

The Image of Bengkulu City Government in Public Service Delivery as Reflected in Online Media Coverage From 2023 To 2025

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the image of the Bengkulu City Government in public service delivery as reflected in online media coverage from 2023 to 2025. The research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with qualitative content analysis. The data were obtained from online news articles discussing public service programs of the Bengkulu City Government, particularly the Harapan dan Doa Public Service Mall, Mobile Public Service Mall, digital public services, the Sippadek application, free licensing services, and the public service compliance assessment by the Ombudsman. The findings show that online media tend to construct a positive image of the Bengkulu City Government as an active, responsive, transparent, and adaptive local government in improving public services. The Public Service Mall appears as the dominant narrative because it represents integrated and accessible service delivery. In addition, the increasing number of service users, the implementation of mobile services, and the development of digital-based services strengthen the image of innovation and service improvement. However, the study also finds that the image presented in online media is mostly built from official government sources and institutional achievements. Public voices, service user experiences, and critical evaluations of service quality are less dominant in the news coverage. Therefore, the public service image of the Bengkulu City Government in online media can be understood as a positive institutional image, but it does not fully represent the complete experience of citizens in accessing public services.



Introduction

Public service is one of the main indicators for assessing the performance of local government. In public administration, public service is not only understood as an administrative activity, but also as a concrete form of government responsibility in fulfilling

citizens' needs. Law Number 25 of 2009 concerning Public Service states that public service is a series of activities intended to fulfil the service needs of citizens and residents in relation to goods, services, and administrative services provided by public service institutions (Republic of Indonesia, 2009). This regulation shows that public service delivery has a direct relationship with public trust, because citizens evaluate government performance through the services they receive.

The quality of public service is closely related to the image of government. A government that provides accessible, transparent, responsive, and accountable services tends to build a positive image among citizens. In contrast, complicated procedures, unclear requirements, slow service, and limited access may reduce public trust in government institutions. Mursyidah and Choiriyah (2021) explain that public service management requires service standards, institutional commitment, and responsiveness to community needs. In this context, the image of local government is not only shaped by the existence of public service programs, but also by how these programs are experienced, communicated, and represented in public spaces.

Online media plays an important role in shaping public perception of government performance. News coverage can highlight certain issues, select specific sources, and construct a particular meaning about public service delivery. Fauziati (2021) argues that online media can frame the image of government through the way information is selected and presented to the public. Therefore, online media is not merely a channel for delivering information, but also a space where the public image of government is constructed. This becomes relevant in examining how the Bengkulu City Government is portrayed in relation to public service delivery during the 2023–2025 period.

One of the public service innovations developed by local governments in Indonesia is the Public Service Mall or *Mal Pelayanan Publik* (MPP). Regulation of the Minister of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform Number 92 of 2021 explains that MPP is designed as an integrated public service model involving ministries, institutions, local governments, state-owned enterprises, regional-owned enterprises, and private entities in one service location (Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform, 2021). This model reflects a bureaucratic reform effort to simplify service access and reduce fragmented administrative procedures.

The Bengkulu City Government has developed the Harapan dan Doa Public Service Mall as one of its main public service instruments. Online news coverage reported that the Bengkulu City Government provided 118 types of services through 24 counters from 21 institutions at the Harapan dan Doa Public Service Mall. These services include population administration, BPJS services, licensing, health services, social services, and other public services (Mayasari, 2023a). This information shows that online media tends to present the Public Service Mall as a symbol of integrated and practical service delivery in Bengkulu City.

The image of public service delivery in Bengkulu City is also strengthened through news reports on the increasing number of service users. In September 2023, 23,550 citizens were reported to have used the Harapan dan Doa Public Service Mall since its inauguration in March 2023. The number increased to more than 90,000 users in July 2024 and more than 150,000 users by the end of February 2025 (Mayasari, 2023b; Mayasari, 2024; Mayasari, 2025a). These figures are often used in news coverage to suggest that the Public Service Mall has become increasingly recognized and used by citizens. However, the number of users mainly reflects service utilization and does not automatically explain the quality of service experience, service speed, or citizen satisfaction.

Public service innovation is also visible in the development of digital services. In 2024, the Bengkulu City Government was reported to officially implement the digital Public Service Mall on November 1 to facilitate licensing services. In 2025, the government was also reported to have issued 1,377 permits through the Sippadek application during 2024 (Mayasari, 2024b; Mayasari, 2025b). These reports construct the image of the Bengkulu City Government as a local government that is adaptive to technology and seeks to modernize service delivery. Nevertheless, digitalization should not only be understood as technological adoption, but also as a process that requires system readiness, citizen digital literacy, and equal access to services.

The positive image of public service delivery is further supported by the Ombudsman's assessment. In 2025, the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia, Bengkulu Representative Office, reported that the Bengkulu City Government received a green zone predicate with a score of 90.74 in the 2024 public service compliance assessment. This achievement indicates formal compliance with public service standards and provides institutional legitimacy for the public service image presented in online media (Ombudsman RI, 2025). However, compliance with administrative standards still needs to be connected with citizens' direct experiences in accessing services.

Based on this background, this study examines the image of the Bengkulu City Government in public service delivery as reflected in online media coverage from 2023 to 2025. The study focuses on news coverage related to the Harapan dan Doa Public Service Mall, mobile public service delivery, digital services, the Sippadek application, free licensing services, and the Ombudsman's public service compliance assessment. This research is important because the image of local government in public administration is not only determined by the existence of service programs, but also by how those services are represented in public discourse. Through this analysis, the study seeks to understand whether online media coverage presents a comprehensive view of public service delivery or mainly constructs a positive institutional image of the Bengkulu City Government.

Method

This study used a descriptive qualitative approach. This approach was chosen because the study aims to describe and interpret the image of the Bengkulu City Government

in public service delivery as reflected in online media coverage from 2023 to 2025. The focus of this research is not to measure the influence of media coverage statistically, but to examine how public service issues are presented, emphasized, and constructed in online news texts. The type of research used in this study is qualitative content analysis. This method is relevant because the main data of the study are news texts that contain information about public service programs, policies, and achievements of the Bengkulu City Government. Through qualitative content analysis, the researcher examines the content of the news, identifies the dominant issues, and interprets the image of public service that appears in the media coverage.

The object of this study is online media coverage related to public service delivery by the Bengkulu City Government during the 2023–2025 period. The news articles analyzed focus on several main issues, namely the Harapan dan Doa Public Service Mall, Mobile Public Service Mall, digital public services, the Sippadek application, free licensing services, public service users, and the public service compliance assessment by the Ombudsman. These issues were selected because they directly relate to public service delivery and the public image of the local government. The data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary data. The primary data were obtained from online news articles published by accessible media and official sources, such as Antara Bengkulu, RRI, and the official website of the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia. The secondary data were obtained from books, journal articles, regulations, and other relevant documents discussing public service, local government image, public service innovation, and online media coverage.

The data were selected using a purposive sampling technique. The criteria for selecting the news articles were as follows: the articles were published between 2023 and 2025, discussed public service delivery by the Bengkulu City Government, could be accessed online, and contained information related to the Public Service Mall, Mobile Public Service Mall, digital services, licensing services, transparency, or Ombudsman assessment. News articles that did not directly discuss public service delivery were not included in the analysis.

Data collection was carried out through documentation. The researcher collected news articles that matched the research criteria, then recorded the title, media name, publication date, main issue, key information, and the image of public service presented in each article. The collected data were then organized into a data table to make the classification and analysis process more systematic. The data analysis was conducted in several stages. First, the researcher read all selected news articles to understand the content and context of the coverage. Second, the researcher reduced the data by selecting parts of the news that were relevant to the image of public service delivery. Third, the data were classified into several themes, such as integrated public service, service accessibility, service innovation, digitalization, transparency, public service utilization, and institutional legitimacy. Fourth, each theme was interpreted to identify how online media constructed the image of the Bengkulu City Government in public service delivery.

The validity of the data was maintained through source triangulation. The researcher compared news coverage from different online media and official sources to avoid relying on a single source of information. The data were also compared with relevant academic references and regulations related to public service delivery. This process was conducted to ensure that the analysis was based on credible and relevant data. Through this method, the study seeks to provide a clear understanding of how the image of the Bengkulu City Government in public service delivery is constructed in online media coverage. The method also allows the researcher to identify whether the news coverage presents public service delivery as a comprehensive public experience or mainly as a positive institutional image of local government.

Results and Discussion

The results show that online media coverage from 2023 to 2025 constructed the public service image of the Bengkulu City Government through several dominant themes: integrated public service, service utilization, mobile service innovation, digitalization, transparency, and institutional recognition. The news reports mostly present the Bengkulu City Government as an active and adaptive local government in improving public service delivery. The main data used in this section include reports on the Harapan dan Doa Public Service Mall, the increasing number of service users, Mobile Public Service Mall, MPP digital, the Sippadek application, free licensing services, and the Ombudsman's public service compliance assessment.

Table 1. Online Media Narratives on the Public Service Image of Bengkulu City Government from 2023 to 2025

No.	Theme of Coverage	News Data	Image Constructed	Analysis
1	Integrated public service through the Public Service Mall	The Harapan dan Doa Public Service Mall provides 118 services through 24 counters from 21 institutions (Mayasari, 2023a).	The Bengkulu City Government is represented as a local government that provides integrated and accessible public services.	The large number of services shows institutional integration, but it does not automatically explain the quality, speed, and consistency of each service.
2	Early public use of the Public Service Mall	A total of 23,550 citizens used the Public Service Mall after its inauguration in March 2023 (Mayasari, 2023b).	The Public Service Mall is represented as a service facility that began to be recognized by citizens.	The number of users indicates service utilization, but it cannot directly be interpreted as public satisfaction.
3	Increasing number of service users	The number of users increased to more than 90,000 in 2024 and more than 150,000 in 2025 (Mayasari, 2024a; Mayasari, 2025a).	The government is represented as successful in providing a public service facility used by many citizens.	The increase in users reflects service output, while service quality still needs to be assessed through procedure clarity, service time, and user experience.
4	Mobile Public Service Mall	The city government introduced Mobile Public	The government is represented as	The program shows an effort to reach citizens

		Service Mall to bring licensing, data collection, tax, and other services closer to citizens (Mayasari, 2024b).	responsive and citizen-oriented.	more directly, but its effectiveness depends on service continuity, equal coverage across districts, and actual benefits for citizens.
5	Digital public service	The government implemented digital Public Service Mall on November 1, 2024 to simplify licensing services (Mayasari, 2024c).	The government is represented as modern, adaptive, and innovative.	Digitalization strengthens the image of reform, but its success depends on system readiness, digital literacy, and equal public access to technology.
6	Sippadek application	The city government issued 1,377 permits through the Sippadek application during 2024 (Mayasari, 2025b).	The government is represented as using technology to support licensing services.	The number of permits shows application use, but it does not fully explain whether the application has reduced bureaucratic barriers or accelerated licensing processes.
7	Free licensing service	The city government emphasized that licensing and non-licensing services at DPMPTSP are free of charge (Mayasari, 2025c).	The government is represented as transparent and committed to preventing illegal fees.	The statement strengthens the transparency image, but it also shows the need for stronger supervision against brokers or individuals misusing the name of public service officers.
8	Ombudsman assessment	The Bengkulu City Government received a green zone predicate with a score of 90.74 in the 2024 public service compliance assessment (Ombudsman RI, 2025).	The government is represented as compliant with public service standards.	The green zone predicate provides institutional legitimacy, although administrative compliance still needs to be connected with citizens' direct service experience.

Based on Table 1, the most dominant image constructed in online media coverage is the image of the Bengkulu City Government as a provider of integrated public services. The Harapan dan Doa Public Service Mall becomes the central symbol in this construction. News coverage emphasizes the availability of 118 services, 21 institutions, and 24 service counters. This narrative presents the government as an institution that seeks to simplify public access to services. In public administration, this model is important because integrated services can reduce fragmented bureaucracy and help citizens access different services in one location. However, the emphasis on the number of services mostly reflects institutional capacity rather than the complete quality of service delivery. The availability of many services does not automatically prove that each service is fast, simple, consistent, and satisfying for citizens. The news coverage tends to highlight the existence of facilities and the number of services, while citizens' experiences as service users are not discussed in depth. This indicates that the image constructed by online media is stronger at the institutional level than at the level of direct public experience.

The increasing number of Public Service Mall users also strengthens the positive image of the Bengkulu City Government. The news reports show that the number of users

increased from 23,550 in 2023 to more than 90,000 in 2024 and more than 150,000 in 2025. This increase is used in the media narrative to show that the Public Service Mall has become more familiar and more widely used by citizens. The image that appears is that of a local government capable of providing a public facility that meets citizens' administrative needs. Nevertheless, the number of service users should be interpreted carefully. High service utilization is an important indicator, but it is mainly an output indicator. It does not fully explain whether the service process is easy, fast, fair, and satisfying. In public administration, the success of public service delivery is not only measured by how many people use a service, but also by how citizens experience the service process. Therefore, user numbers should be understood as an initial indication of public use, not as the only evidence of service quality.

The narrative of Mobile Public Service Mall constructs the Bengkulu City Government as a responsive local government. This program shows that the government does not only wait for citizens to come to the service office, but also attempts to bring services closer to the community. This image is relevant to public administration because responsiveness is one of the important dimensions of public service quality. A responsive government is expected to understand citizens' barriers, such as distance, time, transportation costs, and limited access to information.

At the same time, the media coverage of Mobile Public Service Mall still focuses more on the implementation of the program than on the evaluation of its results. The analyzed news does not provide detailed information about whether the program has reached all districts equally, which services are most needed by citizens, or how regularly the program is implemented. As a result, the program strongly builds the image of responsiveness, but the assessment of its actual effectiveness still requires broader data from users and field implementation. Digitalization through MPP digital and the Sippadek application constructs the image of the Bengkulu City Government as modern and innovative. Online media presents digital public service as a way to make licensing and administrative services easier, faster, and more efficient. The report on 1,377 permits issued through Sippadek during 2024 strengthens the image that the local government has begun to use technology in service delivery.

Even so, digitalization should not be understood only as the adoption of applications or online systems. Digital public service also requires reliable infrastructure, clear procedures, data security, officer readiness, and public digital literacy. For citizens who are familiar with digital platforms, online services may simplify access. For citizens with limited digital literacy or limited internet access, digitalization may create new barriers. This means that the innovative image in online media should be balanced with attention to accessibility and public assistance. The issue of free licensing services strengthens the image of transparency. The city government's statement that licensing and non-licensing services are free of charge presents the government as committed to preventing illegal fees and protecting citizens from improper practices. In public service delivery, cost certainty is an important element because it directly affects public trust. Clear information about service fees can reduce the possibility of brokers, informal payments, and misuse of authority.

However, the appearance of this issue also shows that transparency remains an important challenge in licensing services. The need to emphasize that services are free indicates that citizens may still face risks from individuals claiming to represent public service officers. Therefore, transparency should not only be communicated through media

statements, but also strengthened through visible service standards, official complaint channels, public education, and stricter supervision. The Ombudsman assessment provides institutional legitimacy for the positive image constructed by online media. The green zone predicate with a score of 90.74 indicates that the Bengkulu City Government formally complied with public service standards. This achievement strengthens the image of the government as an institution that has improved the quality of public service delivery and met administrative standards.

Even so, formal compliance and public experience are not always identical. Ombudsman assessment is important as an external evaluation, but service quality also depends on how citizens directly experience the process. A service unit may have written standards, procedures, and complaint mechanisms, yet citizens may still experience delays, unclear information, or unequal access. Therefore, the green zone predicate should be understood as institutional recognition that still needs to be supported by continuous improvement in daily service practice.

Overall, the findings show that online media coverage from 2023 to 2025 tends to construct a positive image of the Bengkulu City Government in public service delivery. The government is represented as integrated, responsive, innovative, transparent, and compliant with public service standards. However, the dominant narrative is mostly built from official government statements and institutional achievements. Citizens often appear as numbers of service users rather than as subjects who share experiences, evaluations, or complaints. This pattern shows that the public service image of the Bengkulu City Government in online media is mainly an institutional image. It reflects government programs, service facilities, user numbers, and official achievements, but it does not fully represent the complexity of citizens' direct experiences. Therefore, the image of public service in online media should be understood as a media construction that highlights certain achievements, while other aspects such as service obstacles, user satisfaction, and public evaluation still require further examination.

Conclusion

This study concludes that online media coverage from 2023 to 2025 tends to construct a positive image of the Bengkulu City Government in public service delivery. This image is mainly formed through news narratives about the Harapan dan Doa Public Service Mall, the increasing number of service users, Mobile Public Service Mall, digital public services, the Sippadek application, free licensing services, and the Ombudsman's public service compliance assessment. Through these narratives, the Bengkulu City Government is represented as a local government that is active, responsive, transparent, innovative, and committed to improving public service quality. The Public Service Mall becomes the dominant symbol in the construction of this public service image. The availability of 118 services from various institutions, the growing number of service users, and the development of mobile and digital services show that online media presents the Bengkulu City Government as an institution that seeks to simplify service access for citizens. In addition, the news about free licensing services and the green zone predicate from the Ombudsman strengthens the image of the government as transparent and compliant with public service standards.

However, the findings also show that the image constructed in online media is mostly based on official government statements, institutional achievements, and administrative data. Citizens are more often presented as numbers of service users rather than as subjects who provide direct experiences, evaluations, or criticism of service quality. Therefore, the public service image of the Bengkulu City Government in online media can be understood as a positive institutional image, but it does not fully represent the complete experience of citizens in accessing public services. Overall, the study shows that online media plays an important role in shaping the public image of local government service delivery. The image presented in the news reflects the government's efforts to improve public services, but it should still be read carefully because media coverage does not always capture all dimensions of service quality, especially citizens' satisfaction, service obstacles, and direct user experiences.

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