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Good Governance in the Management of Local Government Administration

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Abstract---This study examines the application of good governance in the administration of local government as an effort to achieve effective, transparent, accountable, and participatory governance. This study employs a literature review method, analysing various relevant academic sources concerning the principles of good governance, its implementation in local government administration, as well as the challenges and strategies for strengthening it. The findings indicate that the application of good governance plays a crucial role in improving the quality of public services, strengthening public trust, and fostering a professional bureaucracy. However, its implementation still faces obstacles such as weak leadership commitment, low civil service capacity, a cumbersome bureaucracy, and limited public participation. Therefore, good governance needs to be strengthened through bureaucratic reform, the digitalisation of services, the enhancement of civil service competencies, and the expansion of public involvement in the local government process.

Keywords---good governance, local government administration, transparency, accountability, public services

Introduction

Local government plays a strategic role in delivering high-quality, responsive public services that are closely aligned with the needs of the community. In the context of regional autonomy, local governments are not merely implementers of central government policies but also possess the authority to manage governmental affairs in accordance with the characteristics of their respective regions. Consequently, the quality of local government administration is a decisive factor in the overall success or failure of regional development. The principles of *good governance* serve as a vital framework to ensure that administrative management is conducted in a transparent, accountable, participatory, and public-interest-oriented manner (Yusman, 2024).

In practice, local government administration often faces complex issues, ranging from overlapping authorities and poor coordination between local government bodies to slow public services. These issues demonstrate that administrative management cannot rely solely on a formal bureaucratic structure but also requires good governance. *Good governance* emerges as an approach that emphasises the importance of a balanced relationship between the

government, the public, and other sectors in managing public resources effectively (Baland et al., 2010). Thus, good governance is not merely a normative concept but a practical necessity in local government administration.

The concept of *good governance* has developed in response to the weaknesses of traditional bureaucracy, which tends to be closed, centralised, and unresponsive to the public. From the perspective of modern public administration, the government is required not only to carry out regulatory functions but also to ensure transparency of information, certainty of service delivery, and the quality of public decision-making. Widjaja (2026) emphasises that good governance is closely linked to the ability of public institutions to respond to the needs of the community swiftly, fairly, and efficiently. This demonstrates that *good governance* forms the cornerstone of local bureaucratic reform.

The implementation of *good governance* in local government is also closely linked to efforts to build public trust. Public trust in the government will grow if civil servants can work honestly, transparently, and responsibly. Conversely, if local government administration is rife with malpractice, corruption and service uncertainty, the government's legitimacy will decline. Pariela & Hoesein (2025), state that accountability and transparency are key to creating a local government that enjoys public trust. Therefore, strengthening governance is a vital priority in local government administration.

Furthermore, developments in information technology have also driven changes in the patterns of local government administration. The digitisation of public services, management information systems and the implementation of *e-government* have opened up significant opportunities to improve efficiency and transparency. However, the use of such technology does not automatically result in good governance if it is not accompanied by institutional commitment and the integrity of civil servants. Sutanto et al. (2025), emphasise that the success of digital innovation in government is largely determined by organisational readiness, human resources, and the alignment of system design with public needs. Therefore, the modernisation of administration must go hand in hand with the strengthening of the principles of *good governance*.

In the Indonesian context, the implementation of *good governance* at the local level is of the utmost importance, as the decentralisation system affords local governments considerable scope to regulate and manage the interests of their own communities. Ideally, decentralisation should bridge the gap between the government and citizens, thereby ensuring that services are delivered more swiftly and effectively. However, in reality, decentralisation can also give rise to new risks in the form of abuse of authority if not balanced by robust oversight mechanisms. Baland et al., (2010), emphasise that regional autonomy must be implemented in accordance with the principles of efficiency, effectiveness, accountability and participation so as not to deviate from its original objectives.

Good local government administration is also a key prerequisite for the success of regional development. All development programmes—from planning and budgeting through to implementation and evaluation—depend on the quality of the administration carried out by local governments. If the administrative system is weak, development policies will struggle to achieve optimal results. In this regard, *good governance* serves as a guideline to ensure that every administrative process is carried out in a systematic, measurable, and results-oriented manner. Herwibowo et al. (2025), explain that good governance requires synergy between institutional governance and the performance of civil servants in supporting public services.

Furthermore, public participation is one of the key elements of *good governance*, yet it is often not implemented to the full in local government administration. The public should not merely be recipients of services, but must also be involved in the planning and evaluation of public policy. This participation is essential to ensure that local policies truly reflect the real needs of the community. Rahmadi & Rusmiati (2025), identify participation as one of the key principles of good governance, as without public involvement, government policies risk being irrelevant and ineffective. Consequently, a participatory local government administration will be stronger both socially and politically.

On the other hand, accountability is a fundamental requirement in the management of local government administration. Every action taken by state officials must be accountable, whether administratively, morally, or legally. Accountability ensures that public resources are used appropriately and are not misused for personal or group interests. According to Ramadhany et al. (2025), accountability in the public sector is a vital instrument for assessing the extent to which government performance aligns with the mandate granted by the public. Consequently, strengthening the accountability system is an integral part of the *good governance* agenda.

Transparency also plays an equally important role in building a sound local government administration. Through open access to information, the public can understand how policies are formulated, how budgets are allocated, and how programme outcomes are evaluated. Transparency not only enhances public trust but also serves as a means of social control against potential irregularities. Muksalmina et al. (2025), state that an open government will be better

able to adapt to public demands and more effective in delivering services. In this context, transparency is one of the key indicators of successful *good governance*.

Nevertheless, the implementation of *good governance* in local government administration still faces various challenges. A rigid bureaucratic culture, low integrity amongst civil servants, limited human resource capacity, and weak internal oversight often constitute the main obstacles. These challenges demonstrate that administrative reform cannot be achieved through regulatory changes alone, but also requires a shift in organisational culture. [Ramadhany et al. \(2025\)](#), emphasise that the success of public policy is heavily dependent on implementation capacity at the bureaucratic level. Therefore, the transformation of local government administration must be comprehensive and sustainable.

Based on the above, it is clear that *good governance* is not merely a slogan in the administration of local government, but a genuine necessity for creating an administration that is effective, clean, and service-oriented. Through the application of the principles of transparency, accountability, participation, effectiveness, and the rule of law, local governments can improve the quality of public services and strengthen public trust. This article will discuss in further detail the principles of *good governance*, their implementation in local government administration, as well as the challenges and strategies for strengthening them within the context of sustainable regional development ([Kardos, 2012](#)).

Method

This research employs a literature review method, examining various relevant written sources, such as books, journal articles, policy documents, and other academic references relating to *good governance* and the management of local government administration. The review process involved the collection, selection, critical reading, and content analysis of the selected sources to identify concepts, principles, patterns of implementation, challenges, and strategies for strengthening local government governance ([Snyder, 2019](#); [Eliyah & Aslan, 2025](#)). Using this method, the discussion is structured in a descriptive-analytical manner to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research topic based on theoretical findings and the results of previous studies.

Result and Discussion

Principles of Good Governance

The principles of *good governance* form the cornerstone of effective, clean and public-interest-oriented governance. In the practice of public administration, these principles serve as guidelines to ensure that power is not exercised arbitrarily, but rather in accordance with norms, procedures and the interests of the wider community. [Yuliana & Anita \(2026\)](#), emphasise that good governance encompasses participation, the rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus-building, equality, effectiveness and efficiency, accountability, and strategic vision as key elements of governance.

The first principle is participation, namely the involvement of the public in the public decision-making process. Participation positions citizens not merely as objects of policy, but as subjects who help determine the direction of development. In the context of local government, participation is crucial because policies arising from public involvement tend to be better aligned with the real needs of the community and are more readily accepted in their implementation. [Sutanto et al. \(2025\)](#), emphasise that public participation is one of the fundamental principles in achieving *good governance*, as it can strengthen the legitimacy of public policy and enhance a sense of ownership towards government programmes.

The second principle is *the rule of law*. This principle affirms that all government actions must be subject to laws that are fair, consistent, and non-discriminatory. The rule of law is essential to ensure that public power is exercised correctly and not abused for specific interests. In local government, legal certainty also forms the basis for the provision of well-organised public services and the protection of citizens' rights. Koiman explains that a fair and enforceable legal framework is an absolute prerequisite for the establishment of good governance, particularly in guaranteeing the rights of the public and preventing the abuse of power ([Prayogi, 2024](#)).

The third principle is transparency, namely the openness of information regarding government processes, policies, and decisions to the public. Transparency enables the public to understand how the budget is spent, how decisions are made, and how policy outcomes are evaluated. Through this openness, the public can exercise social oversight over the government's performance. [Yuliana & Anita \(2026\)](#) regard transparency as a crucial element because, without adequate access to information, public participation and government accountability will be difficult to achieve.

Transparency is also closely linked to the prevention of corruption and the abuse of power. When public information is made clear and easily accessible, the scope for manipulative practices is significantly reduced. In local government administration, transparency can be achieved through the publication of budgets, performance reports, digital services, and public complaint mechanisms. [Sutanto et al. \(2025\)](#), emphasise that openness is a prerequisite for the public to be able to effectively monitor the running of government.

The fourth principle is accountability, namely the obligation of public officials to be accountable to the public for every policy, decision, and use of resources. Accountability does not merely mean submitting reports, but also explaining the reasons, processes, and outcomes of every governmental action. In the context of local government administration, accountability serves as a vital tool for assessing whether the government has acted in accordance with its mandate and public objectives. [Muksalmina et al. \(2025\)](#), explain that public sector accountability demands responsibility for the efficient, effective, and auditable use of state resources.

Accountability is also linked to public trust in the government. If civil servants are able to demonstrate that every programme is implemented in accordance with the rules and is accountable, the government's legitimacy will increase. Conversely, a lack of accountability will give rise to suspicion, mistrust, and even social conflict. In the practice of *good governance*, accountability encompasses administrative accountability, performance accountability, and legal accountability, all of which must operate in a balanced manner to ensure sound governance ([Reza, 2021](#)).

The fifth principle is responsiveness, namely the government's ability to respond to the needs, aspirations and problems of the public promptly and appropriately. A responsive government does not wait for problems to escalate, but immediately takes corrective action based on conditions on the ground. In public service, responsiveness is crucial to the quality of the relationship between the government and citizens. [Wardani \(2022\)](#), views responsiveness as one of the key characteristics of *good governance*, as a good government must be sensitive to the ever-evolving needs of the public.

Responsiveness also demonstrates that public policy must not be static. In a rapidly changing society, local governments must be able to adapt to social, economic, and technological dynamics. If the bureaucracy is too slow or overly bureaucratic, services will lose their relevance. Therefore, responsiveness is a key indicator in assessing the quality of local government administration, particularly in basic services such as health, education, licensing, and population administration ([Prayogi, 2024](#)).

The sixth principle is consensus orientation, namely the government's ability to build agreement amongst various differing interests within society. In local government, conflicts of interest often arise due to differences in needs, values, and priorities between groups. Consensus orientation helps the government find a fair middle ground that is acceptable to all parties. [Wardani \(2022\)](#), emphasises that good governance must strive for consensus in order to maintain stability and social cohesion.

In practice, a consensus-oriented approach can be realised through development planning deliberations, public consultation forums, and policy dialogues. Such mechanisms enable the government to take public aspirations into account before making important decisions. Consequently, the resulting policies are not only formally legal but also socially legitimate, as they are built based on mutual agreement. This is in line with the view of [Reza \(2021\)](#), Good governance must take into account the diversity of interests and manage them democratically.

The seventh principle is *equity*. This principle emphasises that all citizens must receive fair treatment in terms of access to public services, opportunities for participation, and legal protection. Equity is essential to prevent discrimination based on social or economic status, gender, or political background. In the context of local government, equity serves as a key measure of whether public services genuinely serve all sections of society or only certain groups. [Wardani \(2022\)](#), identifies equity as an integral part of good governance, as the government must ensure justice for all citizens without exception. Equity is also linked to equitable development. Local governments must not prioritise only city centres or groups with stronger political influence, but must ensure that remote areas and vulnerable groups receive the attention they deserve. Thus, this principle reinforces the dimension of social justice in public administration. From a public administration perspective, equitable governance will result in policies that are inclusive and more sustainable ([Muksalmina et al., 2025](#)).

The eighth principle is effectiveness and efficiency. Effectiveness refers to the extent to which policy objectives are achieved, whilst efficiency relates to the economical and appropriate use of resources. In local government, these two principles are of paramount importance because public budgets must be managed to deliver maximum benefits to the community. [Widjaja \(2026\)](#) emphasises that *good governance* is not merely about following the correct procedures, but also about tangible results and the optimal use of resources.

Effectiveness and efficiency are becoming increasingly important in an era of fiscal constraints and high demands for public services. Local governments need to ensure that every programme has clear outputs and outcomes, rather than being merely an administrative formality. To this end, policy planning, implementation, and evaluation must be

performance-based. [Muksalmina et al. \(2025\)](#), explain that the public sector must apply the principles of *value-for-money*, namely generating the greatest possible benefits at the lowest possible cost without compromising service quality.

The ninth principle is strategic vision, namely the government's ability to formulate a clear and sustainable long-term development direction. A strategic vision is needed to ensure that local policies are not merely reactive or short-term, but rather have a measurable, future-oriented focus. In the context of *good governance*, a strategic vision helps the government maintain policy consistency despite changes in officials or the political landscape. [Sofni & Napisah \(2025\)](#) identify the strategic vision as a key element because good governance must be able to anticipate the future needs of the community.

A strategic vision is also linked to the continuity of regional development. Without a clear direction, government programmes tend to be fragmented and their success difficult to evaluate. Therefore, local governments need to draw up development plans that are data-driven, participatory, and aligned with the needs of the community. [LAILATUL \(2026\)](#) emphasises that a government with a strategic vision will be better able to build adaptive and high-performing institutions.

The tenth principle is the professionalism and competence of civil servants. Good governance can only function if supported by human resources possessing adequate knowledge, skills, and work ethic. Professionalism requires civil servants to work in accordance with standards, procedures, and the responsibilities of their posts, whilst competence ensures that government tasks are carried out by the right people in the right positions. [Reza \(2021\)](#) emphasises that the quality of civil servants is crucial to the success of *good governance* because, without adequate competence, the principles of governance cannot be consistently implemented. In local government, the professionalism of civil servants also has a direct impact on the quality of public services. Professional civil servants will be quicker to understand problems, provide solutions, and uphold integrity. Conversely, a lack of competence can lead to administrative errors, delays in service delivery, and bureaucratic inefficiency. Therefore, human resource capacity building is a key strategy in strengthening the principles of *good governance* ([Widjaja, 2026](#)).

The eleventh principle is partnership with the business sector and the community. Local governments cannot work alone in meeting increasingly complex development needs. Partnerships are necessary to foster collaboration between the government, the private sector, and civil society so that available resources can be utilised more broadly. [Sofni & Napisah \(2025\)](#), argue that good governance requires synergy among stakeholders because public affairs cannot be resolved by the government alone. Such partnerships can be realised through cooperation on development programmes, the provision of public services, environmental management, and the strengthening of the local economy. By building partnerships, local governments can enhance service delivery capacity whilst simultaneously encouraging social and economic participation among the community. From a *good governance* perspective, partnerships demonstrate that government is not a sole actor, but rather part of a collaborative network in which actors complement one another ([Cahyaningrum et al., 2025](#)).

The twelfth principle is decentralisation, namely the devolution of authority from the centre to the regions so that decision-making is closer to the community. Decentralisation is an important part of *good governance* because it provides scope for regions to tailor policies to local needs. With greater authority, local governments can design programmes that are more contextually appropriate and respond swiftly to issues within their areas. [Sofni & Napisah \(2025\)](#) identify decentralisation as one of the key principles, as good governance must foster more participatory and effective decision-making at the local level. However, decentralisation also requires strong institutional readiness to prevent policy fragmentation or the abuse of authority. Local governments must possess adequate administrative, fiscal, and oversight capacities for autonomy to operate in line with the principles of *good governance*. [Smelser & Swedberg \(2010\)](#) emphasise that successful decentralisation is that which is capable of improving the efficiency of services whilst strengthening local accountability.

The thirteenth principle is a commitment to the environment and sustainability. In the development of modern governance, good governance is measured not only by administrative aspects but also by its responsibility for the sustainability of natural resources and the quality of life of the community. Local governments need to ensure that development policies do not damage the environment, but rather maintain a balance between economic growth and conservation. [Sahputra \(2021\)](#), emphasise that the strategic vision of *good governance* must take into account the sustainability of both present and future generations. This principle is highly relevant for regions facing pressures from the exploitation of natural resources, urbanisation and climate change. Local governments must be able to integrate environmental aspects into development planning and public services. Thus, *good governance* is not merely administrative in nature, but also ecological and social. [LAILATUL \(2026\)](#), emphasises that good development must prioritise sustainability so that its benefits can be felt in the long term.

The fourteenth principle is the upholding of public ethics and integrity. In addition to laws and formal procedures, *good governance* also requires a high standard of morality amongst public officials so that the

administration of government does not become mired in corrupt practices. Integrity demands that public officials work honestly, do not abuse their power, and prioritise the interests of the public. Without public ethics, other principles such as transparency and accountability will be difficult to implement consistently. Pradana et al. (2025) emphasise that good governance requires integrity because formal oversight is insufficient without a moral commitment from public officials.

Overall, the principles of *good governance* are interrelated and cannot stand alone. Participation without transparency will be weak, accountability without the rule of law is ineffective, and efficiency without equity can lead to inequality. Therefore, the implementation of *good governance* must be carried out comprehensively within the local government system. By understanding and applying these principles, local governments will be better able to realise an administration that is professional, fair, and trusted by the public.

Implementation of Good Governance in Local Government Administration

The implementation of *good governance* in local government administration is an effort to bring about a system of government that is more open, accountable, participatory, and oriented towards public service. In the context of regional autonomy, local governments possess broad authority to manage governmental affairs within their territories; consequently, the quality of governance becomes a determining factor in the success of public services and development. The principles of *good governance* serve not only as normative guidelines but also as practical tools for improving the performance of local bureaucracies so that they are more responsive to the needs of the community (Sahputra & Husniati, 2021).

One of the most tangible forms of implementation is the application of transparency in government administrative processes. Transparency is realised through open access to public information, the publication of budgets, access to service standards, and the provision of public complaint channels. Through such openness, the public can understand how policies are formulated, how resources are utilised, and how programme outcomes are evaluated. Research on the implementation of *good governance* in local government indicates that effective transparency helps to strengthen public trust, although in many cases, there are still obstacles to providing comprehensive and easily accessible information (Herwibowo et al., 2025).

The implementation of accountability is also a key element in local government administration. Accountability requires every civil servant and public official to be able to account for their policies, actions, and use of the budget to the public and supervisory bodies. In practice, accountability is implemented through performance reports, internal audits, programme evaluations, and public oversight. Pradana et al. (2025), emphasise that the public sector must manage resources efficiently and accountably so that public service objectives are truly achieved. Thus, accountability serves as the primary mechanism to prevent the abuse of authority and budgetary waste.

Furthermore, public participation is a crucial dimension in the implementation of *good governance* at the local level. Participation enables citizens to be involved in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of development policies. Through consultative forums, public consultations, and feedback mechanisms, the public can voice their needs and criticisms regarding local government policies. Smelser & Swedberg (2010), explain that public involvement in decision-making enhances the legitimacy of policies and fosters a sense of ownership of government programmes. In this context, participation is not merely a formality, but a means of ensuring that the administration genuinely prioritises the interests of the public.

The implementation of *good governance* is also evident in the application of clear and measurable public service standards. Local governments are required to establish service procedures, completion deadlines, service fees, and administrative requirements transparently so that the public can be assured of certainty. Research in several sub-district offices has shown that the application of *good governance* principles in public services can improve service quality when supported by clear standard operating procedures (SOPs), good communication, and a responsive civil service (Smelser & Swedberg, 2010). This demonstrates that good governance must be realised in day-to-day administrative practice, not merely in policy documents.

In regional implementation, e-government also serves as a vital instrument for strengthening public administration. The digitisation of administrative processes facilitates data processing, speeds up service delivery, reduces direct contact that could potentially lead to irregularities, and broadens public access to information. Sutanto et al. (2025), explain that the success of e-government depends heavily on organisational readiness, human resources, and the alignment of systems with user needs. In many local governments, the use of online service applications and management information systems has become the first step towards a more efficient and transparent administration.

However, the implementation of *good governance* at the local level does not always run smoothly, as it continues to face various structural and cultural obstacles. One of the main obstacles is a bureaucracy that is convoluted, slow, and tends to cling to old ways of working. Research on local government indicates that the principles of *good*

governance have been applied, but not to their full potential, as there are still weaknesses in the management of transparency and access to information (Dwiyanto, 2018). This situation suggests that regulatory changes may not be sufficient unless accompanied by a change in the working culture of the civil service.

Another obstacle is the uneven quality of human resources across local government bodies. Some civil servants do not yet possess adequate competencies in the use of technology, public service delivery, or modern administrative management. Consequently, the implementation of *good governance* principles is often hampered by a lack of understanding of service standards and a lack of initiative to improve performance. Yasin et al. (2024), emphasise that bureaucratic capacity is a determining factor in the success of public administration reform. Therefore, enhancing civil servants' competencies must form part of the strategy for implementing good governance.

In addition to competence, the integrity of civil servants is also a crucial factor. The implementation of *good governance* will be difficult to achieve if practices such as corruption, collusion, nepotism, or the abuse of office persist. Consequently, strengthening bureaucratic ethics, internal oversight, and a strict system of sanctions form part of the efforts to maintain the integrity of local government. Pradana et al. (2025), emphasise that public accountability cannot function effectively without the moral integrity of government officials. Consequently, good governance requires an ethical commitment in addition to administrative mechanisms. In the practice of local government administration, public oversight also plays a vital role. A public that actively monitors government performance can act as a social check on budget expenditure, service quality, and programme implementation.

Public complaint mechanisms, data transparency, and joint evaluation forums serve as means to strengthen such oversight. Rahman (2022), states that good governance requires the active participation of all stakeholders, including citizens as monitors of public policy. Therefore, public involvement must be effectively facilitated by local governments.

The implementation of *good governance* also depends on visionary local leadership committed to bureaucratic reform. Regional heads and heads of local government agencies have a significant influence in shaping organisational culture, setting policy priorities, and ensuring that the principles of good governance are consistently applied. Without strong leadership, reform programmes often remain mere slogans. LAILATUL (2026), emphasises that leadership focused on public service is vital for building an adaptive, clean and professional bureaucracy.

Furthermore, the implementation of *good governance* must be supported by effective inter-agency coordination. Local government comprises various bodies with different functions; therefore, without proper coordination, policy overlaps and administrative inefficiencies will arise. Solid coordination enables policies to run smoothly from the planning stage through to evaluation. Smith (2007), explains that effective local government governance requires synergy between agencies so that development programmes can achieve their objectives optimally.

Furthermore, the application of *good governance* principles in local administration must be supported by a service-oriented work culture. Civil servants who are service-oriented will find it easier to translate the principles of transparency, accountability and responsiveness into concrete actions. This work culture encompasses discipline, prompt service, empathy towards the public, and a willingness to accept criticism. Research at sub-district level indicates that public services which prioritise effective communication, staff competence, and follow-up on public complaints tend to be more successful in applying the principles of good governance (Bardhan, 2002).

The implementation of *good governance* also requires standardised procedures that make it easier for the public to access services without unnecessary obstacles. Clear standard operating procedures (SOPs) help civil servants work more consistently, whilst the public gains certainty regarding service processes. In many cases, public service standards serve as a vital tool for objectively measuring the performance of local government. Muksalmina et al. (2025), state that good public policy must be easy to implement and provide tangible benefits to service users. Therefore, SOPs are not merely administrative documents, but rather a bridge between policy and service quality.

Ultimately, the implementation of *good governance* in local government administration must be understood as an ongoing process, not an instant result. Local governments need to continuously carry out evaluations, improve systems, enhance the capacity of civil servants, and strengthen public participation so that governance is truly effective. If the principles of transparency, accountability, participation, efficiency, and the rule of law are consistently upheld, then local government administration will improve in quality and gain public trust. In this way, *good governance* can become a strong foundation for equitable and sustainable regional development.

Challenges and Strategies for Strengthening Good Governance

The challenge of achieving *good governance* in local government remains a crucial issue, as the quality of governance determines the standard of public services and the effectiveness of development. Although various reforms have been implemented, local government practices in Indonesia still face complex structural, cultural, and institutional obstacles. The principles of transparency, accountability, participation, effectiveness, and the rule of law are often adopted in policy, but their implementation remains inconsistent in practice (Rahman, 2022). Consequently,

a discussion of the challenges and strategies for strengthening *good governance* is highly relevant to understanding how local government can move towards better governance.

One of the main challenges is the lack of political commitment and leadership in driving bureaucratic reform. In many cases, policy changes often depend on the will of the local head of government; consequently, when leadership lacks a strong vision, governance reforms proceed slowly or even come to a standstill. Research on the implementation of *good governance* in local government indicates that *political will* is a strategic factor, yet its effectiveness remains dependent on policy consistency and bureaucratic support (Bardhan, 2002). Without leadership characterised by integrity and a focus on public service, efforts to strengthen governance struggle to produce sustainable change.

The next challenge is corruption, collusion and nepotism, which remain perennial problems within local government. These malpractices undermine transparency, erode public trust and lead to the unfair distribution of resources. Under such conditions, the principle of accountability is difficult to realise, as public decisions are not always based on the public interest, but rather on specific vested interests. Research on the challenges of implementing *good governance* in Indonesia confirms that corruption remains a major obstacle to the creation of a clean and effective government (Yusuf, 2018). Therefore, the eradication of corruption must be a core component of any strategy to strengthen governance.

In addition to corruption, a convoluted and sluggish bureaucracy also poses a serious problem. Excessively lengthy procedures, rigid hierarchies and an unresponsive work culture often hinder public service delivery. The public ultimately faces high time and economic costs when dealing with administrative services. In many regions, service reform remains hampered by administrative practices that prioritise procedural compliance over service outcomes. Studies in local government show that bureaucratic obstacles still frequently arise even though the principles of *good governance* have been formally adopted (Widjaja, 2026). This underscores that the simplification of procedures is an urgent necessity.

Another challenge of equal importance is the low capacity of civil servants. Some civil servants do not yet possess adequate skills in data management, digital services, performance-based planning, or public communication. This lack of preparedness among civil servants means that the implementation of administrative reform is not proceeding optimally. Yasin et al. (2024), explain that the quality of the bureaucracy is greatly influenced by the capacity of civil servants to understand and implement the principles of modern public service. Therefore, strengthening *good governance* cannot be separated from the systematic development of civil servants' competencies.

Furthermore, the still-low level of public participation also poses a significant obstacle. Many citizens are not yet actively involved in the planning, monitoring or evaluation of local policies, either due to a lack of information or a dearth of effective avenues for participation. Yet, *good governance* requires public involvement so that policies are not only administratively valid but also possess social legitimacy. Yusuf (2018), identifies participation as one of the key elements of good governance, as without public involvement, government tends to operate in a closed and unresponsive manner. Consequently, local governments need to expand participation channels that are easily accessible and actually utilised. The digital divide is also becoming an increasingly prominent challenge, particularly in the implementation of digital public services. Not all regions possess the same internet infrastructure, information systems, and human resource capabilities. Consequently, digital transformation risks creating new disparities between developed and underdeveloped regions. Although *e-government* can enhance efficiency and transparency, its success depends heavily on the readiness of organisations and users (Sutanto et al., 2025). Therefore, the strengthening of digital-based *good governance* must be accompanied by the development of equitable infrastructure and technological literacy.

The next challenge is the weakness of performance monitoring and evaluation systems. In many cases, performance reports are not truly utilised as tools for improvement, but merely serve as administrative formalities. Consequently, the same errors continue to recur and the quality of public services struggles to improve. Pariela & Hoesein (2025), emphasise that public sector accountability requires clear evaluation mechanisms so that budget utilisation and programme outcomes can be measured objectively. Without effective oversight, the principles of *good governance* easily lose their driving force. Furthermore, sub-optimal inter-agency coordination often hinders the implementation of good governance. In local government, each local authority has its own specific responsibilities, but without strong coordination, programme overlaps, slow decision-making and a waste of resources will occur. Weak coordination often results in a lack of alignment between policy planning, implementation and oversight. Bardhan (2002), explains that the success of regional development is heavily influenced by the local government's ability to foster synergy between agencies. Therefore, strengthening coordination must be a priority in bureaucratic reform.

In addressing these various challenges, strengthening leadership based on integrity is the first and most crucial strategy. Regional heads and the leadership of regional administrative bodies must be able to act as the driving force for change by setting a concrete example in terms of transparency, discipline, and a service-oriented approach. Strong leadership can foster an organisational culture that supports transparency and accountability. [LAILATUL \(2026\)](#), emphasises that a sound bureaucracy always stems from leadership committed to the values of clean and service-oriented governance.

Reforms must therefore not be merely technical in nature, but also moral and cultural

The next strategy is to strengthen the capacity of local government officials through training and skills development. Local civil servants need to be equipped with administrative, digital, public communication, and service ethics skills so that they are able to meet the increasingly complex demands of the public. Ongoing training will help civil servants understand professional work standards and adapt to change. [Yasin et al. \(2024\)](#), emphasise that high-quality public service depends on competent and responsive human resources. Therefore, investment in the quality of the civil service is a strategic step in strengthening *good governance*.

Furthermore, the application of information technology must be expanded to enhance the transparency and efficiency of services. Digital systems such as online services, budget publications, and electronic complaint channels can speed up administrative processes whilst minimising the scope for irregularities. However, the implementation of technology must be accompanied by adequate infrastructure, data integration, and information security safeguards. Studies on *good governance* indicate that digitalisation can support transparency, but must be accompanied by institutional strengthening so that its benefits are not limited to technical aspects alone ([Khan, 2013](#)). Thus, technology is a tool, not an end in itself.

Another key strategy is to expand public participation substantively. Local governments need to create spaces for public consultation that are not merely formal but which genuinely influence decision-making. Consultative forums, satisfaction surveys, feedback platforms, and open data can serve as effective channels for participation. [Claessens & Yurtoglu \(2012\)](#), emphasise that meaningful public participation strengthens the legitimacy of policies and improves the quality of decision-making. Therefore, efforts to strengthen *good governance* must ensure that the public are not merely heard, but are also genuinely involved.

Strengthening internal and external oversight systems is also a key strategy. Internal oversight needs to be strengthened through audits, performance evaluations and service quality control mechanisms. Meanwhile, external oversight can be strengthened through the role of the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD), oversight bodies, the media and civil society. This combination of oversight will create positive pressure on civil servants to work with greater discipline and accountability. [Yusman \(2024\)](#), emphasises that good governance demands accountability from all stakeholders, not just a single institution. Therefore, multi-layered oversight is vital for maintaining the integrity of government.

The final strategy is to foster an organisational culture centred on service and integrity. A healthy work culture will ensure that the principles of *good governance* are ingrained in civil servants' day-to-day behaviour, rather than remaining merely formal rules. The values of —discipline, responsibility, transparency and empathy towards the public—must be continually instilled through leading by example and an appropriate incentive system. Research on the implementation of *good governance* in various regions indicates that a change in work culture is key to ensuring that bureaucratic reform does not remain merely at the policy level ([Dwiyanto, 2018](#)). With a strong organisational culture, strategies to strengthen governance will be easier to implement consistently.

Overall, the challenges of *good governance* in local government encompass political, bureaucratic, human resources, technological, participatory and oversight factors. To address these, a comprehensive strategy is required, ranging from leadership with integrity, capacity building for civil servants, the digitalisation of services, the expansion of participation, robust oversight, to the establishment of a service-oriented organisational culture. If these strategies are implemented consistently, *good governance* will no longer be an abstract concept, but a tangible practice within a local government administration that is clean, effective, and trusted by the public.

Conclusion

Good governance in the management of local government administration is the cornerstone for realising an effective, transparent, accountable, participatory and public-service-oriented government. The application of these principles makes administrative processes more orderly, decisions more accountable, and services to the public of a higher quality. Thus, *good governance* is not merely a theoretical concept, but a practical necessity in the administration of local government.

Furthermore, the implementation of *good governance* demands a strong commitment from local governments, particularly in establishing an open administrative system, strengthening oversight, and enhancing public participation. Challenges such as a sluggish bureaucracy, low civil service capacity, and the potential for malpractice must be addressed through bureaucratic reform, the use of technology, and the strengthening of civil service integrity. If these measures are implemented consistently, the governance of local government will become increasingly effective and trusted by the public.

Ultimately, the success of local government administration depends largely on the extent to which the principles of *good governance* are applied comprehensively and sustainably. Local governments need to view the public as partners, rather than merely recipients of services, so that every policy truly reflects public needs. With good governance, local governments can become more responsive, professional, and capable of driving equitable and sustainable development.

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