

E-Government and Public Trust in Rokan Hulu

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ABSTRACT

E-government-based public services have become a new paradigm in modern government administration. E-government offers great potential in increasing efficiency, transparency and citizen participation in gaining access to public services. Through digital platforms, people can easily access information, submit applications, pay taxes, and interact with the government without having to visit conventional service offices. In this technological era, e-government-based public services have become an important instrument in advancing government administration that is more modern, responsive and adaptive to community needs. However, to achieve success in implementing e-government, it is important for the government to ensure the availability of adequate technological infrastructure, guaranteed data security, and increase public digital literacy so that the adoption of this technology can run smoothly and gain high public trust. Public trust describes the extent to which people feel confident, trust and believe that the government through e-government can provide public services that are effective, transparent, safe and responsive to their needs. In the context of this research, the role of e-government is very relevant because it can increase the effectiveness and efficiency of public services, so that with more effective and efficient public services, the public will be more active and enthusiastic in interacting using the services provided in e-system-based public services. -government so that it will influence the level of public trust in the government.

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INTRODUCTION

E-government functions as a medium for providing public services digitally and transparently. The use of technology in providing public services allows the public to access various services more easily and efficiently. With e-government, public services become more responsive to community needs, enabling the government to provide services more quickly and on target. Transactions that previously required a physical visit to a service office can be done online, saving time and money for the public. This linkage emphasizes the importance of public trust in ensuring e-government-based public services can run smoothly and are well received by the public.

In the midst of global trends showing declining public trust, the concept of Electronic Government (e-government) is considered a potential solution—especially in developed countries (Li & Shang, 2023). To foster a more resilient public sector, increasing trust within local communities is critical, through e-government (Chen et al., 2023; Weber et al., 2023). Nawafleh (2020) proves that the use of e-government in Jordan can influence public trust. Likewise, research by Abdulkareem & Mohd Ramli (2022) in Nigeria and Jameel et al. (2019) in Pakistan which refers to something similar. This is because e-government opens up opportunities for open interaction between society and government (Janssen et al., 2018).

Public services are also considered the norm in government efforts to increase public trust (Li & Shang, 2023). Kim et al. (2019) stated that public services that are well designed and executed, such as using information technology (IT) in service channels, have been proven to increase public trust. Saifullah et al. (2019) also stated that public services based on the e-government concept have been proven to overcome the practices of maladministration and fraud. This finding was confirmed by Moreno-Enguix et al. (2019), that e-government is able to streamline public service processes. Thus, e-government-based public services are the answer to increasing public trust.

Currently, in Indonesia, the government is facing three crucial problems: globalization, national unity, and public trust, where the government emphasizes the complexity of the problem in increasing public trust (Fauzi et al., 2022). On the other hand, the Indonesian government is intensifying the adoption of e-government-based public services to increase public trust, as evidenced by the increase in Indonesia's ranking by 11 places in 2022 to rank 77 (Ministry of PANRB, 2022). However, since the emergence of e-government-based public services in global countries, there are still various obstacles, especially in rural areas (Sihotang et al., 2023; Sterrenberg & L'Espoir Decosta, 2023). Factors such as social influence, infrastructure conditions, capabilities and capabilities of information communication technology (ICT), finance, leadership, suitability, and so on, are still obstacles to e-government-based public services in rural areas from various parts of the world (Sihotang et al. al., 2023).

At the Regency/City level, Rokan Hulu Regency is also intensifying the implementation of e-government in every public service. Available e-government based services include licensing services, population administration, public information and communication, and Hospital Management Information Systems (SIMRS). The quality of this service is reflected in the form of the Community Satisfaction Index (IKM) which is held every year. Figure 1.1 shows that since

2020 public satisfaction with Rokan Hulu Regency government services has continued to increase until it reaches 89.1 in 2022. Of the 9 indicators for assessing SMEs, 5 are already at the highest score (Very Good) and 4 are still in the Good category (See Appendix 1).

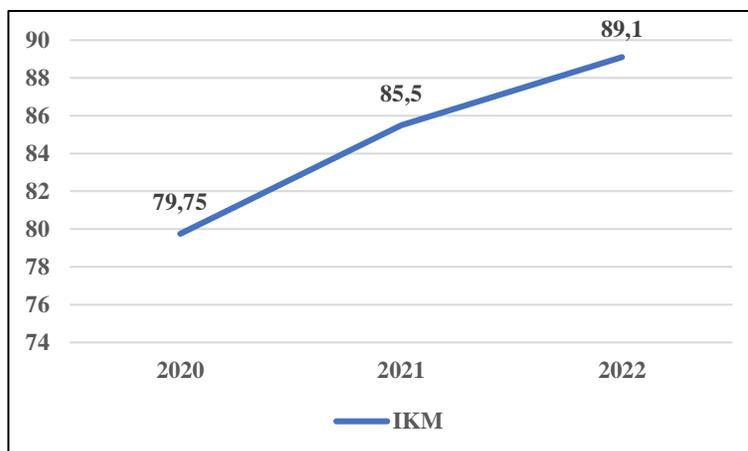


Figure 1. Trends in IKM in Rokan Hulu Regency

However, studies on the influence of public services on public trust are rare, especially for district/city areas. Previous research viewed and discussed this phenomenon partially and not comprehensively (Im et al., 2014; Kurfalı et al., 2017; Parent et al., 2005; Pérez-Morote et al., 2020; Reddick & Turner, 2012; Salsabila et al., 2022; Smith, 2010; Susanto & Aljoza, 2015; Trkman et al., 2023). Many approaches used are to look at how trust influences the use of public services, not how the use of public services influences public trust. Li & Shang (2023) are one of the researchers who looked at how the use of e-government services influences public trust. However, this research does not look at the organization's internal perspective in providing e-government services. This is coupled with the rarity of studies that focus on the provision of e-government services at the micro-level government level (Sihotang et al., 2023).

Based on the things mentioned above, if we look at the Rokan Hulu Regency Government, currently many of the public services provided by the government are still facing challenges in terms of quantity and quality. Thus, research related to how the challenges faced by the government and the influence of public services will influence public trust is crucial for realizing a democratic society:

Formulation of the problem

Based on point 1.1, a problem can be drawn, namely "e-government based public services have not optimally supported the Rokan Hulu Government in increasing public trust". This explains several root causes, including:

1. The problems/challenges faced by the Rokan Hulu Government in providing e-government based public services are unknown.

2. The characteristics of users of e-government based public services are unknown.
3. The factors that influence e-government-based public services in increasing public trust are unknown.

Research purposes

This research has research objectives, including:

1. Elaborate on the challenges faced by the Rokan Hulu Government in providing e-government based public services.
2. Describe and explain the characteristics of users of e-government based public services.
3. Knowing the factors that influence the level of e-government based public services in increasing public trust.
4. Develop recommendations for improving e-government based public services.

Benefits of research

Theoretical Benefits

1. To develop knowledge and thinking skills and apply the theories obtained during lectures;
2. The results of this research can be used as a comparison or input for conducting studies or research in other aspects and can improve good information literacy supported by data and facts.

Practical Benefits

1. The results of this research can contribute as a basis for establishing Government or Regional Government policies, especially in the context of appropriate use of e-government, increasing community participation, and improving the quality of public services. Analysis of the use of e-government in regional public services, especially in Rokan Hulu Regency, is expected to help formulate policies aimed at improving the quality of public services. In addition, understanding the impact of using e-government on the quality of public services and public trust is the basis for the Rokan Hulu Regency Government to design policies that focus on improving the quality of public services and public trust in the government.
2. As a contribution of academic thought to the community and the Regional Government of Rokan Hulu Regency, especially in improving the quality of public services.

Scope

The scope of this research is:

1. All active e-government based public services in Rokan Hulu Regency by 2023.
2. Public services provided by non-vertical offices/agencies in Rokan Hulu Regency.

METHODOLOGY

Research design

Research design includes a systematic plan and structure for collecting, analyzing, and calculating data to answer the research questions asked (Cresswell, 2014; Saunders et al., 2019). In the context of this research, Table 3.1 provides a summary of the research design to see how e-government-based public services influence public trust.

Table 1. Research Design Design

Rincian	Keterangan
Tujuan Penelitian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mengetahui tantangan penyediaan layanan publik berbasis <i>e-government</i> - Mengidentifikasi dan menguji faktor-faktor apa saja yang memengaruhi peningkatan kepercayaan publik
Paradigma	<i>Positivism</i>
Klasifikasi	Studi kasus
Kategori	<i>Mixed Methods</i> (Metode Campuran)
Jenis Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kualitatif: Teks, Gambar, Rekaman Audio) - Kuantitatif: Hasil Survei)
Sumber data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Primer: Wawancara dan Kuesioner - Sekunder: Tinjauan pustaka
Metode olah data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kualitatif: Open Coding dan Axial Coding - Kuantitatif: PLS-SEM
Alat olah data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kualitatif: NVIVO12 - Kuantitatif: SmartPLS 3.3

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data collection

In the process of collecting qualitative data, the author succeeded in interviewing a number of sources who had deep insight into the research topic. The interview process was carried out directly or face to face between 1 and 19 December 2023, allowing the author to gain an in-depth understanding from various perspectives of the relevant agencies. Meanwhile, for quantitative data involving the community, the author used a digital questionnaire distributed from 1 to 22 December. This effort succeeded in collecting a total of 278 valid samples, creating a strong data base for the quantitative analysis in this research. A combined approach between qualitative data from trusted sources and quantitative data from the community provides a solid foundation for gaining a comprehensive understanding of the influence of e-government services on the level of public trust in Rokan Hulu Regency.

Characteristics of Service Users

Demographic analysis of respondents highlights a number of key characteristics that can provide an in-depth understanding of citizen participation in e-government services while also answering the second research question. In the context of e-government in Rokan Hulu Regency, demographic analysis of research respondents provides rich insight into how citizens interact with digital government technology. Data shows that the majority of respondents are male (70.14%), indicating the dominance of male participation in the use of e-government services in this region. However, this profile provides opportunities and challenges to understand more deeply how women engage in these services so that gender inclusivity is maintained.

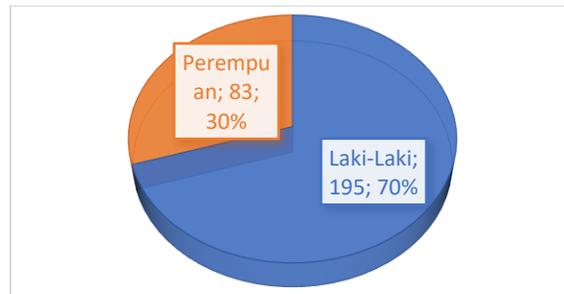


Figure 2. Gender of Respondents

When reviewing age groups, the age distribution of respondents shows diversity between generations. The 25–34 year age group was the most active (35.61%), indicating that the younger generation plays an important role in adopting technology and using the Rokan Hulu Regency government's e-government services. Meanwhile, the 55–64 year age group showed a lower participation rate (1.08%), highlighting the need for inclusive strategies to ensure technology accessibility for all age groups. This needs special attention because this age group is a vulnerable group that needs fast public services, especially in the health sector.

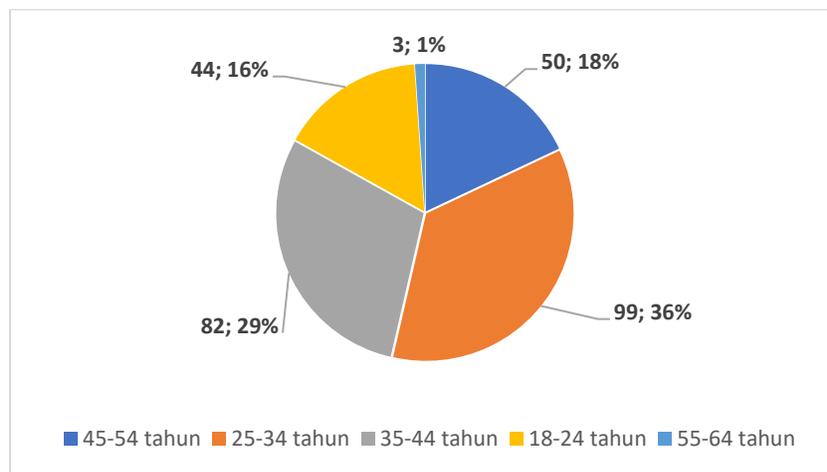


Figure 3. Age description of respondents

In terms of education, respondents generally have a D4/S1 education level (54.32%), reflecting their high understanding and adaptation to technological changes. However, it is important to remember that the level of education can be a limiting factor for some segments of society, and this must be considered in efforts to optimize the benefits of e-government services. This may be related to better technological understanding and skills among those with higher levels of education.

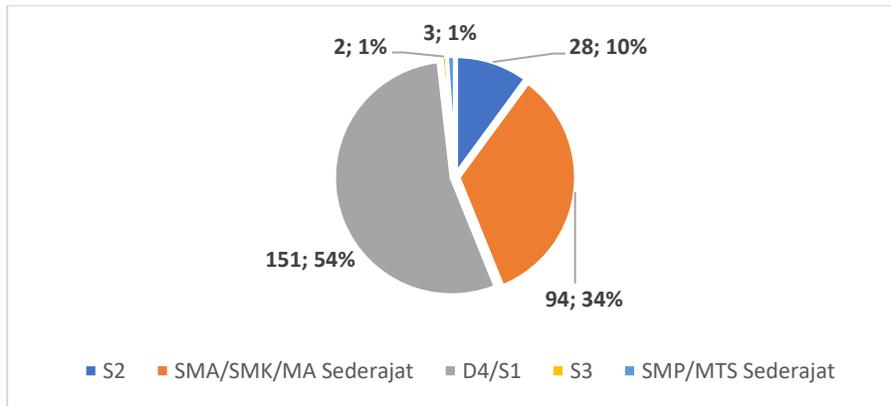


Figure 4. Description of Respondents' educational background

The frequency of use of e-government services also shows an interesting pattern with high annual use (29.86%) which illustrates the dominance of administrative transactions occurring periodically. Daily (19.06%) and monthly (26.98%) usage provides an indication that community interaction with the service is sustainable, providing opportunities for more in-depth service development.

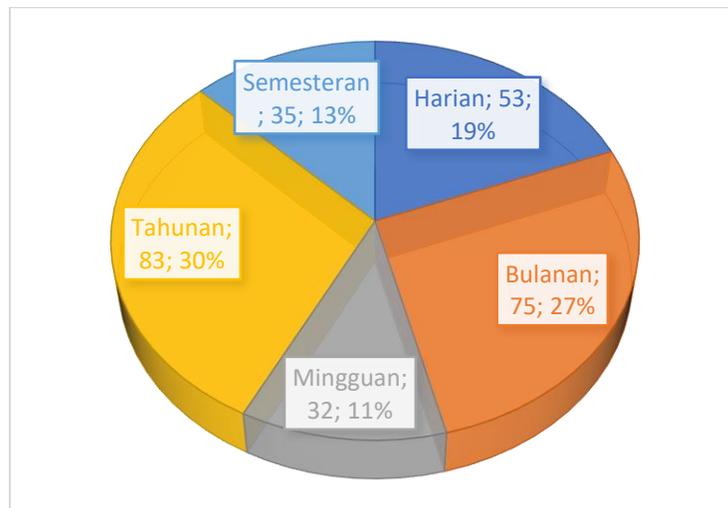


Figure 5. Frequency of service use

In terms of access devices, smartphones (74.46%) are the main tool, reflecting the diversity and mobility of the Rokan Hulu community. Nonetheless, the continued use of laptops (14.03%) and computers (3.24%) highlights the importance of providing flexible access across multiple platforms. This requires special attention because the provision of services must be adjusted to the responsiveness of smartphones and the need for fast and accurate services in the hands of the people of the Rokan Hulu Regency Government.

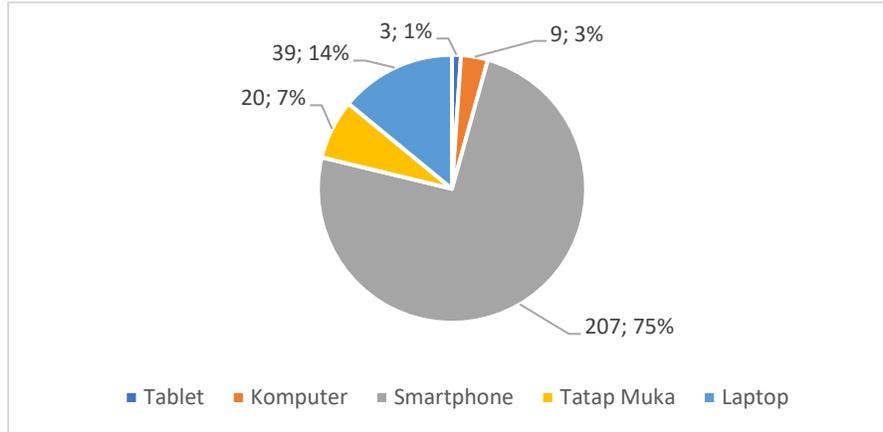


Figure 6. Service access device

Finally, public service preferences reflect high information and communication needs (Public Information and Communication Services with 168 respondents). Population Services (149 respondents), Licensing Services (104 respondents), and Health Services (104 respondents) were also the main focus, indicating that these services are very relevant and needed by the people of Rokan Hulu Regency. This shows that people use e-government services to view massive public information presented. Population services are the most frequently used community services, followed by licensing and health. So, the Rokan Hulu Regency government needs to give more focus and attention to these three services.

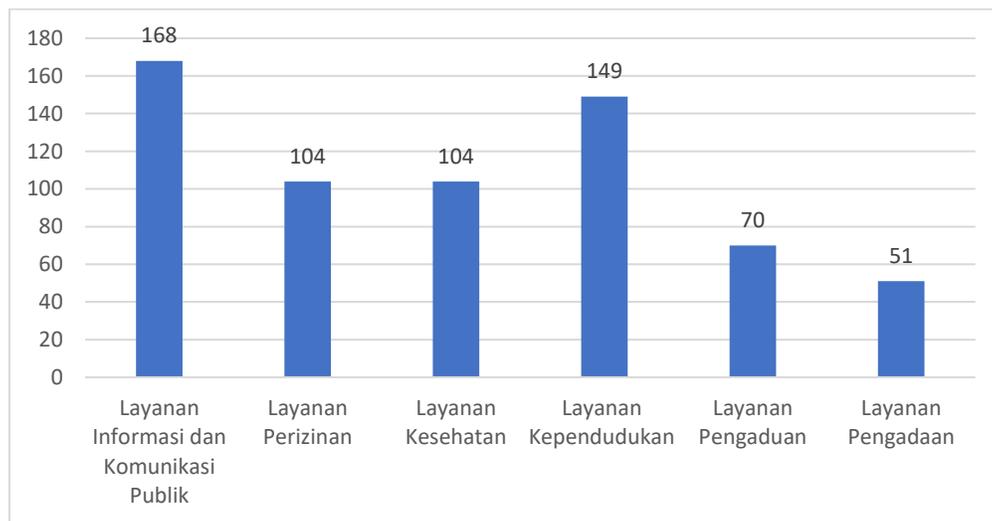


Figure 7. Types of Services used

Overall, an in-depth analysis of respondent demographics provides a comprehensive picture of the use of e-government services in Rokan Hulu Regency. Differences in characteristics such as gender, age, education, occupation, frequency of use, access devices, and types of services used provide a strong foundation for further understanding of the factors that influence citizens' interactions with e-government services as well as their level of trust in them. .

DISCUSSION

One form of public participation in E-Government is through the open dissemination of information and service accessibility. The government can provide a transparent and easily accessible online platform to publish policy information, programs and public service data. In this way, people can (Wastuhana & Werdiningsih, 2021) easily understand and gain access to the services they need without obstacles.

Apart from that, community participation can also be realized through feedback mechanisms and submission of suggestions. By providing an online form or digital complaint mechanism, the public can provide input, complaints or aspirations regarding the quality and effectiveness of the services they receive. This provides an opportunity for the government to respond and improve services that are still unsatisfactory.

Community participation in E-Government also plays a role in the decision-making process. In developing and designing E-Government systems, governments can involve citizens in surveys, online discussion forums, or public consultations to gather diverse input and views. This participation helps the government gain more comprehensive insights and reflects the interests of various community groups.

Apart from that, community participation in E-Government also has an impact on improving the quality and sustainability of the system. By involving the community as active users, the government can get continuous feedback to improve and develop the E-Government platform in accordance with technological developments and community needs. However, to achieve optimal public participation in E-Government, the government needs to overcome several challenges. One of them is the digital divide, where some people may not have access or skills in using digital technology. Therefore, the government must strive to address this gap through relevant training and education programs.

Overall, public participation in E-Government is an important pillar in the government's efforts to create more responsive, transparent and accountable public services. Through active community participation, E-Government can function as a powerful tool for creating a government that is more open, collaborative, and oriented towards the interests and needs of its citizens.

Conclusion

The quality of E-Government based public services is a crucial aspect in increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of services provided by the government. In the context of information

and communication technology (ICT), E-Government allows governments to provide public services digitally through online platforms, mobile applications and web portals. Based on technology, the quality of public services can be improved in several significant ways.

One of the advantages of the quality of E-Government based public services is easy access for the public (Publik & Indonesia, 2009). Citizens can easily access various public services without having to physically come to government offices. Administrative processes that previously took time and money can be replaced with digital processes that are faster and more efficient, thereby increasing people's comfort and satisfaction in obtaining services.

The quality of E-Government based public services is also reflected in the ease of use and navigation of the platform. The government must ensure that the design and interface of their applications or websites are simple and easy for the public to understand. With a user-friendly design, people can easily find the information they need and use the service without any difficulty. Apart from that, E-Government can increase the transparency and accountability of public services. The government can provide information openly regarding the process and results of the services provided. Communities can easily track the status of their applications or administrative processes, as well as monitor the use of public funds for specific services. This transparency creates trust and strengthens the government's relationship with the community.

Improving the quality of public services is also reflected in the responsiveness of the E-Government system to community requests and aspirations. The use of information technology allows the government to respond to requests or complaints from the public more quickly and precisely. The public can easily provide feedback and suggestions, which helps the government to identify needs and problems more accurately.

However, to achieve optimal quality of public services in E-Government, several aspects need to be considered. First, data security and privacy must be guaranteed so that people feel comfortable and confident in using digital services. The government must implement strong security measures to protect the public's personal data and information.

Second, the digital divide must be overcome so that no group of people is marginalized from using E-Government. Training and education programs on digital technology should be provided to help citizens who are unfamiliar with or do not have access to technological devices.

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