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Quality of Marriage Registration Services at the Religious Affairs Office (KUA) of Ciparay District, Bandung Regency

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Abstract: This research is motivated by indications that the quality of service at the Religious Affairs Office (KUA) of Ciparay District, Bandung Regency, has not fully met the expectations of the community, despite the improvement of facilities and the implementation of an online registration system. The research gap was identified because previous studies on marriage registration services generally only relied on the SERVQUAL model to describe the perception of services, without explaining why frontline officers behaved in this way. This study aims to analyze the quality of marriage registration services at the Ciparay District KUA based on five dimensions, namely tangible, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. The method used is qualitative descriptive, with data collection through in-depth interviews, observations, and document reviews, and analyzed through source triangulation. The results of the study show that services in general have run well in all dimensions, characterized by improving facilities, compliance with procedures, disseminating information through various channels, technological assistance, and friendly attitude of officers. Shortcomings are still found in the completeness of information, certain delays, lack of officer initiatives, and gaps in technology access in rural areas.

Keywords: Public Service, Marriage Registration, Service Quality, Office of Religious Affairs, Street-Level Bureaucracy

Abstrak: *Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh indikasi bahwa kualitas pelayanan di Kantor Urusan Agama (KUA) Kecamatan Ciparay, Kabupaten Bandung, belum sepenuhnya memenuhi harapan masyarakat, meskipun telah terjadi perbaikan fasilitas dan penerapan sistem pendaftaran daring. Kesenjangan penelitian (research gap) diidentifikasi karena penelitian-penelitian terdahulu mengenai pelayanan pencatatan nikah umumnya hanya mengandalkan model SERVQUAL untuk mendeskripsikan persepsi layanan, tanpa menjelaskan mengapa petugas garis depan berperilaku demikian. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis kualitas pelayanan pencatatan pernikahan di KUA Kecamatan Ciparay berdasarkan lima dimensi, yaitu tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, dan empathy. Metode yang digunakan adalah deskriptif kualitatif, dengan pengumpulan data melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi, dan telaah dokumen, serta dianalisis melalui*

triangulasi sumber. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pelayanan secara umum telah berjalan baik pada seluruh dimensi, ditandai dengan perbaikan fasilitas, kepatuhan terhadap prosedur, penyebaran informasi melalui berbagai kanal, pendampingan teknologi, serta sikap petugas yang ramah. Kekurangan masih ditemukan pada kelengkapan informasi, keterlambatan tertentu, minimnya inisiatif petugas, serta kesenjangan akses teknologi di wilayah pedesaan.

Kata Kunci: *Pelayanan Public, Pencatatan Pernikahan, Kualitas Pelayanan, Kantor Urusan Agama; Street-Level Bureaucracy*

INTRODUCTION

Public service is a basic function inherent in the existence of every government institution, as mandated in Law Number 25 of 2009 concerning Public Services, which places the quality of service as the main benchmark for the success of government administration (Government of the Republic of Indonesia, 2009). One form of public service that has a strategic function in the social life of the community is the marriage registration service, which acts as a legal mechanism to provide legal certainty for a marriage bond while protecting the rights of married couples and children born from the marriage.

The Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) as the technical implementation unit of the Ministry of Religion at the sub-district level carries out the function of marriage registration and referral services based on the Regulation of the Minister of Religion Number 34 of 2016 concerning the Organization and Work Procedures of the District Religious Affairs Office (Regulation of the Minister of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia Number 34 of 2016 concerning the Organization and Work Procedures of the District Religious Affairs Office, 2016). As a frontline public service agency, KUA bears direct responsibility in translating regulations into real services for the community. The technical provisions are regulated in more detail in the Regulation of the Minister of Religion Number 20 of 2019 concerning Marriage Registration, which among other things requires registration no later than ten working days before the marriage contract (Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2019), as well as Regulation of the Minister of Religion Number 19 of 2018 which regulates the use of an online-based Marriage Management Information System (SIMKAH) as a form of modernization of marriage registration (Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, 2018), which was previously initiated through the Instruction of the Director General of Islamic Community Guidance Number DJ.II/369 of 2013 (Director General of Islamic Community Guidance, 2013).

In KUA Ciparay District, the number of marriage registration services increased from 1,020 couples in 2022 to 1,110 couples in 2024. However, the use of SIMKAH Web in the same period remained low and tended to be stagnant, namely 12.7% in 2022, increasing to 16.3% in 2023, then dropping to 15.3% in 2024, while the majority of people still registered manually. This condition indicates that digital transformation in marriage registration services has not run optimally and has the potential to cause delays in data processing and service queues. Other problems identified in the field include limited information facilities and media, incomplete documents for the bride-to-be, delays in the issuance of marriage books, lack of socialization of procedures, and there are still marriages that have not been officially registered.

Studies on the quality of marriage registration services at KUA have been carried out in various locations, generally using the SERVQUAL model to measure five dimensions of service quality, namely tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy (Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V. A., & Berry, 1988), Research on the quality of marriage registration services has been carried out, among others, at the KUA of Tegal Regency

(Nuriyanto, 2016), KUA Lowokwaru District, Malang City (Jamilah, L., Ati, N. U., & Suyeno, 2019), KUA Sukolilo District Surabaya (Alfie, 2015), KUA Kuantan Tengah District (Melti, 2021), KUA Ambulu District (Irawan, V. A., & Sunarto, 2025), KUA Tanjung District (Mujahidin Noviansyah, 2025), KUA of Medan Tembung District (Khairani, Harahap, Fajri, & Sabuki, 2025), and KUA of Merauke Regency (Iswanda, N., Syahruddin, Ririhena, S. W., & Haris, 2025). These studies consistently found that the quality of marriage registration services was influenced by the five dimensions of SERVQUAL, with variations in the strength of influence between dimensions depending on the characteristics of the location and institutional capacity of each KUA.

Along with the modernization of services through the Marriage Management Information System (SIMKAH), a number of studies have also examined the digital dimension of marriage registration services. A systematic literature review found that SIMKAH provides convenience, procedural speed, and effective data validation in digital marriage card services (Sandi Kaci, W., Salehudin, B., & Elfa, 2023). The evaluation of the implementation of SIMKAH Web in KUA, Upau District, Tabalong Regency showed positive results on the marriage registration process ((Selma, & Suriyani, 2023), while research at KUA Jatiuwung District, Tangerang City found that the implementation of SIMKAH has helped improve the quality of services and information to the community, although it is still constrained by socialization and stability of network access (Agustin, R., Suherman, A., & Firdiyani, 2024). Research on public satisfaction with marriage registration services through SIMKAH also confirms that the effectiveness of the digital system affects the level of satisfaction of service users (Setianingsih, P., Purwanto, P., & Syarifah, 2024), in line with the findings regarding the accountability of SIMKAH in the implementation of the Marriage Law (Tohir, M., Zakka, U., & Simun, 2025).

At a broader level, the study of marriage registration is also linked to the principle of good governance, which emphasizes that official registration is an important instrument of accountability and legal certainty of the state to its citizens (Latupono, 2019), in line with the findings that the optimization of the principle of good governance is a determining factor for the success of public services in the field of population administration (Ernalis, F., Jahidin, T., Yusrawati, Afriana, & Iqbal, 2024). Research on the effectiveness of premarital courses as part of the KUA service series also shows that the successful implementation of a religious service policy cannot be separated from the institutional readiness of its implementers (Hakim, M. L., Sugianto, Muala, A., Khamim, & Ismail, 2020).

However, these studies generally stop at the description of public perception of service final results based on the five dimensions of SERVQUAL or the evaluation of the success of the implementation of the digital system alone, without adequately explaining why certain service patterns such as delays or low initiative of officers can be repeated in the field. SERVQUAL is designed to measure the gap between service expectations and perceptions, but it is not built to explain the behavior of implementing bureaucrats on the front lines. This gap is the research gap that underlies this research, namely the need for an analytical framework that not only measures the perception of service quality, but also explains the root of the behavior of implementing officers in dealing with limited resources.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method, aiming to obtain an in-depth picture of the quality of marriage registration services based on the actual experience of stakeholders, not in the form of statistical hypothesis testing (Scott, 2017). The object of the study is the quality of marriage registration services organized by the KUA of Ciparay District, Bandung Regency, which was chosen because the combination of the increase in service

volume and the low utilization of SIMKAH in the 2022–2024 period indicates the existence of relevant service gaps to be studied.

The data source consists of primary data and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through in-depth interviews with three categories of informants selected purposively, namely the Head of KUA, staff/headmen, and the community using marriage registration services. Secondary data was obtained from official documents and archives of KUA services, as well as related regulations, namely Law Number 25 of 2009 concerning Public Services and Regulation of the Minister of Religion Number 20 of 2019 concerning Marriage Registration. The data collection technique was carried out through direct observation of the implementation of services, in-depth interviews, and documentation (Moleong Lexy, 2017).

The analysis instrument refers to five dimensions of service quality, namely tangible, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy (Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V. A., & Berry, 1988). Which is operationalized into a number of parameters in each dimension, such as the completeness of facilities and information media for the tangible dimension, or accessibility and timeliness for the reliability dimension. Data analysis is carried out with an interactive model of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion/verification (Creswell, 2014). Data validity testing is carried out through source triangulation, which is combining the results of interviews from the three categories of informants, field observations, and document reviews, in order to assess the credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents research findings regarding the quality of marriage registration services at KUA Ciparay District based on the five dimensions of SERVQUAL, the results of triangulation between data sources, and the expansion of analysis through the perspective of Street-Level Bureaucracy as a contribution to the novelty of this research.

Tangible

The tangible dimension is assessed through two parameters, namely the completeness of the facilities and the availability of service information media. The results of the interview with the Head of KUA show that the service room has been renovated to be more comfortable than the previous condition, although it is still limited during crowded visits, and devices such as computers and printers have begun to be updated although not thorough. The staff/head confirmed that the addition of facilities and the arrangement of service spaces are quite visible, while the service user community considers the available facilities to be quite helpful and does not complicate the management process. In the aspect of information media, KUA has provided notice boards and simple brochures regarding the marriage registration procedure, but some community informants stated that the information is still general so they still need to ask the officer directly.

This finding is in line with the concept of tangibles which emphasizes the importance of physical evidence as a representation of the readiness of institutions in providing services (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988), as well as the mandate of the availability of adequate facilities and infrastructure (Government of the Republic of Indonesia, 2009). It can be concluded that the tangibles dimension in KUA Ciparay has shown progress, but the completeness of information facilities still needs to be improved in order to reach the needs of all levels of society.

Reliability

The reliability dimension is assessed through the parameters of service accessibility and punctuality. The Head of KUA explained that services are provided on predetermined working

days and hours, with the recommendation to register at least ten days before the contract according to applicable regulations, as well as the assignment of the head in rotation so that all applicants can be served on time. However, one of the community informants conveyed the experience of a schedule that had been delayed because the officer was on duty outside the office, accompanied by initial information that was considered inadequate.

These findings show that KUA Ciparay basically has standard operating procedures that regulate service schedules and stages, in line with the provisions regarding the certainty of time and marriage registration procedures (Government of the Republic of Indonesia, 2009; Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, 2019). The gaps that arise in the delivery of schedule information indicate that the reliability of services has largely been met, but the consistency of communication to the community still needs improvement.

Responsiveness

The responsiveness dimension is assessed through three parameters, namely information dissemination, clarity of service SOPs, and alertness of officers. KUA Ciparay disseminates information through bulletin boards, coordination with the village government and community leaders, social media, and bride-to-be debriefing activities that are held routinely every week. In terms of SOPs, the Head of KUA and staff/headmen stated that the flow of services was clear from registration to registration, although one of the community informants assessed that the services he received were running rather slowly and the explanation of the flow at the initial stage was not clear, so he had to return to the village to complete the file.

In terms of alertness, the officer stated that he was used to handling schedule changes or lack of files quickly as long as the bride-to-be was actively coordinating, but some people felt that the initiative came more from the service users than from the officers. Thus, the Ciparay KUA service in this dimension has been responsive, but a more proactive approach from the officers is still needed, especially in sudden conditions.

Insurance

The assurance dimension is assessed through the parameters of ease of use of the SIM application and the availability of supporting facilities. The Head of KUA admitted that there are still obstacles to the use of SIMKAH, especially in more remote areas due to limited internet access and community technological literacy, so that officers provide direct assistance for residents in need. In terms of facilities, KUA has provided waiting rooms, parking lots, organized service rooms, and special rooms for the implementation of marriage contracts, which are considered by the community to provide a sense of comfort and security.

These findings show that the guarantee of comfort and security of the marriage registration process at KUA Ciparay is relatively adequate, but the gap in technology literacy among rural communities remains an obstacle to the optimization of digital services, so that the accessibility of SIMKAH is not fully evenly distributed to all levels of society.

Empathy

The empathy dimension is assessed through the friendly and polite attitude of the officers, ease of communication, and special attention to applicants with special needs. The Head of KUA and staff/headman explained that they try to understand the condition of each prospective bride and groom, explain the procedure in simple language, and provide direct assistance for people with disabilities, including assistance from the entrance to the service room. The service user community in general considers the service to be friendly, not in a hurry, and willing to repeat the explanation if necessary.

In another aspect, the Head of KUA and staff/headmen also admitted that there are still marriages in the Ciparay District area that have not been officially registered, which is associated with low legal awareness among some people, the practice of serial marriage, and early marriage that has not met legal requirements. This condition has implications for the risk of losing civil rights of spouses and children, such as alimony, inheritance, and birth certificates, so that strengthening socialization and coaching remains an important part of empathetic service efforts.

Triangulation between the results of interviews with three categories of informants, field observations, and the review of official documents (Government of the Republic of Indonesia, 2009; Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, 2019) shows consistency in the five dimensions of SERVQUAL. In the tangible dimension, there has been progress in facilities even though information media is still common. In reliability, procedures and schedules are generally in accordance with SOPs, although sometimes there are delays when officers are on duty outside the office. Responsiveness shows that information dissemination is quite good, but the proactive initiative of officers still needs to be improved. Assurance shows sufficient assistance in the use of SIMKAH, but rural technology literacy is still an obstacle. Empathy shows a friendly attitude of officers and pays special attention to vulnerable groups.

The SERVQUAL model basically only measures public perception of the final results of service, without explaining why frontline officers behave in such a way. Field findings in the five dimensions above consistently show the same pattern, namely service delays associated with the assignment of officers outside the office (reliability), the impression that more initiatives come from the community than officers (responsiveness), and the limitations of SIMKAH assistance for rural communities (assurance). These patterns indicate the existence of adaptive behavior of officers that cannot be fully explained by SERVQUAL alone.

Based on these conditions, this research contributes novelty by expanding SERVQUAL using the Street-Level Bureaucracy theory (Lipsky, 2010). Street-level bureaucrats in this context are described as always working in conditions of limited resources (time, personnel, and information) faced with high and diverse service demands (Lipsky, 2010). In these conditions, frontline officers exercise discretion and develop adaptive strategies (coping mechanisms) so that services continue to run, although not always according to ideal standards (Lipsky, 2010).

This perspective explains three main patterns: first, discretion in scheduling and assigning heads on a rotating basis as an effort to overcome personnel limitations; second, coping strategies in the form of service delays when workload increases, especially when officers are on duty outside the office; and third, structural limitations are not just individual issues behind the lack of proactive initiative of officers and the limitations of SIMKAH assistance, which is more accurately understood as a consequence of the ratio of officers to service volume. By combining SERVQUAL and Street-Level Bureaucracy, this study not only measures how the community feels about service quality, but also explains why these service patterns are formed at the executive level. The combination of these two theories is what contributes to the novelty of this study, as well as distinguishing it from similar studies that generally only use SERVQUAL as the only analytical framework.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The quality of marriage registration services at KUA Ciparay District in general has gone well in all five dimensions of SERVQUAL, characterized by improving infrastructure, compliance with procedures, disseminating information through various channels, assistance in the use of SIMKAH, and friendly and empathetic officers. However, a number of

shortcomings are still found, namely information media that are not fully detailed, delays in services under certain conditions, proactive initiatives of officers that need to be improved, and limited access to technology for rural communities. Analysis through the perspective of Street-Level Bureaucracy shows that these shortcomings are more accurately understood as a consequence of limited structural resources in the number of personnel, time, and information and not just a reflection of the low individual competence of officers. Thus, this study answers the formulation of the problem regarding the quality of marriage registration services as well as explaining why the service pattern is formed at the executive level.

Limitations

This research has a number of limitations. First, the research was only conducted in one location, namely the KUA of Ciparay District, so the findings could not be generalized to all KUA in Indonesia. Second, the descriptive qualitative approach used focuses on exploring the meaning and experience of informants, so that it does not measure the strength of interdimensional influence statistically. Third, the analysis of Street-Level Bureaucracy in this study is still exploratory based on the pattern of field findings, so it requires more in-depth follow-up research to test the proposition systematically.

Recommendations

Theoretically, this study suggests that the study of the quality of public services within religious institutions not only uses SERVQUAL, but also considers the perspective of Street-Level Bureaucracy (Lipsky, 2010)cto explain the root of the behavior of the implementing officer. Strengthening the five dimensions of SERVQUAL remains relevant, for example the development of physical facilities and information media for the tangible dimension (Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V. A., & Berry, 1988), strengthening the timeliness and procedural accuracy for the reliability dimension (Tjiptono, 2012), as well as communication and alertness training for the responsiveness dimension (Hardiyansyah, 2011).

Practically, the KUA of Ciparay District is advised to add and update service information media so that it is more detailed and easy to understand by the public, improve service mechanisms so that there are no delays when officers are on duty outside the office, increase training and add heads/staff so that proactive initiatives of officers can be improved, and expand assistance in the use of SIMKAH for people in areas with limited access to technology. Further research is suggested to expand the scope of the research location and test more systematically the proposition regarding the relationship between the limited resources of frontline bureaucrats and the quality of service perceived by the community.

Author Contributions

The author is fully responsible for the entire research process, including conceptualization, data collection, data analysis, interpretation of results, preparation of manuscripts, and final approval of manuscripts for publication.

AI Disclosure Statement

In the preparation of this manuscript, the author uses an artificial intelligence (AI) tool in the form of Claude (Anthropic) which is specifically used to help tidy up the grammar and writing of the manuscript. The use of AI does not include the preparation of ideas, analysis, data, or research conclusions. The author has studied, examined, and edited all the results obtained, and is fully responsible for the entire content of this manuscript, including its accuracy, authenticity, and scientific integrity.

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