

Agile Local Government: Lessons from Digital Collaborative Service in Jambi City

^a Ginazar Hasta Winata; ^b M.Yusuf; ^c Dimas Subekti; ^d Makmun Wahid; ^e Mar Atun Saadah

^{a b c d} Government Studies Program, Department of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Jambi, Muaro Jambi Regency, Jambi, Indonesia; ^e Government Management, Department of Management, Universitas Jambi, Muaro Jambi Regency, Jambi, Indonesia

ABSTRAK

Artikel ini secara khusus mengeksplorasi penerapan prinsip-prinsip pemerintahan cergas dalam konteks layanan kolaboratif digital untuk perizinan bangunan di Kota Jambi. Pemerintahan cergas memprioritaskan responsivitas dan adaptabilitas dalam administrasi publik untuk menjawab kebutuhan masyarakat yang terus berkembang. Studi ini bertujuan menganalisis bagaimana prinsip-prinsip tersebut dapat memperbaiki proses perizinan bangunan dengan meningkatkan kolaborasi antar-instansi. Penelitian ini mengidentifikasi tantangan utama dalam koordinasi lembaga pemerintah dan menilai sejauh mana fleksibilitas, keterbukaan, serta orientasi pada pengguna telah diterapkan dalam proses layanan. Dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif, riset ini mengumpulkan data melalui wawancara dan analisis terhadap berbagai dokumen. Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa kompleksitas birokrasi dan lemahnya komunikasi antar-instansi merupakan hambatan besar bagi efisiensi pelayanan publik. Di sisi yang berbeda, pemanfaatan teknologi informasi dinilai memiliki potensi signifikan untuk meningkatkan transparansi, koordinasi, dan kecepatan pengambilan keputusan. Temuan studi ini memiliki arti penting bagi reformasi birokrasi di tingkat lokal dan mengusulkan strategi seperti penyelarasan Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), pengembangan platform komunikasi terintegrasi, serta pemanfaatan sistem pemantauan real-time untuk meningkatkan kecepatan, efisiensi, dan kualitas layanan. Rekomendasi ini tidak hanya relevan untuk Kota Jambi, tetapi juga dapat diterapkan di daerah lain yang menghadapi tantangan serupa, sehingga mendorong layanan publik yang lebih adaptif, efisien, dan berorientasi pada pengguna.

ABSTRACT

This article explores the implementation of agile government principles in the context of digital collaborative services for building permits in Jambi City. Agile Government prioritizes responsiveness and adaptability in public administration to address the evolving needs of society. This study aims to analyze how these principles can improve the building permit process by enhancing inter-agency collaboration. It identifies key challenges in coordination among government institutions and assesses the extent to which flexibility, openness, and user-orientation have been applied in the service process. Using qualitative methods, this research collected data through interviews and analysis of various documents. Our study indicates that bureaucratic complexity and weak inter-agency communication are major barriers to efficient public service efficiency. However, the use of information technology is considered to have significant potential to improve transparency, coordination, and fast in decision-making. The findings of this study have significance for bureaucratic reform at the local level and propose strategies such as the alignment of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), the development of integrated communication platforms, as well as the utilization of real-time monitoring systems to improve efficiency, and quality of public services. These recommendations are not only relevant for Jambi City but can also be applied in other regions facing similar challenges, thus promoting more adaptive, efficient, and user-oriented.

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INTRODUCTION

Agile government is a concept that emphasizes an organization's ability to respond quickly to unexpected changes in order to meet the evolving needs of society (Marifah & Satlita, 2023). This concept aims to enhance organizational capacity in utilizing information and communication technology to support effective governance. Therefore, its implementation has become imperative for nations facing challenges in this disruptive era (Vernanda, 2020). Consequently, public services must continue to innovate in line with societal needs and make ongoing improvements based on public feedback.

In today's digital era, efficiency and responsiveness in public services have become key indicators in meeting societal needs (Adnan, 2014). In 2023, the number of internet users in Indonesia reached 221,563,479 out of a total population of 278,696,200 (Busri et al., 2023). This situation requires the government to provide services that are not only easily accessible but also transparent, responsive, effective, and efficient (Adnan, 2014). Digital services have become essential not only in the administrative and health sectors but also in building permit processing.

Generally, building permit processes in Indonesia continue to face challenges, including bureaucratic complexity, lengthy processing times, and relatively high costs for the public (Online, 2020). These obstacles contribute to low public satisfaction with permit services and hinder infrastructure development across various regions. Furthermore, difficulties in obtaining building permits often lead to an increase in illegal constructions, as illustrated in the following data:

Table 1.
Distribution of Illegal Construction Cases in Regencies/Cities

Island	Number of Case in Regency/ City
Sumatera	38
Java-Bali	25
Kalimantan	15
Sulawesi	18
Nusa Tenggara	10
Maluku and Papua	15

Source: Ministry of AASP/NLA (2021)

Based on the data in Table 1, the distribution of illegal building cases in Indonesia shows significant variation across regions. Sumatra leads with 38 illegal building cases across various regencies and cities. This is followed by the Java-Bali region, with 25 cases, which, despite being highly urbanized, still faces similar issues. Sulawesi recorded 18 cases, while Kalimantan and the combined Maluku-Papua region each reported 15 cases. Meanwhile, the Nusa Tenggara region had the fewest cases, with only 10. These findings indicate that illegal construction is a nationwide issue, but is more dominant in Sumatra, requiring special attention in licensing enforcement and spatial planning supervision.

The issue of illegal buildings has become a critical problem in various urban areas, including Jakarta, where approximately 60% of the population still lives in uninhabitable zones. Many of them construct illegal buildings in high-risk locations, such as under toll roads, beneath bridges, or along riverbanks (Risbiani Fardaniah, 2021). Similar problems also occur in non-metropolitan cities in Sumatra Island, such as Jambi City, which still faces building permit violations, including at Rimbo Medika Hospital (Khairiyyah & Amir, 2022). The presence of illegal buildings can have significant social impacts, necessitating strict enforcement of building regulations to ensure compliance with established technical and spatial requirements.

To simplify the licensing process and prevent violations, the government introduced the building approval (*persetujuan bangunan gedung/PBG*) as regulated in Government Regulation No. 16 of 2021, which was later updated by Law No. 6 of 2023 concerning the Stipulation of Government Regulation in Lieu of Law No. 2 of 2022 concerning job creation. In Jambi City, PBG services are managed by the Department of Investment and One-Stop Integrated Services (*Dinas Penanaman Modal dan Pelayanan Terpadu Satu Pintu/DPMPTSP*) in collaboration with the DPUPR. In its implementation, the DPMPTSP cooperates with the DPUPR through the Construction Development and Control Division, specifically the Construction Services Monitoring and Evaluation Section, which is responsible for the technical aspects of permits (Octari Anggraini, 2023).

Despite the implementation of PBG, various challenges remain in its execution. This aligns with a statement by a member of Real Estate Indonesia (REI) that the transition from Building Construction Permits (*Izin Mendirikan Bangunan/IMB*) to PBG under the Job Creation Law has not been implemented optimally at the regional level. Some regions still face obstacles in the technical and regulatory aspects of PBG, potentially hindering infrastructure provision (Istikasari & Khadiyanto, 2014).

Based on publicly reported data between July 2021 and December 2022, 509 PBG applications were submitted in Jambi City, but only 155 permits were issued (Manik, 2023). According to the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), PBGs are supposed to be issued within 28 working days from registration until the permit certificate is released (Pupr, 2021). However, field implementation reveals administrative obstacles that cause inefficiencies in the permit issuance process.

To address this issue, enhanced collaboration between relevant agencies is needed to improve the efficiency of the licensing process. The agile government approach can accelerate and enhance the effectiveness of permit services by reducing bureaucratic barriers between the Department of Public Works and Spatial Planning (*Dinas Pekerjaan Umum dan Penataan Ruang/DPUPR*) and the DPMPTSP in Jambi City. By applying agile government principles, it is hoped that a more flexible, transparent, and community-oriented licensing system can be established. Therefore, this research poses the question of how to apply agile governance principles to digital collaborative services for building permits in the City of Jambi.

This research holds both practical and theoretical significance. Practically, this study is expected to produce strategic policy recommendations to strengthen inter-agency synergy in the context of licensing services. These recommendations cover aspects of institutional strengthening, optimization of collaboration systems, improvement of human resource capacity, and innovation in business processes to support bureaucratic efficiency and the effectiveness of public services. Furthermore, this research also aims to optimize the implementation of the new public service (NPS) concept by emphasizing the principles of participation, transparency, and accountability in governance.

Theoretically, the results of this study are expected to make a significant contribution to the development of an agile government-based collaboration model, particularly in permitting services. The resulting model is expected to serve as a reference for other regional governments in designing policies that are more adaptive to change, responsive to societal needs, and aligned with the principles of good governance. Thus, future policy implementation will not only meet administrative standards but also genuinely address the challenges of development complexity and societal dynamics.

Literature Review

The concept of agile government is considered an innovation in public governance that integrates cultural, structural, and procedural adaptations to enhance the responsiveness of public organizations to environmental dynamics. This model focuses on adaptability in unstable, uncertain, and unpredictable situations while prioritizing flexibility in responding to the evolving societal needs (Deseve, 2020; Greve et al., 2020; McBride et al., 2022; Neumann et al., 2024; Zulyani, 2020).

Previous literature also indicates that implementing agile government in public administration faces various challenges, such as bureaucratic complexity, limited human resource competence in information technology, and suboptimal inter-agency coordination (Busri et al., 2023; Rofiyanti et al., 2021). These obstacles affect policy effectiveness and public service efficiency, underscoring the need for a more comprehensive collaborative approach to overcome institutional barriers and enhance governance quality. Although numerous studies have emphasized the role of agile government in improving public service efficiency, research specifically examining collaboration in the PBG process remains limited. This study positions collaboration as a core component of agile government by mapping inter-agency collaboration into three main dimensions: structure, process, and communication.

From a structural perspective, agile collaboration involves flexible institutional arrangements that enable coordination among technical agencies responsible for licensing, spatial planning, environmental assessment, and public works. Such arrangements reduce bureaucratic fragmentation and support adaptive decision-making. From a process perspective, collaboration involves iterative, coordinated workflows that enable agencies to respond quickly to application requirements, technical verifications, and regulatory adjustments. Meanwhile, from a communication perspective, agile collaboration emphasizes transparent information exchange, digital integration, and continuous stakeholder interaction to ensure timely and accurate decision-making.

By conceptualizing collaboration across structural, procedural, and communicative dimensions, this study seeks to fill a gap in the literature and to provide a clearer analytical framework for understanding how agile government principles can support more adaptive and efficient governance models in public services.

In Jambi City, one of the main obstacles in the PBG service process is the prolonged licensing process due to suboptimal coordination between the DPUPR and the DPMPTSP. This inefficiency not only delays the licensing process but also negatively impacts the overall effectiveness of public service delivery. Therefore, this study seeks to explore the role of collaboration in implementing Agile Government principles in the PBG process in Jambi City. The primary focus is to identify challenges, opportunities, and strategies that can affect the effectiveness of inter-agency coordination, and to establish a more responsive, flexible, and efficient governance system.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative case study approach to identify and analyse inter-agency collaboration patterns in the implementation of agile government principles in the PBG process in Jambi City in 2023. The qualitative approach was selected because the research focuses on understanding complex institutional interactions, collaborative practices, and adaptive governance processes that cannot be adequately captured through quantitative measurement

alone. Inter-agency collaboration in the PBG process involves dynamic relationships among actors, organizational arrangements, and communication practices that require in-depth exploration of experiences and perspectives from relevant stakeholders.

The case study method was chosen because the implementation of PBG services in Jambi City represents a specific governance setting in which agile government principles are applied through inter-agency coordination. This method enables a comprehensive examination of the structural arrangements, procedural mechanisms, and communication patterns that shape collaboration among institutions. By focusing on a single case, this study aims to generate a contextual and holistic understanding of how agile government principles operate in practice and how collaborative mechanisms influence the effectiveness of PBG service delivery. The research design follows the qualitative data analysis model developed by Huberman & Miles (1992), which consists of four main stages: comprehensive data collection, data reduction to filter relevant information, data presentation in narrative or analytical matrices, and conclusion drawing or verification of findings to ensure the accuracy of the research results.

Data collection was conducted using various methods to obtain a holistic picture. The primary data collection technique used in this study was in-depth interviews with key informants directly involved in the PBG process. The informants were purposively selected based on their institutional roles, decision-making authority, and direct involvement in inter-agency coordination within the PBG service system. Key informants include the Head of the Licensing and Non-Licensing Services division of Development and Environment at the DPMPTSP and the Head of Construction Development and Control at the DPUPR of Jambi City. The interviews were conducted between October and December 2024 at the respective agency offices in Jambi City, within the context of the ongoing implementation of the building management information system (*system informasi manajemen bangunan gedung/SIMBG*) based on PBG services. This period was selected because the digital licensing system had been operational and routinely used, allowing informants to reflect on actual practices of inter-agency collaboration and communication. The interviews were semi-structured to allow flexibility in exploring institutional experiences while maintaining consistency across key themes related to collaboration, coordination, and digital service implementation.

Additionally, secondary data were obtained through an in-depth review of various official documents, including institutional performance reports (*laporan akuntabilitas kinerja instansi pemerintahan/LAKIP*), strategic planning documents (*rencana strategis/Renstra*), performance evaluation results (*evaluasi kinerja/Evalkin*), and relevant regulations, such as Regional Regulations and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for licensing services. To ensure data validity, this study implemented source and method triangulation by comparing and confirming interview findings with documentary evidence and field observation notes. This aims to identify consistent patterns, discrepancies, or new findings emerging from various perspectives.

Data analysis was conducted systematically using a thematic analysis approach. The analysis stages began with data familiarization through repeated reading of interview transcripts and supporting documents. Next, coding was performed to group the data by specific concepts. The subsequent stage involved identifying categories and main themes through an iterative process to discover patterns of relationships between variables. Key findings were validated through member checking by confirming data interpretations with informants to ensure that the results accurately reflected their experiences and institutional perspectives. This procedure was conducted to enhance the credibility and confirmability of the qualitative findings by reducing potential researcher bias and minimizing misinterpretation of informants' statements.

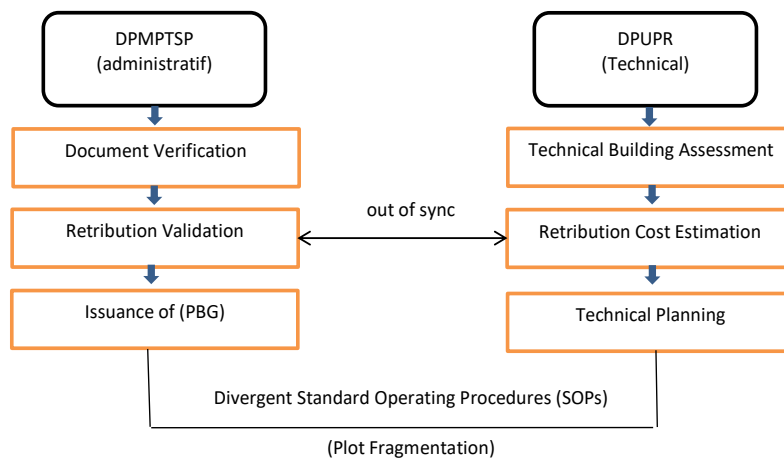
In addition, the study ensured reliability and trustworthiness through the use of consistent interview guidelines, systematic data coding, and careful documentation of the research process. Data obtained from interviews were also compared across informants from different institutions to achieve data triangulation, enabling the identification of consistent patterns in inter-agency collaboration practices. Through these procedures, the study maintains methodological rigor and ensures that the findings provide a dependable and well-grounded representation of inter-agency collaboration in the PBG service process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The Integration of Work Processes

This study reveals that integrating work processes in PBG services in Jambi City still faces significant challenges, particularly in inter-agency collaboration among institutions involved in service delivery. According to Government Regulation No. 16 of 2021 concerning Job Creation, the PBG licensing process is divided into two main domains: technical and administrative. The responsibility for technical aspects lies with the DPUPR, which includes evaluating the physical condition of buildings, conducting land assessments, preparing technical plans, and estimating regional levies. On the other hand, the DPMPSTP manages administrative matters, including verifying document requirements, validating levy payments, and issuing PBG Decision Letters (*surat keputusan/SK*) to applicants.

Figure 1.
Fragmentation of the Building Approval Process (PBG)



Source: Author Processed

The government has adopted a digital system, the SIMBG, designed to enhance efficiency, transparency, and accountability in the licensing process. However, this study indicates that the implementation of this digital system has yet to overcome structural and procedural barriers arising from misaligned SOPs across agencies. Differences in SOPs between DPUPR and DPMPSTP create workflow inconsistencies, ultimately hindering optimal process integration. This highlights the high flexibility in implementing regulations at the regional level, yet it also results in overlapping authorities, workflow duplication, and ineffective cross-sector coordination.

These findings align with Butler's (2011) argument, which emphasizes the importance of inter-agency procedural alignment in supporting successful collaboration within government systems.

In this context, flexibility without a strong coordinative framework instead creates bureaucratic disorganization, negatively impacting public service performance. This study also identifies procedural disharmony between technical and administrative agencies as a source of inefficiencies in managing PBG applications. This condition prolongs licensing completion times, increases bureaucratic workloads, and reduces the system's responsiveness to public needs. This is reinforced by the findings of Pantouvakis & Bouranta (2017), which state that administrative inefficiency is a significant factor that diminishes the overall quality of public services.

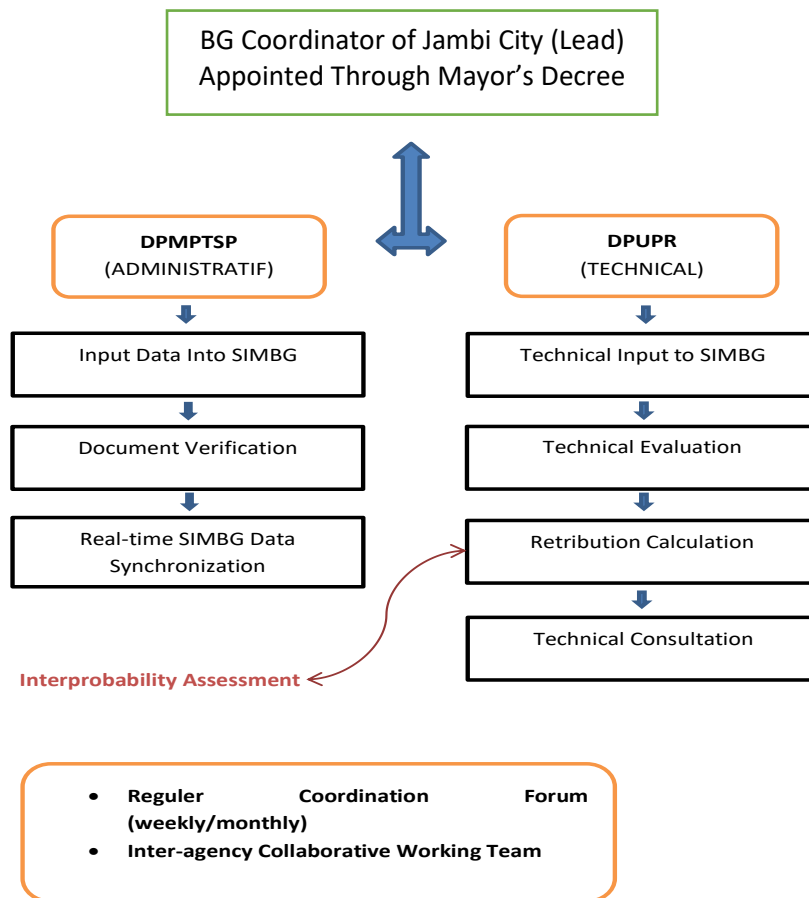
Furthermore, this study highlights the absence of a leading sector or coordinating leader functionally responsible for synergizing inter-agency performance as a key factor exacerbating procedural misalignment. The lack of clearly defined leadership creates confusion in role and responsibility allocation and weakens the effectiveness of cross-sector collaboration. (McBride et al., 2022) argue that collaborative leadership is a prerequisite for overcoming institutional silos and strengthening collaborative governance in the public sector.

Additionally, current regulations are perceived as insufficiently comprehensive in incorporating adaptive public service perspectives. Hierarchical and uniform regulations from the central government often limit regional innovation tailored to local characteristics and institutional functions. This results in low work efficiency and a decline in the quality of public service (Carrasco et al., 2018; Iswinarno, 2021; Kusbandrijo et al., 2025; Saputra et al., 2023). The mismatch between regulatory design and field implementation indicates weak adaptability principles in the bureaucratic system, ultimately hindering the implementation of agile government principles.

In the context of agile government, the principles of flexibility, collaboration, and responsiveness to user needs (user-centricity) should underpin public service delivery. Nonetheless, this study shows that procedural fragmentation, weak coordination, and the absence of integrative leadership have become significant obstacles to the adoption of these principles in PBG services in Jambi City.

Based on these findings, this study recommends several strategic measures to enhance work-process integration and accelerate the transformation of PBG services toward a more adaptive, collaborative system. First, regulatory harmonization between technical and administrative agencies is needed to align SOPs and reduce workflow overlaps. This harmonization can be achieved through regular coordination forums involving all relevant stakeholders. Second, optimizing the use of the SIMBG digital system should extend beyond technical operations to include the development of inter-agency system interoperability, enabling real-time data integration and strengthening accountability. Third, strengthening cross-sector communication and coordination mechanisms by forming collaborative working teams and appointing a lead institution mandated to oversee the integration process and resolve procedural conflicts swiftly and efficiently.

Figure 2.
Recommendations for an Agile Government-Based PBG Process Integration Model



Source: Author Processed

Inter-Agency Communication

This study reveals that although the PBG application process in Jambi City has been digitized through the SIMBG, the communication mechanisms among involved agencies have not undergone a comparable transformation. Coordination between the DPUPR and the DPMPTSP still relies on conventional methods, such as face-to-face meetings and non-integrated instant messaging applications like WhatsApp. The gap between coordination systems and digital services indicates that digitalization remains partial, limited to application submissions, and has not substantially improved inter-agency coordination.

This condition is influenced by several structural and institutional factors. First, the division of authority between DPUPR, the technical evaluator, and DPMPTSP, the licensing administrator, creates a segmented workflow in which each agency operates within its respective mandate. The SIMBG platform primarily accommodates administrative submission and technical verification processes but does not fully support integrated communication and coordination functions across agencies. As a result, coordination still depends on informal channels to bridge institutional boundaries. Second, the persistence of a bureaucratic work culture that prioritizes direct confirmation and personal interaction encourages the continued use of face-to-face meetings and instant messaging as faster, more familiar coordination mechanisms compared to formal digital communication systems. Third, existing regulatory arrangements and standard

operating procedures emphasize procedural compliance in document verification but provide limited guidance on structured inter-agency communication mechanisms within digital service delivery.

Informants acknowledge informal communication tools and direct meetings as practical solutions to prevent misunderstandings, particularly when documents are uploaded or technical requirements are incorrect. However, these methods have significant limitations in communication, documentation, process accountability, and information traceability. The absence of structured, recorded communication weakens tracking and auditing systems, ultimately increasing the risk of inefficiency, redundant work, and gaps in accountability for administrative decision-making.

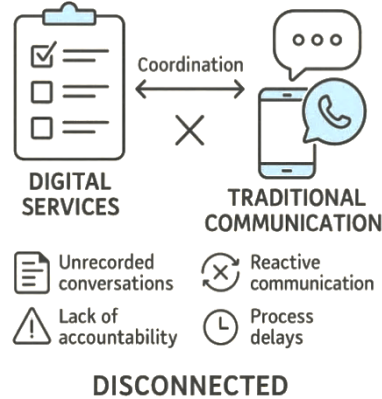
Interview data shows that inter-agency communication in PBG services occurs primarily in two scenarios: first, when a PBG application is submitted; and second, when errors occur in technical or administrative documentation. This pattern reflects a reactive mode of collaboration, shaped by institutional fragmentation and limited system integration, in which communication occurs mainly in response to emerging technical or administrative problems. In this context, communication functions less as a proactive coordination mechanism that ensures workflow continuity and more as a problem-solving instrument used to address disruptions in the licensing process. By identifying these structural, cultural, and regulatory factors as underlying causes, the findings indicate that the main challenge of agile government implementation in PBG services lies not only in service digitization but also in transforming institutional coordination mechanisms.

From the perspective of effective coordination theory (Butler, 2011), cross-sector communication should ensure clarity, completeness, and mutual understanding among bureaucratic actors to minimize service delays. However, in practice, informal and undocumented communication creates room for misinterpretation of technical and administrative information, leading to processing delays, document inconsistencies, and poor policy alignment across agencies. This reliance on ad-hoc communication reflects an institutional coordination framework that lacks sustainability and robustness.

Furthermore, the study finds that communication ineffectiveness is exacerbated by institutional resistance to change. Agencies involved in PBG services tend to cling to outdated workflows, even when these workflows are no longer aligned with the demands of digital services and agile government principles. Additionally, the lack of standardized joint procedures worsens coordination issues, as there are no clear guidelines to bridge inter-agency roles and responsibilities (Berlinda Putri et al., 2022). This procedural ambiguity obstructs the development of an efficient, systematic communication system, a fundamental requirement for an agile, responsive bureaucracy.

Moreover, the absence of a technology-driven evaluation system in SIMBG poses a significant barrier to continuous service improvement. Without real-time monitoring of licensing bottlenecks, recurring issues remain unresolved. (Mergel et al., 2018) argue that adaptive digital systems should not only facilitate services but also incorporate evaluative features for early problem detection and rapid response. This weakness also leads to ineffective public feedback processing, as rigid bureaucratic structures fail to adapt based on user input.

Figure 3.
Inter-agency communication issues

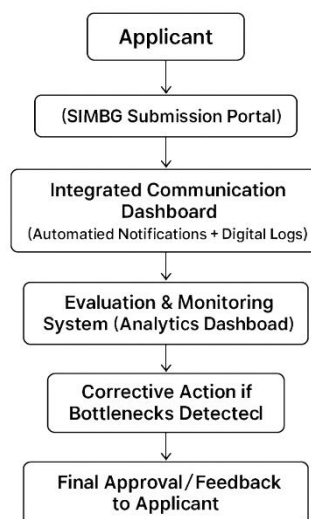


Source: Author Processed

Based on these findings, comprehensive reforms in communication and service evaluation mechanisms are urgently needed. These reforms should establish an integrated and documented communication system aligned with Agile Government principles (collaboration, adaptability, user-centricity). Key measures include: developing an inter-agency communication platform enabling real-time coordination, tracking, and documentation; implementing a system-based evaluation mechanism in SIMBG with automated monitoring features to address licensing bottlenecks; and formulating and implementing joint Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) between technical and administrative agencies to minimize task overlaps and strengthen accountability.

The implementation of these measures is expected to foster a synergistic, efficient, and results-oriented bureaucratic ecosystem. In the long term, this transformation is anticipated not only to accelerate PBG services in Jambi City but also to enhance local government institutional capacity in developing adaptive, participatory, and sustainable public service systems, in line with bureaucratic reform principles and good governance standards.

Figure 4.
Inter-agency Communication Workflow



Source: Author Processed

Support Mechanisms

The implementation of technology in public services has become a key pillar of Indonesia's bureaucratic reform, including in PBG services. At the national level, the government has established the SIMBG as an integrated digital platform designed not only to streamline licensing procedures but also to facilitate coordination among institutions involved in the PBG process. Through a centralized digital system, agencies responsible for administrative verification and technical assessment are expected to access the same information base, synchronize workflows, and reduce procedural fragmentation. In this sense, SIMBG is intended to support inter-agency coordination and cross-domain collaboration by enabling shared data access and standardized processing mechanisms within a single platform.

The presence of SIMBG is therefore expected to foster a more efficient, transparent, and responsive bureaucracy in line with the principles of agile government, which emphasize flexibility, cross-sector collaboration, and user-oriented service delivery (Butler, 2011). However, in practice, the contribution of digitalization to inter-agency coordination remains uneven. While SIMBG has improved the efficiency of application submission and document verification, its role in facilitating structured communication and collaborative decision-making among agencies remains limited. As a result, digitalization has not yet fully supported integrated collaboration across institutional domains, indicating that technological innovation alone is insufficient without corresponding adjustments in coordination mechanisms and organizational practices.

From the user's perspective, SIMBG offers various administrative conveniences, including creating user account, uploading documents, and tracking application status online. In principle, this system has replaced manual processes that previously required face-to-face interactions and relatively long processing times. However, this study shows that digitalization has not completely replaced the traditional interaction patterns between applicants and bureaucratic officials. Direct interactions with the administrative offices continue, particularly when applicants encounter technical difficulties with SIMBG or require further clarification about the licensing process.

It was found that technical and administrative offices in Jambi City still provide direct services to applicants, including consultations, technical assistance, and resolution of administrative issues that cannot be resolved independently through SIMBG. Nevertheless, officials continue to direct the public to use the online system as the primary service channel, requiring account creation and document uploads on the digital platform before further processing can proceed. These findings suggest that the transition to a fully digital public service system is still in its early adaptation phase, where technological transformation has not yet fundamentally changed bureaucratic work patterns or the habits of public service users.

Within the theoretical framework of technology-based NPS, the digitalization of public services should ideally not only be technical but also transform the paradigm of government-citizen relations. However, resistance to change remains a major challenge in implementing SIMBG at the regional level. This study finds that such resistance is triggered by several structural and cultural factors, including unprepared internal policies governing digital workflows, limited technical capacity among officials, and the lack of organizational adjustments to support data- and system-based decision-making. These factors not only hinder optimal use of digital systems but also create dissonance between central policies and field practices.

These findings reinforce previous studies that emphasize the importance of institutional readiness for implementing technology-based public services. Such readiness includes adaptive

regulatory dimensions, improving technical competencies of officials through continuous training, and institutional reforms to create flatter, and more flexible bureaucratic structures that is open to innovation (Mutiarin et al., 2024; Zulyani, 2020). Without such readiness, the implementation of a digital systems risks becoming merely a symbolic modernization without any significant impact on improving service effectiveness.

Therefore, within the context of PBG services in Jambi City, it is imperative to develop comprehensive and integrative policy frameworks that go beyond mere technological adoption to fundamentally strengthen institutional capacity, thereby enabling digital solutions to serve as genuine catalysts for holistic bureaucratic reform. These strategic interventions should be designed to achieve three primary objectives: first, the formulation of detailed operational guidelines and standardized protocols to ensure uniform and optimal utilization of the SIMBG across all relevant agencies; second, the restructuring of inter-organizational workflows and governance mechanisms to facilitate seamless system interoperability and data integration between disparate government units; and third, the establishment of dedicated technology-enabled rapid response units equipped with both technical expertise and decision-making authority to provide real-time assistance to applicants facing procedural or systemic challenges. By implementing this multifaceted approach, technological innovation in PBG services can transcend its conventional role as an administrative facilitator and instead emerge as a transformative force capable of reengineering bureaucratic processes, enhancing service delivery paradigms, and ultimately fostering a more responsive, efficient, and citizen-centric licensing ecosystem that aligns with the broader objectives of agile government principles.

The digital transformation of public services through the SIMBG in Jambi City represents a significant milestone in the evolution towards a more dynamic, adaptive and citizen-responsive bureaucratic system. This transition embodies the complex interplay between technological innovation and administrative reform, where digital solutions serve as both drivers and enablers of bureaucratic modernization. However, the ultimate success and sustainability of this digitalization initiative are fundamentally contingent upon three critical success factors: the institutional maturity and adaptive capacity of government agencies to internalize and institutionalize technological changes, the presence of strong political leadership and managerial commitment to foster inter-agency collaboration, and the strategic alignment between technological infrastructure, organizational restructuring, and comprehensive human resource development programs.

The case of Jambi City demonstrates that true digital transformation extends far beyond mere technical implementation. It requires a paradigm shift in governance approaches and service delivery mindsets. Only through this holistic, integrated approach that synchronizes policy frameworks, institutional arrangements, technological systems, and human capital development can the public sector fully actualize the principles of agile government. Such a transformation will ultimately enable the realization of public services that are not only efficient and transparent but also genuinely responsive to the evolving needs and expectations of the community in this digital era. This necessitates continuous evaluation, adaptive policymaking, and sustained investment in both technological and human aspects of governance to ensure the long-term effectiveness and relevance of digital government initiatives.

CONCLUSIONS

This study reveals that inter-agency coordination in the licensing process remains predominantly reactive rather than proactive, as evidenced by communication patterns that emerge only when system issues or procedural bottlenecks arise, rather than being embedded in routine

operational protocols. The lack of interconnected, standardized communication systems between institutions leads to an over-reliance on informal communication applications like WhatsApp as stopgap solutions, which are neither formally integrated into the official digital licensing system nor properly documented for institutional record-keeping purposes. Consequently, this ad hoc approach to inter-agency communication results in fragmented, unsystematic documentation across departments, significantly increasing the risk of misinformation or data discrepancies while simultaneously prolonging the time required to complete licensing procedures due to the need for repeated verification and clarification.

Furthermore, the study identifies that the absence of a clearly defined lead sector with authoritative coordination mandates in inter-agency processes contributes substantially to delays in processing permits, as decision-making becomes diffused across multiple institutions without clear accountability mechanisms. The lack of a structured, institutionalized leadership mechanism results in agencies operating in organizational silos, with minimal information sharing, preventing the development of optimal synergy that could be achieved through properly coordinated workflows. Additionally, existing regulations that do not fully incorporate or account for crucial public service aspects in their design exacerbate bureaucratic inefficiencies, making the entire system less responsive and adaptive to evolving community needs and expectations.

From a technological standpoint, while the implementation of the SIMBG has successfully streamlined online permit applications in terms of basic submission processes, the current digital transformation has not entirely eliminated the need for direct physical interactions between applicants and government agencies, particularly for applicants facing technical difficulties or lacking digital literacy. The limited readiness and varying levels of technological competency among officials in effectively adapting to and utilizing these technological systems also create significant bottlenecks that hinder the full effectiveness and potential benefits of comprehensive service digitalization, resulting in a hybrid system that fails to maximize either digital or conventional service delivery models.

Therefore, this study demonstrates that inter-agency coordination in the PBG process in Jambi City remains structurally fragmented and procedurally reactive. Despite the implementation of digital licensing systems, institutional misalignment, informal communication practices, and the absence of a clearly defined coordinating authority constrain the realization of agile governance principles. By conceptualizing collaboration through structural, procedural, and communicative dimensions, this study extends the application of agile governance theory to local-level licensing services. The findings suggest that digitalization alone is insufficient to achieve adaptive governance without corresponding institutional reform, regulatory harmonization, and integrated coordination mechanisms. Strengthening institutional interoperability and establishing formalized cross-agency leadership structures are essential for transforming digital systems into instruments of genuine bureaucratic agility.

RECOMMENDATION

This study acknowledges certain limitations in its scope, as it primarily examines collaborative dynamics within the local government framework of Jambi City. Consequently, it is strongly recommended that subsequent research endeavours broaden their analytical perspective by not only maintaining the governmental focus but also systematically incorporating the crucial viewpoints and participation of private sector stakeholders in the collaborative public service delivery process. At the local government level, particularly within DPUPR and DPMPTSP, the focus should be on developing standardized digital communication procedures and integrated

coordination mechanisms within the SIMBG platform to strengthen routine inter-agency collaboration. At the national and regional policy levels, medium-term policy development (3–5 years) should emphasize the establishment of clearer coordinating authority and institutional arrangements for PBG services, including the formulation of technical guidelines that support structured inter-agency communication and accountability

Furthermore, future research trajectories should adopt a more holistic approach that moves beyond a singular emphasis on service digitalization. Such expanded investigations should comprehensively examine multiple critical dimensions, including, but not limited to: innovative job design approaches that facilitate inter-agency cooperation, the transformation of organizational culture to support agile governance principles, and the complex interplay between regional socio-cultural characteristics and geographical conditions that significantly shape the implementation effectiveness of collaborative governance models. This multidimensional analytical framework, when properly implemented, is theoretically positioned to yield a more nuanced, comprehensive, and contextually grounded understanding of the intricate dynamics characterizing cross-sector collaboration mechanisms. Such an enriched understanding would substantially contribute to ongoing efforts to enhance public service quality through the Agile Government paradigm, while simultaneously addressing the unique contextual challenges and opportunities across Indonesia's decentralized governance landscape.

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