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TAHU SUMEDANG: Digital Public Service Implementation (A Study at Regional Government of Sumedang Regency)

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Abstract

Digital transformation in public service delivery has become a key strategy in promoting government efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency. This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of implementing the TAHU SUMEDANG digital public service portal in the Sumedang Regency and identify the challenges encountered in its application. The research adopts a qualitative approach using a case study method, involving in-depth interviews with 10 key informants, participatory observations, and document analysis of regional public service policies and reports from 2023. The findings reveal that the TAHU SUMEDANG portal has increased service speed by up to 40% compared to the pre-digitalization period and expanded public access to administrative services, with a 65% increase in active users over the past year. Furthermore, service transparency has improved through an online service tracking system accessed by more than 12,000 users. These findings align with previous studies by Nugroho (2021) and Pratama and Wahyudi (2022), demonstrating that adopting digital technologies in local public services can accelerate bureaucratic responsiveness and enhance citizen satisfaction. However, the implementation still faces significant challenges, including limited digital infrastructure in 23% of peripheral villages, low digital literacy, especially among older people, and resistance from 30% of government staff who are not yet accustomed to the digital system. Compared to similar programs such as "SIPANDA" in Banyuwangi Regency and "Jakarta Smart City," Sumedang still has room for improvement regarding data integration and service simplification. In conclusion, digitalization through the TAHU SUMEDANG portal has positively impacted the quality of public services, yet it requires further strengthening in infrastructure, digital literacy, and staff capacity. The results of this study are expected to serve as strategic input for local governments in formulating inclusive, adaptive, and sustainable digital public service policies.

Keywords: Digital public services, e-government, transparency, accessibility, TAHU SUMEDANG.

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INTRODUCTION

Digital public services refer to implementing information and communication technology in government administration to enhance service quality for the public. The digitization of public services enables faster, more transparent, and more efficient processes than conventional bureaucratic systems (Richard Heeks, 2018). In the digital transformation era, e-government has become a key solution in supporting a more responsive and accountable government (Janowski, 2016). Governments worldwide, including in Indonesia, continue to promote digitalization as part of bureaucratic reform to improve the accessibility and effectiveness of public services (Yuliansyah, 2020).

On a global scale, various countries have successfully implemented e-Government systems using different approaches, such as GovTech in Singapore and Estonia's Digital Society, which have significantly improved administrative efficiency (UN E-Government Survey, 2022). Meanwhile, in Indonesia, public service digitalization initiatives have been launched through the Electronic-Based Government System (SPBE) to enhance governance through information technology (Kementerian PANRB, 2021). Digitalizing public services in Indonesia is a strategic step to improve administrative effectiveness, especially in regions facing bureaucratic inefficiencies and limited access to information.

Sumedang Regency is one of the regions that has taken significant steps in developing digital public services. The local government faces various challenges, including limited public access to information and low transparency in administrative services (Pemerintah Kabupaten Sumedang, 2023). The regional government developed a digital public service portal called TAHU SUMEDANG to address these issues. This portal is designed to streamline public service

processes, enhance public access to administrative information, and accelerate bureaucratic services (Pemerintah Kabupaten Sumedang, 2023).

This research is significant in examining the effectiveness of the TAHU SUMEDANG portal in improving the quality of regional public services. It will also contribute to understanding how digitalization can help local governments provide faster, more transparent, and more responsive services while identifying challenges in its implementation. Similar studies have been conducted in various regions, such as research by Nugroho (2019), which found that digitalization at the regional level can enhance administrative efficiency despite facing technical and social obstacles.

Before digitalization, public services in Indonesia generally faced significant challenges, such as lengthy bureaucratic procedures and complex processes that reduced service efficiency (Dwiyanto, 2018). Traditional service systems also often struggled with accessibility issues, particularly for communities in remote areas that found it difficult to reach government offices for administrative matters (Putra, 2021). Additionally, the lack of transparency in manual systems frequently led to maladministration issues such as corruption and abuse of authority.

The TAHU SUMEDANG portal was developed as part of Sumedang Regency's digital transformation strategy to improve public service quality. This portal offers various features, including online administrative services, public complaint reporting, and access to regional policy information (Pemerintah Kabupaten Sumedang, 2023). Through digitalization, this portal aims to enhance service efficiency, accelerate administrative processes, and improve transparency and public participation in local governance. Compared to conventional methods, digital services enable the public to access services more easily and reduce reliance on slow

and complex manual procedures (R. Astuti & S. Raharjo, 2020).

Despite its significant potential, implementing the TAHU SUMEDANG portal also faces several challenges. Technological barriers, such as unequal digital infrastructure and limited digital literacy among the public, can hinder service effectiveness (Wijayanto, 2021). Additionally, government employees' adoption of digital systems still encounters resistance to change and a lack of technical training. Public perception of digital services also poses a challenge, as concerns about data security and trust in the reliability of digital systems for public services remain prevalent (Nurdin, 2019).

This study aims to analyze the effectiveness and impact of the TAHU SUMEDANG portal in enhancing public service quality in Sumedang Regency. It also seeks to identify key challenges in implementing digital services in local governance and explore opportunities for further improvement and development. By understanding the factors influencing the success of public service digitalization, this research is expected to provide recommendations for local governments to optimize technology utilization in improving public services.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach using a case study method to analyze the implementation of the TAHU SUMEDANG portal in digital public services in Sumedang Regency. The case study method allowed for an in-depth investigation within a real-world context (Yin, 2018). The research focuses on local government agencies managing services through the portal and the citizens who use these services. The study subjects include government employees, community members from various backgrounds, and experts in e-government and digital transformation.

Data collection was conducted using multiple methods to enhance validity and reliability (Creswell, 2018). In-depth interviews were carried out with government officials, technical staff, and the public to understand the effectiveness and challenges of the portal (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018). The participatory observation was conducted to directly observe the use of the portal by citizens and its management by the government, providing a clearer picture of technical and operational challenges (Michael Angrosino, 2016). Additionally, document analysis was performed on public service digitalization policies, portal evaluation reports, and e-government regulations in Indonesia to understand the legal framework and implementation strategies (Bowen, 2009).

Data analysis follows the thematic analysis method (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The process includes data reduction, where information is categorized based on key themes such as efficiency, accessibility, transparency, challenges, and user perception. The data is then presented in a descriptive narrative to comprehensively illustrate the portal's implementation and is linked to existing theories and previous research to conclude. To enhance the accuracy of findings, source triangulation is employed by comparing interview results, observations, and documents, along with method triangulation using various data collection techniques (Denzin, 2017). Member checking is also conducted by confirming interview results and data analysis with key informants (Yvonna S. Lincoln, 1985).

This study aims to use this approach to provide a clearer understanding of the effectiveness and challenges in implementing the TAHU SUMEDANG portal and offer policy recommendations for its future development.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Before explaining the research results and discussion, the following is presented on

the TAHU SUMEDANG public service portal as a primary reference for the community.

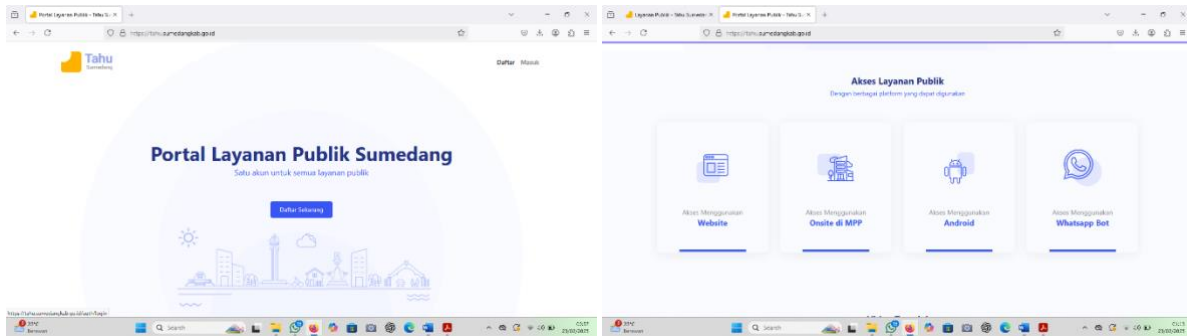


Figure 1: Page Login

Source: <https://tahu.sumedangkab.go.id>

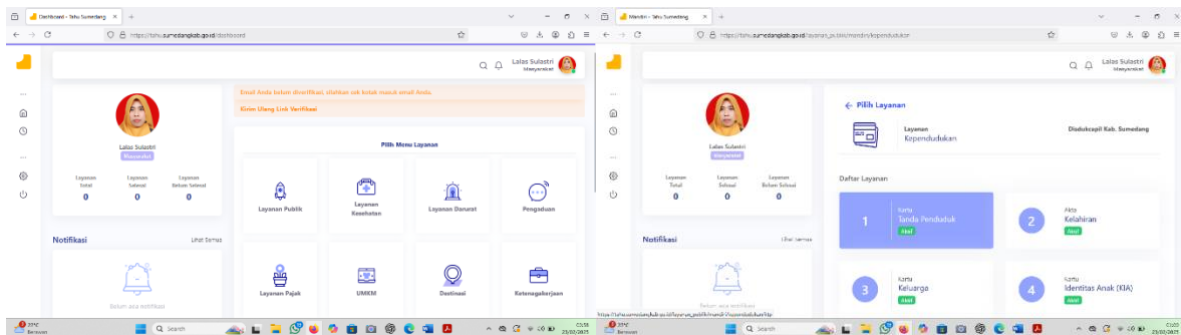


Figure 2: Page Dashboard

Source: <https://tahu.sumedangkab.go.id>

Based on qualitative data analysis obtained through interviews, observations, and document studies, several key findings regarding implementing the TAHU SUMEDANG portal in digital public services in Sumedang Regency were identified.

Portal Effectiveness in Public Services

The majority of informants, both from the government and the public, stated that the TAHU SUMEDANG portal has improved the effectiveness of public services. This effectiveness is evident through two leading indicators: the acceleration of service processes and ease of access for the public.

Table 1. Research Results from the Dimension of Portal Effectiveness in Public Services

No.	Indicator	Research Findings
1	Service Process Acceleration	Government employees stated that administrative processes that took days can now be completed in hours or minutes.
2	Ease of Access	The public, especially in urban areas, appreciates the convenience of accessing services without visiting government offices.

Source: Research Results, 2025

Digitalizing public services through the TAHU SUMEDANG portal has significantly accelerated government administrative processes. Previously, services such as document processing or permits required several days due to manual procedures. However, the digital

system can complete services within hours or minutes.

Meijer, 2016 found that e-government implementation significantly reduces complex bureaucracy and speeds up public service processes. This is supported by (Purnamasari et al., 2025), who discovered

that digital service adoption in several Indonesian regions has cut service time by up to 50% compared to conventional methods. Similarly, Indrajit, 2021 emphasized that digital-based systems enhance government employees' efficiency, reduce physical document accumulation, and expedite responses to public requests.

However, this acceleration still faces challenges regarding government employees' digital skills. (Susanto, 2021a) highlighted adaptation difficulties among employees, particularly in regions with low technological literacy. Therefore, continuous training is necessary to ensure optimal system effectiveness.

The TAHU SUMEDANG portal has also received positive feedback from the public regarding service accessibility. The portal's flexibility allows people, especially in urban areas, to handle administrative services without visiting government offices. This aligns with Bertot et al. (2010), who stated that digital government services improve public convenience by enabling access to services anytime and anywhere.

A study by Halim (2022) found that e-government adoption in major Indonesian cities has increased public satisfaction by providing real-time information and services. Additionally, Kurniawan (2021) confirmed that digital services reduce transportation costs and time previously spent traveling to government offices. Nonetheless, challenges remain, particularly for communities with limited internet access.

Identified inadequate internet infrastructure in rural areas as a barrier to utilizing digital services. Hence, besides increasing digital literacy, strengthening technological infrastructure is crucial to ensuring digital services are accessible to all societal groups.

Accessibility and Challenges of Digitalization

Although the TAHU SUMEDANG portal aims to improve public service accessibility, several challenges persist in its implementation. The two main obstacles are digital infrastructure and public digital literacy.

Table 2. Research Results from the Dimension of Accessibility and Challenges of Digitalization

No.	Indicator	Research Findings
1	Digital Infrastructure Issues	In some remote areas, unstable internet access is a significant obstacle for the public in utilizing the portal's services.
2	Public Digital Literacy Level	Many public informants expressed the need for further education on portal usage, particularly for those unfamiliar with digital technology, to access government services.

Source: Research Results, 2025

One of the primary challenges in utilizing digital services is technological infrastructure limitations, especially uneven internet access. A (World Bank 2021) study indicated that the digital divide remains a significant challenge for developing countries, including Indonesia. Remote areas often experience internet access limitations that affect the effectiveness of government digital services.

Nugroho (2019) emphasized that telecommunication infrastructure barriers in rural areas limit access to e-government

services, contributing to digital inequality. Additionally, it highlighted the importance of strengthening digital infrastructure through government programs such as the Palapa Ring to ensure equal internet access across Indonesia.

Apart from infrastructure, public digital literacy also challenges the adoption of government digital services. Certain groups, particularly older individuals and those with lower education levels, still struggle with using digital technology. The UN E-Government Survey (2022) stressed that digital literacy is a key factor in digital

transformation, as individuals unfamiliar with technology are less likely to engage with online services.

Novi Ramadani et al. (2024) found that limited digital skills among Indonesians hinder the implementation of government digital services. Additionally, Effendi (2021) revealed that training and education programs on e-government have not yet effectively reached all societal

segments. Thus, this study highlights the need for more inclusive and sustainable digital education strategies.

Transparency and Government Accountability

The TAHU SUMEDANG portal has been recognized for enhancing transparency in public services. Several indicators highlight this improvement:

Table 3. Research Results from the Dimension of Transparency and Government Accountability

No.	Indicator	Research Findings
1	Real-Time Information Provision	Citizens can openly access information on service procedures, document submission status, and government regulations.
2	Service Tracking and Monitoring	The system allows users to track their service requests online, reducing bureaucratic complexity and potential illegal fees.
3	Increased Public Trust	Interviews indicate that the portal enhances trust in government services due to its more accountable system.

Source: Research Results, 2025

The TAHU SUMEDANG portal is an innovation that enhances public service transparency and accountability. Digital governance transparency is crucial in building public trust in government services (Meijer, 2016). The following indicators demonstrate the improvements achieved through this portal:

One of the key advantages of the TAHU SUMEDANG portal is its ability to provide real-time service information. Citizens can easily access service procedures, track document submissions, and review government regulations without visiting government offices. (Bertot et al., 2010) Assert that transparent digital services enable citizens to obtain clear and open information, reducing uncertainty in administrative processes. Additionally, Lindstedt, 2019 emphasizes that accessible information helps bridge the information gap between the government and the public, fostering greater civic participation in service oversight.

However, challenges remain in ensuring the effectiveness of provided information. (Susanto, 2021) found that while information is available online, some citizens struggle to understand complex

regulations and procedures. Therefore, the government must ensure the portal presents user-friendly information using accessible language for all demographic groups.

The service tracking system allows users to monitor the status of their requests in real-time, reducing bureaucratic inefficiencies, service delays, and potential illegal fees (Collins, 2019). Grimmelikhuijsen (2017) suggests that transparent service tracking enhances government accountability by enabling citizens to oversee public service performance directly.

Moreover, Halim (2022) found that implementing e-government with tracking features reduces corruption risks in public services, as all processes are digitally documented and auditable at any time. This aligns with Kurniawan (2021), who states that digital public service portals minimize bureaucratic misconduct since all transactions are recorded within the system.

However, R. Astuti and S. Raharjo (2020) highlight that tracking effectiveness depends on technological infrastructure readiness and consistent data updates by government agencies. Therefore, a more

automated system for updating service statuses and cross-agency integration is necessary to maximize transparency.

Interviews indicate that the portal enhances trust in government services due to its more accountable system. Kim, 2020 found that transparency in digital public services directly contributes to increased public confidence in the government. A system that allows open information access and independent service monitoring makes citizens feel more involved in public administration processes.

Dwivedi (2019) also noted that countries adopting e-government systems see a significant rise in public trust indices. This is because citizens perceive services as

fair, accountable, and free from fraudulent practices.

However, sustaining this trust requires continuous improvements in digital service systems. Vita Aprilia et al. (2025) stress that e-government transparency relies on data openness, the government's responsiveness to public complaints, and ongoing service quality enhancements.

Challenges in Implementing the TAHU SUMEDANG Portal

Despite its significant benefits, the portal faces several challenges that need to be addressed:

Table 4. Research Results from the Dimension of Transparency and Government Accountability

No.	Indicator	Research Findings
1	Technical Issues	Some users experience system errors, delays in document processing, and a lack of responsive online assistance features.
2	Adoption Among Government Employees	While the portal is designed to streamline bureaucracy, some employees struggle to adapt due to their reliance on conventional work methods.
3	Public Perception	Some citizens still prefer face-to-face services, citing concerns about data security and the effectiveness of digital services.

Source: Research Results, 2025

Although the TAHU SUMEDANG portal has significantly improved public service digitalization, several challenges remain in optimizing its implementation. These challenges include technical issues, adoption among government employees, and public perception of digital services.

Users' technical difficulties are a significant challenge in implementing the TAHU SUMEDANG portal. Some respondents report experiencing system errors, delays in document processing, and insufficient responsive online support. Gil-Garcia (2019) highlights that technical challenges are a common barrier to e-government implementation, particularly in the early stages of system development. These issues often stem from limited technological infrastructure, inadequate system maintenance, and insufficient server capacity to handle high user demand.

Furthermore, (Anthopoulos et al., 2016) found that the success of digital government services depends largely on system reliability and user-friendliness. If users frequently encounter technical problems, trust and adoption rates for digital services may decline. Therefore, the government must ensure that the TAHU SUMEDANG portal operates with a stable, fast, and well-supported system with responsive online help features to efficiently address user complaints.

Although the portal is designed to enhance bureaucratic efficiency, government employees face challenges in adopting technology. Some officials struggle to transition to the new system due to their long-standing habits of manual work.

Weerakkody (2018) found that resistance to change is a major barrier to implementing e-government. Employees accustomed to traditional workflows often

feel uncomfortable with new technology, especially if they do not receive adequate training. This aligns with Dwivedi (201), who stresses that human resource readiness is a key factor in successful digital government transformation.

Additionally, Bannister F & Connolly R (2020) highlight that employee resistance to digital systems often stems from a lack of understanding of their long-term benefits. To address this challenge, more intensive training is needed to help government employees understand and effectively use the system. A strategic change management approach should also ensure that employees feel prepared and motivated to adapt to the new technology.

Another challenge in implementing the TAHU SUMEDANG portal is that some citizens still prefer face-to-face services over digital alternatives. Concerns about data security and the reliability of online services drive this reluctance.

Carter and Weerakkody (2008) found that trust plays a crucial role in the adoption of e-government services. If citizens perceive digital systems as insecure or unreliable, they are more likely to stick to traditional methods. Susanto (2021) also identified low digital literacy as a primary barrier to the adoption of digital services, particularly in regions where technology usage is less common.

Additionally, Alomari et al., 2012 suggest that inadequate public outreach regarding the benefits of digital services slows adoption. Therefore, the government must enhance digital literacy efforts and awareness campaigns to assure citizens that online services are more efficient, secure, and user-friendly.

CONCLUSION

The digitalization of public services through the TAHU SUMEDANG portal has positively impacted the effectiveness, transparency, and accessibility of government administrative services in Sumedang Regency. This study found that

the portal accelerates service processes, reduces bureaucratic complexity, and provides easier access for the public. With a real-time service tracking system, citizens can transparently access information and monitor the status of their requests, contributing to increased public trust in local governance.

However, implementing this digitalization still faces several challenges. The main obstacles include limited digital infrastructure in certain areas, low levels of digital literacy among citizens, and resistance to change from some government employees. Additionally, technical issues such as system disruptions and delays in service processing affect the optimal use of the portal.

To enhance the effectiveness of this digital service, further efforts are needed to strengthen technological infrastructure, improve digital literacy through outreach and training, and increase the capacity of government employees to adopt digital systems. With continuous improvements, the TAHU SUMEDANG portal has the potential to become an innovative model for the digital transformation of local public services, which could be replicated in other regions across Indonesia.

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