

Strengthening Public Sector Performance: The Role of Good Governance, Leadership Style, and Service Quality in Village Government Administration

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ABSTRACT: This study investigates the impact of good governance and leadership style on local government performance, with service quality serving as a mediating variable. Focusing on village administrations in Klaten Regency, the research adopts a quantitative approach with data collected from 150 respondents using structured questionnaires. The analytical method employed is path analysis through SPSS version 22. Results demonstrate that both good governance and leadership style significantly influence service quality. In turn, service quality has a substantial positive impact on government performance. Furthermore, the findings confirm that service quality partially mediates the relationship between the independent variables and performance outcomes. This implies that transparent governance practices and an adaptive leadership approach can enhance public service delivery, which ultimately improves organizational performance at the village level. The study contributes to the literature by highlighting the importance of non-financial factors, such as integrity, participation, and responsiveness, in shaping institutional effectiveness. Practical implications include the need for continuous training of village officials in governance principles and leadership development, as well as the formulation of policies that prioritize citizen satisfaction and institutional accountability. By focusing on the interplay between governance, leadership, and service quality, this research offers valuable insights for optimizing performance within decentralized government structures.

KEYWORDS: Good Governance, Leadership Style, Service Quality, Public Sector Performance, Village Government.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past two decades, Indonesia has witnessed a significant transformation in its system of governance through an ambitious decentralization agenda (Lewis, 2023; Schulze & Sjahrir, 2014). These reforms, initiated under Law No. 22 of 1999 on Regional Government and Law No. 25 of 1999 on Fiscal Balance, marked the beginning of a major shift in administrative, political, and fiscal authority from the central government to local governments. A particularly notable feature of this transformation has been the increased autonomy granted to village governments in managing their own development programs. With the enactment of Law No. 6 of 2014 concerning Villages, the Indonesian government formally institutionalized village autonomy and provided villages with direct funding through the Village Fund (Dana Desa) program. As of 2020, this allocation exceeded IDR 70 trillion annually, intended to support infrastructure development, the provision of basic services, poverty alleviation, and local economic empowerment (da Gama, 2024).

While this injection of substantial financial resources presents enormous potential to improve rural welfare, it also raises critical concerns regarding the effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability of fund management at the village level (Indrijawati & Anwar, 2024; Umar et al., 2018; Yap et al., 2024). Mismanagement, corruption, and a lack of transparency have emerged as persistent challenges in Indonesia's decentralized village administration. Numerous studies have reported elite capture and misuse of public funds in local government settings (Sjahrir et al., 2014). These issues have spurred growing attention from both scholars and policymakers, who seek to better understand and reform the governance mechanisms underpinning rural development (McCarthy, 2010). Accountability, a central principle of good governance, is particularly vital in ensuring that public funds are used lawfully, effectively, and in alignment with intended objectives (Alshaikh, 2024a; Hoque, 2015; Torres & Garcia-Lacalle, 2021). Bovens (2007) defines accountability entails the obligation of public officials to explain and justify their actions to stakeholders, encompassing both vertical accountability to higher authorities and horizontal accountability to the public.

Good governance, as characterized by transparency, accountability, participation, rule of law, responsiveness, and equity, plays a crucial role in shaping public sector performance (Boonlab et al., 2024; Herasymuk et al., 2020; Kaufmann et al., 2010; Torres & Garcia-Lacalle, 2021). In the context of village governance, these principles guide how village leaders manage public resources and implement development initiatives (Razak et al., 2024; Sulaiman et al., 2024). Numerous studies affirm that governance quality is positively correlated with improved service delivery and organizational performance (N. A. Ali et al., 2017; Mishra, 2004;

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Wahidahwati et al., 2024). Nonetheless, good governance cannot function in isolation. The role of leadership in enforcing governance norms, mobilizing resources, and steering development priorities is equally essential. Leadership style determines not only how decisions are made but also how they are communicated and executed across the organization.

Leadership in the public sector differs significantly from its corporate counterpart. It demands not only strategic vision and managerial skills but also ethical behavior, public accountability, and citizen engagement (Selvakumar et al., 2025). Transformational leadership, which emphasizes motivation, vision, and innovation, has been widely associated with improved public service performance (Belhaj, 2024; Iddrisu & Mohammed, 2025). In village settings, where administrative structures are small and closely tied to community networks, leadership style can significantly influence the success or failure of governance practices.

Beyond governance and leadership, service quality has emerged as a critical factor in assessing local government performance (Giannoccaro et al., 2008). According to Parasuraman et al. (1985) service quality encompasses dimensions such as tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. These attributes not only affect citizens' satisfaction but also serve as indicators of how well governments fulfill their duties. In rural areas, the delivery of basic services such as health, education, clean water, and infrastructure development is often the most tangible representation of government performance. As such, the ability of village governments to maintain high standards of service delivery directly impacts public perceptions of their legitimacy and effectiveness (Osborne et al., 2012; Zheng, 2022).

The interplay between good governance, leadership, and service quality raises an important analytical question: How do these variables interact to influence the performance of local governments, particularly at the village level? Existing literature provides fragmented insights. Some studies emphasize the direct relationship between governance and performance (Natto & Mokoteli, 2025; Phuangsuwan et al., 2025; Vieira & Madaleno, 2024), while others highlight the mediating role of service quality in linking governance and leadership to outcomes (Jaber-Chehayeb, 2023). There is a growing recognition that an integrated approach is necessary to understand the complex dynamics of local public administration.

Stewardship Theory provides a useful lens through which to examine these relationships. Unlike Agency Theory, which assumes that individuals act primarily out of self-interest, Stewardship Theory posits that leaders are motivated by a sense of duty, community responsibility, and organizational loyalty (Davis et al., 1997). This theory is particularly relevant in the Indonesian cultural context, where communal values and public service ethos are emphasized. It suggests that when public officials are trusted and empowered, they are more likely to act as stewards who prioritize the public interest, implement accountability mechanisms, and foster organizational performance.

Despite extensive theoretical and empirical research, there remain notable gaps in the literature. First, few studies have simultaneously examined the joint impact of governance, leadership, and service quality on local government performance, particularly in the village context (Greasley et al., 2011; Kusnandar, 2019; Wahidahwati et al., 2024). Second, while governance indicators are often treated as macro-level constructs, there is limited analysis of how they manifest in micro-administrative units such as villages. Third, much of the existing literature is focused on urban settings, leaving rural governance underexplored. These gaps highlight the need for a nuanced empirical investigation that takes into account contextual variables and local institutional dynamics.

The main objectives of this research are fourfold: (1) to examine the effect of good governance on service quality; (2) to determine the influence of leadership style on service quality; (3) to assess the impact of service quality on local government performance; and (4) to analyze whether service quality mediates the relationship between good governance, leadership style, and government performance. By addressing these questions, the study contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of performance management in decentralized settings and offers practical recommendations for policy and capacity development at the village level. This research builds on existing theories of governance, leadership, and public service while incorporating the cultural and institutional specificities of Indonesian village governance. It aligns with the broader global discourse on strengthening local institutions to achieve sustainable development goals, particularly those related to effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions (UN SDG 16). Through empirical investigation and theoretical integration, the study aspires to generate insights that are both academically rigorous and practically relevant.

I. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Stewardship theory serves as a compelling framework for explaining managerial behavior in public sector institutions. Unlike agency theory, which assumes that managers are self-interested agents requiring oversight, stewardship theory posits that individuals are motivated to act in the best interests of the organization and its stakeholders (Davis et al., 1997). In this view, managers (or stewards) prioritize collective goals and long-term organizational success over short-term personal gains. The relevance of stewardship theory is particularly significant in public institutions, where the primary orientation is towards service delivery and public welfare rather than profit maximization. Government officers are presumed to behave as stewards by nature of their roles—entrusted by citizens (principals) to manage public resources responsibly and ethically (Godwin et al., 2021; Gomes & Berman,

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2021; Saunders, 2019). This theory is grounded in psychological and sociological constructs, suggesting that managers are intrinsically motivated by values such as duty, loyalty, and the public good (Hernandez, 2012; Muth & Donaldson, 1998).

In local governments, stewardship is reflected through leaders who collaborate, empower staff, and align governmental activities with community needs. Such leaders value transparency, accountability, and integrity, which form the foundation of good governance (Caers et al., 2006; Pillay & Kikasu, 2024; Syafaruddin Syafaruddin, 2024). Moreover, they often exhibit participative or transformational leadership styles, emphasizing inclusivity and long-term institutional goals (Wright & Pandey, 2010). In the Indonesian context, stewardship theory aligns with the expectation that village officials operate as servants of the people, ensuring that public funds are managed for community development and well-being. The government's responsibility to act in the best interest of the public, particularly under decentralization schemes like Dana Desa, further illustrates the practical application of this theory.

Empirical support for the application of stewardship theory in the public sector has been found in studies across Asia and Latin America, which demonstrate that when managers are empowered and trusted, organizational outcomes improve significantly (Donaldson & Davis, 1991; Van Wart, 2013). Thus, the theory not only provides a philosophical foundation but also practical implications for leadership, accountability, and service quality in the public domain.

Good governance, as defined by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), involves the exercise of economic, political, and administrative authority to manage a nation's affairs at all levels. It encompasses key principles such as transparency, accountability, participation, rule of law, effectiveness, equity, and responsiveness (UNDP, 1997). In the context of public administration, these principles are crucial in shaping how services are designed, delivered, and evaluated. Transparency ensures that information regarding public services and decision-making processes is accessible to all stakeholders, enabling oversight and reducing opportunities for corruption (Chen & Ganapati, 2023). Accountability implies that public officials are answerable for their actions and that mechanisms exist to sanction mismanagement (Alshaikh, 2024b; Liu, 2016; Widanti, 2022). Responsiveness requires that government institutions act in accordance with the needs and expectations of citizens, particularly in the delivery of essential services.

Theoretically, stewardship theory supports this logic by emphasizing that public managers, acting as stewards, are intrinsically motivated to act in the interest of the public and aim to fulfill their responsibilities ethically and effectively (Davis et al., 1997). This theory suggests that when governance systems are designed based on trust and collective purpose, stewards are empowered to provide high-quality public services. Empirically, several studies affirm this relationship. Kaufmann et al. (2010) in their *Worldwide Governance Indicators*, found a strong correlation between governance quality and public sector effectiveness across countries. In a more localized context, Rohman et al. (2019) found that the implementation of good governance principles significantly improved the quality of service delivery in Indonesian local governments. Their findings revealed that when officials are guided by transparency and accountability, services become more timely, reliable, and responsive to citizens' needs.

Moreover, good governance facilitates the development of systems and procedures that support service standardization, monitoring, and continuous improvement. For example, the presence of citizen charters, open budgeting processes, and performance audits allows for consistent evaluation and enhancement of service quality (Gisselquist, 2012). In village government settings—particularly in decentralized administrative contexts like Indonesia—good governance ensures that community needs are prioritized, and local services are delivered equitably. When participatory principles guide village officials and are responsive to local aspirations, service quality improves not only in efficiency but also in inclusiveness and relevance (Claraini et al., 2017). Thus, integrating governance principles into the operational fabric of public service institutions can foster trust and satisfaction among citizens, both of which are critical outcomes of service quality. Therefore, based on the theoretical foundation, logical reasoning, and empirical evidence, it is hypothesized that:

H1: Good governance has a positive and significant effect on service quality in local government institutions.

Leadership style refers to the consistent behaviours and strategies employed by a leader to influence, guide, and manage their subordinates toward achieving organizational goals (Bwalya, 2023; Gutterman, 2023). In the public sector, particularly at the local government level, leadership style plays a pivotal role in determining how effectively public services are delivered. According to transformational leadership theory, leaders who demonstrate vision, inspire others, and foster a sense of purpose can elevate motivation and commitment among public service personnel (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Blom, 2024). Such leadership styles are known to empower employees, encourage innovation, and promote a culture of service excellence. From the perspective of stewardship theory, leadership behavior is viewed through a lens of collective responsibility and intrinsic motivation. Leaders act as stewards by aligning personal interests with those of the community they serve, fostering trust, and prioritizing the public good (Hernandez, 2012). This alignment enhances employee morale and encourages behaviors that result in improved service quality.

Empirical evidence supports this association. Wright and Pandey (2010) found that transformational leadership in public organizations leads to greater organizational commitment and higher service performance. Similarly, Nguyen & Sharma (2024) and Abdulrahman & Mohammed (2024) demonstrated that leadership style significantly influences the implementation of digital services and responsiveness in Indonesian local governments. Moreover, participative leadership styles, which promote

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collaboration, inclusion, and shared decision-making, are particularly effective in enhancing service delivery in decentralized governance systems. Leaders who involve staff and community members in planning and problem-solving tend to foster more responsive and equitable service systems (Van Wart, 2013). In the context of village government, a leadership style that promotes empowerment, empathy, and communication ensures that services are aligned with community needs and delivered in a fair and accessible manner. Thus, it is reasonable to hypothesize that:

H2: Leadership style has a positive and significant effect on the quality of public service delivery.

Service quality in the public sector encompasses dimensions such as reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibility (Asif et al., 2016; Chatzoglou et al., 2013; Kim, 2006; Parasuraman et al., 1985; Pataria et al., 2025). High-quality services meet or exceed citizen expectations, which in turn enhances satisfaction, trust, and support for government institutions. According to public value theory, the goal of public administration is to generate value for citizens by delivering services that are efficient, accessible, and equitable (Moore, 1995). In this sense, service quality becomes a core component of government performance, as it reflects the government's ability to address societal needs effectively. When service quality is high, the community experiences tangible improvements in areas such as health, education, licensing, and infrastructure. These outcomes, in turn, translate into higher levels of trust and legitimacy, which are essential for sustaining democratic governance and long-term development (Osborne et al., 2012; Zheng, 2022).

Empirical studies affirm the strong link between service quality and institutional performance. For example, Van Dooren et al. (2015) found that improvements in service delivery are often accompanied by gains in efficiency and citizen satisfaction. Similarly, Behn (2003), Hatry (2018), and Pollitt (2014) emphasize that performance measurement systems focusing on service outputs and outcomes are essential for improving organizational performance in government. In local governance settings, such as Indonesian villages, service quality serves as a tangible indicator of government responsiveness and effectiveness. Villages that provide timely and fair access to services, such as administrative documentation, public health initiatives, and infrastructure support, are more likely to be perceived as performing well. Hence, improving service quality is not just a means to satisfy immediate needs but a strategic tool for enhancing overall governmental performance. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Service quality has a positive and significant effect on local government performance.

Leadership is a critical driver of public sector performance. Effective leadership shapes organizational culture, motivates public employees, and ensures that strategic objectives are aligned with public needs. In the context of local government, where decision-making is decentralized and service delivery is direct, leadership plays a pivotal role in determining the success of governance and administration. Transformational leadership theory emphasizes the importance of leaders inspiring, intellectually stimulating, and considering their subordinates (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Leaders who adopt this style foster higher commitment and proactive behavior among government employees, which leads to improved outcomes and institutional effectiveness.

Meanwhile, stewardship theory views leaders not as agents seeking personal gain, but as stewards of public trust. These leaders prioritize communal goals over self-interest, aligning their values with those of the citizens they serve (Hernandez, 2012). Such alignment is particularly important in village-level governance, where direct engagement with community members is crucial. Empirical studies support this relationship. Kindarto et al. (2020), Van Wart (2013), Selvakumar et al. (2025) and Alshaikh (2024a) argued that public sector leaders who demonstrate competence, moral integrity, and vision positively influence team cohesion and performance. Caillier (2020), Alghizzawi, Ahmed, et al. (2024) and Alghizzawi, Megdadi, et al. (2024) found a strong relationship between leadership style and government performance in Indonesian regional governments, particularly where leaders practiced open communication and participative decision-making. Therefore, effective leadership not only enhances organizational dynamics but also boosts public trust, accountability, and performance measurement systems, all of which are vital in public administration.

H5: Leadership style has a positive and significant effect on local government performance.

While good governance provides a foundational framework for effective public management, its influence on performance is often channeled through improvements in service quality. Governance establishes institutional norms, structures, and processes that enable consistent, responsive, and accountable service delivery. However, the actual delivery of high-quality services is the operational mechanism through which governance earns legitimacy and performance outcomes are realized (Gisselquist, 2012). From a systems perspective, good governance ensures that service delivery mechanisms are citizen-focused, transparent, and continuously evaluated. These mechanisms in turn enhance service quality, which is perceived through tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy (Parasuraman et al., 1985). Without such mediation, the impact of governance may remain procedural and not perceived at the user level.

Empirical findings reinforce this logic. Kaufmann et al. (2010) found that countries with strong governance frameworks often achieved better performance primarily through superior service quality. Locally, research by Fauziah et al. (2023) and Claraini et al. (2017) show that principles of governance such as fairness and accountability improve administrative services, which in turn elevate public satisfaction and trust in government. Thus, governance can influence performance more significantly when it leads to practical improvements in service standards, citizen interfaces, and grievance redressal systems.

H6: Service quality mediates the relationship between good governance and local government performance.

Leadership style not only influences team dynamics and goal orientation but also affects how public services are designed, delivered, and improved (Alghizzawi, Megdadi, et al., 2024; A. Ali et al., 2022; Dias & Guimaraes E Borges, 2017). Leaders with participative or transformational traits tend to implement changes that elevate the quality of services, which ultimately drives government performance outcomes. From the lens of service-dominant logic, public value is co-created through interactions between service providers (public officials) and service users (citizens) (Osborne et al., 2012). Leaders influence this interaction by shaping employee attitudes, service standards, and frontline innovation. For example, leaders who encourage feedback mechanisms, citizen engagement, and service innovation create conditions for higher quality service, which in turn boosts performance metrics. Stewardship theory further strengthens this rationale by proposing that leaders driven by collective responsibility are likely to engage in practices that prioritize long-term public welfare. These leaders institutionalize values such as responsiveness and reliability, which are fundamental dimensions of service quality (Hernandez, 2012). Empirical support for this mediating effect is found in research by Nurung et al. (2020) and A. Ali et al. (2022) shows that leadership positively affects public service quality, and this service quality becomes the channel through which performance is improved. Similarly, Hi. Laha & Suranto (2015) emphasize the indirect effects of leadership through quality-enhancing initiatives such as staff training, digital service adoption, and community feedback loops. Hence, even if leadership does not directly manage all performance indicators, it strongly influences the operational factors, such as service quality, that determine performance effectiveness.

H7: Service quality mediates the relationship between leadership style and local government performance.

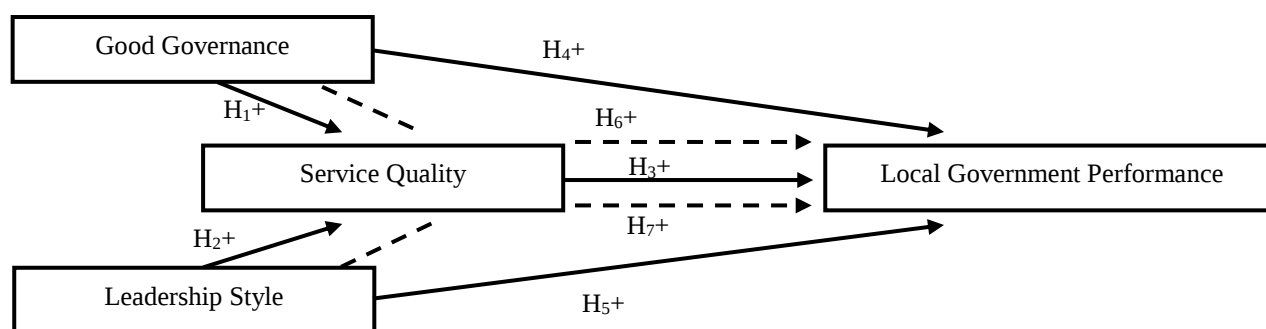


Figure 1. Research Model

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a quantitative research design to examine the influence of good governance and leadership style on local government performance, with service quality serving as a mediating variable. A causal approach is adopted to assess both direct and indirect effects among the variables, making it suitable for testing mediation relationships. The research is grounded in stewardship theory, which conceptualizes government officials as stewards who act in the interest of the public and are intrinsically motivated to provide quality service and uphold organizational integrity. The population of this study includes village government officials in Klaten Regency, Central Java, Indonesia. These officials comprise village heads, secretaries, treasurers, and administrative staff who are directly involved in governance and service delivery processes. Due to geographical and practical constraints, the study utilizes a convenience sampling technique to collect data from accessible participants. A total of 150 respondents were obtained, which satisfies the minimum requirement for conducting path analysis and multiple regression techniques, as suggested by Hair et al. (2017).

The research relies on primary data collected through a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed based on validated instruments from previous studies and adjusted to fit the local government context in Indonesia. It was distributed both physically and digitally, with each respondent rating statements on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The instrument measures four constructs: good governance, leadership style, service quality, and local government performance. Good governance is operationalized through indicators such as transparency, accountability, participation, rule of law, and responsiveness, in line with the framework established by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 1997) and elaborated by Gisselquist (2012). Leadership style is measured based on transformational and participative leadership behaviours, which include vision, communication, motivation, delegation, and support, following the works of Bass and Riggio (2006). Service

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quality is assessed using adapted SERVQUAL dimensions (Parasuraman et al., 1985) specifically tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Local government performance is evaluated based on input, output, outcome, and impact indicators and relevant regulatory standards in Indonesia. The formula for this research is as follows:

Equation 1:

$$\text{Service Quality} = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{Good Governance} + \beta_2 \text{Leadership Style} + e$$

Equation 2:

$$\text{Local Government Performance} = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{Good Governance} + \beta_2 \text{Leadership Style} + \beta_3 \text{Service Quality} + e$$

Data analysis was performed using SPSS version 22. Descriptive statistics were first applied to summarize respondents' characteristics and to provide a preliminary overview of variable distributions. The validity and reliability of the questionnaire items were then tested using Pearson correlation coefficients and Cronbach's alpha values, respectively. To ensure that the data met statistical assumptions, classical assumption tests including the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test for normality, variance inflation factor (VIF) for multicollinearity, and scatterplot analysis for heteroscedasticity were conducted. For hypothesis testing, the study employed path analysis to estimate both direct and indirect relationships among variables. The t-test and F-test were used to evaluate the significance of regression coefficients, while the coefficient of determination (R^2) was used to assess the explanatory power of the independent variables. To examine the mediating role of service quality, the Sobel test or bootstrapping method was utilized, which allows for the estimation of indirect effects with greater statistical power.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Demographic Data

This research utilized primary data collected through the direct distribution of questionnaires to respondents. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling. Based on Table 1, a total of 160 questionnaires were distributed and all were successfully returned, resulting in a 100% response rate. However, 10 questionnaires (7%) were found to have incomplete responses and were excluded from the analysis. Consequently, 150 questionnaires (93%) were deemed valid and were used in the final statistical analysis. In terms of age distribution, the majority of respondents fell within the 41–55 years age group, accounting for 41% of the total sample. This indicates that a significant portion of the respondents are mature and likely to possess extensive experience in village governance. The second-largest group was the 26–40 years cohort, comprising 40%, followed by those aged under 25 years and over 56 years, each representing 6% of the sample. It is worth noting that 7% of respondents did not disclose their age, which introduces a minor limitation to the demographic completeness. Regarding gender composition, the majority of respondents were male (65.33%), while female respondents accounted for 34.67%. This distribution suggests a gender imbalance, potentially reflecting the male-dominated nature of administrative roles within village government structures in the region. In terms of educational background, Bachelor's degree holders constituted the largest group, representing 47% of the respondents. This is followed by those with a high school education (36%), vocational education (13%), and master's degrees (2%). An additional 2% of participants did not indicate their educational attainment. These figures suggest a relatively well-educated respondent pool, with more than half holding higher education qualifications, which is beneficial for implementing governance and administrative practices effectively. When examining the length of work, the majority of respondents (55%) reported having worked less than 5 years, indicating a significant proportion of relatively new officials in the village administration. This could reflect recent recruitment, generational transition, or decentralization initiatives. Respondents with more than 10 years of experience made up 31%, while 8% had been in service for 5 to 10 years. The remaining 6% did not provide information about their work tenure. Finally, concerning position within the village government, the largest proportion of respondents were village secretaries (33%), followed by village treasurers (24%), and village heads (20%). Heads of affairs accounted for 13%, while heads of hamlet made up the smallest group at 9%. This distribution shows a diverse representation of administrative roles, ensuring a comprehensive perspective on the internal functioning and service delivery within village governments. The details of the questionnaire return rate are as follows:

Table 1. Characteristics Respondent

No	Characteristics Respondent	Sub Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
1	Questionnaires	Distributed	160	100%
		Returned	160	100%
		Questionnaires returned with incomplete answers	10	7%
		Total number of questionnaires that can be analysed	150	93%
2	Age	< 25	9	6%
		26 – 40	60	40%

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		41 – 55	62	41%
		>56	9	6%
		not filling	10	7%
3	Gender	Male	98	65,33%
		Female	52	34,67%
4	Educational Background	High School	54	36%
		Vocational	20	13%
		Bachelor	70	47%
		Master	3	2%
		not filling	3	2%
5	Length of Work	< 5 Year	83	55%
		5 – 10 Year	12	8%
		>10 Year	46	31%
		not filling	9	6%
6	Position	Village Head	30	20%
		Village Secretary	50	33%
		Village Treasurer	36	24%
		Head of Affairs	20	13%
		Head of Hamlet	14	9%

B. Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive analysis of the study's four main variables reveals generally high mean scores, indicating positive perceptions among respondents.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

Variabel	N	Min	Max	Median	Mean	Std. Deviation
Good Governance	150	50	65	57	57,17	3,861
Local Government Performance	150	34	50	40	41,83	2,967
Service Quality	150	26	35	30	29,75	2,115
Leadership Style	150	34	45	39	39,96	2,929
Valid N (listwise)	150					

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics for the four main variables investigated in the study: Good Governance, Local Government Performance, Service Quality, and Leadership Style. The descriptive measures analysed include the number of respondents (N), minimum and maximum scores, median, mean, and standard deviation. The Good Governance variable, measured from a minimum of 50 to a maximum of 65, recorded a mean score of 57.17 with a standard deviation of 3.861. The median score was 57, indicating a relatively symmetrical distribution around the mean. These results suggest that the respondents generally perceived governance practices in their villages as moderately strong, with little variability in responses, reflecting some consistency in the implementation of governance principles such as transparency, accountability, and participation.

For the Local Government Performance variable, the observed scores ranged from 34 to 50, with a mean of 41.83 and a standard deviation of 2.967. The median score of 40 is slightly lower than the mean, suggesting a slight right skew in the distribution. Nevertheless, the overall performance was rated positively, though with slightly more variation in perception than good governance, which may be attributed to differing outcomes or implementation practices across villages. The Service Quality variable had a mean score of 29.75 out of a possible maximum of 35, indicating a moderate to high level of perceived quality in the delivery of public services. The standard deviation was 2.115, showing relatively low dispersion in responses, and the median score was 30, consistent with the mean. This implies that most village officials perceive service delivery mechanisms to be satisfactory, especially in terms of responsiveness and reliability.

Lastly, the Leadership Style variable yielded a mean of 39.96, with a score range of 34 to 45 and a standard deviation of 2.929. The median score was 39, indicating a near-normal distribution. The results imply that leadership within village governments is generally viewed as participative and transformational, characterized by motivational influence and inclusive decision-making. In summary, all four variables show relatively high average scores with moderate dispersion, suggesting generally favorable perceptions of governance, leadership, service quality, and institutional performance among village officials in Klaten. The standard deviations indicate acceptable consistency, making the data suitable for further inferential statistical analysis such as correlation, regression, or path analysis.

C. Data Quality Test

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To ensure the accuracy and appropriateness of the research instrument, a validity test was conducted using Pearson's product-moment correlation analysis. This test assesses whether each questionnaire item accurately measures the intended construct. With a sample size of 150, the critical value for the correlation coefficient was 0.134. All items within the constructs of good governance, local government performance, service quality, and leadership style demonstrated correlation coefficients exceeding the threshold. Therefore, each item used in this study was deemed valid and appropriate for further analysis. In addition to validity, reliability testing was employed to assess the internal consistency of the instrument. The criterion for reliability is a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient greater than 0.70. The results showed that the good governance variable achieved a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.825, local government performance scored 0.792, service quality reached 0.733, and leadership style recorded 0.837. These values confirm that all constructs in the questionnaire exhibit strong internal reliability, indicating that the items within each variable are consistently measuring the same underlying concept.

A normality test was also conducted to evaluate whether the residuals in the regression models follow a normal distribution. This assumption is critical for the validity of parametric inferential statistical techniques. Using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, the Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) values were found to be 0.224 and 0.242 for the two regression models, both of which exceed the alpha level of 0.05. These findings indicate that the data used in the models are normally distributed. Multicollinearity testing was carried out to determine whether the independent variables are highly linearly correlated with one another, which could distort the regression results. The analysis utilized the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and tolerance values. All independent variables reported VIF values below 10 and tolerance values above 0.1. These results suggest the absence of multicollinearity, indicating that each independent variable contributes unique explanatory power to the regression model without redundancy. To assess the presence of heteroscedasticity, which refers to unequal variance of residuals across levels of the independent variables, the Glejser test was used. This test involves regressing the absolute value of the residuals against the independent variables. The significance values for all predictors were above 0.05, signifying that heteroscedasticity is not present in the data. This suggests that the regression model satisfies the assumption of homoscedasticity, thereby supporting the reliability of the estimated coefficients.

In conclusion, the instrument used in this research demonstrates strong validity and reliability. Furthermore, the results of the normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity tests indicate that the dataset meets all necessary classical assumptions for multiple linear regression analysis. This supports the robustness of the statistical procedures applied and ensures that the findings of this study are both valid and trustworthy.

D. Coefficient of Determination Test and Simultaneous Test

The coefficient of determination (R^2) measures the extent to which independent variables can explain the variation in the dependent variable. A higher R^2 value indicates a stronger explanatory power of the model. According to Ghazali (2018), a relatively low R^2 is common in cross-sectional data due to substantial individual variation, while time-series data tend to yield higher R^2 values. Based on the results in Table 3, the first regression model shows an R value of 0.489, indicating a moderate positive correlation between the independent and dependent variables. The R Square of 0.240 means that 24% of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by the model, while the adjusted R Square of 0.229 confirms a modest yet consistent explanatory power. The standard error of 2.605 suggests a moderate level of prediction accuracy. In contrast, the second model presents a stronger relationship, with an R value of 0.686 and an R Square of 0.471, indicating that 47.1% of the variance is explained by the model. The adjusted R Square of 0.460 and a lower standard error of 2.180. The results of the determination coefficient test can be seen in table 3:

Table 3: Results of Determination Coefficient Test R^2

Equation	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0,489 ^a	0,240	0,229	2,605
2	0,686 ^a	0,471	0,460	2,180

Furthermore, the F-test was used to examine the simultaneous effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable. As shown in Table 4, In the first model, which examines the effect of good governance and leadership style on service quality, the F score is 23.149 with a p-value of 0.000. Since the p-value is significantly below the standard alpha level of 0.05, it can be concluded that the model is statistically significant. This indicates that good governance and leadership style, when considered together, have a meaningful and simultaneous influence on service quality. In the second model, which includes good governance, leadership style, and service quality as predictors of local government performance, the F score is 43.335 and the p-value is 0.000. Again, the result is statistically significant, demonstrating that the combination of these three variables provides a strong predictive capability for explaining variations in local government performance. Overall, both models are valid and robust in explaining their respective dependent variables, as indicated by the high F-values and the highly significant p-values.. The results of the f-test can be seen in table 4:

Table 4: f Test Results

Variables	F Score	P-Value
Good Governance, Leadership Style → Service Quality	23,149	0,000 ^b
Good Governance, Leadership, Service Quality → Local Governance Performance	43,335	0,000 ^b

E. Hypothesis Testing and Discussion

The partial t-test was conducted to examine the individual influence of each independent variable—community participation (X1), internal control system (X2), accessibility of financial reports (X3), and organizational commitment (X4)—on the dependent variable, which is village fund management accountability (Y).

Table 5: T-Test or Partial Results

Equation	Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	P-value
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	Constant	20,568	4,326		4,755	0,000
	Corporate Governance	0,334	0,055	0,544	4,615	0,000
	Leadership Style	0,495	0,073	0,589	6,793	0,000
	Dependent Variable: Service Quality					
2	Constant	7,358	3,979		1,849	0,000
	Corporate Governance	0,327	0,046	0,235	4,581	0,000
	Leadership Style	0,300	0,066	0,296	4,566	0,000
	Service Quality	0,714	0,089	0,518	7,994	0,000
	Dependent Variable: Local Government Performance					

Based on Table 4 above, the variable good governance has a significance value of 0.000, which is less than the alpha level of 0.05, and a regression coefficient value of 0.544 with a positive sign. This indicates that the first hypothesis is supported. Therefore, it can be concluded that good governance has a positive influence on service quality. The support for the first hypothesis means that respondents' perceptions of aspects such as community involvement in decision-making, a strong legal framework, good governance practices, transparency, responsiveness, government openness in creating good governance, efficiency and effectiveness, and government accountability show a positive and significant effect on service quality during the pandemic. According to Rohman et al. (2019), to achieve good service quality, it is essential to implement the principles of good governance, such as participation, rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus orientation, equity, effectiveness and efficiency, accountability, strategic vision, and interconnection. If these principles are not implemented by village government officials, then the quality of public service delivered will not be optimal (Fauziah et al., 2023). The phenomenon in Klaten Regency, in line with this study, shows that good governance practices by village government officials have been effective, as evidenced by the distribution of masks, social assistance, BLT fund aid, and public outreach about the coronavirus. These distributions would not have run smoothly without the application of good governance principles by the village government. The results of this study, based on questionnaire responses provided by village officials in Klaten Regency, are consistent with the findings of Sulaiman et al. (2024), Claraini et al. (2017) and Holzacker et al. (2015) who stated that good governance has a positive and significant influence on the quality of public services. The results of the second hypothesis test (H2) indicate that the leadership style variable has a significance value of 0.000, which is less than the alpha level of 0.05. Additionally, the regression coefficient is 0.589 and positive, thus supporting the second hypothesis. This finding is further reinforced by the descriptive statistical results, which show that the leadership style observed in this study is generally favorable. Therefore, it can be concluded that leadership style has a positive influence on service quality in the village government offices in Klaten Regency. According to Prayoga et al. (2017), leadership style refers to the patterns or behavioral tendencies and thinking methods of a leader in influencing subordinates or employees. In other words, an effective leadership style requires the leader to play an active role in improving the quality of public services. Trust and strong relationships between leaders and subordinates are essential components of service delivery and have been well established in this context (Ruffiah & Muhsin, 2019).

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Furthermore, the leader's ability to engage in two-way communication also enhances collaboration between the village officials and their leaders. Providing clear instructions can reduce communication barriers, which in turn minimizes repeated work and improves efficiency in achieving objectives aligned with the organization's vision and mission (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Caillier, 2020; Gutterman, 2023; Nurung et al., 2020). This implies that the more effective a leader is in guiding their subordinates in delivering services, the better the impact on community satisfaction and outcomes. Thus, it can be concluded that leadership style has a positive and significant effect on service quality. This finding is consistent with the research of (Alghizzawi, Ahmed, et al., 2024; Alghizzawi, Megdadi, et al., 2024; Dias & Guimaraes E Borges, 2017; Pillay & Kikasu, 2024), who also found that leadership style significantly and positively affects the quality of public services.

The results of the third hypothesis test indicate that the service quality variable has a significance value of 0.000, which is less than the alpha level of 0.05, and a positive regression coefficient of 0.518. Therefore, the third hypothesis is supported. This implies that improvements in service quality positively influence the performance of local government offices in Klaten Regency. High-quality services—characterized by responsiveness, reliability, fairness, and attentiveness to community needs—serve as an important foundation for achieving performance targets. Service delivery that is consistent with public expectations strengthens institutional credibility and contributes to higher levels of satisfaction and trust. According to W. E. Putra (2018), effective government performance is realized through improved service delivery to the public. This finding is aligned with prior studies by Dariansyah (2018) confirmed that service quality has a significant and positive effect on government performance.

The fourth hypothesis test reveals that good governance has a significant positive effect on local government performance, with a significance value of 0.000 and a regression coefficient of 0.235. This supports the hypothesis, indicating that respondents' understanding of good governance principles, such as participation, rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, fairness, efficiency, accountability, and strategic vision—positively contributes to the overall performance of village governments. According to Jatmiko & Lestiawan (2016), good governance involves professional ethical standards and a clear regulatory framework to manage public roles and responsibilities. Alshaikh (2024a) further emphasized that the government must be accountable to the people in exercising good governance. The ability of village officials to carry out their functions responsibly and transparently, as well as the presence of feedback mechanisms such as online suggestion systems, has enabled service improvement and performance enhancement (Bushman & Smith, 2003; da Cruz et al., 2016). Fair access to information and equal treatment of all citizens regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, or religion further reinforce the credibility of local governance. The results are consistent with findings by N. A. Ali et al. (2017), who found that good governance significantly influences public sector performance.

The fifth hypothesis is supported by a significance value of 0.000 and a positive regression coefficient of 0.296. These findings suggest that leadership style has a direct and significant influence on the performance of village governments in Klaten Regency. Claraini et al. (2017) argue that leadership style represents the way a leader builds relationships and motivates employees to achieve organizational goals. Leaders who inspire, support, and effectively direct their teams tend to drive higher organizational performance (Prayoga et al., 2017). In the context of this study, a leadership environment characterized by trust, harmony, and mutual support was found to positively affect the quality of work among village officials. Feedback provided by leaders for performance improvement was also perceived as clear and actionable (Iddrisu & Mohammed, 2025; Kindarto et al., 2020; Pillay & Kikasu, 2024). Leadership style has a significant positive effect on the performance of local governments.

The sixth hypothesis test demonstrates that the indirect effect of good governance on local government performance—through service quality—is greater than its direct effect. This indicates that service quality serves as a mediating variable in the relationship between good governance and performance. The findings show that understanding and applying the principles of good governance contributes to improved public services, which in turn enhances institutional performance. As noted by Rohman et al. (2019) applying good governance ensures that government activities are accountable, regulated, and oriented toward public needs. Herasymiuk et al. (2020) emphasized that good governance is a critical indicator for producing high-quality performance. This study supports the conclusion that enhanced service quality reflects the success of governance in village-level institutions. The results are consistent with Claraini et al. (2017) who confirmed that service quality mediates the effect of good governance on performance.

The seventh hypothesis is also supported, as the indirect effect of leadership style on local government performance, mediated by service quality, is greater than its direct effect. This confirms that leadership style positively affects performance through improvements in service quality. The findings suggest that a leader's ability to guide, motivate, and align their staff directly contributes to better services, which in turn strengthens government performance. This is in line with Afifah (2017), who found that leadership style has a significant indirect effect on performance when mediated by public service quality. A strong leadership style, supported by organizational culture and clear performance goals, can further enhance the delivery of high-quality services (Alghizzawi, Ahmed, et al., 2024; Nguyen & Sharma, 2024; Pillay & Kikasu, 2024; Syafaruddin Syafaruddin, 2024). Responsiveness to citizen needs and active engagement in solving problems reinforce the perception of competent and professional local governance.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

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This study was conducted to examine the effect of good governance and leadership style on local government performance, with service quality as a mediating variable. The research involved 150 respondents from village government offices in Klaten Regency. The results demonstrated that both good governance and leadership style significantly and positively influence service quality. Furthermore, service quality was found to have a significant and positive impact on local government performance, suggesting that the ability of government institutions to deliver effective and responsive services is key to improving institutional outcomes. The direct influence of good governance and leadership style on government performance was also confirmed. However, it was observed that the indirect effects of these variables—through service quality—were stronger, indicating that improvements in governance and leadership are most effective when they are translated into better service delivery practices. Based on these findings, several suggestions can be offered. Village governments are encouraged to continuously promote and institutionalize principles of good governance, such as transparency, accountability, and citizen participation, to improve trust and service outcomes. Leaders within the village government should also develop their leadership capacity through regular training that emphasizes communication, motivation, and inclusive decision-making. This is essential for enhancing employee performance and public satisfaction. In addition, service quality should be strengthened through the adoption of community feedback systems and the use of technology to improve access, speed, and accuracy in service delivery. Theoretically, the findings of this study contribute to the application of stewardship theory in the public sector by confirming that government officials, when acting in the interest of the community and guided by ethical and participative leadership, can significantly enhance organizational performance. Practically, the study highlights the importance of integrating governance quality and leadership effectiveness in efforts to improve public service institutions. For policymakers, this implies the need to strengthen village-level administration not only through regulations and control mechanisms, but also by empowering human resources and focusing on service outcomes.

For future research, it is recommended to broaden the scope by including other regions beyond Klaten Regency to allow for comparative analysis. A longitudinal design could also be employed to observe changes over time and better understand how leadership and governance improvements influence long-term service performance. Further studies may also consider incorporating other variables such as organizational culture, employee motivation, or digital transformation to deepen the analysis. Lastly, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches in a mixed-methods design would provide richer insights into the dynamics of local governance and public sector performance.

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