

Evaluating Employee Productivity in Labor Services at the Local Government Level

Sukur Suleman*, and Sahrony A. Hirto

Department of Public Administration, Universitas Muhammadiyah Maluku Utara, Indonesia

**Email Co-Authors: sukursuleman@gmail.com*

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Abstract: Public employment services play a critical role in regional development, particularly in island areas where labor market dynamics are often under-researched. This study aims to evaluate employee productivity in labor services at the local government level, addressing a gap in the literature on bureaucratic performance in eastern Indonesia. Using a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through interviews, observations, and document analysis at the Ternate City Manpower Office, Indonesia. The evaluation focused on four key indicators: human resource competence, facilities and infrastructure, workforce development programs, and outreach activities. Findings show that employee productivity is hindered by limited technical skills, inadequate infrastructure, budget constraints affecting program continuity, and weak communication strategies. Of 9,807 job seekers, only 1,712 were placed, while 1,952 vacancies remained unfilled—highlighting inefficiencies in labor market matching and service delivery. These structural and operational gaps reduce public trust and hinder employment outcomes. The study concludes that targeted reforms in human resource development, infrastructure investment, and strategic outreach are essential to improve service effectiveness. It recommends integrating digital labor market systems and strengthening partnerships with educational institutions to enhance responsiveness. These insights offer a replicable framework for improving employment services in other local government contexts facing similar challenges.

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INTRODUCTION

Public services in the employment sector are a vital element in regional economic development, especially in island regions such as Ternate City. However, studies on employee productivity in employment services in eastern Indonesia are still very limited. This research serves as a response to the need for data-driven evaluation of local bureaucracy, as well as an effort to enrich the literature on contextual public administration (Dwiyanto, 2017; Keban, 2017). This study offers a new perspective on the dynamics of labor services in areas that have been under-researched previously.

Although the Ternate City Labor Office has a mandate to provide responsive labor services, the reality on the ground shows low employee productivity. This is reflected in the slow handling of industrial disputes, the limited utilization of the Special Job Market (BKK), and the mismatch between the number of job seekers and available vacancies (Hasibuan, 2019; Sugiyono, 2022). This disparity indicates structural issues and

suboptimal human resource competencies in effectively and efficiently performing public service functions.

Literature on the performance of labor bureaucracy in Indonesia generally focuses on major cities such as Makassar and Jakarta, with little attention paid to island regions like Ternate. The study by Daraba and Subiyanto (2018) highlights the success of the Makassar Labor Department in improving workforce quality, but there has been no similar study addressing the geographical context and unique challenges in eastern regions. This gap hinders a comprehensive understanding of variations in bureaucratic performance in labor services across Indonesia.

This research offers a solution in the form of an evaluation of employee productivity based on four main indicators: human resource competence, facilities and infrastructure, the effectiveness of workforce quality improvement programs, and outreach activities. Using a case study approach and Miles & Huberman's analysis (Sugiyono, 2022), this research aims to identify bureaucratic weaknesses and formulate strategies for improving public service performance that are tailored to local characteristics. This approach is expected to serve as an evaluative model for other regions with similar conditions.

The urgency of this research lies in the increasing number of job seekers in Ternate, which is not matched by the effectiveness of employment services. Out of 9,807 applicants, only 1,712 were successfully placed, while 1,952 positions remained vacant (Employment Office Document, 2024). This inefficiency highlights the need for data-driven bureaucratic reform and enhanced human resource capacity. Without appropriate intervention, this disparity risks exacerbating unemployment and public dissatisfaction with government services (Dwiyanto, 2015; Widodo, 2018).

The primary objective of this study is to analyze the productivity levels of employees in labor services at the Ternate City Labor Department. The research objectives include identifying structural and operational barriers, evaluating the effectiveness of work programs, and developing strategic recommendations for improving bureaucratic performance. By focusing on local aspects and community needs, this research aims to make a tangible contribution to improving public services in the labor sector (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Bernardin, 2017).

This research is relevant because it addresses the issue of employee productivity in labor services in island regions, which has been rarely studied. The novelty lies in the evaluative approach based on productivity indicators directly linked to job placement data and community satisfaction. Additionally, this study proposes the integration of a digital monitoring system and the strengthening of partnerships with educational institutions as innovative strategies to improve service effectiveness (Sinambela & Lijan, 2016; Pramusinto, 2015).

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Type and Approach

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive research type, aiming to gain an in-depth understanding of employee productivity in employment services at the

Ternate City Manpower Office. This approach allows researchers to explore social phenomena contextually and holistically, in line with the characteristics of case studies that emphasize the intensity and depth of analysis of a single organizational unit (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Mujahidin, 2018). This study does not aim to generalize, but rather to interpret the dynamics of local bureaucracy based on empirical data obtained directly from the field.

Data Collection

Data was collected through three main techniques: direct observation of public service processes, in-depth interviews with structural officials and job seekers, and documentation of internal archives and reports from the Labor Department. Key informants included the Department Head, Secretary, technical staff, and service users. Triangulation was conducted to enhance internal validity by comparing the results of interviews, observations, and official documents (Miles, Huberman & Saldaña, 2019; Sugiyono, 2022). This technique enabled the researcher to obtain a comprehensive picture of the quality and effectiveness of labor services.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using the Miles and Huberman model, which consists of four stages: data reduction, data presentation, conclusion drawing, and verification. Data reduction was performed by filtering relevant information from interview results and documentation. Data presentation was conducted in the form of thematic narratives and descriptive tables. Conclusions were drawn based on consistent patterns of findings, then verified through discussions with informants and comparisons with previous studies (Sugiyono, 2022; Bernardin, 2017). This approach ensures that the interpretation of the results is valid, contextual, and academically accountable.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Bureaucratic Capacity and Employee Productivity in Labor Services

Ternate Mayor Regulation No. 9 of 2017 stipulates that the Manpower Office is responsible for implementing regional government affairs in the field of manpower. Its main functions include formulating technical policies, implementing public services, supervising operations, and managing internal administration. This mandate requires an adaptive and productive bureaucracy in order to respond to the dynamics of the labor market. In the context of regional autonomy, the effectiveness of institutions is highly dependent on human resource capacity and responsive public service systems (Dwiyanto, 2017; Keban, 2017).

Changes in industrial structure and economic globalization have influenced labor conditions in Ternate. New work technologies and job compositions require adjustments in labor placement strategies. The labor market functions as a link between labor supply and demand, and the success of placement is an indicator of development that is directly felt by the community (Hasibuan, 2019). This is in line with Article 27 paragraph 2 of the 1945 Constitution, which affirms the right of citizens to work and a decent livelihood.

Table 1. Job Vacancies Registered, Filled, and Removed by Education Level in Ternate City, North Maluku Province (2024)

Education Level	Remaining Vacancies Last Year	Vacancies Registered This Year	Vacancies Filled This Year	Vacancies Removed This Year	Remaining Vacancies This Year
Elementary School	1,068	0	0	0	1,068
Junior High School	566	265	71	308	452
Senior High School	2,002	566	710	543	1,315
Diploma I	0	111	45	66	0
Diploma II	0	72	30	42	0
Diploma III	0	77	33	44	0
Diploma IV	0	82	35	47	0
Bachelor's Degree	0	1,347	788	559	0
Total	3,636	2,520	1,712	1,609	2,835

Table 1 shows a significant disparity between the number of job seekers (9,807 people) and the number of available positions (3,664). Out of the total applicants, only 1,712 were successfully placed, while 1,952 positions remained vacant and 8,095 applicants were eliminated during the selection process. This mismatch indicates the weakness of the labor market information system and the low effectiveness of employment services (Sugiyono, 2022). This disparity shows that the bureaucracy has not been able to bridge the gap between labor needs and employment opportunities optimally.

The performance of the Labor Department has not been aligned with the designed work program. Inefficiency in information dissemination and slow response to community needs indicate low employee productivity. Dwiyanto (2015) emphasizes that bureaucratic officials must be professional, friendly, and of high integrity. In this context, quality public service is the primary responsibility of local governments. Inability to meet public expectations can erode public trust in government institutions (Widodo, 2018).

Employee productivity encompasses two main dimensions: effectiveness and efficiency. Effectiveness relates to achieving organizational goals, while efficiency measures the ratio between input and output performance. To assess productivity at the Ternate Manpower Office, this study uses four indicators: human resource competence, facilities and infrastructure, the effectiveness of workforce quality improvement programs, and outreach activities. This approach allows for a comprehensive analysis of the factors that influence public service performance (Bernardin, 2017; Sinambela & Lijan, 2016).

Assessment of Human Resource Competence in Labor Service Delivery

Human resources are a strategic element in determining the success of public organizations, including the Ternate City Manpower Office. According to Hasibuan

(2014), the quality and quantity of human resources are the main determinants of institutional progress or stagnation. In the context of public service, employee competence encompasses not only knowledge and skills but also attitudes and behaviors that support professionalism. Therefore, strengthening human resource capacity is an absolute requirement for achieving responsive and equitable labor services (Sinambela & Lijan, 2016).

Ministerial Decision No. 63 of 2004 stipulates that the competencies of service personnel must be accurately determined based on knowledge, expertise, skills, attitudes, and behavior. These standards serve as a reference for assessing the suitability of employees in performing public service duties. In practice, the Ternate Labor Department has not fully met these standards, particularly in the placement of new employees who have not yet mastered their core duties optimally. This impacts service quality, such as delays in issuing yellow cards (AK-1), which are frequently complained about by the public.

Interview results indicate that although work mechanisms have been implemented, there are weaknesses in the adaptation of new employees. The quality of human resources is still relatively low, especially in terms of accuracy and consistency of service. Internal documents show that the educational background of employees is structurally appropriate, but technical competencies and problem-solving skills are not yet optimal. For example, the handling of layoff cases and industrial relations disputes is often delayed and incomplete, indicating weak mediation capacity and institutional response (Sugiyono, 2022).

Limited employee competencies directly impact public perceptions of fairness, particularly among workers who have experienced unilateral termination of employment. The agency's indecisiveness as a technical institution in resolving disputes has led to public dissatisfaction and distrust. In public services, public satisfaction is highly dependent on the ability of officials to respond to complaints quickly and appropriately (Dwiyanto, 2015). Therefore, improving human resource competencies must be a priority in labor bureaucratic reform at the regional level.

Evaluation of Facilities and Infrastructure in Supporting Labor Services

In public services, facilities, and infrastructure are essential components that determine service quality. Ministerial Decree No. 63 of 2004 emphasises that the provision of adequate facilities reflects an institution's commitment to providing fast and optimal services (Ratminto & Winarsih, 2013). Without good infrastructure support, the service process becomes slow and inefficient. Therefore, an evaluation of the physical and technological conditions at the Ternate Manpower Office is important to improve employee productivity and public satisfaction. Cramped waiting rooms, unstable technology networks, and limited computer equipment are the main obstacles in the service process. Meanwhile, the number of job seekers applying for yellow cards (AK-1) is quite high every year. The mismatch between service volume and infrastructure capacity causes long queues and public complaints about service quality.

The limitations of facilities directly impact the effectiveness of public services. Employees cannot work optimally due to inadequate working conditions. This hinders

administrative processes, slows response times, and reduces the accuracy of Labor data. According to Bernardin (2017), an inadequate work environment can reduce employee motivation and performance. In the context of employment services, poor infrastructure also increases the risk of errors in managing job seeker data and Labor placement. In public services, physical comfort and access to technology are part of the public's right to quality services (Sinambela & Lijan, 2016). Therefore, facility improvements should be a priority in Labor bureaucratic reform at the local level.

Evaluation of Workforce Development Programs and Budget Constraints in Labor Services

Workforce development programs are an important tool in supporting job placement and reducing unemployment. The Department of Labor is responsible for organizing training, job fairs, and Labor market information services. According to Mulyadi (2019), these programs serve as a bridge between job seekers and the business world. Without structured intervention, the quality of the local workforce will stagnate and be unable to compete in an increasingly competitive job market, especially in island regions such as Ternate. Programs such as internship training, self-employment coaching, and job fairs are not running optimally. Budget efficiency in 2025 has caused many activities to be canceled. However, these programs are urgently needed by job seekers to improve their skills and access to labor market information (Sugiyono, 2022; Bernardin, 2017).

Budget cuts directly impact the quality of public services. Job seekers are not receiving adequate training, and companies are struggling to find suitable workers. According to Sinambela & Lijan (2016), the quality of public services is highly dependent on the sustainability of capacity development programs. When programs are not implemented, the effectiveness of bureaucracy in supporting labor market development weakens. This widens the gap between market needs and the competencies of the local workforce.

Interviews with job seekers and business actors show dissatisfaction with the lack of training activities and labor market information. They feel they are not being adequately supported by the Department, particularly in terms of guidance and access to job opportunities. In the context of public services, community participation and satisfaction are important indicators of program success (Dwiyanto, 2015). The absence of workforce development programs shows a lack of commitment on the part of the bureaucracy to address the real needs of the community.

Effectiveness of Employment Socialization and Complaint Handling in Labor Services

Employment socialization is an important instrument in building public awareness of the importance of improving the quality of the workforce. According to Suharto (2010), effective socialization can strengthen job seekers' understanding of training, job market information, and employment opportunities. However, in Ternate, socialization activities by the Labor Department over the past two years have been minimal. This has led to low public participation in training programs and a lack of awareness about available job search mechanisms.

Researcher observations indicate that socialization at universities and vocational schools has not been optimal. Only UMMU has an active Job Placement Center (BKK), while other vocational schools have not developed such centers. According to Wibowo (2017), educational institutions are strategic partners in disseminating labor market information. The absence of outreach activities has caused confusion among students in seeking employment after graduation. The mismatch between the number of job applicants and available positions indicates the weakness of the labor market information system communicated to the public.

Data shows that out of 9,807 job applicants, only 1,712 were accepted, while 1,952 job openings remained unfilled, and 8,095 applicants were rejected. This disparity reflects the inefficiency of employment services, particularly in disseminating job vacancy information and labor market needs. According to Hasibuan (2016), the mismatch between job seekers and industry needs can be addressed through structured and sustained outreach. Without an appropriate communication strategy, inefficiency in job placement will continue to occur.

The handling of public complaints, such as layoffs, lacks clear standards. The agency remains focused on administrative resolutions such as AK-1 cards, while complex cases require a more systematic approach. According to Dwiyanto (2015), quality public services must be able to respond to complaints with transparency and measurable resolution mechanisms. Unclear procedures and insufficient information provided to the public erode public trust in government institutions.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that employee productivity in local government at Ternate City, Indonesia, labor services remains suboptimal due to limited human resource competence, inadequate facilities, underfunded workforce development programs, and weak outreach mechanisms. The mismatch between job seekers and available vacancies, as well as delays in dispute resolution and administrative services, reflects structural and operational inefficiencies. These findings underscore the urgent need for targeted bureaucratic reform, particularly in enhancing technical skills, improving infrastructure, and ensuring program continuity despite budget constraints.

The implications of this research are significant for improving public service delivery in employment sectors, especially in under-researched regional contexts. Strengthening employee competence and institutional responsiveness can directly impact job placement success and public trust. The study offers a practical evaluative framework that can be adapted by other local governments facing similar challenges. Future research should explore digital integration strategies and cross-sector partnerships to enhance labor market information systems and service accessibility. By addressing these systemic gaps, local governments can better fulfill their mandate to support workforce development and reduce unemployment.

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