successful. To achieve the goals set, proper and quality service is needed. Because proper and quality services will help the government achieve these goals. Service is very important for every community because the better the quality of the service provided, the more trust the community gives to the government involved in the service sector. Based on Law Number 25 of 2009, Article One (1) Regarding Public Service, the definition of public service is as follows: "Public Service is an activity or series of activities to meet the service needs in accordance with laws and regulations for every citizen and resident for goods, services, and/or administrative services provided by public service providers".

If analyzed specifically, that service is the provision of basic rights to citizens or communities according to their needs and interests as regulated by law. Service means serving the people being served. If serving, then in reality it is rendering services and devotion professionally. Service means seriously serving the people being served to fulfill their needs and interests in order to provide satisfaction and benefit to the people being served. According to Indri and Hayat in Hayat (2015:22) stated that: "the optimization of public service is the provision of professional and quality service with positive implications for public satisfaction". According to the Decree of the Minister of Empowerment of State

Apparatus Number 25 of 2004: "public service is all service activities carried out by public service providers as an effort to fulfill the needs of service recipients, or in the context of implementing the provisions of the law". According to Hayat (2017:22) "public service is serving all aspects of basic services that the community needs to fulfill in accordance with its provisions"

Mukaron and Laksana, (2016:41) said that: "Public Service is the provision of services (servicing) to the needs of people or communities that have an interest in the organization in accordance with the basic rules and procedures established". From the different opinions about the definition of public service above, it can be concluded that the definition of public service is a service activity carried out professionally, with quality, and with a positive service that helps meet the needs of the community in accordance with government regulations.

Public services can be understood through various approaches to public administration theory, including:

1. Teori New Public Service (NPS) – Denhardt & Denhardt (2000)

The New Public Service emphasizes that government is not only a service provider, but also a steward of community needs. Public services must:

- Put the interest of the community first
- Involves citizen participation
- Prioritizing accountability and social justice

2. Theory of Good Governance

The principles of good governance such as transparency, accountability, participation, effectiveness and inclusiveness are the benchmarks for the success of the modern public service.

3. Theory of Social Justice – John Rawls

In the context of public services in the Ministry of Religion, the theory of social justice is important to ensure that all groups in society, including religious minority groups, receive equal and dignified services.

METHODOLOGY

This article uses a descriptive qualitative approach, that is, by describing the phenomenon of public services based on secondary data, such as official documents of the Ministry of Religion, laws and regulations, and the results of relevant previous studies.

Data source

- Law No. 25 of 2009 regarding Public Services
- The Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Religion (Renstra)
- Ministry of Religion Government Agency Performance Accountability Report (LAKIP)
- Digital public service applications (Pusaka Superapps, Siskohat, etc.)
- Literature study from newspapers and literature on public administration and religious services

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of Public Services in the Ministry of Religion

The Ministry of Religion provides very complex and extensive services, including:

1. Administration of Religion
 - Marriage and reconciliation services through the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA)
 - Issuance of permits for places of worship and certification of religious educators
 - Management of waqf and zakat
2. Hajj and Umrah Services
 - Through the SISKOHAT system and online services
 - Guidance and counseling before departure
3. Religious Education and Formal Religion
 - Management of madrasas, Islamic boarding schools and religious colleges
 - Scholarship and accreditation services for religious educational institutions
4. Facilitate Interfaith Harmony
 - Interfaith Harmony Forum (FKUB)
 - Conflict mediation and interreligious dialogue

Innovation at Digital Transformation

The Ministry of Religion is undertaking various innovations to create more responsive and inclusive services:

- Pusaka Superapps: Integration of various Kemenag services in one application
- Digitization of KUA services: Marriage registration system and online consultation
- Digital-based Halal Certification: Through BPJPH, the process is faster and more transparent
- Transformation of the IT-based madrasa education system

Referring to the NPS theory and the principles of good governance, the Ministry of Religious Affairs shows a paradigm shift from strict bureaucracy to more participatory and digital services. However, challenges still exist, such as:

- Differences in access to services in 3T areas (frontier, remote, and underdeveloped)
- Digital literacy gap between ASN and society
- Lack of participatory community oversight in service evaluation

Synergy between central and regional governments is needed, as well as human resource capacity building to ensure that services truly reach all groups.

CONCLUSION

The public services at the Ministry of Religious Affairs are not only about administrative aspects, but also a manifestation of the state's commitment to ensure an orderly, peaceful, and just religious life. By applying the principles of good governance, digital innovation, and social justice approaches, the Ministry of Religious Affairs can become a model of responsive and inclusive public service in a pluralistic society.

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