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Editoral: From Local Budgeting to Green Policy (Emerging Issues in Indonesian Public Administration and Governance)

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The public sector in Indonesia stands at a critical juncture, shaped by a confluence of historical legacies, ongoing reforms, and the pressing demands of a rapidly evolving society. The urgency to understand and address the dynamics of governance, policy implementation, and public service delivery in Indonesia is underscored by the nation's commitment to citizen welfare, equitable development, and the realization of good governance principles (Wahyurudhanto, 2020; Wibawa, 2024). As the world's fourth most populous country and a diverse archipelago, Indonesia's public sector faces unique challenges and opportunities that make its transformation both urgent and complex.

The Legacy of Reform and Persistent Challenges

Indonesia's public administration has undergone significant transformation since the fall of the New Order regime in 1998. The transition from a highly centralized, authoritarian bureaucracy—plagued by inefficiency, corruption, and poor service delivery—to a more decentralized and democratic system has been marked by both progress and setbacks (Turner et al., 2022). Decentralization, initiated in the early 2000s, transferred substantial authority to local governments, aiming to bring services closer to citizens and foster local accountability (Maksum & Lutfi, 2025; Sumintono et al., 2023). However, this shift has also exposed disparities in capacity, resource allocation, and governance quality across regions, particularly in remote and island communities (Uang et al., 2020).

Despite ambitious reforms, the Indonesian public sector continues to grapple with systemic issues such as bureaucratic inertia, lack of transparency, and persistent maladministration (Nurman, 2016; Wahyu Sulistya et al., 2019). The implementation gap between policy formulation and on-the-ground outcomes remains a central concern, often exacerbated by weak integration of planning and budgeting, and a compliance-oriented rather than performance-driven culture (Friedberg & Hilderbrand, 2016; Pudjono et al., 2026).

Governance: The Pursuit of Good Governance and Accountability

Good governance has become a central objective in Indonesia's bureaucratic reform agenda, reflecting both domestic aspirations and international standards (Wibawa, 2024). The adoption of New Public Management principles and the emphasis on accountability, transparency, and citizen participation have driven a wave of reforms aimed at modernizing the state apparatus. Yet, the realization of these ideals is uneven, with challenges in procurement transparency, financial management, and public trust (Kahar et al., 2023).

The push for agile and adaptive governance is particularly urgent in the face of political uncertainties and the need for responsive public institutions. The integration of digital technologies and e-government initiatives is seen as a pathway to greater efficiency and transparency, but implementation remains inconsistent, with many government services still falling short of citizen expectations (Lukman & Hakim, 2024).

Policy Implementation: Bridging the Gap

Policy implementation in Indonesia is shaped by a complex interplay of political, administrative, and financial factors (Aryani et al., 2023; Friedberg & Hilderbrand, 2016). Local politics, leadership quality, and fiscal capacity significantly influence the quality of public service delivery, leading to variations in outcomes across regions. The decentralization era has empowered local governments but also highlighted the need for stronger performance management frameworks and capacity-building to ensure effective policy execution (Pudjono et al., 2026; Sumintono et al., 2023).

Public participation in policy-making is increasingly recognized as vital for legitimacy and effectiveness, especially in managing Indonesia's vast maritime and natural resources (Handayani, 2017). However, meaningful engagement remains a work in progress, with institutional and cultural barriers to inclusive governance.

Public Service Delivery: Innovation and Equity

Public service delivery is both a benchmark of government performance and a strategic issue affecting the daily lives of Indonesians (Dharmika & Subanda, 2023). The government's commitment to improving service quality is evident in initiatives such as public service innovation competitions and the adoption of Law No. 25/2009 on public services (Muluk & Pratama, 2021; Uang et al., 2020). These efforts aim to foster innovation, address citizen complaints, and ensure that basic needs are met efficiently and equitably (Muluk & Pratama, 2021; Nurman, 2016).

Nevertheless, disparities persist, particularly in remote and under-resourced areas where transportation and infrastructure limitations hinder access to services (Uang et al., 2020). The drive for innovation is complicated by budgetary constraints, administrative opacity, and the need for greater citizen trust (Muluk & Pratama, 2021; Torres-Sandoval et al., 2025). The adoption of e-government and digital transformation holds promise but requires sustained investment and capacity development (Lukman & Hakim, 2024; Wahyu Sulistya et al., 2019).

The urgency of understanding and addressing the dynamics of Indonesia's public sector lies in the nation's aspirations for inclusive development, social justice, and global competitiveness. The interplay of governance reforms, policy implementation challenges, and the quest for effective public service delivery defines the current landscape and sets the agenda for future transformation. Continued research, innovation, and stakeholder engagement are essential to realize the full potential of Indonesia's public sector and to meet the evolving needs of its citizens.

This May 2026 edition presents a series of empirical studies and critical analyses regarding the dynamics of public governance, fiscal policy, and environmental sustainability. Readers are invited to examine the issue of priority distortion in local public budgeting, as well as the factors influencing taxpayer compliance regarding motor vehicle taxes. Furthermore, in support of the transition toward green development, this issue reviews policies on the disposal of government vehicle assets, alongside a regulatory evaluation assessing the success of Presidential Regulation No. 126 of 2022.

Additionally, this edition highlights aspects of preparedness, education governance, and socio-religious values within public services. An analysis of regional disaster preparedness in Serang Regency offers crucial insights into local-level risk management. Meanwhile, the effectiveness of public service delivery in higher education is explored through the reframing of *Pancasila* instruction, complemented by a study on applying religious values to prevent bullying in secondary schools. This diverse collection of articles aims to offer constructive insights for academics, practitioners, and policymakers alike.

The first article, authored by Simin, Hikmah Nuraini, and Shadu Wijaya, is titled "Distortion of Public Budgeting Priorities at the Local Level". It examines the phenomenon of priority distortion in public budgeting at the village level in Indonesia, focusing on the implementation of the Village Fund policy in Banyumas Regency. Although a participatory budgeting mechanism via Village Deliberations (Musyawarah Desa or Musdes) has been procedurally implemented, the study reveals a significant discrepancy between community aspirations and the budget allocations established in the Village Budget (*APBDes*). The research employs a sequential exploratory mixed-methods design, comprising a quantitative phase—involving a survey of community needs and an analysis of APBDes documents—and a qualitative phase involving in-depth interviews, observations of deliberation forums, and process tracing to track the transformation of community aspirations throughout the budget cycle.

The results indicate that villagers consistently prioritize the agricultural sector (88.9%) and education (72.2%) as their primary needs, reflecting the agriculture-based nature of the rural economy. However, budget allocations within the APBDes are dominated by physical infrastructure development. This gap indicates a lack of strong alignment between budget allocations and the basic service needs of rural communities, despite the mandate of public organizations to serve and fulfill the public's fundamental requirements. These findings align with Maslow's hierarchy of needs, wherein communities require physical services at the foundational level, followed by educational needs as a form of self-actualization.

This priority distortion stems from local power dynamics, where the authority of the village head and the influence of agendas from higher levels of government often determine the final budget outcomes more than the community aspirations voiced in deliberation forums. While these forums provide a space for public participation, final decisions regarding development priorities remain influenced by the preferences of key actors within the village governance structure. This study concludes that the effectiveness of participatory budgeting should not be measured solely by procedural completeness or the frequency of deliberations, but also by the extent to which fiscal allocations are truly responsive to the community's actual needs. Without alignment between budget allocations and pressing needs—such as agriculture and education—community participation will remain a meaningless procedure, failing to transform well-being at the village level.

The second article, authored by Hana Fujiana, Juliannes Cadith, and Sierfi Rahayu, is titled "Factors Affecting Taxpayer Compliance in Paying Motor Vehicle Taxes: A Case Study at Samsat Kelapa Dua, Tangerang Regency." This article highlights the phenomenon of high Motor Vehicle Tax (PKB) arrears in the Tangerang Regency area. Employing an associative quantitative approach with a sample of 100 respondents selected via purposive and accidental sampling, the study critically analyzes the influence of Service Quality (X1) and Tax Sanctions (X2) on Taxpayer Compliance (Y) at the Samsat Kelapa Dua unit. The research background is systematically structured by linking issues of fiscal decentralization and regional revenue to real-world phenomena—such as the high volume of tax arrears in Banten (involving over 2.2 million vehicles in 2022) and service-related issues like long queues and allegations of illegal levies.

Regarding the results and empirical analysis, the study presents interesting and relevant statistical findings. Service quality and tax sanctions were found to have a significant, strong simultaneous influence ($R=0.848$) on taxpayer compliance, with a coefficient of determination (R^2) of 71.9%. However, partial testing revealed a sharp disparity in implications. Service quality (X1) was shown to have a significant effect on taxpayer compliance ($p=0.001$), with the "assurance" indicator making the greatest contribution. Conversely, tax sanctions (X2) showed no significant effect when tested individually ($p=0.132$). This indicates that financial or administrative sanctions are not yet effective enough to ensure taxpayer compliance unless accompanied by public understanding of the sanctions' purpose and consistent enforcement. Overall, this article makes a concrete practical contribution to improving public governance in the local taxation sector. The author goes beyond merely presenting multiple linear regression statistics by offering actionable recommendations—such as enhancing physical facilities (e.g., disability-friendly waiting areas, nursing rooms, and prayer spaces), ensuring transparency regarding bureaucratic procedures on social media, and reframing the communication of sanctions from a "threat" to a form of "public protection insurance." However, the study has limitations regarding its relatively small sample size (100 respondents) compared to a total population of hundreds of thousands of taxpayers. Additionally, the 28.1% residual value leaves room for future researchers to explore other variables, such as tax awareness, transparency, or implementation via digital systems like e-Samsat.

The third article, authored by Rachman Sucipto, Azaria Eda Pradana, Aska Winarta Putra, and Galang Graha Perkasa, highlights a fundamental dilemma in the management of State-Owned Assets (BMN) in Indonesia, specifically regarding the disposal or decommissioning mechanisms for government service vehicles. To date, the policy for decommissioning government vehicles in Indonesia has been dominated by a public auction approach driven primarily by fiscal and administrative objectives—namely, optimizing Non-Tax State Revenue (PNBP) and ensuring budgetary efficiency. Although the auction mechanism has proven administratively effective, achieving a sales success rate of 98 percent, the authors critically point out a significant environmental trade-off. The auctioned service vehicles are generally old, fuel-inefficient, and high in carbon emissions; selling them to the general public effectively extends their operational lifespan. This phenomenon is viewed as contradictory to Indonesia's national commitments regarding the low-carbon development agenda and the goal of achieving Net Zero Emissions (NZE) by 2060.

To propose a solution to this issue, the article applies Dolowitz and Marsh’s (2000) Policy Transfer Theory to analyze and compare government vehicle disposal practices in three developed nations: the United States, Germany, and Japan. These three countries were selected because they have successfully integrated green economy and circular economy principles into their public asset management chains. The US, through the General Services Administration (GSA), implements life-cycle management and emission criteria; Germany employs a rigorous End-of-Life Vehicle (ELV) recycling system for material recovery; and Japan combines the Automotive Recycling Law with Life Cycle Assessment (LCA). Employing a descriptive-qualitative analytical framework, this article asserts that Indonesia cannot simply replicate foreign models due to various internal institutional challenges—such as state asset management regulations that lack environmental criteria, the unpreparedness of the national automotive recycling infrastructure, and a high fiscal reliance on auction proceeds.

As its primary contribution, the study proposes a policy recommendation in the form of a hybrid model that combines public auctions with certified vehicle recycling. Roadworthy vehicles may be auctioned subject to specific emission criteria, whereas high-emission or end-of-life vehicles must be directed to certified recycling facilities for material recovery. The article also outlines an inter-agency governance framework—linking Bappenas, the Ministry of Finance, the Directorate General of State

Assets Management (DJKN), and the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK)—and recommends allocating a portion of auction proceeds to fund clean energy transition programs and fleet renewal with low-emission electric vehicles. Overall, this article makes a significant theoretical and practical contribution by shifting the paradigm of state asset management from a mere revenue-generating instrument to a strategic tool for environmental sustainability and the circular economy.

The fourth article, authored by Mujib, Kasdi Tri Aryada, Mery Lestari, Farida Asy'ari, and Tri Meliana—titled "Reframing Pancasila Instruction as Public Service Delivery: Evidence from Student-Oriented Higher Education Governance at Pontianak State Polytechnic"—examines the mandatory Pancasila course not merely as an academic regulatory requirement, but as a form of student-oriented educational public service. Employing a descriptive quantitative approach and an adapted SERVQUAL framework, the study measured the perceptions of 80 students across eight departments at Pontianak State Polytechnic. The results indicate that, overall, student perceptions regarding the quality of Pancasila instruction were highly positive, with 90% of respondents rating the service quality as "high." These findings underscore a paradigm shift in vocational higher education governance—moving from a conventional knowledge-transfer model toward a model of inclusive and participatory public service delivery.

In greater detail, the research findings reveal that relational dimensions—or human interactions—play a far more dominant role than physical dimensions. Based on the analysis of the five SERVQUAL dimensions, empathy ranked highest with an achievement rate of 90.50%, followed by responsiveness (89.88%), assurance (88.88%), and reliability (87.25%). Conversely, the tangibles dimension (physical facilities such as air conditioning and classrooms) recorded the lowest score at 76.83%. This substantiates concepts of co-production and Service-Dominant Logic within public administration, demonstrating that the value of character- and moral-based education—such as Pancasila—is generated primarily through humanistic interpersonal relationships, lecturer care, and responsive two-way communication, rather than merely through the availability of infrastructure and facilities.

In terms of practical and policy implications, this article emphasizes the need for a dual-track strategy to strengthen higher education governance. On one hand, institutions must sustain academic social capital by honing lecturers' pedagogical and communication competencies to ensure a continued student-oriented focus. On the other hand, enhancing the governance capacity of physical and digital infrastructure remains a priority to bridge the quality gap in supporting facilities. Despite limitations—specifically its focus on a single vocational institution and reliance on quantitative data derived solely from student perceptions—this study makes a significant theoretical and practical contribution by repositioning the *Pancasila* course as a strategic instrument for public service within a framework of student-centered governance in Indonesia.

The fifth article, authored by Eko Wahyu Junaidi, Mawi, Aulia Sholichah Iman Nurchotimah, and Varidho Fuad, is titled "Religious Values and School Governance: Implementing *Akhlaqul Lil Banin* to Prevent Bullying in Islamic Junior High Schools." It explores in depth the role of internalizing classical Islamic ethical values (turath) in addressing the issue of bullying within the school environment. Conducted at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Ushuluddin Singkawang using a qualitative case study approach, the article highlights the phenomenon of bullying—particularly verbal abuse and social exclusion—which remains prevalent among early adolescents. The authors systematically explain that formal instruments, such as school regulations and the enforcement of disciplinary sanctions, often fail to eradicate bullying completely because students tend to comply only when under teacher supervision. As a solution, the study proposes a prevention approach based on value-oriented governance through the teaching of the text Akhlaqul Lil Banin (Volume I) by Sheikh Umar bin Ahmad Baradja. Substantive values—such as humility (tawadhu'), polite speech, empathy, and respect for both teachers and peers—are taught and integrated into daily routines to foster an internal system of self-control among students.

The study's methodology was systematically designed to incorporate data triangulation from various stakeholders, including guidance and counseling teachers, the vice principal for curriculum affairs, subject teachers, and seventh-grade students. The findings reveal that the process of internalizing these moral values extends beyond mere textual memorization in the classroom; instead, it is implemented through four key pillars: teacher role-modeling (uswah), the cultivation of school culture (ta'wid), the fostering of a religious environment, and collaboration between the school and families. Three key qualitative indicators demonstrate the success of this moral intervention: a shift in students' social attitudes toward greater politeness, the emergence of cooperative and inclusive peer interaction patterns, and a transition in conflict resolution methods from aggression to peaceful communication. The author successfully links these field findings to classical Islamic theoretical foundations (such as the thought of Al-Ghazali, Ibn Jama'ah, and Abdullah Nashih Ulwan) and modern organizational culture theory (Schein), thereby lending significant academic weight to the effectiveness of classical texts within a modern educational context.

Overall, this article makes a valuable contribution to the literature on Islamic educational management and institutional strategies for preventing school violence. The author clearly identifies key managerial factors—such as teacher commitment, program continuity, systematic monitoring, and resource availability—that determine the successful implementation of moral values at an institutional level. Although the discussion regarding variations in student comprehension levels and practical field constraints could be further elaborated, the article successfully demonstrates that classical Islamic texts remain relevant and practically useful as a preventive framework. This work serves as a highly relevant guide for *madrasah* administrators, educators, and policymakers seeking to transform bullying management systems from a corrective-punitive model into a character-focused, curative approach grounded in religious values.

The sixth article, authored by Tiwi Rizkiyani and Yeni Khoirunnisa Agustiani and titled "Analysis of Regional Disaster Preparedness in Serang Regency," highlights the preparedness dynamics of the area with the highest frequency of disaster events in Banten Province. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach based on the LIPI-UNESCO/ISDR (2006) framework, the study evaluates five key parameters: knowledge and attitudes, policies and guidelines, emergency response plans, early warning systems, and resource mobilization capabilities. The findings indicate that Serang Regency faces consistent and recurring vulnerability, particularly regarding hydrometeorological disasters such as floods, landslides, and extreme weather. Although threats escalate sharply each year, the region's preparedness is assessed as still being fragmented and not yet functioning optimally at the operational field level.

Qualitatively, the primary strengths of disaster preparedness in Serang Regency lie in its robust normative foundation, formal legal framework, and non-structural aspects. The local government has established a tiered regulatory system—ranging from Regional Regulations (Perda) to Regent Regulations (Perbup)—developed internal Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD), formulated Tsunami Contingency and Flood Risk Management plans, and implemented an integrated early warning system in coastal areas. Furthermore, the response level of field personnel (Rapid Reaction Team/TRC) has proven excellent, with an average response time of 5 to 30 minutes following an incident. Social capital—manifested in local wisdom regarding natural signs and the tradition of *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation)—also serves as a crucial informal support system during crises.

However, the study explicitly reveals a significant gap between administrative readiness and the reality of structural implementation. Field preparedness is hampered by limited routine regional budget (APBD) allocations, a lack of operational facilities and equipment (such as fire trucks, inflatable boats, and water pumps), and the infrequent conduct of disaster drills for the community. Furthermore, the dissemination of educational programs and the establishment of Disaster-Ready Villages (KSB) remain uneven and have not yet reached all disaster-prone districts. Overall, this article concludes that while Serang Regency possesses robust disaster management planning and coordination, its effectiveness is still constrained by limited operational resources.

The seventh article, titled "Has Presidential Regulation Number 126 of 2022 Succeeded? Evaluating Indonesia's National Salt Development Policy and Import Dependency" by Anita Shalehah et al., examines the paradox of Indonesia's reliance on salt imports despite the vast potential of its coastal regions. Employing a descriptive qualitative method based on a literature review and the triangulation of secondary data (from BPS and KKP), the authors systematically analyze the effectiveness of Presidential Regulation No. 126 of 2022. The primary analytical framework used is Thomas R. Dye's Public Policy Process theory, which maps the policy chain into six systematic stages: problem identification, agenda setting, formulation, legitimation, implementation, and policy evaluation. The authors carefully highlight a gap in previous research—which generally focused on macroeconomic analysis or regional case studies—thereby positioning this article to fill the void regarding a holistic evaluation of the policy cycle at the national level.

In the discussion section, the article demonstrates the strength of its analysis by presenting empirical evidence regarding technical implementation in the field. The authors detail the implementation process from the pre-production stage through to marketing, covering initiatives such as the integration of land for the People's Salt Economic Center (SEGAR) in Cirebon, technological innovations utilizing rejected brine in Indramayu and Brebes, Geographical Indication certifications (such as for Tejakula and Amed salt), and the construction of a fluidized-bed salt washing plant in Batangan. However, despite the comprehensive institutional framework and the various work programs implemented, quantitative evaluation findings indicate that the policy has not yet succeeded in significantly reducing import figures during the 2022–2024 period. Indonesia's salt import volume has fluctuated only slightly, ranging from 2.75 to 2.81 million metric tons annually; supplies remain dominated by Australia and India, as these sources meet the purity standards required for industrial-grade salt.

The eight article, titled "Rural Development Initiative Through Nature-Based Tourism Development: Challenges and Opportunities " by Muslih Faozanuddin and Lilis Sri Sulistiani, The development of nature-based tourism in the Kendeng Mountains areas panning Somagede District, Banyumas Regency represents a strategic move to spur local economic growth by leveraging the natural and cultural potential of Kemawi, Klinting, and Tanggeran villages. This bottom up initiative is being realized through inter village cooperation, the establishment of a joint Village Owned Enterpris specifically BUNDEMSA Agro Tri Rahayu and the active involvement of Tourism Awareness Groups called Pokdarwis and local communities in managing tourism assets such as waterfalls, mountain scenery, camping grounds, *embung*, religious sites, and cultural heritage sites.

Although tourism development in this area offers significant opportunities such as creating jobs, fostering new businesses, diversifying livelihoods, and improving residents' wellbeing it still faces several major obstacles. These challenges include inconsistent commitment among village heads, a lack of tourism management skills and experience among the local workforce, the absence of an integrated development master plan, and limited accessibility due to inadequate road infrastructure and telecommunications networks. Therefore, strengthening stakeholder collaboration, building community capacity, improving infrastructure, and implementing digital based promotion are essential to establishing a sustainable and competitive rural tourism destination.

In conclusion, this article asserts that the failure to achieve the national salt self-sufficiency target by 2024 stems not from the design or formulation of regulations, but rather from implementation challenges and quality gaps in local production. The author critically emphasizes that self-sufficiency cannot be attained merely through import quota restrictions; instead, it requires large-scale technological modernization such as the planned Sea Water Reverse Osmosis (SWRO) plant in Sampang, a project that has shifted the self-sufficiency target to 2027.

Finally, the editorial team extends its deepest appreciation to the authors who have contributed their critical insights on a wide range of topics, including public budgeting, tax compliance, the green economy, the governance of education and religious values, disaster preparedness, and the evaluation of presidential regulations. We hope that the ideas presented in this May 2026 edition will not only enrich scholarly literature but also offer practical policy recommendations for improving government governance and enhancing the quality of public services across the board.

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