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**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SP4N-LAPOR PROGRAM IN RESPONDING TO  
REPORTS AND COMMUNITY ASPIRATIONS AT THE COMMUNICATION AND  
INFORMATICS OFFICE OF SIMALUNGUN REGENCY**

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**ABSTRACT**

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This study aims to analyze the implementation of the National Public Service Complaint Management System (SP4N-LAPOR) in responding to public reports and aspirations at the Department of Communication and Informatics (Diskominfo) of Simalungun Regency. SP4N-LAPOR is a technology-based public service innovation designed to improve transparency, accountability, and citizen participation in government administration. However, its implementation at the regional level still encounters several challenges that affect the effectiveness of complaint management. This research employed a qualitative approach using a case study method. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with two SP4N-LAPOR liaison officers and two community members who had submitted complaints, supported by direct observation and documentation. The analysis was conducted using George C. Edward III's policy implementation framework, which focuses on communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure. The findings reveal that communication among liaison officers, regional government agencies, and the public remains ineffective due to limited socialization and unclear information delivery. Resource constraints include technical disruptions, inadequate infrastructure, and the absence of dedicated budgets and incentives for implementers. In terms of disposition, weak coordination and inconsistent follow-up have reduced the effectiveness of complaint resolution, leading to public dissatisfaction. Furthermore, frequent staff rotations and the lack of a formally approved Standard Operating Procedure have created inconsistencies in implementation. The study concludes that optimizing SP4N-LAPOR requires stronger communication strategies, improved human and technical resources, accelerated institutionalization of operational procedures, and enhanced inter-agency coordination. These measures are essential to strengthen responsive, participatory, transparent, and accountable public service delivery in Simalungun Regency.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The demand for high-quality public services has become increasingly significant in Indonesia as society expects government institutions to operate in a transparent, accountable, participatory, and responsive manner. Public service is no longer limited to administrative activities but has evolved into a fundamental obligation of the government in fulfilling citizens' rights as mandated by the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia and Law Number 25 of 2009 concerning Public Services. In this context, the government is expected to continuously innovate to improve service quality while ensuring that the community has adequate access to participate in governance processes. One of the essential forms of public participation is the ability of citizens to submit aspirations, complaints, and reports regarding public services and receive appropriate follow-up from the responsible institutions.

The rapid development of information and communication technology has encouraged governments worldwide to implement digital governance systems to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in public administration. In Indonesia, this transformation has been realized through the implementation of the Electronic-Based Government System (SPBE), commonly referred to as e-government. E-government seeks to integrate digital technology into government administration to provide faster, more transparent, and more accessible public services. Through digital platforms, governments are expected to strengthen communication with citizens while improving accountability and responsiveness in policy implementation.

One of the major innovations developed under the e-government framework is the National Public Service Complaint Management System (SP4N-LAPOR). SP4N-LAPOR, or the National Public Service Complaint Management System–People's Online Aspiration and Complaint Service, serves as an integrated platform that enables citizens to submit reports, complaints, and aspirations through websites, mobile applications, and other digital channels. The system was established to ensure that public complaints can be managed in a simple, fast, coordinated, and comprehensive manner while strengthening citizen participation in monitoring public service delivery. The

implementation of SP4N-LAPOR is supported by Presidential Regulation Number 76 of 2013, Minister of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform Regulation Number 3 of 2015, and Ministerial Decree Number 680 of 2020, which officially designated the platform as Indonesia's national complaint management application.

Simalungun Regency is among the regional governments that have adopted SP4N-LAPOR as part of its public service management strategy. Through the Department of Communication and Informatics (Diskominfo), the local government is responsible for receiving complaints, verifying reports, forwarding them to relevant agencies, and monitoring the follow-up process. The presence of SP4N-LAPOR is expected to improve transparency and accountability while creating a more participatory relationship between government institutions and society. However, despite these expectations, implementation challenges remain evident in practice. Several public complaints submitted through the platform have experienced delayed responses, inadequate follow-up, or automatic closure by the system before complete resolution. Such conditions indicate that there is still a discrepancy between policy objectives and implementation outcomes.

The existence of these problems forms the background of this research. Previous studies conducted in other regions have similarly reported obstacles such as limited socialization, inadequate coordination among implementing agencies, insufficient human resources, and the absence of effective operational standards. These recurring issues suggest that successful implementation depends not only on regulatory frameworks but also on organizational readiness and institutional capacity. Consequently, examining the implementation of SP4N-LAPOR in Simalungun Regency becomes essential to identify the factors influencing policy execution and to formulate recommendations for improving complaint management performance.

Based on the background described above, the research problem addressed in this study is: How is the implementation of the SP4N-LAPOR Program in responding to public reports and aspirations at the Department of Communication and Informatics of Simalungun Regency? This research question focuses on understanding the

effectiveness of policy implementation and identifying challenges encountered during operational processes.

Accordingly, the objective of this study is to analyze and understand the implementation of the SP4N-LAPOR Program in responding to public reports and aspirations at the Department of Communication and Informatics of Simalungun Regency. The study seeks to evaluate implementation practices using an appropriate theoretical framework while identifying factors that support or hinder successful complaint management.

Academically, this research is expected to enrich the literature on public policy implementation, digital governance, and electronic public services by providing empirical evidence regarding SP4N-LAPOR implementation at the local government level. It may also serve as a useful reference for future studies examining technology-based public service innovations in Indonesia. Practically, the findings are expected to assist government institutions in improving complaint management systems through stronger coordination, enhanced institutional capacity, and more effective service delivery mechanisms that support good governance principles.

The concept of implementation itself provides an important theoretical foundation for understanding how public policies are translated into practical actions. Mazmanian and Sabatier define implementation as the process of transforming policy decisions into operational activities designed to achieve intended outcomes while considering political, social, and economic contexts. Similarly, Van Meter and Van Horn describe implementation as actions undertaken by individuals or organizations directed toward accomplishing policy objectives. These perspectives emphasize that policy success cannot be measured solely by formal regulations but also by how effectively policies are executed in practice.

Policy implementation theory further explains the factors that influence implementation performance. Van Meter and Van Horn identify several dimensions affecting implementation, including policy standards and objectives, resources, characteristics of implementing agencies, implementers' attitudes, inter-

organizational communication, and the surrounding social, economic, and political environment. Grindle complements this perspective by emphasizing policy content and implementation context, arguing that successful implementation depends on policy benefits, institutional support, available resources, and stakeholder interests. These theories illustrate that implementation is a multidimensional process requiring coordination between policy design and administrative execution.

Among various implementation models, George C. Edward III's framework is widely recognized for its comprehensive explanation of factors determining policy success. According to Edward III, implementation effectiveness is influenced by four interrelated variables: communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure. Communication concerns the transmission, clarity, and consistency of policy information among decision-makers, implementers, and target groups. Clear and consistent communication ensures that policy objectives are understood correctly and implemented uniformly.

Resources constitute another critical factor in policy implementation. Effective implementation requires sufficient human resources, financial support, authority, infrastructure, and technological facilities. Even when communication functions properly, implementation may fail if implementing agencies lack competent personnel, operational budgets, or adequate facilities to execute policy responsibilities. Therefore, resource availability directly affects the capacity of organizations to achieve intended policy outcomes.

Disposition refers to the attitudes, commitment, and willingness of policy implementers to carry out assigned responsibilities. Edward III argues that implementers who share positive attitudes toward policy objectives are more likely to execute programs effectively, whereas resistance or lack of commitment can significantly reduce implementation performance. In the context of SP4N-LAPOR, the responsiveness of liaison officers and government agencies toward public complaints reflects the importance of disposition in determining service quality.

The fourth component, bureaucratic structure, concerns organizational arrangements, coordination mechanisms, and operational procedures supporting implementation activities. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), clearly defined responsibilities, and effective inter-agency coordination help minimize fragmentation and ensure consistent policy execution. Conversely, bureaucratic complexity, overlapping authority, and weak coordination may hinder effective implementation despite the existence of adequate regulations and resources.

Besides implementation theory, the concept of public service also provides an essential framework for understanding the role of SP4N-LAPOR. Public service refers to activities undertaken by government institutions to fulfill citizens' needs through the provision of goods, services, or administrative processes. High-quality public service is characterized by efficiency, responsiveness, accessibility, transparency, reliability, and fairness. The ultimate objective of public service is to generate public satisfaction while strengthening trust in government institutions through accountable and citizen-oriented governance.

Within this context, SP4N-LAPOR represents an important innovation in Indonesia's public service system by functioning as an integrated complaint management mechanism. The platform enables citizens to communicate aspirations and complaints directly to government institutions while facilitating monitoring and evaluation of service performance. Through its "no wrong door policy," complaints submitted through any participating institution are forwarded to the appropriate agency for resolution, thereby reducing bureaucratic barriers and improving service accessibility. Consequently, SP4N-LAPOR not only functions as a technological platform but also serves as an instrument for enhancing democratic participation, transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement in public service delivery. Examining its implementation in Simalungun Regency therefore provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of digital governance initiatives and the practical challenges faced in achieving responsive and accountable public administration.

## 2. METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research approach using a descriptive case study design to obtain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of the National Public Service Complaint Management System (SP4N-LAPOR) in responding to public reports and aspirations at the Department of Communication and Informatics (Diskominfo) of Simalungun Regency. A qualitative approach was selected because the research aimed to explore the actual implementation process, identify the experiences and perceptions of policy implementers and service users, and examine the various factors influencing policy execution within its natural setting. Rather than measuring variables statistically, qualitative research enables the researcher to interpret social phenomena comprehensively through direct interaction with participants and contextual analysis of the environment in which the policy operates.

The case study design was considered appropriate because SP4N-LAPOR represents a specific public policy innovation implemented within a particular institutional and regional context. Through this approach, the researcher was able to investigate implementation dynamics in detail, including communication patterns, organizational coordination, resource availability, bureaucratic procedures, and the attitudes of policy implementers. The research adopted an interpretive perspective, emphasizing participants' experiences and the meaning they attach to policy implementation rather than relying solely on quantitative indicators of performance.

The research was conducted at the Department of Communication and Informatics (Diskominfo) of Simalungun Regency, North Sumatra Province, Indonesia. This institution serves as the coordinating agency responsible for administering SP4N-LAPOR at the local government level, including receiving complaints, verifying reports, forwarding them to relevant Regional Government Organizations (Organisasi Perangkat Daerah/OPD), and monitoring complaint resolution. The selection of this research site was based on its strategic role in implementing the national complaint management system and on the existence of several implementation challenges

identified during preliminary observations, including delayed responses to complaints, reports that remained unresolved for extended periods, and automatic closure of complaints before complete follow-up actions had been undertaken.

The research location also reflects the importance of evaluating digital public service implementation in regional governments that have integrated national electronic governance policies into local administrative practices. Studying SP4N-LAPOR implementation in Simalungun Regency provides an opportunity to examine how national policy objectives are translated into operational activities at the local level while identifying institutional constraints affecting service effectiveness. The findings are expected to contribute to improving complaint management practices both within Simalungun Regency and in other local governments implementing similar digital governance initiatives.

Research informants were selected using purposive sampling, a technique commonly employed in qualitative research to identify individuals possessing direct knowledge and experience related to the phenomenon under investigation. The selection criteria emphasized participants who were actively involved in SP4N-LAPOR implementation or had firsthand experience utilizing the complaint management system. Through purposive sampling, the researcher ensured that collected information was relevant to the research objectives and capable of providing comprehensive insights into policy implementation.

The primary informants consisted of two liaison officers responsible for managing SP4N-LAPOR at the Department of Communication and Informatics of Simalungun Regency. These officials were selected because they directly supervise complaint verification, coordination with regional agencies, and monitoring of complaint resolution processes. Their experiences provided valuable information regarding administrative procedures, organizational coordination, technical challenges, and institutional responses encountered during implementation. In addition to government officials, the study involved two community members who had previously submitted complaints through the SP4N-LAPOR platform.

These participants contributed perspectives regarding service accessibility, complaint handling experiences, responsiveness of government institutions, and overall satisfaction with the complaint management process. Combining implementers' and users' viewpoints enabled the research to produce a balanced understanding of implementation performance from both institutional and public perspectives.

Data collection relied on three complementary techniques: in-depth interviews, direct observation, and documentation. Semi-structured interviews served as the primary method for obtaining detailed information from informants while allowing flexibility to explore emerging issues during discussions. Interview questions focused on communication processes, complaint management procedures, organizational coordination, resource availability, technical obstacles, implementers' commitment, and community experiences in using SP4N-LAPOR. Open-ended questioning enabled participants to explain their experiences comprehensively and provided opportunities for clarification whenever necessary.

Observation was conducted to obtain direct evidence regarding implementation practices within the Department of Communication and Informatics. During observation activities, the researcher examined administrative procedures, interactions among liaison officers, complaint processing mechanisms, utilization of technological facilities, and daily operational activities associated with SP4N-LAPOR implementation. Direct observation strengthened research findings by allowing comparison between participants' statements and actual organizational practices observed in the field.

Documentation constituted another important source of evidence supporting qualitative analysis. Documentary materials included official regulations governing SP4N-LAPOR, institutional reports, complaint management records, internal administrative documents, policy guidelines, photographs, screenshots of complaint status, and publicly accessible information related to SP4N-LAPOR implementation in Simalungun Regency. Documentary analysis provided contextual information regarding legal frameworks, implementation procedures, and complaint statistics while supporting triangulation of

evidence obtained through interviews and observations.

The collected data were analyzed using the interactive qualitative analysis model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which consists of three interconnected stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing with verification. Data reduction involved organizing and simplifying raw information collected from interviews, observations, and documentation by selecting materials relevant to the research objectives and coding recurring themes associated with policy implementation. This stage enabled the researcher to focus analytical attention on essential aspects of communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure influencing SP4N-LAPOR implementation.

Following data reduction, the researcher conducted data display through systematic presentation of categorized findings using narrative descriptions and thematic organization. Presenting information in an organized manner facilitated interpretation of relationships among variables, comparison of perspectives across informants, identification of implementation patterns, and recognition of institutional strengths and weaknesses affecting complaint management performance. Continuous interaction between data reduction and presentation ensured that analytical interpretations remained grounded in empirical evidence collected throughout the research process.

The final stage involved drawing conclusions and verifying research findings through continuous comparison between emerging interpretations and available evidence. Verification was performed repeatedly throughout the analytical process to ensure consistency, avoid premature generalizations, and strengthen the credibility of conclusions. The resulting interpretations focused on explaining the implementation of SP4N-LAPOR within the framework of George C. Edward III's policy implementation theory while identifying factors supporting or constraining effective complaint management in Simalungun Regency.

To ensure research trustworthiness, several data validity techniques were employed based on qualitative research principles. The primary strategy was source triangulation, which involved

comparing information obtained from different categories of informants, namely government officials responsible for SP4N-LAPOR implementation and community members who had used the service. Differences and similarities among participants' statements were carefully examined to identify consistent findings and reduce potential bias resulting from reliance on a single perspective.

Method triangulation was also applied by comparing information obtained through interviews, observations, and documentary evidence. Findings generated from one data collection technique were validated using evidence derived from other methods to enhance analytical reliability. For example, interview statements regarding delayed complaint responses were compared with complaint records and publicly available documentation to confirm consistency between participants' narratives and actual implementation outcomes.

Furthermore, the researcher continuously reviewed collected data throughout the research process to ensure interpretive accuracy and maintain analytical consistency. Repeated examination of interview transcripts, observation notes, and documentary materials enabled refinement of emerging categories and strengthened the credibility of final conclusions. By integrating purposive sampling, multiple data collection methods, systematic qualitative analysis, and triangulation techniques, this study sought to produce valid, comprehensive, and trustworthy findings regarding the implementation of SP4N-LAPOR in responding to public reports and aspirations at the Department of Communication and Informatics of Simalungun Regency.

### **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **Overview of SP4N-LAPOR Implementation in Simalungun Regency**

The National Public Service Complaint Management System (SP4N-LAPOR) has become one of the Indonesian government's strategic initiatives to strengthen citizen participation and improve the quality of public service delivery through digital governance. Established as an integrated complaint management platform,

SP4N-LAPOR enables members of the public to submit complaints, reports, suggestions, and aspirations through online channels while ensuring that responsible government agencies provide appropriate follow-up actions. In Simalungun Regency, the implementation of this system is coordinated by the Department of Communication and Informatics (Diskominfo), which serves as the central liaison responsible for receiving complaints, verifying submitted reports, forwarding them to the relevant Regional Government Organizations (Organisasi Perangkat Daerah/OPD), and monitoring the progress of complaint resolution.

The implementation mechanism demonstrates that the liaison officers at Diskominfo function as intermediaries between the public and sectoral government agencies. Every complaint received through the SP4N-LAPOR platform undergoes an initial verification process before being distributed to the appropriate OPD based on the nature of the reported issue. Administrative records are subsequently maintained to document complaint statistics and monitor the effectiveness of follow-up actions over time. This organizational arrangement reflects the government's effort to establish a structured and accountable complaint management system capable of supporting transparent public administration.

Despite the existence of this institutional framework, empirical findings indicate that the implementation of SP4N-LAPOR in Simalungun Regency has not yet achieved its intended effectiveness. Field observations and interviews reveal recurring challenges associated with delayed complaint responses, incomplete follow-up by responsible agencies, limited communication between implementing actors, and technical constraints affecting system accessibility. These implementation problems create discrepancies between the normative objectives of SP4N-LAPOR and its practical operation at the local government level.

The findings also suggest that implementation difficulties originate from multiple interconnected factors rather than from a single organizational weakness. Communication barriers between liaison officers and OPDs, insufficient technical resources, inconsistent coordination mechanisms, and weaknesses in bureaucratic procedures collectively influence complaint management

performance. Consequently, evaluating SP4N-LAPOR implementation requires a comprehensive analytical framework capable of examining institutional behavior from several dimensions simultaneously.

This study therefore adopts George C. Edward III's policy implementation model, which emphasizes communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure as the principal determinants of successful policy implementation. The following discussion analyzes each dimension based on empirical evidence collected through interviews, observations, and documentation conducted at the Department of Communication and Informatics of Simalungun Regency.

### **Communication in the Implementation of SP4N-LAPOR**

Communication represents one of the most fundamental variables in George C. Edward III's implementation model because policy objectives can only be achieved when information is transmitted accurately, consistently, and clearly among all implementing actors. In the context of SP4N-LAPOR, communication involves interactions between liaison officers, Regional Government Organizations (OPDs), and members of the public who utilize the complaint management platform.

The findings demonstrate that internal communication between Diskominfo and OPDs generally follows the formal complaint disposition mechanism established within the SP4N-LAPOR system. Once complaints are verified, liaison officers promptly forward them to the relevant government agencies for further action. Interviews with liaison officers indicate that complaint forwarding procedures are normally completed within the prescribed administrative timeframe, reflecting an institutional commitment to maintaining procedural compliance.

However, communication problems become apparent during the follow-up stage. Although liaison officers claim to remind OPDs regarding pending complaints and encourage timely responses, direct observations conducted during the research period revealed limited evidence of continuous communication between implementing

agencies. The absence of documented reminders or active discussions concerning complaint progress indicates that monitoring activities are not consistently carried out after complaints have been forwarded to responsible institutions. This inconsistency weakens inter-agency coordination and reduces the effectiveness of complaint resolution.

Communication challenges are also evident in interactions between government institutions and citizens. Several community informants reported that they received little or no information regarding the progress of complaints submitted through SP4N-LAPOR. In cases involving damaged public infrastructure and unauthorized business activities, complainants expressed disappointment because their reports remained unresolved for extended periods without receiving adequate status updates. Such conditions reduce public confidence in the complaint management system and create perceptions that submitted reports are ignored despite being formally registered.

Another significant issue concerns the limited dissemination of information regarding SP4N-LAPOR itself. Interviews and field observations indicate that public socialization activities remain insufficient, resulting in low levels of awareness among citizens regarding available complaint channels and reporting procedures. Some users experience difficulties in preparing complete complaint descriptions because they are unfamiliar with the information required by the system, including precise locations and chronological explanations. Incomplete submissions subsequently delay verification and disposition processes because implementing agencies require additional clarification before taking action.

Communication barriers are therefore not restricted to information transmission among government institutions but also involve public understanding of reporting mechanisms. The absence of intensive outreach programs reduces community participation while simultaneously increasing the likelihood of incomplete reports that cannot be processed efficiently. These findings demonstrate that communication problems exist vertically between government and citizens as well as horizontally among implementing organizations.

From Edward III's theoretical perspective, ineffective communication creates ambiguity regarding policy objectives and implementation responsibilities. In the case of SP4N-LAPOR in Simalungun Regency, communication deficiencies manifest through inconsistent follow-up coordination, inadequate dissemination of information to the public, and insufficient monitoring of complaint resolution. Consequently, communication remains one of the principal factors limiting the effectiveness of digital public complaint management.

### **Resources Supporting the Implementation of SP4N-LAPOR**

Resource availability constitutes another essential determinant of successful policy implementation. According to George C. Edward III, implementation cannot function effectively without adequate human resources, authority, financial support, facilities, and technological infrastructure. The findings from Simalungun Regency reveal that although certain resources are available to support SP4N-LAPOR operations, several important limitations continue to hinder implementation performance.

From the perspective of human resources, Diskominfo has appointed liaison officers responsible for verifying complaints, forwarding reports to relevant agencies, and monitoring complaint status. These officers possess operational knowledge regarding SP4N-LAPOR procedures and demonstrate the capacity to administer the system according to existing responsibilities. Nevertheless, interviews indicate that SP4N-LAPOR responsibilities are generally performed as additional duties rather than dedicated positions, creating increased workloads for implementing personnel.

The availability of technological infrastructure represents another important component of resource capacity. Diskominfo provides computers, office facilities, and internet access to support complaint management activities. However, field observations reveal that technical disruptions frequently interfere with operational performance. Electricity outages and unstable internet connectivity often delay access to the national SP4N-LAPOR platform, preventing liaison officers from immediately verifying incoming

complaints or forwarding reports to appropriate agencies. Because the application operates as a nationwide centralized system, server congestion occasionally causes loading delays that further reduce administrative efficiency.

Technical problems are also experienced by members of the public using the SP4N-LAPOR mobile application. Several informants reported that the Android application frequently crashes unexpectedly, requires repeated login procedures after updates, and presents interface difficulties for elderly users or individuals with limited digital literacy. These usability issues discourage active participation and create barriers to monitoring complaint progress independently. Consequently, technological limitations affect not only implementing agencies but also service users.

Resource constraints extend beyond physical infrastructure to include institutional support and operational financing. Interviews with liaison officers indicate that no special incentives or dedicated budgets are allocated specifically for SP4N-LAPOR administration. The absence of financial incentives means that complaint management relies primarily on professional commitment rather than material support. Although implementation continues under these circumstances, limited financial resources may reduce long-term motivation and constrain opportunities for expanding outreach activities or improving technological facilities.

Another important resource-related challenge concerns supporting infrastructure for public information dissemination. The study found limited availability of direct public information centers capable of assisting citizens with complaint submission procedures. As a result, individuals unfamiliar with digital technology receive minimal guidance regarding the use of available complaint channels, reducing inclusiveness in public participation.

Overall, the resource dimension demonstrates that SP4N-LAPOR implementation in Simalungun Regency benefits from the existence of designated personnel and basic technological facilities but remains constrained by unstable internet connectivity, occasional electricity disruptions, application performance issues, limited financial support, and insufficient public assistance

infrastructure. These deficiencies reduce implementation efficiency and ultimately influence the quality of public service delivery.

### **Disposition of Policy Implementers**

Disposition refers to the attitudes, commitment, willingness, and responsiveness of policy implementers toward achieving program objectives. George C. Edward III emphasizes that even when communication and resources are available, implementation may still fail if responsible actors lack commitment or motivation to execute policy responsibilities effectively. The findings from Simalungun Regency reveal a complex relationship between formal commitment expressed by liaison officers and practical implementation outcomes observed in the field.

Interviews with liaison officers indicate that they perceive themselves as carrying out complaint disposition procedures in accordance with established regulations. According to their explanations, complaints are immediately forwarded to relevant OPDs after verification, while subsequent monitoring activities are conducted through internal communication mechanisms intended to encourage timely responses from receiving agencies. Liaison officers also acknowledge that delays frequently originate from sectoral agencies that must complete additional administrative procedures before implementing corrective actions.

Despite these claims, observational evidence presents a different picture. During direct observation of internal communication channels, the researcher found no substantial evidence indicating active follow-up communication between liaison officers and OPDs after complaints had been forwarded. The absence of reminders, clarifications, or monitoring messages suggests that coordination mechanisms are weaker than described during interviews. This discrepancy between interview statements and observed practices indicates that supervision over complaint follow-up remains limited and may contribute to prolonged response times.

Another issue affecting implementer disposition concerns incomplete complaint submissions from citizens. Liaison officers explained that many reports lack sufficient information regarding

locations or chronological descriptions, making it difficult to determine which agency should receive the complaint. Consequently, some reports experience delayed disposition while administrators seek additional clarification. Although this problem originates from reporting quality rather than implementer attitudes, it nevertheless affects overall implementation performance.

The research also identified instances in which complaints were initially forwarded to inappropriate agencies because of changes in institutional responsibilities that had not been fully reflected in operational practice. For example, complaints concerning public street lighting were mistakenly directed to the Public Works Office instead of the Transportation Office following regulatory adjustments. Such errors required additional coordination before complaints could be reassigned correctly, thereby extending processing time and reducing administrative efficiency.

Public perceptions further illustrate weaknesses in implementation disposition. Community informants reported waiting hundreds of days without receiving meaningful progress regarding complaints related to damaged roads and unauthorized truck repair workshops. Although complaints had formally entered the SP4N-LAPOR system, the absence of substantive follow-up created dissatisfaction and reinforced perceptions that government agencies lacked responsiveness toward citizen concerns.

The analysis of complaint statistics between 2020 and 2024 also supports these observations. While earlier years demonstrated relatively high complaint completion rates, more recent data reveal declining percentages of resolved cases alongside increasing numbers of delayed or unaddressed reports. This trend suggests that although liaison officers exhibit a degree of procedural commitment, institutional responsiveness at the OPD level remains inconsistent and insufficient to ensure effective complaint resolution.

Taken together, these findings indicate that disposition within SP4N-LAPOR implementation is characterized by partial commitment rather than comprehensive institutional responsiveness. Liaison officers generally demonstrate willingness

to perform administrative responsibilities, but weak monitoring practices, inconsistent coordination, delayed agency responses, and declining complaint completion rates limit the realization of responsive public service delivery envisioned by the SP4N-LAPOR program.

### **Bureaucratic Structure and Standard Operating Procedures**

Bureaucratic structure represents the fourth variable in George C. Edward III's policy implementation framework. This dimension concerns the organizational arrangements, distribution of authority, coordination mechanisms, and operational procedures that guide policy execution. An effective bureaucratic structure is essential because it ensures that responsibilities are clearly defined and that implementation activities are conducted in a coordinated and consistent manner. In the context of SP4N-LAPOR in Simalungun Regency, the bureaucratic structure consists of a network of actors involving the Regent, Regional Secretary, Department of Communication and Informatics, liaison officers, and administrators from various Regional Government Organizations (OPDs).

Formally, the organizational structure of SP4N-LAPOR has been established through a Regent's Decree, which specifies the roles and responsibilities of each implementing actor. The structure includes a supervisory function at the regional leadership level and operational responsibilities assigned to liaison officers and OPD administrators. This formal arrangement demonstrates that the local government has attempted to institutionalize complaint management within its administrative system. However, the existence of a formal structure does not automatically guarantee effective implementation. Empirical findings reveal several structural weaknesses that continue to affect policy performance.

One of the most significant structural challenges concerns institutional fragmentation. Although responsibilities have been distributed among different agencies, coordination between those agencies remains inconsistent. Complaint handling requires collaboration between Diskominfo and sectoral OPDs, yet the process often becomes

prolonged because each institution follows its own administrative procedures before responding to complaints. As a result, reports submitted by citizens may remain unresolved for extended periods despite having been successfully forwarded through the SP4N-LAPOR platform. This condition reflects a fragmentation problem in which organizational boundaries limit the effectiveness of inter-agency coordination.

Another issue relates to the frequent rotation and reassignment of government personnel. Interviews with liaison officers revealed that employees who have already received training and system access are often transferred to other units shortly afterward. Consequently, replacement personnel must undergo a new learning process before they can effectively perform their responsibilities. This situation disrupts continuity, weakens institutional memory, and reduces administrative efficiency. Frequent personnel changes create dependency on individual experience rather than organizational knowledge, making the implementation process vulnerable to inconsistency.

The role of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) is equally important in determining implementation effectiveness. SOPs are intended to provide clear guidance regarding complaint verification, disposition, follow-up procedures, reporting mechanisms, and coordination processes. Interviews indicate that a draft SOP for SP4N-LAPOR has already been developed and is being used informally by implementing officers. Nevertheless, the document had not yet received formal approval from the Regent during the period of research. Consequently, although officers claim to follow the established workflow, the absence of a legally endorsed SOP reduces procedural certainty and weakens accountability mechanisms.

Field observations further reveal that practical implementation frequently relies on informal communication rather than standardized procedures. Liaison officers often describe coordination through WhatsApp or other informal channels as a substitute for formal monitoring mechanisms. However, direct observation conducted during the research period found no evidence of active communication regarding pending complaints within the relevant internal communication groups. This finding suggests that neither formal SOP mechanisms nor informal

coordination channels are functioning optimally. As a result, complaint follow-up becomes inconsistent and difficult to monitor systematically.

The findings indicate that bureaucratic structure remains one of the principal factors limiting the effectiveness of SP4N-LAPOR implementation in Simalungun Regency. Although formal organizational arrangements already exist, challenges related to fragmentation, personnel rotation, weak coordination, and the absence of an officially legalized SOP continue to hinder implementation performance. Strengthening institutional arrangements and ensuring consistent procedural compliance are therefore essential for improving the responsiveness and accountability of complaint management services.

### **Comparative Analysis Using George C. Edward III and Van Meter–Van Horn Perspectives**

The empirical findings of this study can be better understood by comparing George C. Edward III's policy implementation model with the implementation framework developed by Van Meter and Van Horn. While Edward III focuses on communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure, Van Meter and Van Horn expand the analysis by emphasizing policy standards and objectives, characteristics of implementing agencies, inter-organizational communication, environmental conditions, and implementer attitudes. Applying both perspectives provides a more comprehensive explanation of the challenges affecting SP4N-LAPOR implementation in Simalungun Regency.

From Edward III's perspective, communication problems are evident in the limited dissemination of information, weak monitoring of complaint progress, and inconsistent coordination between liaison officers and OPDs. These communication deficiencies contribute directly to delays in complaint resolution and public dissatisfaction. Van Meter and Van Horn, however, provide a broader interpretation by emphasizing the importance of shared understanding among implementing organizations. The findings indicate that different agencies often interpret complaint handling responsibilities differently, leading to variations in response quality and follow-up actions. Therefore, implementation difficulties

arise not only from communication failures but also from inconsistencies in organizational interpretation of policy objectives.

Regarding resources, both theoretical models reach similar conclusions. Edward III emphasizes the importance of personnel, facilities, authority, and financial support, all of which were found to be limited in the implementation of SP4N-LAPOR. Van Meter and Van Horn complement this analysis by highlighting the significance of information and operational funding. The findings demonstrate that unstable internet connectivity, technical disruptions, limited incentives, and insufficient public outreach infrastructure collectively constrain implementation capacity. Thus, resource limitations extend beyond physical facilities and involve broader institutional support systems required for effective policy execution.

The disposition variable also reveals important insights when examined through both frameworks. Edward III argues that implementation success depends on the commitment and willingness of implementers to carry out policy objectives. The study found that liaison officers generally display a positive attitude toward their responsibilities, yet responsiveness among receiving OPDs remains inconsistent. Van Meter and Van Horn deepen this analysis by emphasizing not only commitment but also the intensity of support and understanding possessed by implementing actors. In Simalungun Regency, the problem is not merely a lack of commitment but also variations in how different agencies prioritize and respond to public complaints. Some agencies treat complaint resolution as an administrative obligation, whereas others view it as a secondary responsibility. This discrepancy contributes to uneven implementation performance across government institutions.

Similarly, the bureaucratic structure variable demonstrates strong parallels between the two theoretical perspectives. Edward III highlights fragmentation and procedural arrangements as determinants of implementation effectiveness. Van Meter and Van Horn reinforce this argument by emphasizing the importance of institutional integration and operational clarity. The findings reveal that fragmentation among OPDs, frequent personnel rotations, and the absence of a formally approved SOP create obstacles that reduce implementation efficiency. Consequently, both

theoretical perspectives support the conclusion that organizational structure remains a critical determinant of policy performance.

A distinctive contribution of Van Meter and Van Horn's framework is its consideration of environmental factors. Unlike Edward III, who focuses primarily on internal organizational dynamics, Van Meter and Van Horn recognize the influence of social, political, and cultural contexts. In the case of SP4N-LAPOR, external factors include limited public awareness, low participation rates, varying levels of digital literacy, and bureaucratic cultures that have not fully embraced citizen-centered service delivery. These external conditions significantly influence implementation outcomes because public complaint systems depend not only on government performance but also on active community engagement.

Overall, the comparison demonstrates that Edward III's model effectively explains the internal administrative factors affecting SP4N-LAPOR implementation, whereas Van Meter and Van Horn provide additional insights into organizational complexity and environmental influences. Together, both frameworks offer a comprehensive understanding of why implementation challenges persist despite the existence of a nationally integrated complaint management system.

### **Implications for Strengthening Public Complaint Management**

The findings of this study have several important implications for improving the effectiveness of SP4N-LAPOR and strengthening public complaint management in Simalungun Regency. First, communication mechanisms must be enhanced through more structured and continuous coordination among liaison officers, OPDs, and the public. The absence of consistent follow-up communication has contributed to delays in complaint resolution and reduced public trust in the system. Establishing regular monitoring procedures, documented communication channels, and periodic evaluation meetings could significantly improve inter-agency responsiveness. At the same time, broader public socialization efforts are necessary to increase awareness of reporting procedures and encourage greater citizen participation.

Second, improvements in resource capacity are essential for supporting sustainable implementation. Technical problems such as unstable internet connectivity, electricity disruptions, and application errors undermine both administrative efficiency and user experience. Strengthening technological infrastructure, improving application reliability, and providing dedicated operational support would enhance service accessibility and reduce implementation barriers. Additional training and capacity-building programs for implementing personnel could further improve complaint handling performance.

Third, the study highlights the importance of reinforcing accountability mechanisms. The increasing number of delayed and unresolved complaints indicates that existing monitoring systems are insufficient to ensure timely follow-up. Liaison officers should be granted stronger authority to supervise complaint handling across OPDs, while performance indicators related to complaint resolution should be incorporated into institutional evaluation systems. Such measures would encourage greater responsiveness and reduce the likelihood of neglected reports.

Fourth, bureaucratic reforms are necessary to address organizational fragmentation and procedural inconsistency. The immediate legalization of the SP4N-LAPOR Standard Operating Procedure would provide a stronger legal foundation for implementation while promoting uniformity in complaint management practices. Furthermore, strategies to minimize the disruptive effects of personnel rotation, such as standardized training modules and structured knowledge transfer mechanisms, would help maintain implementation continuity.

Finally, the findings emphasize that successful complaint management requires a combination of technological innovation and organizational commitment. SP4N-LAPOR has already established a foundation for transparent and participatory governance in Simalungun Regency. However, realizing its full potential depends on the ability of government institutions to strengthen communication, expand resources, improve responsiveness, and institutionalize effective administrative procedures. By addressing these challenges, SP4N-LAPOR can become a more

reliable instrument for promoting accountable public service delivery and enhancing public trust in local government institutions.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This study examined the implementation of the National Public Service Complaint Management System (SP4N-LAPOR) in responding to public reports and aspirations at the Department of Communication and Informatics (Diskominfo) of Simalungun Regency. Using George C. Edward III's policy implementation framework, which emphasizes communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure, the research found that the implementation of SP4N-LAPOR has not yet achieved its intended level of effectiveness. Although the system has provided an important platform for facilitating public participation and strengthening transparency in government administration, several structural and operational challenges continue to limit its overall performance.

From the communication perspective, the findings indicate that communication among liaison officers, Regional Government Organizations (OPDs), and members of the public remains inadequate. While complaints are generally forwarded to the responsible agencies within the required administrative timeframe, communication after the disposition process is often weak and inconsistent. Many complainants reported that they received little information regarding the progress of their reports, resulting in dissatisfaction and declining confidence in the complaint management system. Furthermore, public awareness of SP4N-LAPOR remains relatively limited due to insufficient socialization activities. As a consequence, many citizens are unfamiliar with available reporting channels and frequently submit incomplete reports, which further delays the complaint-handling process. These findings suggest that communication problems are not only related to information transmission among implementing agencies but also involve the government's ability to engage and educate the public effectively.

The study also found significant limitations in the resource dimension. Although Diskominfo has designated liaison officers and provides basic facilities such as computers and office space,

implementation is constrained by various technical and institutional challenges. Frequent electricity outages, unstable internet connections, and occasional system lag interfere with the ability of administrators to access and manage complaints efficiently. In addition, users frequently encounter technical difficulties when utilizing the SP4N-LAPOR mobile application, including application crashes, login problems, and usability challenges for individuals with limited digital literacy. The absence of dedicated financial support and special incentives for implementing personnel further illustrates the limited institutional resources allocated to complaint management activities. Consequently, the effectiveness of implementation depends heavily on the personal commitment of liaison officers rather than on a comprehensive support system provided by the organization.

Regarding disposition, the findings demonstrate that liaison officers generally exhibit a positive attitude and a willingness to perform their assigned responsibilities. They consistently verify complaints and forward reports to the appropriate agencies according to established procedures. However, the research also reveals a discrepancy between the statements of implementing officers and actual practices observed in the field. Although liaison officers claimed to conduct regular monitoring and follow-up communication with OPDs, observations found limited evidence of such activities. This indicates weaknesses in supervision and coordination mechanisms. Furthermore, the increasing number of unresolved and delayed complaints over the period 2020–2024 suggests that responsiveness among receiving agencies remains inconsistent. While commitment exists at the administrative level, effective implementation is hindered by inadequate follow-up, delayed responses, and the absence of regular progress updates provided to complainants. The study therefore concludes that disposition remains one of the critical factors influencing implementation effectiveness, particularly in relation to inter-agency accountability and responsiveness.

The bureaucratic structure dimension also presents several challenges. Formally, the SP4N-LAPOR implementation structure in Simalungun Regency has been established through a Regent's Decree that clearly defines the roles of liaison officers, administrators, and supervisory

authorities. Nevertheless, practical implementation is affected by organizational fragmentation and procedural inconsistencies. Frequent personnel rotations disrupt institutional continuity and require repeated training for newly assigned officers. In addition, although a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) has been drafted and informally applied, it had not yet received official legal endorsement during the research period. This situation reduces procedural certainty and weakens accountability mechanisms. The study also found that informal communication practices often replace formal coordination procedures, yet these informal mechanisms are not consistently utilized. As a result, complaint management processes frequently lack the systematic coordination necessary to ensure timely and effective follow-up.

The analysis further demonstrates that the implementation challenges identified through Edward III's framework are reinforced by the broader perspective of Van Meter and Van Horn. In addition to communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure, factors such as organizational coordination, policy standards, and environmental conditions also influence implementation outcomes. Limited public participation, varying levels of digital literacy, and a bureaucratic culture that has not fully embraced citizen-centered service delivery contribute to the persistence of implementation problems. These findings indicate that improving SP4N-LAPOR requires not only internal administrative reforms but also broader efforts to strengthen community engagement and institutional responsiveness.

Based on these findings, several recommendations can be proposed to improve the effectiveness of SP4N-LAPOR implementation in Simalungun Regency. First, communication mechanisms should be strengthened through more structured and consistent coordination among liaison officers, OPDs, and citizens. Regular monitoring procedures, documented follow-up systems, and periodic coordination meetings should be institutionalized to ensure that complaints are addressed promptly and transparently. Public socialization programs should also be expanded through digital media, community outreach activities, and local information campaigns to increase public awareness and encourage greater participation.

Second, improvements in infrastructure and technical support are necessary to enhance service quality. Stable internet connectivity, reliable electricity supply, and improved system performance are essential for ensuring uninterrupted access to SP4N-LAPOR. The mobile application should also be optimized to improve usability and accessibility for all users, including elderly citizens and individuals with limited digital skills. Additional investments in technological infrastructure would significantly reduce operational barriers and increase user satisfaction.

Third, institutional accountability should be reinforced through stronger monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. Liaison officers should be provided with greater authority to oversee complaint resolution processes and ensure that receiving agencies respond within established timeframes. Performance indicators related to complaint handling should be integrated into agency evaluation systems to encourage responsiveness and accountability. Clear sanctions and incentives may also be considered to promote compliance with complaint management standards.

Fourth, the local government should prioritize the formal legalization and implementation of the SP4N-LAPOR Standard Operating Procedure. An officially approved SOP would provide a stronger legal and administrative foundation for complaint management activities while ensuring consistency across implementing agencies. Regular evaluations should be conducted to assess compliance with established procedures and identify opportunities for improvement.

Finally, sustainable human resource management strategies are needed to minimize the negative effects of frequent personnel rotations. Training programs, standardized knowledge-transfer mechanisms, and succession planning should be implemented to maintain organizational continuity and preserve institutional expertise. In addition, reviewing the automatic complaint closure mechanism within the SP4N-LAPOR system may help prevent unresolved reports from being classified as completed merely because complainants fail to provide responses within a specified period.

In conclusion, SP4N-LAPOR has provided an important foundation for promoting transparency, accountability, and citizen participation in Simalungun Regency. Nevertheless, the findings of this study demonstrate that substantial improvements are still required in communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure to ensure that the system functions effectively. Addressing these challenges will not only improve complaint management performance but also contribute to the development of more responsive, participatory, and accountable public service delivery. Ultimately, strengthening the implementation of SP4N-LAPOR is essential for enhancing public trust in government institutions and supporting the realization of good governance at the local level.

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