Work Performance in Improving the Public Service Quality
(Research on Semuntai Village Long Ikis District Paser Regency)

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ABSTRACT

The insufficient public knowledge in Semuntai Village, Long Ikis District, Paser Regency, regarding the completeness of service application files results in delays, compelling community members to make multiple visits. This qualitative descriptive study aimed to analyze employee performance in improving public services. Interviews with employees and community members,

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coupled with observations and document analysis, revealed commendable skills in technology, data processing, societal understanding, and public speaking, despite discrepancies in employee placement based on knowledge. Employee discipline, especially concerning office hours, needs improvement, yet personal efforts to enhance work quality through technical guidance and workshops are evident. Persistence in task execution is notable. In terms of work dimensions, cost-saving practices are in place, but punctuality issues persist, and while technology proficiency is noteworthy, deficiencies remain in supporting facilities and infrastructure. Overall, Semuntai Village employee performance is fairly good, with areas such as discipline, skills, time flexibility, and infrastructure support identified for improvement in public service delivery.

**Keywords:** Performance, Employees, Public Service.

**Introduction**

Performance in an organization is the outcome of both qualitative and quantitative efforts. In the context of public organizations, optimal performance is characterized by the successful achievement of goals and targets within the stipulated timeframe, aligning with the designated functions and responsibilities of a specific government institution (Tangkilisan, 2005). Concurrently, the concept of public service encompasses all activities undertaken by the state to fulfill community needs and enforce legal provisions. Entities responsible for executing public service activities include government agencies at both central and regional levels, as well as State-Owned Enterprises or Regional-Owned Enterprises. The establishment of these services is rooted in the objective of addressing the essential living requirements of all citizens, reflecting a societal consensus that certain services should be universally accessible irrespective of individuals' social status or income levels. Recipients of public services encompass individuals, groups, and/or legal entities with rights and obligations pertaining to a given public service. In Indonesia, public services are governed by Law number 25 of 2009, defining them as activities conducted by bureaucratic institutions with the aim of meeting community needs.

Public services serve as key indicators for evaluating government performance. The public can gauge the government's effectiveness directly through the quality of the services they receive. The impact of public services is experienced by individuals from diverse backgrounds, and the success of building a professional, effective, efficient, and accountable public service performance can significantly enhance public trust in government operations. Unfortunately, current public services delivered by government officials exhibit numerous weaknesses, falling short of meeting the quality standards expected by the public. Recognizing the government as a public servant, it is imperative for the government to consistently endeavor to enhance the quality of its services.
Semuntai Village office in the Long Ikis District, Paser Regency, faces challenges in its public services, particularly administrative functions such as issuing population administration documents and land certificates. A notable issue is the lack of awareness among individuals seeking these services about the necessary document requirements, leading to multiple visits to the village office for completion. For instance, when applying for an SKT/Seal/SHM, individuals must submit documents like the original owner's KTP, the limit owner's KTP (right, left, front, back), stamp, and witness. This knowledge gap hinders efficient service delivery, turning what should be a quick process into a prolonged one due to incomplete document submissions. Addressing this issue is crucial for enhancing the overall effectiveness and responsiveness of public services in the village.

Numerous researchers have delved into the realm of organizational performance, with a particular focus on the Village Government officials who are often perceived as the local extension of the central government (Komalasari & Krismawintari, 2018). The significance of leadership characterized by integrity and values is emphasized as it can instigate positive changes in the behavior of subordinates, thereby influencing overall officials performance (Fitriani, Saharuddin, et al., 2021). Expectations for officials to adhere to established procedures while prioritizing service quality have been underscored in the literature (Kwan et al., 2013). Regrettably, subpar services provided by village officials contribute to a negative community perception of the government (Hajar, 2021).

Referring to the aforementioned description, the researcher asserts the distinctiveness of this study in comparison to prior research. While previous investigations predominantly explored employee performance through the lens of the Village Head's role as a model for subordinates, team cohesion, and the extension of the Central Government, this research takes a novel approach by applying Performance theory to analyze the performance of Semuntai Village employees in the Long Ikis District of Paser Regency.

**Research Methods**

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive approach, employing interviews with 7 village government officials and 5 residents from Semuntai Village in the Long Ikis District of Paser Regency. In addition to interviews, the research incorporates observational methods and documentation collection related to the research focus. Data analysis involves reduction techniques, presentation of findings, and drawing conclusions. The research aims to identify and
understand employee performance in enhancing public services, as well as explore initiatives aimed at improving public service performance in Semuntai Village. Drawing on Hasibuan's (2001) perspective, performance is perceived as the mental attitude of employees who demonstrate a strong work ethic, a manifestation of which is observable through various factors as follows.

1. Self Improvement can be measured by enhancement in these following traits.
   a. Knowledge in the field of work,
   b. Job skills,
   c. Work discipline,
   d. Personal efforts to enhance the quality of work,
   e. Perseverance in work.

2. Professional improvement can be measured by enhancement in these following traits.
   a. Cost savings,
   b. Punctuality in work,
   c. Better mastery of technology and systems.

Results and Discussion

Employee Performance in Relation to Public Service Improvement in Semuntai Village

In the context of public services, the enhancement of service quality is pivotal, and each agency adopts specific measures to ensure efficient service delivery to the public. The quality of service from an agency is intricately linked to the actions of its personnel, as they play a direct role in determining the overall success of the organization. Hasibuan (2001) contends that performance is indicative of the mental attitude of employees who are driven to work diligently. The analysis of employee performance in elevating public services in Semuntai Village is as follows.

1) Self Improvement can be measured based on the following parameters:
   a. Work-related knowledge

Performance is defined as a compilation of work activities associated with behavior in fulfilling obligations within the organization (Situmorang, 2022). Observations conducted by the researcher reveal that officials in Semuntai Village, Long Ikis District, Paser Regency, exhibit diverse educational backgrounds. However, it is noted that not all officials are placed in positions aligned with their educational qualifications. Findings from interviews indicate that the abilities of each employee are generally quite adequate as reflected the organizational structure of the employees below.
Figure 1 illustrates the Organizational Structure and the Education Background of Semuntai Village Office Employees. Source: Village Office of Semuntai Village Long Ikis District Paser Regency, 2022

Figure 1 is further elaborated as follows.

a) **The Head of the Governance Section** is actually considered somewhat mismatched with the position held. However, the Bachelor's degree in Economics can also be utilized for its knowledge in governance, particularly in managing limited resources around the village. In contrast, the Head of Planning Affairs, with a Bachelor's degree in Economics, seems more fitting as economic knowledge is closely related to planning, especially concerning village development, budgeting, and more.

b) **The Head of Welfare Section** seems to have a significant disparity in educational background compared to the position held.

c) **The Head of Service & Village Secretary** holds a Bachelor's degree in Education. As we know, individuals from an educational background are usually adept at blending in when it comes to public service, communicating clearly, and providing satisfactory service to users. They often exhibit a nurturing attitude towards subordinates and, of course, towards the community.

d) Regarding the **Head of Financial Affairs**, the writer observes that she is a woman who, despite holding a degree in Education, appears meticulous and precise in managing finances. Ideally, this position should be filled by someone with a degree in Economics.

e) **The Village Head** has a degree in Agriculture or Agronomy. Perhaps this educational background can be useful in harnessing the natural resources of the village, especially considering that Semuntai Village is classified as an oil palm farming area.
However, the emphasis is that knowledge and the ability to master a field can be learned over time, provided that employees have a high curiosity to learn. This is crucial to support and expedite the service processes in the village.

**b. Professional Skills**

The proficiency of each employee is inherently connected to their most recent educational background. For instance, an employee with a background in computer science is likely to find it easier to grasp information about existing systems and operational equipment. During an interview conducted by the author with Semuntai Village Head on November 8, 2022, at 08:40 WITA in the Service room, the Village Head expressed that these skills can be honed with a willingness to learn, even if the educational background of most Semuntai Village office workers does not precisely align with the job criteria. Over time, employees have demonstrated the capacity to fulfill their duties and responsibilities, facilitating the provision of quality service. Sulistiani (2016) posits that skill improvement is derived from knowledge and experience. julianto (2018) underscores the significance of strong abilities in accelerating the achievement of organizational goals, with employee performance being significantly influenced by skill levels. The greater the proficiency of an employee, the higher the level of performance they can attain.

The Village Head, serving as the leader of the village organization, plays a crucial role in enhancing employee performance. Primarily, the Village Head serves as a motivator, encouraging village employees to conscientiously improve their skills to expedite public services within the village. Additionally, the Village Head can actively pursue budgetary priorities for employees, particularly in supporting their participation in education, training activities, or relevant technical guidance aligned with the skills needed for public service. Drawing from insights obtained through informant interviews, the researcher identifies several skills that Semuntai Village employees should possess as follows:

1) Mastery of Computer Technology, Internet, and Systems

   All employees are required not to be technologically challenged, considering the increasingly modern era where all affairs and activities are closely related to technology.

2) Skill in Bookkeeping Data Processing

   This skill is undoubtedly crucial, as it can be used in calculating the Village Budget (APBDesa) and returning unutilized funds (Silpa). Such skills can maximize cost savings.
3) Understanding the Community's Character

As public servants, employees of Semuntai Village are expected to understand and be familiar with the character of their residents. This skill is essential to reduce complaints, conflicts, and misunderstandings among the community regarding the services provided by the village government.

4) Public Speaking

This skill is an initial asset for a public servant. In their daily activities as service providers, employees are required to speak in front of the general public wisely, avoiding any impression of offense or hurt feelings. The findings in this research reinforce the results of a study conducted by Fitriani et al. (2021) which states that there is a significant influence between job skills and the quality of public services.

c. Work Discipline

Discipline stands as the foundational element in fostering effective public services, and the current state of disciplinary attitudes among subordinates in Semuntai Village is reported to be somewhat lacking. According to employee disclosures, tardiness or absenteeism is occasionally attributed to family or urgent matters. In an interview with the Head of Semuntai Village on November 8, 2022, at 08:53 WITA in the Service room, the Village Head mentioned not having established specific rules or sanctions for employees. Instead, the practice involves summoning and providing verbal warnings to subordinates who are absent for three consecutive days without prior notice or clear information. Public grievances include the inability to access services due to employee absence, causing residents to endure extended wait times when seeking assistance or conducting transactions. Additionally, the frequent tardiness of employees further contributes to residents’ inconvenience.

During interviews with residents at Semuntai Village office, the researcher noted a general lack of community awareness regarding village Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). A majority of residents are unfamiliar with essential details, such as the required supporting data for processing land documents like SKT/Seal/SHM. This lack of knowledge is attributed to the absence of information on Village Information boards and insufficient direct government education to the community. Consequently, residents often face the inconvenience of making multiple trips to complete missing files. Additionally, there is a lack of communication about changes, such as the relocation of new KTP processing from the village office to the sub-district office. Residents also expressed concerns about the punctuality of certain employees, leading to
extended waiting times for services. The community members present during the researcher's visit revealed that they had never participated in any socialization efforts regarding service SOPs from Semuntai Village. The challenges faced by the community in file processing include waiting for absent employees, prolonged wait times due to slow computer equipment, and a dearth of written information on the village information board. Regarding the competency and skills of village employees, residents indicated an uneven distribution of capabilities, potentially linked to issues of employee discipline. Aljabar (2020) emphasizes the critical importance of a disciplined attitude among employees, viewing it as integral to effective and efficient agency management and the achievement of village government goals.

d. Personal Efforts Performed to Improve the Work Quality

Performance involves a stack of tasks undertaken by the respective village officials to enhance the quality of work in Semuntai Village, Long Ikis Subdistrict. Referring to the research results, it is evident that Semuntai Village employees frequently participate in various training programs, including:


b. Training on the Acceleration of Stunting Mitigation, reduction of Maternal Mortality Rate (AKI) and Infant Mortality Rate, as well as addressing the increasing cases of Dengue Fever (DBD) in the Long Ikis Health Center area.

c. Training on Geographic Information System (GIS) using QGIS, organized by Kawal Borneo CF. This training took place at the Multipurpose Building Awa Bepakat, Modang Village, from October 19 to October 23, 2022.

This activity was organized by the Production Forest Management Center Region XI on Thursday, November 3, 2022. It took place at Platinum Hotel & Convention in Balikpapan City, with an agenda focused on enhancing the capacity of human resources for forest management, Forest Management Unit (KTH), and Assistants/Counselors for the Forest Management Unit (KPH).

The author concludes that the initiative to educate village officials about forest management may not be a top priority, as this knowledge seems more fitting for community members who are the owners or managers of the forest. The village government's role is perceived as primarily supervisory. Consequently, the author recommends that Semuntai Village employees redirect their
focus toward self-development, emphasizing the study of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), particularly those related to public services, for enhanced understanding. Additionally, suggested efforts include the introduction of internet network installations, learning leadership skills, and participating in training for self-development, particularly in the area of public speaking.

e. Perseverance at Work

The research findings indicate that employees have diligently fulfilled their job responsibilities, particularly towards the end of the year, when there is a substantial volume of data that needs completion and verification. In interviews with the Head of Planning Affairs and the Government Section, it was emphasized that their perseverance as public servants has been a crucial factor in navigating the pressures of their work. This resilience, demonstrated in the face of challenges, serves as a supportive element for self-development in the workplace. The employees' curiosity also plays a role in driving their commitment to their tasks, with a motivation to apply newfound knowledge in serving the community. This diligence is further reflected in the employees' disciplined attendance, adhering to the operational hours of Semuntai Village Office.

Sipahutar & Dalimunthe (2022) assert that persistence is a source of hope for individuals striving to take action. In this context, persistence can significantly enhance employee productivity in aligning with the vision and mission of the village government. Based on the research findings, the conclusion can be drawn that persistence serves as a training ground for cultivating patience and consistency among employees. This unwavering and consistent perseverance facilitates the smoother execution of tasks, particularly in delivering services to the community, ultimately contributing to improved work performance.

2) Work-Related

a. Cost Savings

The allocation of the current budget is deemed to be in line with established standards, with the village government adopting an open and transparent system. This approach ensures that the entire village community is informed, dispelling any misconceptions about budget markups or corruption by the village government. As part of cost-saving measures, Semuntai Village Government actively promotes transparency to the public. This is exemplified through the installation of posters at the village office shown in the following Figure.
Semuntai Village Government has prominently displayed a sizable billboard directly in front of its office, serving as a visual representation of the tangible impact of the 2022 regional budget on the community. This initiative aims to transparently communicate the genuine value derived from the allocated funds. The strategic placement of the billboard signifies the government's commitment to fostering open discussions with the community regarding the allocation of these funds in the future. Prioritization of urgent and targeted projects will be a key focus, aligning with community needs. In accordance with prior research findings, it is crucial to address the calculation of excess budget returns. Researchers have emphasized that any surplus exceeding the 30% threshold, as outlined in PP. 22/2015, must be promptly returned. Failure to comply with this regulation may result in sanctions (Ariantini, 2015).

b. Punctuality at Work

Referring to the discourse on work discipline among Semuntai Village employees, the matter of punctuality is intricately linked with the overall efficiency of each staff member within the village government. Notably, the author highlights a notable absence of information regarding operational hours on the information board. As per insights gleaned from an interview with the Head of Government, such details are conveyed verbally and are not officially displayed. This deficiency becomes evident when, during a visit at 09:00, the Head of the Services Section and the Head of the Welfare Section were absent, despite the stipulated operational hours from 08:00 WIB to 13:30 WIB without any breaks. Beyond punctuality, the provision of services faces
challenges, with village officials struggling to promptly acquire information from the central administration about policy changes in file management. Consequently, this disrupts services, compelling individuals to make repeated trips to fulfill required supporting data, causing both operational inefficiencies within the village office and inconvenience for the community seeking assistance.

To initiate the attainment of exemplary service, the implementation of a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) stands as a foundational requirement for Semuntai Village Government Employees in fulfilling their responsibilities as public servants. A crucial first move involves the formulation of a written SOP, crystallized into policy form. This policy, once established, should be officially disseminated and rigorously enforced for adherence by all village employees. The responsibility for publishing and ensuring strict compliance with the SOP lies with the appropriate administrative authority. By instituting this SOP, employees will gain a structured framework, empowering them to navigate their duties with precision. In the event of errors, the focus would shift from directly scrutinizing the employee to evaluating and refining the SOP itself.

Earlier research has highlighted the imperative for village government services to adhere to Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), often abbreviated as SOP, especially in fulfilling administrative obligations such as handling correspondence (Hajar, 2021). These procedures serve as regulatory provisions, meticulously guiding administrative processes to ensure the delivery of high-quality services. Additionally, the significance of clearly defined service standards is underscored as a pivotal aspect in achieving service objectives (Panjaitan et al., 2019).

c. Improved System and Technology Mastery

Typically, village officials are consistently offered technical guidance whenever there is new information, whether related to systems or policies. While there is a commendable level of proficiency in the technology sector, the operational efficiency is hindered by the suboptimal availability of equipment, falling below specified standards.

Each desk in Semuntai Village's employee offices, situated in Long Ikis District, Paser Regency, appears to be equipped with operational facilities such as laptops and printers. However, a noticeable shortfall is observed in the availability of chairs in front of the desks designated for each Head of Affairs/Section. Previous researchers have wisely recommended the immediate provision of office facilities in village offices, ensuring that every employee can carry out their community service duties without disruption (Atika et al., 2018). The author aligns with this
recommendation, emphasizing that complete and adequate infrastructure will undeniably enhance the ability of Semuntai Village employees to deliver excellent service. This viewpoint is substantiated by Nurrahman & Rahmadanita (2022) who assert that the physical environment is intricately linked to the quality of public services.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, the research indicates that the performance of Semuntai Village employees in Long Ikis District, Paser Regency, in public services falls within the category of quite good. This assessment is drawn from an evaluation of various dimensions of employee performance, revealing several areas that warrant improvement. Firstly, there is a notable need for enhanced discipline among some employees, particularly concerning punctuality at work. Additionally, the alignment of employee placement with their educational backgrounds requires attention. Another critical aspect to address is the inadequacy of facilities that support employees in their work.

Based on these conclusions, the researcher recommends several key initiatives for Semuntai Village Government to enhance public services. Firstly, issuing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in the form of written policies, particularly addressing working hours, sanctions, rewards, and public service protocols, is crucial for improving service quality. Additionally, prioritizing the allocation of the budget and conducting a comprehensive assessment of operational support facilities, especially in terms of computers and internet networks, is essential to address existing shortcomings. Moreover, the researcher advises the village government to allocate a budget for workshops, technical guidance, or training programs aimed at enhancing employee competencies and skills in their respective roles.

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