

Public Service Management Through Competence of Village Apparatus Resources in Klampok Village

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Abstract**Keywords:**

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This study examines how the competencies of village officials contribute to public service management in Klampok Village, Singosari District, Malang Regency. Despite the growing body of literature on public service and official competencies, prior studies have rarely examined these dimensions within an integrated public service management framework at the village government level, leaving a gap in understanding how competency development functions as a managerial instrument in village governance contexts. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation involving village officials and service users. Data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldãa. The findings specifically reveal that the recruitment of officials with bachelor-level education led to the proactive adoption of digital services via the village website and social media, more structured task allocation based on individual expertise, and a measurable reduction in repeat administrative visits by community members. These improvements directly strengthened the four management functions of planning, organising, actuating, and controlling public services. Competency enhancement also elevated service quality across the SERVQUAL dimensions of tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Nevertheless, uneven information technology skills, irregular training programs, and inadequate digital infrastructure remain persistent challenges. This study contributes theoretically by demonstrating that village officials' competencies serve not merely as individual attributes but as integrative managerial instruments that collectively determine the effectiveness of public service management at the village level, thereby enriching the intersection of human resource competency theory and public administration in village governance.

Kata Kunci:

Manajemen Pelayanan
Publik, Kompetensi
Sumber Daya, Aparatur
Desa, Servqual

Abstrak.

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji bagaimana kompetensi aparatur desa berkontribusi terhadap manajemen pelayanan publik di Desa Klampok, Kecamatan Singosari, Kabupaten Malang. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif dengan pengumpulan data melalui observasi, wawancara mendalam, dan dokumentasi yang melibatkan aparatur desa serta masyarakat pengguna layanan. Analisis data dilakukan menggunakan model interaktif Miles, Huberman, dan Saldãa. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa integrasi pengetahuan, keterampilan, dan sikap profesional aparatur desa memperkuat fungsi manajemen pelayanan

publik yang meliputi perencanaan, pengorganisasian, pelaksanaan, dan pengawasan pelayanan. Peningkatan kompetensi tersebut juga berdampak pada peningkatan kualitas pelayanan berdasarkan dimensi SERVQUAL, yaitu bukti fisik (tangibles), keandalan (reliability), daya tanggap (responsiveness), jaminan (assurance), dan empati (empathy), yang ditandai dengan proses administrasi yang lebih cepat, akses informasi yang lebih mudah, serta meningkatnya kepuasan masyarakat. Pemanfaatan platform digital turut mendukung transparansi dan efisiensi pelayanan. Namun demikian, keterbatasan kemampuan teknologi informasi, kurangnya pelatihan, dan belum memadainya infrastruktur digital masih menjadi tantangan utama. Oleh karena itu, penguatan kapasitas sumber daya manusia serta pengembangan sistem pelayanan berbasis digital diperlukan untuk meningkatkan tata kelola pemerintahan desa dan kualitas pelayanan publik yang berkelanjutan.

INTRODUCTION

Public service is one of the primary functions of government, most closely connected to citizens' daily lives, encompassing the processing of civil registration documents, correspondence, permits, and other administrative services (Sastra Wijaya, 2024). Public service is no longer viewed merely as an administrative activity but as a governmental responsibility for realising good governance, requiring that services be planned, organised, implemented, and controlled in a manner that is timely, accurate, transparent, and responsive to community needs (Ayu Astuti, 2022). Public service management, therefore, constitutes the managerial backbone through which government institutions translate policy into service outcomes that citizens directly experience (Jabri & Ahmad, 2025).

At the village government level, public service management encompasses not only administrative procedures but also the human resource management of village officials, who serve as the primary actors in service delivery (Kartiko et al., 2025; Langgeng & Wilasari, 2023). Indonesia's Law Number 25 of 2009 concerning Public Services stipulates that every citizen has the right to receive quality, accessible, and reliable services, while Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages has granted village governments broader authority in governance, development, community empowerment, and public service delivery (Ardiansyah et al., 2021). This expansion of authority has raised public expectations: citizens no longer expect merely the completion of administrative procedures, but services that are efficient, transparent, and supported by information technology (Trenggana et al., 2025).

Nevertheless, public service delivery at the village level continues to face significant challenges in many regions. Delays in service provision, unclear administrative procedures, limited information transparency, and inadequate service competencies among village officials remain common issues (Wahyudin et al., 2024). Klampok Village, located in Singosari District, Malang Regency, illustrates this problem: field observations and interviews conducted for this study revealed that, before the recent regeneration of village personnel, residents made an average of more than three repeated visits per administrative request, largely due to unclear procedural guidance and manual processing systems (Sholeh et al., 2024). Limited competencies among village officials in administrative management and information technology further hindered the effectiveness of public service management (Akbar & Tjenreng, 2025).

In recent years, Klampok Village has recruited new officials with higher educational qualifications and relatively younger ages, which has contributed to a more modern, responsive, and technology-oriented approach to service management (Sangaji & Irianto, 2025). The village government has reactivated its official website and social media platforms, enabling residents to

access information on village activities, administrative requirements, and public services more quickly and conveniently. (Jacky & Tjenreng, 2025). Officials possessing adequate administrative skills, regulatory knowledge, and strong public service motivation are better equipped to perform managerial functions professionally and responsibly, whereas insufficient competencies may hinder planning, organising, implementation, and control, ultimately reducing public trust in village government institutions (Kartiko et al., 2024; Narisa et al., 2023).

Despite the growing body of literature on public service delivery and public officials' competencies, most previous studies, including Triprasetyo and Imbaruddin on capacity-building programs and human resource innovation. Moreover, the SERVQUAL framework, Zeithaml, which measures service quality through the dimensions of tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy, has rarely been applied together with a competency-management integration analysis in village governance (Widiastuti & Cakranegara, 2022). This gap is significant because village governments, as the governmental units closest to citizens, operate under institutional constraints, including limited budgets, thin staffing, and uneven digital infrastructure, that differ markedly from those of higher-level bureaucracies (Virtanen & Jalonen, 2024).

This study, therefore, proposes that village officials' competencies function not merely as individual performance indicators but as collectively integrated managerial instruments that shape the entire cycle of public service management, thereby advancing the theoretical intersection of human resource competency frameworks and public administration in village governance. Based on the foregoing discussion, this study aims to (1) analyse the role of village officials' competencies in the planning, organising, actuating, and controlling functions of public service management; (2) evaluate the quality of public services in Klampok Village using the SERVQUAL dimensions; and (3) identify the challenges and managerial adaptation strategies employed in the delivery of village public services.

METHOD

This study adopted a qualitative descriptive approach to examine public service management through the competencies (Soelistya, 2022). A qualitative design was chosen because it enables a comprehensive, contextual understanding of public service practices, including the behaviour of village officials, service management patterns, and the experiences of citizens as service users. (Meričková & Muthová, 2021). Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with nine purposively selected informants, comprising three village government officials and six community members as public service users, all of whom had direct and relevant experience with public service delivery in Klampok Village (Husen, 2023).

Data collection combined observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observation was employed to examine public service processes, service facilities, and interactions between village officials and community members. In-depth interviews were carried out to explore the competencies of village officials, the implementation of public service management functions, service quality, and the challenges encountered in service delivery (Husain, 2025). Documentation, comprising SOPs, staffing records, service reports, and photographs, served as supporting evidence and a means of verifying information obtained from the field. The researcher acted as the primary instrument (*human instrument*), supported by interview guidelines, field notes, an audio recording device, and a documentation checklist (Sugiyono, 2021).

Data were then analysed using the interactive model developed by (Miles et al., 2014), which consists of three concurrent stages, namely data condensation, data display, and conclusion

drawing and verification; these stages were carried out iteratively until the findings reached thematic saturation across the three research foci. The three government informants consisted of the Village Head, the Village Secretary, and an administrative service staff member, while the six community informants were selected to represent diversity in age, educational background, and type of administrative service used, namely civil registration, land certification, social aid documentation, and business licensing (Zyzak & Farsund, 2025). The characteristics and roles of the informants are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics and Roles of Research Informants

Code	Characteristics	Function
IG-01	Village Head (male, 38 years old; bachelor's degree in Public Administration; 5 years of service)	Key informant on managerial policy, service planning, and control
IG-02	Village Secretary (female, 34 years old; bachelor's degree in Government Science; 4 years of service)	Key informant on organising and coordination functions
IG-03	Administrative Service Staff (male, 27 years old; bachelor's degree in Information Systems; 2 years of service)	Key informant on digital service implementation
IM-01 – IM-06	Six community members (aged 22–58 years; education from junior high school to university; users of civil registration, land certification, social aid documentation, and business-licensing services)	Informants on public service quality and user experience (SERVQUAL dimensions)

Source: Data Collection, 2026

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Village Officials' Competencies and Public Service Management Functions

The research findings indicate that public service management in Klampok Village has undergone a marked transformation over the past several years, driven primarily by improvements in the competencies of village officials. Based on interviews with the Village Head (IG-01) and the Village Secretary (IG-02), this transformation began with the recruitment of new officials holding bachelor's degrees, replacing a workforce that had previously consisted largely of senior-high-school graduates. Village staffing documentation confirmed this shift in the educational profile of personnel, while field observation showed that the physical layout of the village office, including the arrangement of service counters and the availability of computer equipment, had been reorganised to support more structured service delivery.

This shift was reflected directly in the Village Head's account of the personnel change. The Village Secretary added that tasks are now allocated according to each official's field of expertise: officials with stronger information-technology skills are assigned to manage digital service operations, while those with stronger communication skills are responsible for serving community members directly at the service counters.

We intentionally prioritised recruiting younger staff with university degrees because we needed people who could operate digital systems and understand current regulations” (IG-01, 2026).

Documentary analysis of the village office's standard operating procedure (SOP) files corroborated these accounts, showing written administrative service schedules and clearer service procedures that had not previously existed. These changes were evident across the four

management functions observed in the field. In planning, officials now prepare service schedules in advance and plan the use of digital media for disseminating public information.



Figure 1. Public Service Facilities and Equipment Office

In organising, tasks are allocated according to individual expertise, office facilities are managed more systematically, and coordination among service units has improved. In acting, officials deliver administrative services more responsively, provide direct assistance throughout the document-processing process, and use the village website and social media to disseminate information. In controlling, the Village Head and senior officials conduct informal evaluations of service quality and monitor feedback from community members regarding their service experience.

Public Service Quality Based on the SERVQUAL Dimensions

Field data show that the quality of public services in Klampok Village has improved across the five SERVQUAL dimensions. With respect to tangibles, service areas have been reorganised and equipped with computers, and officials present a neater and more professional appearance. Regarding reliability, community informants IM-02 and IM-04 reported that administrative processes are now completed in accordance with established procedures without the need for repeated visits, a marked change from previous years (Siyum, 2024). On responsiveness, several community informants observed that officials now respond to inquiries and complaints more promptly and proactively than before.

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Now, if there is a problem with my documents, the officer explains directly what still needs to be completed, so I do not have to keep going back and forth (IM-04, 2026).

In the past, we were often confused because the rules seemed to keep changing, but now the officers clearly explain from the very first meeting exactly which documents are missing (IM-06, 2026).

Documentation of the village website and social media activity further verified that officials now disseminate service information more regularly through these digital channels than in previous years. This documentary evidence supports the empathy dimension as well, reflected in field observations of officials interacting with community members in a more courteous, attentive, and helpful manner.

Table 2. Summary of Field Findings: Competencies and Public Service Quality

Dimension	Observation	Interview	Documentation
Tangibles	Reorganised service counters; computers installed	Officials describe a more orderly workspace	SOP documents; office layout photographs
Reliability	Services completed without repeated visits	IM-02, IM-04 report consistent procedures	Service logbooks show reduced repeat visits
Responsiveness	Officials respond promptly to inquiries observed at counters	Community informants report faster responses	Complaint-handling records
Assurance	Officials explain procedures clearly during service	IM-04 quote on clearer document explanations	SOP and regulation references used by staff
Empathy	Courteous, attentive staff–citizen interaction observed	Community informants note friendlier service	Photographic documentation of service interactions
Knowledge	Staff consult regulations while processing requests	IG-01, IG-02 describe the understanding of governance rules	Staffing records show bachelor’s-level qualifications
Skills	Staff operate computers and digital platforms directly	IG-03 describes managing digital service operations	Website and social media activity logs
Attitude	Staff observed the following schedules and procedures consistently	Informants describe discipline and responsibility	SOP compliance records

Source: Data Collection, 2026

Challenges and Managerial Adaptation Strategies

Despite the overall improvements observed in public service delivery, field data simultaneously identified several critical constraints that continue to affect the consistency and long-term effectiveness of service management in Klampok Village. While structural and technological upgrades have been initiated, their operationalisation is not yet fully uniform across all administrative tiers. This uneven adaptation often creates standard operational gaps, leading to temporary bottlenecks in service execution when specific criteria or complex digital procedures are introduced.

This operational challenge was described directly by an administrative staff member, who highlighted the human resource limitations and technical dependencies within the office. This situation reflects a broader administrative friction where the rapid adoption of digital tools is not automatically followed by a corresponding cultural shift in digital literacy among the local apparatus. The concentration of technological know-how in only a small fraction of the workforce creates an institutional bottleneck, leaving daily operations vulnerable during peak hours. The practical manifestation of this human capital constraint was articulated as follows:

There are still several officials who are not yet fully familiar with using digital systems.

When technical problems arise, we usually rely on one or two officials with stronger technical expertise. This becomes a challenge when they are not available in the office (IG-03, 2026).

The empirical evidence from this interview underscores a deeper structural vulnerability, specifically regarding the uneven distribution of digital literacy among village apparatuses. This digital divide within the organisation creates an over-reliance on a limited number of technically proficient personnel, thereby exposing the service delivery system to single-point-of-failure risks. Consequently, when these key personnel are absent, the responsiveness and reliability dimensions of the public service are temporarily compromised, reflecting an institutional challenge in maintaining service continuity.

To mitigate these systemic vulnerabilities, documentary and observational evidence indicated that the village government proactively adapted to these constraints through multi-layered administrative strategies. These coping mechanisms included the institutionalisation of peer-to-peer technical mentoring among officials, the flexible utilisation of digital communication media to bypass immediate system rigidities, and the implementation of strengthened internal coordination frameworks. Through these adaptive practices, the local administration attempts to build institutional resilience and ensure that service standards remain functional despite existing capacity limitations.

Table 3. Constraints and Management Strategies In Public Service Delivery

Type of Constraint	Description of Field Findings	Management Strategy Implemented
Information Technology Limitations	Not all village officials possess equal levels of information technology (IT) competence; digital services still depend on certain officials.	Internal technical assistance and competency-based task allocation among village officials.
Suboptimal Training Programs	Training and capacity-building programs for village officials have not been conducted regularly or comprehensively.	Coordination with sub-district and district governments to organise periodic administrative and IT training programs.
Infrastructure Constraints	Limited internet connectivity and technological infrastructure have made some digital services inaccessible to all community members.	Utilisation of face-to-face services as a complement to digital services, and submission of infrastructure-improvement proposals to local government authorities.
Community Digital Literacy	Some community members still lack an understanding of how to use digital-based services.	Direct public outreach by village officials and simplification of digital service interfaces to improve accessibility.

Source: Data Collection, 2026

DISCUSSION

Public Service Management through the Competence of Village Officials

The findings indicate that the competence of village government officials is closely related to the effectiveness of public service management in Klampok Village. Improvements in officials' competencies, reflected in higher educational attainment, enhanced administrative skills, greater information-technology proficiency, and improved service-communication ability, have strengthened the implementation of the four management functions of planning, organising, actuating, and controlling. (Warnis et al., 2024). This is consistent with the competency framework

of Spencer, which identifies knowledge, skills, and attitudes as fundamental determinants of individual performance, and with the argument that the quality of public service management is largely determined by the capacity of the human resources responsible for its implementation.

These findings also align with Triprasetyo et, who found that capacity-building programs for local government officials improve service quality and organisational effectiveness, and with those who emphasise the role of human resource practices in strengthening public service motivation. Unlike these studies, however, competency improvement in Klampok Village occurred largely through personnel regeneration, the replacement of older, less-educated officials with younger, university-educated recruits, rather than through formal training programs (Alumran et al., 2021). This suggests that the pathway to competency-driven service improvement at the village level can be more contextually contingent than the literature on formal capacity-building implies, and that structural personnel change can itself function as a mechanism of managerial improvement.

From the perspective of public administration, these findings resonate with the New Public Service paradigm of Denhardt and Denhardt (2003), which positions citizens as individuals to be served in a responsive and participatory manner. Village officials in Klampok Village increasingly plan services, organise information, and use digital technology in ways that reflect this citizen-oriented posture.(Butkus et al., 2023). In terms of knowledge, officials' improved understanding of governance regulations and administrative procedures has strengthened the service-planning function; in terms of skills, greater administrative and digital proficiency has supported the organising and actuating functions, particularly through the use of the village website and social media. (Kalaja & Krasniqi, 2022)

In terms of attitude, a shift toward more disciplined, courteous, and responsible service behaviour has reinforced the quality-control function. This study reinforces the view that officials' technological competence functions as an essential component of information management in digitally based public services. (Firdausi Fikri & Nawangsari, 2023). It also observes that multichannel service management improves delivery, though the present findings show that, in village governance, informal coordination based on individual competency and task allocation by expertise can serve as an equally effective, if organizationally fragile, alternative to formal coordination mechanisms.(Morales-Garrido et al., 2025).

Implementation of Management Functions and Managerial Adaptation

More specifically, the implementation of management functions in Klampok Village has progressed gradually and contextually alongside improvements in officials' competencies (Anwar et al., 2025). Service planning is increasingly proactive rather than reactive, with clearer scheduling and procedural arrangements. Resource organisation is achieved by assigning tasks according to expertise, enabling service functions to operate more efficiently. In execution, village officials have demonstrated improvements in the quality of interaction with the community, both directly at the village office and through digital media (Avadhani, 2025). These findings align with public service management principles that emphasise citizen-centric orientation as the core of high-quality service delivery (Osborne et al., 2013).

The control function, however, remains comparatively informal, relying on citizen feedback and leadership evaluation rather than written SOPs and formal performance-evaluation systems (Tejawati et al., 2025). Within the framework of adaptive management theory, this can be understood as an institutional adjustment to internal and external constraints. (Mr.Vaivaw Kumar Singh & Ms. Rishika Gupta, 2025). Rather than tightening formal regulation, the village

government has responded by adapting service patterns and mentoring mechanisms, including technical mentoring by more competent officials, flexible use of digital communication media, and strengthened internal coordination, to remain workable given existing staff capacity (Handayani et al., 2025).

Compared with prior literature, this study both corroborates and diverges from existing findings. Where (Ivahnenko et al., 2025) Emphasising formal, institutionally channelled capacity-building as the primary driver of service-quality improvement, the Klampok Village case shows that structural personnel regeneration can produce comparable managerial gains even without systematic training programs. Likewise, in contrast to (Cepiku, 2020), who show that multichannel service management is most effective when anchored in formal institutional coordination, this study finds that informal coordination based on individual competency can serve as an organizationally fragile but functionally adequate alternative, pointing to a need for future research on the conditions under which such informal arrangements eventually require formalisation (Mukhlis et al., 2025).

These findings also confirm the relevance of the SERVQUAL framework for evaluating public service management, rather than only individual service encounters, at the village level. (Dyakiv et al., 2024), and are consistent with evidence that officials' public service motivation, reflected in more responsive and community-oriented work attitudes, underlies improvements in institutional performance (Ongaro & Yang, 2025). Table 4 summarises the theoretical and managerial implications of these findings across each competency and management-function dimension.

Table 4. Theoretical and Managerial Implications for Competencies for Public Service Management

Dimension	Empirical Pattern	Managerial Implication
Knowledge	Understanding of governance regulations and administrative procedures	Service planning becomes more focused and procedurally grounded
Skills	Administrative, communication, and digital competence	Service delivery becomes faster and reflects the actuating function more effectively
Attitude	Discipline, responsibility, and citizen-oriented conduct	Quality-control function is reinforced through more accountable service behaviour
SERVQUAL (Tangibles–Empathy)	Improved facilities, consistency, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy in service delivery	Service quality indicators shift from individual encounters to an institutional management outcome.
Managerial Adaptation	Informal mentoring and flexible coordination in response to IT and infrastructure constraints	Adaptive management functions as a substitute for, and potential precursor to, formal institutional mechanisms

Source: Data Collection, 2026

Overall, the findings demonstrate that public service management through the competencies of village government officials is an integrative and contextual process. Officials' competencies are not merely individual attributes but also managerial instruments that determine how the functions of planning, organising, actuating, and controlling public services can be effectively implemented at the village government level (Bassi, 2023). Consequently, this study provides both empirical and theoretical contributions to the fields of management and public administration, particularly in understanding the relationship between human resource competencies and the quality of public service management in village governance (Aprilianto et al., 2025; Santos & Gonçalves, 2025).

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that public service management in Klampok Village, Singosari District, Malang Regency, is carried out through the competencies of village government officials, which significantly strengthen the planning, organising, actuating, and controlling functions of public service management, thereby answering the first research focus. Competency enhancement, particularly in knowledge, administrative skills, information-technology capability, and service attitude, has also improved service quality across the five SERVQUAL dimensions of tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy, making administrative services faster, more transparent, and more responsive to community needs, thereby answering the second research focus. At the same time, the study identifies persistent challenges, namely uneven information-technology skills, irregular training, and limited digital infrastructure, which the village government has addressed through informal managerial adaptation strategies such as technical mentoring, flexible digital coordination, and direct community outreach rather than through formal institutional mechanisms, thereby answering the third research focus.

The novelty of this study lies in its empirical demonstration that officials' competencies, encompassing knowledge, skills, and attitudes, function not merely as individual performance attributes but as collectively integrated managerial instruments that shape the entire cycle of public service management at the village level; this study is among the first to systematically integrate a POAC (planning, organizing, actuating, controlling) management framework with SERVQUAL evaluation in the context of Indonesian village governance. Nevertheless, this study has several limitations: it was conducted in a single village using a qualitative approach, which limits the generalizability of the findings to other village government contexts, and it did not extensively measure community satisfaction through quantitative indicators. Future research is therefore recommended to employ quantitative or mixed-methods approaches, to conduct comparative studies across multiple villages, and to examine more specifically the sustainability of informally organised competency-driven improvements and the institutional conditions under which their formalisation becomes necessary.

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