

Digitalization of Public Services Through the Gorontalo Integrated Community (GOMT) Application in Dungingi District, Gorontalo City

Rahmawati H. Karim¹, Sri Handayani Suprapto², Dian Fitriani Karim³, Widya Kurniati Mohi⁴

Universitas Muhammadiyah Gorontalo

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Abstract

Public services are one of the primary functions of government in meeting public needs. With the changing times, digitalization has become a strategic solution for increasing the efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, and accountability of public services. The Gorontalo City Government developed the Gorontalo Integrated Community (GoMT) application to support digital service transformation. This study aims to determine public understanding of the use of the Gorontalo Integrated Community (GoMT) application in Dungingi District, Gorontalo City. This study used a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collection techniques through interviews, observation, and documentation. The results indicate that the digitalization of public services through the GoMT application has not been running efficiently and optimally. The support indicator shows that government support is available in the form of regulations and policies, but public outreach is still minimal, resulting in many residents being unaware of the application. The capacity indicator shows that the availability of human resources is considered adequate, but technological infrastructure remains challenging, such as unequal distribution of internet networks and supporting devices. Meanwhile, the value indicator shows that although the GoMT application has the potential to provide fast, easy, and transparent services, its benefits have not been fully realized because the public still prefers manual services at the village office. Thus, a sustainable strategy is needed, including improving public digital literacy, strengthening network infrastructure, developing simpler and more user-friendly application systems, and consistent budget support. This research is important because it provides a concrete picture of the challenges and opportunities for digitizing public services at the sub-district level. It is hoped that it will provide input for local governments in developing more targeted policies. With these steps, the digitalization of public services through GoMT can be truly realized optimally and more effectively.

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Corresponding Author:

Rahmawati H. Karim

Universitas Muhammadiyah Gorontalo

Email: rahmawatikarim97@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

Public service is one of the main functions of government in fulfilling the needs of the community. As time goes by, the Indonesian government has made various efforts to improve the quality of public services, one of which is through the implementation of digitalization. Digitalization of public services is expected to facilitate public access to

various services, increase the efficiency and effectiveness of services, and strengthen transparency and accountability in the administration of government.

As a form of seriousness in implementing digitalization, the government has issued various regulations, one of which is Presidential Regulation Number 95 of 2018 concerning the Electronic-Based Government System (SPBE). The regulation explains that SPBE is a government system that utilizes information and communication technology to support government administration. The main goal is to create a more efficient and effective government by integrating previously manual service systems into a digital platform. This regulation also contains several main principles, including effectiveness, integration, continuity, efficiency, accountability, interoperability, and security.

Advances in information and communication technology offer significant opportunities for local governments to improve the quality of public services. One innovation developed by the Gorontalo City Government is the Gorontalo Integrated Community (GoMT) application. This application is designed as an integrated digital service platform to facilitate public access to government services, particularly for processing correspondence and population administration quickly, efficiently, and transparently.

However, in its implementation, the digitalization of public services through the Gorontalo Integrated Community Application (GoMT) in Dungingi District still faces various challenges. In the form of the use of applications in digital correspondence services is not running optimally, as seen from the low number of people who use the GoMT application. In addition, the socialization of the Gorontalo Integrated Community Application (GoMT) by the local government, especially in the South Tomulabutao and Tuladenggi Sub-districts, also did not run optimally. The socialization carried out tends to be formal and limited, so it has not reached all levels of society. Seeing these conditions, it is important to conduct research related to the Digitalization of Public Services Through the Gorontalo Integrated Community Application (GoMT) in Dungingi District, Gorontalo City, to find out the extent of digitalization through the Gorontalo Integrated Community Application (GoMT) in public services.

According to Indah Mawarni (2023), digitalization is the process of converting information or data from physical form into a digital format that can be processed using information technology. To improve the quality of public services, the government needs to utilize various online platforms such as websites, mobile applications, and social media. This step aims to strengthen the system of *e-government* and facilitate public access to information and services provided by the government. Thus, digitalization plays a crucial role in advancing public services and enhancing interaction between the government and the public.

Meanwhile, according to Siti Marfuah (2024), the digitalization of public services brings significant changes compared to traditional public services in terms of how they are accessed or provided. On the other hand, the digitalization of public services brings significant changes compared to conventional public services in terms of how these services are accessed or provided.

According to Apliani & Deby (2021), Public services are part of the government's obligation to fulfill the rights of its citizens. Meanwhile, according to (Fakhriyah et al., 2022), Law Number 25 of 2009 concerning public services explains that activities or a series of activities in order to fulfill service needs in accordance with statutory regulations for every citizen and resident for goods, services, and or services provided by public service providers.

The focus of the problem in this research is how to digitalize public services through the Gorontalo Integrated Community (GoMT) application in Dungingi District, Gorontalo City.

This study aims to determine the public's understanding of the use of the Gorontalo Integrated Community (GoMT) application in Dungingi District, Gorontalo City.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomena occurring in the field. The research method used is descriptive, with the aim of systematically, factually, and accurately describing the process of digitizing public services through the GoMT application in Dungingi District, Gorontalo City.

This research was conducted at the Tomulabutao Selatan and Tuladenggi Village Offices, Dungingi District, Gorontalo City. This location was chosen based on the consideration that issues relevant to the research topic were identified in these areas, particularly regarding the digitalization of public services through the Gorontalo Masyarakat Terpadu (GoMT) application.

This research uses data analysis techniques according to Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014), which consist of three stages in the research, namely: Data reduction, Data presentation, and concluding.

To verify the validity of this data, researchers used triangulation techniques. According to Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014), triangulation is used to ensure the accuracy of data from multiple perspectives to ensure more objective and unbiased research results.

3. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section explains the research results and provides a comprehensive discussion. Results can be presented in the form of images, graphs, tables, and other forms, making them easier for readers to understand [2, 5]. The discussion can be divided into several subchapters.

3.1. Research result

1. *Support*

The digitalization of public services through the GoMT application has received positive support and response from both the government and the public. This is evident in the activities of both the government and the public who have used the application.

The Gorontalo City Government introduced the GoMT application by directly involving neighborhood heads (RT) and neighborhood association (RT) leaders. They gathered and explained the application's benefits and how to use it. The goal was for the RT heads to help disseminate information to residents, making it easier for them to understand and use the GoMT application in their daily lives.

The sustainability of public services through the GoMT application still faces various obstacles, both technical and non-technical. Low public digital literacy, system disruptions due to the loss of national data, limited access on certain devices like iPhones, and changes in regional leadership have all contributed to the app's suboptimal use.

2. *Capacity*

To support the use of the GoMT application in public services, the technological infrastructure has been met using the budget allocated for its development. The government has prepared human resources to operate the GoMT application.

3. Value

The digitization of public services through the GoMT application offers a number of positive benefits, particularly for the government as the service provider. However, these benefits have not yet been fully realized by the public. This is evident in the fact that some residents are still unaware of the GoMT application, and some are even hearing it for the first time. This situation indicates that the application's use is not yet evenly distributed and that public outreach still needs to be improved.

3.2. Discussion

1. Support

The implementation of digital public services through the Gorontalo Integrated Community (GoMT) application in Dungingi District, particularly in Tomulabutao Selatan and Tuladenggi Villages, is a government effort to improve the quality of public services, ensuring they are effective, efficient, transparent, and accountable. This aligns with national policy directives on the development of digital-based government systems.

However, the success of implementing digitalization is not only determined by the availability of infrastructure such as computers and internet networks (Wi-Fi), but also depends greatly on the commitment of regional leaders (*political will*). Because the bureaucratic culture in government tends to be top-down, then public service digitalization initiatives such as GoMT can only run optimally if supported by the highest leadership at the city and sub-district levels.

a) Regulatory Support

Regulatory support is essential to strengthen the legal basis and direction of digitalization policies. Clear regulations serve as the foundation for the implementation of the GoMT application, whether in the form of circulars, sub-district decrees, or technical policies at the village level. Without overarching regulations, the implementation of digital innovation will lack direction and operational legality.

The Gorontalo Integrated Community Application (GoMT) has not been specifically regulated in a separate regulation, but its implementation refers to several legal products related to the digitalization of public services, such as Gorontalo City Regulation Number 6 of 2023 concerning the Implementation of PTSP, Mayoral Regulation Number 43 of 2019 concerning Electronic Signatures, and Mayoral Regulation Number 18 of 2022 concerning SPBE. At the provincial level, GoMT is aligned with Gorontalo Governor Regulation Number 36 of 2023 concerning the Implementation of SPBE and Governor's Decree Number 240/3/VI/2024 concerning the SPBE Coordination Team. Nationally, the legal basis refers to Presidential Regulation Number 95 of 2018 and Presidential Regulation Number 132 of 2022, which regulate SPBE and its architecture as part of the government's digital transformation.

b) Leadership Commitment

Commitment from leaders, whether at the provincial, sub-district, or village level, is the primary driving force. Normatively, if an application is effective and aims to improve service efficiency, it should be maintained even if the leadership changes. However, researchers found that this application has been discontinued since 2025 due to a change in leadership.

c) Network Infrastructure

The availability and stability of the internet are key prerequisites for supporting digital applications. In the Tomulabutao Selatan and Tuladenggi sub-districts, the

uneven and unstable internet network is one of the challenges affecting the smooth operation of the GoMT.

d) **Hardware and Software**

Digitalization cannot occur without adequate facilities and infrastructure. The availability of hardware such as computers, printers, and supporting software is part of the ongoing support. Negligence in equipment procurement and maintenance can hamper service delivery.

e) **System**

The system in this case encompasses internal governance related to the GoMT application's working procedures. This includes how SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures), management structures, and service system integration are properly developed and implemented to ensure digital-based services are not only technically sound but also systematic and user-friendly.

f) **Socialization**

Public outreach is a crucial part of the support strategy. The government needs to actively communicate the benefits and how to use the GoMT application sustainably through various media, both in person and online.

g) **Support and Funding (Special Member Allocation)**

Budget support is integral to successful digitalization. A dedicated budget allocation is required not only for infrastructure and devices, but also for the procurement of competent application management personnel. The assignment of dedicated personnel to handle GoMT operations demonstrates the government's commitment to ensuring the continuity and quality of digital services.

Based on observations, researchers found that the government, specifically the South Tomulabutao and Tuladenggi sub-districts, had not yet conducted comprehensive outreach to the community regarding the Gorontalo Integrated Community (GoMT) application. This finding was reinforced by interviews, which showed that outreach to date had been limited to the heads of neighborhood associations (RT) and community associations (RW), without directly reaching all levels of society. Therefore, it can be concluded that the government's outreach efforts have not been optimal.

2. Capacity

Indicator capacity refers to the government's capacity in terms of resources, institutions, technology, and management needed to effectively implement the digitalization of public services. In the context of the digitalization of the Gorontalo Integrated Community (GoMT) application, the capacity in question encompasses the following aspects:

a. **Human Resources (HR) Capacity**

The success of digitalization is largely determined by the competence of the human resources running the system. Government officials are needed who understand information technology, are proficient in operating applications, and are responsive to public complaints and needs. A lack of training or technical assistance can hinder service optimization.

b. **Institutional Capacity**

Institutions or work units at the sub-district and village levels need structures that support digital service management. The availability of dedicated work units, designated operators, and clear coordination channels is our crucial element in strengthening institutional capacity. Without a clear institutional structure, digitalization becomes a mere formality without sustainable operations.

c. Technology Readiness

Technological readiness includes the availability of hardware, software, information security systems, and stable internet support. The GoMT application requires adequate technological infrastructure for optimal use by officials and the public.

d. Change Management

The digitalization of public services requires changes in mindset, work culture, and long-standing habits within the bureaucracy. Planned change management, including training, mentoring, and persuasive approaches, is necessary to prevent officials from experiencing resistance to technology adoption. Readiness to adapt and openness to innovation are essential components of institutional and individual capacity.

Based on interviews conducted in Dungingi District, specifically in Tomulabutao Selatan and Tuladenggi Villages, it was discovered that funding to support the digitalization of public services through the Gomt application comes from the government's budget, in the form of facilities such as Wi-Fi networks and computer equipment. However, public utilization of this application remains relatively low. This is due to limited public information on how to use the application, resulting in the implementation of digitalization of public services through Gomt not being optimal.

3. **Value**

Indicators value focuses on the extent to which the benefits of digitalizing public services are perceived by both the government as the provider and the public as the recipients. The Gorontalo Integrated Community (GoMT) application is expected to provide concrete added value to service quality. Benefits indicators that can be analyzed in this context include:

a. Transparency

Digitization through the GoMT application allows for transparent service information to be communicated to the public, including requirements, service times, and application status. This reduces the potential for illegal levies and strengthens public trust in the bureaucracy.

b. Accountability

With a digitally recorded system, the service process can be traced and accounted for. The GoMT application enables a digital footprint (*digital record*) that is clear for each service activity, thus facilitating the monitoring and evaluation of the performance of the apparatus.

c. Efficiency

Although the GoMT app is designed to improve efficiency by reducing manual bureaucracy, speeding up service times, and reducing operational costs, findings indicate that its implementation is not yet fully efficient. This is evident in the large number of people who still prefer to visit offices in person rather than utilize digital services through the GoMT app.

d. Sustainable Innovation

The value of digitalization lies not only in its current benefits but also in the system's ability to continuously evolve and adapt to changing needs. Continuous innovation is a crucial indicator to ensure the GoMT application doesn't stagnate but can continually improve in terms of features, services, and scope of use.

Based on research results and analysis from interviews with village officials and community users, the implementation of digitalization through the GoMT application does provide convenience and the potential to increase service effectiveness. However, these benefits have not been felt evenly. Many residents still prefer to visit the village

office in person rather than use the application, indicating that this digitalization implementation has not been as efficient as expected.

4. CONCLUSION

Digitalization of public services through the Gorontalo Integrated Community (GoMT) application, seen from the indicators *support*, even though it has received support from the Gorontalo city government, the socialization that has been carried out has not been optimal in introducing the GoMT application directly to the community, so that there are still many people who do not know about the application. In the indicator capacity, even though they have adequate human resources, they still experience obstacles, especially in the provision of inadequate technological infrastructure. Meanwhile, based on the indicator value, although this application has the potential to provide convenience, speed, and transparency in public services, its benefits have not been widely felt because many residents still prefer to come directly to the sub-district office.

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