



Implementation of Village Administration Service Innovation in Barru District, Indonesia

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

This research evaluates the Digital Village Application (Digidés) within Barru Regency's village administration, aiming to align with public service principles to improve service delivery and achieve administrative efficiency. It explores Digidés' operational benefits and identifies challenges like insufficient transparency, limited community engagement, and rights and obligations imbalances. The study underscores the necessity of innovation in governance to meet community needs and enhance social justice. Key recommendations include Digidés' integration with other governmental platforms, IT infrastructure enhancement, digital literacy promotion, and increased transparency and community involvement. These steps are intended to maximize Digidés' utility, promoting equitable and effective public services. This contribution enriches the digital governance discourse, providing insights and recommendations to advance village administration through technological innovation.

Keywords: *Innovation; public service; village administration; digitalization; Barru Regency.*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Law Number 25 of 2009 underscores the critical importance of fostering public trust in public services, in alignment with citizens' expectations and demands for enhanced service quality [1]. Article 4 of this legislation stipulates that the provision of public services is grounded in principles such as public interest, legal certainty, equality of rights, a balance of rights and obligations, professionalism, participation, non-discriminatory treatment, transparency, accountability, the provision of facilities, and special considerations for vulnerable groups, in addition to timeliness, simplicity, and affordability. This is aimed at reinforcing the rights and obligations of citizens and upholding the responsibility of the state and corporations in public services, while also safeguarding the community from abuses of authority in the implementation of services [1].

Establishing an administrative order in villages is crucial for achieving administrative effectiveness, allowing for well-organized operations, accurate data documentation, and seamless governance, aimed at enhancing efficiency and aligning with set objectives. This approach, drawing from Osborne and Gaebler's [2] advocacy for an entrepreneurial spirit in the public sector, emphasizes efficiency, flexibility, and service orientation, akin to the World Bank's [3] emphasis on Good Governance, which stresses the importance of transparency, accountability, and streamlined processes for improved public service delivery and governance outcomes.

The discrepancy between the theoretical framework of village administrative order and its practical application is evident in the statistics reported by the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia for the first quarter of 2022, which revealed 2,706 public reports or complaints about alleged maladministration in public services, with 154 specifically pertaining to village governance [4]. The three predominant areas of concern identified were prolonged delays (59.62%), failure to provide services (13.92%), and procedural deviations (13.72%). These figures underscore the challenges in fully implementing effective village administrative order across all villages, highlighting areas where improvements are crucial.

In addressing the challenges within village administrative services, innovation stands out as a key strategy, involving the adoption

of new ideas, methods, or technologies to improve the services provided by village governments, aiming to enhance efficiency, effectiveness, and community satisfaction [5]. This drive for innovation is supported by New Public Management principles, advocating for the incorporation of private sector practices to boost public sector efficiency and responsiveness [6], and is further echoed in Digital Governance theories, which highlight the transformative potential of digital technologies in streamlining governmental processes and improving service delivery to the public [7].

The integration of the Digital Village Application (Digides), featuring the Village Information System (SID) as its core, marks a significant advancement in village-level administration and service management, enhancing essential information management, decision-making speed, transparency, and community engagement in village development [8,9]. Before Digides' implementation in Barru Regency, village service administration faced hurdles like limited resources, skill and knowledge deficits, inadequate structures, traditional process reliance, low community engagement, regulatory complexities, technological barriers, and limited legal awareness, highlighting the critical need for digital solutions such as Digides to transform village governance and address these challenges effectively [10,11].

Survey results in Barru Regency indicate that 22 of 40 villages have adopted the Digital Village Application (Digides) for administrative processes. Pao-pao Village, in Tanete Rilau District, exemplifies significant service delivery improvements, reducing the need for physical office visits by issuing about 700 administrative letters from January to May 2023 through Digides, demonstrating its efficiency in administrative task management [12,13]. However, Digides' usage is not fully optimized across the regency, with some villages lagging in application utilization and website updates, pointing to inconsistencies in its effective deployment [14,8].

This study aims to analyze the deployment of Digides in Barru Regency's village administration, focusing on its congruence with public service principles. The research assesses how Digides contributes to governance, efficiency, and service delivery enhancement, identifying usage barriers and proposing strategies to improve its application [15,16].

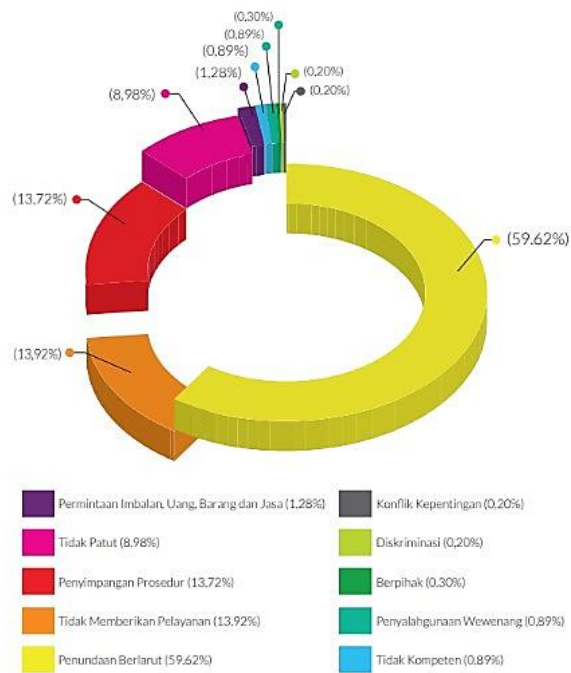


Fig. 1. Public reports of alleged maladministration
 Source: Ombudsman of Indonesia 2022

2. METHODS

This research in Barru Regency examined the deployment of the Digital Village Application (Digides) in village administration, applying a descriptive analytical method to explore its alignment with public service principles like transparency, accountability, and participation, drawing on theories by Denhardt & Denhardt [17] and Osborne & Gaebler [2]. Informant selection was strategic, involving key village administrative officials and service recipients, including Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), to garner a detailed understanding of Digides' effects and operational challenges. This mixed group of primary and secondary informants provided insights into the practical application of administrative principles, the innovative aspects of Digides, and its implementation hurdles in the village governance context [18,8].

This research on the Digital Village Application (Digides) in Barru Regency's village administration employed a dual data collection strategy, using primary data from interviews with key informants and secondary data from relevant documents. A detailed interview guide ensured consistent, in-depth information gathering, while secondary data provided additional quantitative and qualitative context [19]. The study's diverse tools, including interview and observation guides, along with notes on secondary sources, facilitated a comprehensive analysis from various perspectives [20]. Analysis followed a qualitative interactive model, focusing on data reduction, presentation, and conclusion derivation, over a three-month period from February to May 2023, ensuring a thorough investigation and synthesis of findings [22].

Table 1. Summary of informant data

No.	Informant Type	Number of Informants
1	Village Secretary	1 person
2	Head of Government Section	2 people
3	Head of Village Services Section	1 person
4	Service User Community	4 people
5	Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)	1 person
	Total	9 people

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following are the results of the field research conducted to examine the depiction of the implementation of the innovation of app-based village services (*Digides*) based on the principles of public services in Barru Regency.

3.1 Implementation of Village Administration in Barru Regency

The findings from detailed interviews during this study indicate discrepancies in the application of the Digital Village Application (*Digides*) with respect to the foundational principles of public services. These gaps have led to several significant implications:

- a. **Suboptimal Service Quality:** The misalignment with public service principles adversely impacts the service quality. When the implementation falls short of embodying the essential elements of public services, it detracts from both the effectiveness of the services and community satisfaction. This underscores the critical need for aligning digital innovations with core public service values to ensure high service quality [22].
- b. **Inequality in Access and Utilization:** The failure to adhere to public service principles exacerbates access and utilization disparities concerning the Digital Village Application. Consequently, not all community members reap the benefits equitably from such technological advancements, highlighting the importance of inclusivity in digital governance initiatives [23].
- c. **Lack of Community Participation:** The partial fulfillment of public service principles can impede meaningful community engagement with the application. Reduced participation undermines both the efficacy of the innovation and its intended positive ramifications on village administration, emphasizing the role of participatory governance [24].
- d. **Lack of Transparency and Accountability:** Deviating from public service norms can significantly erode transparency and accountability within village governance frameworks. This erosion potentially diminishes public confidence in village authorities, stressing the necessity for

transparent and accountable governance mechanisms [25].

- e. **Negative Perception of Innovation:** Community sentiment that *Digides* fails to align with public service standards may foster antagonism towards the innovation. Such perceptions threaten the adoption and long-term viability of the application, illustrating the importance of aligning technological innovations with public expectations [26].

These insights collectively underline the essential nature of ensuring that digital innovations in public service delivery, such as *Digides*, are firmly rooted in the principles of public service to maximize their effectiveness and foster positive community outcomes.

The non-alignment with public service principles in the implementation of the Digital Village Application (*Digides*) highlights a crucial factor impacting its effectiveness and community acceptance. Reports from the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia in early 2022 indicate inconsistencies in village administration adherence, revealing 2,706 public complaints of maladministration, with 154 pertaining to village governance, emphasizing issues like extended delays, service failures, and procedural errors. These findings point to the significant hurdles in establishing a streamlined and effective village governance system.

In this context, *Digides* presents itself as a transformative tool, offering digital solutions to overcome these governance challenges. Its ability to simplify administrative tasks, improve service efficiency, and boost community engagement marks a critical advancement in integrating digital technologies into village governance. By addressing key administrative issues such as delays, service delivery shortcomings, procedural non-compliance, and enhancing community interaction and complaint resolution, *Digides* aligns with the primary goals of enhancing public services, suggesting its role as a key driver in the modernization of village governance processes.

This research delineates the innovative contributions of the *Digides* application to village administration, marked by the application's potential to:

- a. **Streamline Administrative Processes:** By automating and optimizing administrative

- tasks, Digidis can significantly reduce delays in public service provision, enhancing the efficiency and responsiveness of village governance.
- b. **Enhance Service Delivery:** The application's ability to offer improved service accessibility and efficiency underscores a critical advancement in meeting the diverse needs of the community, irrespective of geographical constraints.
 - c. **Prevent Procedural Deviations:** Digidis' tracking and auditing functionalities ensure adherence to administrative procedures, minimizing the risk of deviations and promoting transparency in governance processes.
 - d. **Foster Community Engagement:** The emphasis on user-friendly design and targeted socialization efforts aims to bolster community involvement in village administration, highlighting the role of participatory governance.
 - e. **Facilitate Complaint Management:** The integration of online reporting features within Digidis enhances the capacity of village governments to address and resolve community grievances effectively, thereby improving public trust in local governance.
- The study presents a fresh approach to overcoming administrative challenges in village governance through digital innovation, specifically the Digital Village Application (Digidis). It highlights Digidis' advantages, outlines the hurdles faced during its deployment, and proposes actionable strategies in a Policy Brief for Barru Regency's local government. This research enriches digital governance discussions by demonstrating how technological solutions can significantly improve public service delivery and administrative efficiency, contributing important insights for enhancing local governance through technology.

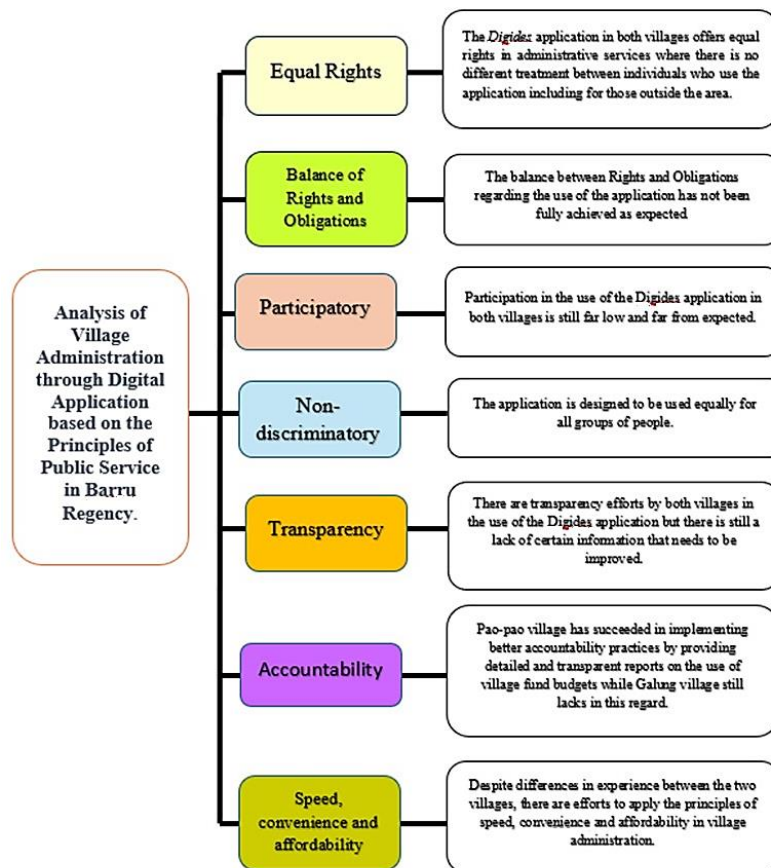


Chart 1. Implementation of the innovation of app-based village services (*Digidis*) based on the principles of public services in Barru Regency

Source: Processed Research Data Figure

The integration of the Digital Village Application (Digides) into village administration presents a transformative approach to overcoming prevalent administrative challenges. This digital innovation has the potential to significantly enhance the efficiency, transparency, and accessibility of public services within village governance. The findings from the research offer a comprehensive overview of how Digides can address the issues identified, with the following solutions:

- a. **Addressing Prolonged Delays:** By streamlining administrative workflows through Digides, village administrations can significantly reduce the time delays associated with the provision of public services. The application's notification and reminder functionalities are instrumental in ensuring that administrative actions are taken promptly, thus minimizing service delivery delays [27].
- b. **Improving Public Services:** The deployment of Digides enables village governments to offer more efficient and expedited services. Its capacity to enhance service accessibility, irrespective of the residents' geographical location, as exemplified by students from Galung Village accessing services in Makassar, is indicative of the application's potential to bridge service delivery gaps across diverse community segments [28].
- c. **Prevention of Procedural Deviations:** By incorporating features designed to ensure adherence to administrative procedures, Digides mitigates the risk of procedural inaccuracies. The application's tracking and auditing capabilities facilitate the transparent monitoring of processes, thereby reducing the likelihood of deviations and enhancing procedural integrity [8].
- d. **Enhancing Community Participation:** Digides can significantly boost community engagement in village services through targeted socialization and training initiatives. By developing a user-friendly interface, the application ensures that a broader segment of the community can easily access and utilize digital services, thereby fostering greater community involvement in governance processes [29].
- e. **Reporting and Handling Complaints:** The inclusion of online reporting functionalities within Digides empowers community members to report instances of potential maladministration [30]. This feature enhances the responsiveness of village governments to community grievances, facilitating more

effective complaint resolution and fostering public trust in village administration [14,31].

The novelty of this research lies in its detailed exploration of the Digital Village Application (Digides) within the context of village administration in Barru Regency, presenting a nuanced understanding of its operational benefits, encountered challenges, and actionable recommendations. This study contributes original insights into three primary areas:

- a. **Benefits of Digides:** The research elucidates the specific advantages offered by the Digides application in enhancing administrative efficiency, service delivery speed, and community accessibility. These benefits are contextualized within the broader objectives of improving public service delivery at the village level, thereby extending the existing knowledge on the application of digital solutions in local governance.
- b. **Challenges in Implementation:** By identifying and analyzing the challenges faced during the implementation of Digides, the study offers a fresh perspective on the practical obstacles to digital transformation in village administrations. These challenges range from technological barriers and limited digital literacy to issues of procedural adherence and equitable access, providing a comprehensive overview of the hurdles to be overcome for successful digital integration.
- c. **Recommendations and Policy Brief:** Perhaps most notably, the research culminates in the formulation of targeted recommendations and the preparation of a Policy Brief intended for the Barru Regency Regional Government. This document encapsulates the study's findings and proposes specific actions to enhance the effectiveness of Digides, tailored to the unique administrative and governance context of Barru Regency. The Policy Brief represents a novel contribution, translating the research insights into actionable strategies for policymakers and administrators.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMENDATIONS

The exploration of the Digital Village Application (Digides) within Barru Regency's village administration landscape underscores a pivotal stride towards enhancing administrative efficacy grounded in public service principles. This

endeavor is vital for fulfilling community necessities and fostering social justice.

Research Insights: The investigation into Digides' deployment across Barru Regency unveils its innovative potential in revolutionizing village administrative services. Nonetheless, the study surfaces critical areas requiring attention, including enhancing transparency, bolstering accountability, augmenting community engagement in the application's evolution, and rectifying the imbalance of rights and obligations among stakeholders.

Developmental Potential of Digides: Digides harbors the capacity to significantly elevate village public services. A dedication towards continual innovation and the rectification of highlighted issues can transform Digides into a pivotal asset for public services in Barru Regency, propelling it towards ensuring a more cohesive, quantifiable service delivery that uplifts rural community living standards.

4.1 Recommendations

- 1. Integration and Feature Expansion:** Advised is the augmentation of Digides with new functionalities and its integration with other pivotal platforms such as the Civil Registration Office, the Department of Education and Culture, and the Social Services Department. Such integration aims to fortify the IT ecosystem, elevate operational efficiency, and catalyze synergy among agencies in public service delivery within Barru Regency.
- 2. IT Infrastructure Evaluation:** A comprehensive assessment of the IT infrastructure underpinning this integration is crucial. Establishing standard protocols for data exchange across applications and implementing rigorous data security measures are essential to preserving information integrity and sustainability.
- 3. Training and Digital Literacy:** The initiation of extensive training sessions on digital application utilization for village communities is vital. This initiative aims to improve application understanding and operational proficiency.
- 4. Effective Socialization:** Amplifying efforts to socialize the benefits and functionalities of digital applications across all societal segments is recommended. This strategy ensures

widespread awareness and adept application use.

- 5. Enhancing Transparency:** It is imperative to improve the transparency within the application by offering more detailed, comprehensible information accessible to the community.
- 6. Stakeholder Collaboration:** Fostering collaborations with relevant entities, both institutional and private, is essential for supporting the application's enhancement and broader implementation.

4.2 Conclusion

By adhering to these recommendations, the Local Government of Barru Regency stands to significantly harness the full spectrum of Digides' benefits, thereby advancing public service quality and championing community empowerment. This strategic approach not only aligns with public service tenets but also sets a precedent for digital governance innovation in rural administrative contexts.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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