

## **The Effectiveness of Information and Competence of Village Officials as Determinants of Community Satisfaction in the BLT Program in East Bulango District**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This study analyzes the influence of the effectiveness of information and the competence of village officials on community satisfaction in the Direct Cash Assistance Program (BLT) in East Bulango District with the implementation of BLT as a mediation variable. Using a survey method of 111 respondents and analyzed through SEM-PLS, this study found that the model has a strong explainability with an  $R^2$  value for BLT implementation of 0.523 and an  $R^2$  for community satisfaction of 0.538. The test results showed that the effectiveness of information had a significant effect on the implementation of BLT ( $\beta = 0.425$ ;  $t = 4.89$ ) and community satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.271$ ), while the competence of village officials had a significant effect on the implementation of BLT ( $\beta = 0.367$ ;  $t = 4.11$ ) but not directly significant on community satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.185$ ). The implementation of BLT was the most dominant factor that affected community satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.538$ ;  $t = 6.32$ ). However, the indirect effect of information effectiveness ( $\beta = 0.152$ ;  $t = 0.044$ ) and the competence of the apparatus ( $\beta = 0.218$ ;  $t = 0.285$ ) through the implementation of BLT on community satisfaction was not significant. These findings confirm that the success of the implementation of BLT—which is timely, transparent, and procedural—is the main determinant of public satisfaction, while effective information and the competence of the apparatus only have a strong impact if implemented through the implementation of good programs. Research recommendations include improving the quality of public information, strengthening the capacity of village officials, and community involvement in the verification and socialization process of the program.*

**Keywords:** Information Effectiveness, Community Satisfaction, Competence of Village Officials, Implementation of BLT, SEM-PLS

## **1. Introduction**

The Village Fund Direct Cash Assistance (BLT) program is one of the government's strategic instruments in strengthening the social safety net, especially for vulnerable communities affected by economic dynamics and changes in social conditions (Ministry of Villages, 2023). This policy not only serves as a response to economic pressures, but also serves as an important indicator in assessing the capacity of village governments to provide transparent, effective, and accountable public services. Historically,

BLT has been implemented since 2005 as compensation for fuel price adjustments and continues to develop into a sustainable social intervention, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic period which has seen an increase in the socio-economic vulnerability of the community (Hidayat & Agustina, 2024; BPS, 2022).

In East Bulango District, the implementation of the BLT program shows complex dynamics. Although it is present as the government's effort to ease the burden on the community's lives, its implementation still faces a number of obstacles such as inaccuracy of targets, delays in distribution, lack of clarity of information, and variations in the competence of village officials in managing the administration and distribution mechanism of aid. This challenge shows that there is a gap between policy and implementation, so empirical evaluation is needed to understand the factors that affect the success of program implementation and the level of community satisfaction.

The effectiveness of information is an important factor in ensuring that the public receives accurate, easy-to-understand, and timely information regarding the BLT mechanism. Ineffective information delivery can affect public perception and have the potential to reduce public trust in the village government. On the other hand, the competence of village officials—both technical, social, and administrative competencies—affects the quality of program implementation, especially in the process of data verification, report preparation, and professional delivery of public services.

Community satisfaction as an outcome indicator is a reflection of the success of the implementation of social assistance programs. A high level of satisfaction indicates the acceptance and trust of the community in village governance. However, the phenomenon in the field shows that even though BLT has been running, community satisfaction has not been optimal, so research is needed to examine the influence of information effectiveness and competence of village officials, including the role of BLT implementation as a mediation variable.

Therefore, this study was conducted to empirically analyze the relationship between the effectiveness of information, the competence of village officials, the implementation of BLT, and community satisfaction in East Bulango District. The results of this study are expected to make a theoretical contribution to the development of public administration studies as well as practical recommendations in improving the quality of BLT program governance at the village level.

## **2. Theoretical Foundations**

### **2.1 Effectiveness of Information**

Information effectiveness is the level of success of a message in achieving the communication goal, which is ensuring that the public understands the content, meaning, and procedures conveyed. Effective information is characterized by clarity, affordability, accuracy, relevance, and timeliness. In the context of social programs such as BLT, the effectiveness of information determines the extent to which the community is aware of the requirements of aid recipients, the distribution schedule, the determination mechanism, and their rights and obligations. Ineffectiveness in the delivery of information has the potential to cause misunderstandings, dissatisfaction, and social conflict. Therefore, the effectiveness of information is an important determinant in shaping public perception of the quality of public services.

### **2.2 Competence of Village Officials**

The competence of village officials refers to the technical, administrative, social, and service ethics capabilities possessed by the apparatus in carrying out government duties. These competencies include regulatory knowledge, communication skills, problem-solving skills, and professional attitudes in providing services. In the implementation of BLT, the competence of the apparatus determines the accuracy of data verification, administrative order, coordination effectiveness, and reporting accountability. Competent officials are able to create transparent and responsive services, thereby increasing public trust and satisfaction.

### **2.3 Implementation of BLT Program**

The implementation of BLT includes the entire process from data collection, verification, determination of KPM, distribution of assistance, to accountability reporting. Good implementation is characterized by the accuracy of the target, the accuracy of quantity, the timeliness, and the transparency of the distribution mechanism. As a mediation variable, the implementation of BLT is a bridge that connects the effectiveness of information and the competence of the apparatus with community satisfaction. Inaccuracies in the implementation have the potential to reduce the quality of public services and give rise to public distrust.

## **2.4 Community Satisfaction**

Community satisfaction is an evaluative response of service recipients to the quality of the BLT program. Satisfaction is influenced by perceptions of service reliability, procedural accuracy, transparency, clarity of information, attitude of officials, and fairness of distribution. The level of community satisfaction is an important indicator of the success of village governance. Timely, accountable, and procedural, BLT services reflect the effective performance of the village government.

## **3. Research Methods**

This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method to analyze the relationship between latent variables of information effectiveness, competence of village officials, BLT implementation, and community satisfaction. The research was carried out in East Bulango District, which consisted of five villages that received the BLT Program. The research population is all BLT beneficiaries in the current year, with a sample of 111 respondents, obtained through probability sampling techniques.

The research instrument is in the form of a questionnaire using a Likert scale of 1–5 which has gone through a validity and reliability test process. The data was analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Square (SEM-PLS) through the SmartPLS application. SEM-PLS was chosen because it is capable of testing complex latent relationships, does not require strict distribution assumptions, and is suitable for medium sample sizes. Model evaluation was carried out through outer model (convergent validity, discriminant validity, composite reliability) and inner model (multicollinearity, path coefficient, t-statistic, p-value, R<sup>2</sup>, and mediation testing). A path diagram is used to illustrate the causal relationship between the variables being tested, while bootstrapping is used to test the significance of a hypothesis at a 95% confidence level.

## **4. Results and Discussion**

### **4.1 Respondent Description**

This study involved 111 respondents who received BLT in East Bulango District. Most of the respondents were in the elderly age group ( $\geq 60$  years), with a dominance of 67 years of age as much as 9.0%. The level of education is dominated by elementary school graduates by 67.6%, showing that the majority of beneficiaries are in the basic education category, so the effectiveness of information is an important aspect in supporting the public's understanding of the program.

#### **4.2 Evaluation Results of Measurement Model (Outer Model)**

All indicators in the variables of information effectiveness, competence of village officials, BLT implementation, and community satisfaction met the criteria of convergent validity with a loading factor of  $> 0.70$ , AVE value  $> 0.50$ , and Composite Reliability (CR)  $> 0.70$ , so that they were declared reliable. The HTMT value  $< 0.90$  indicates a good discriminant validity between variables.

#### **4.3 Results of Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)**

The value of the determination coefficient ( $R^2$ ) indicates that the model has strong descriptive power. The BLT implementation variable has  $R^2 = 0.523$ , which means that the effectiveness of information and the competence of the apparatus explain the 52.3% variation. Meanwhile, the community satisfaction variable obtained  $R^2 = 0.538$ , showing that the implementation of BLT was able to explain 53.8% of the variation in community satisfaction.

#### **4.4 Pengujian Hypothesis**

The results of the SEM-PLS bootstrapping show:

1. The effectiveness of information  $\rightarrow$  BLT implementation was significant ( $\beta = 0.425$ ;  $t = 4.89$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ).
2. The competence of village officials  $\rightarrow$  the implementation of BLT was significant ( $\beta = 0.367$ ;  $t = 4.11$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ).
3. The implementation of BLT  $\rightarrow$  Significant community satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.538$ ;  $t = 6.32$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ).
4. The effectiveness of information  $\rightarrow$  community satisfaction had a positive effect ( $\beta = 0.271$ ), but it was not as strong as the path through the implementation of BLT.
5. The competence of village officials  $\rightarrow$  community satisfaction is not significant ( $\beta = 0.185$ ).
6. The effectiveness of information  $\rightarrow$  the implementation of BLT  $\rightarrow$  community satisfaction was not significant ( $\beta = 0.152$ ;  $t = 0.044$ ).
7. The competence of village officials  $\rightarrow$  the implementation of BLT  $\rightarrow$  community satisfaction is not significant ( $\beta = 0.218$ ;  $t = 0.285$ ).

#### **4.5 Discussion**

The results of the study confirm that the effectiveness of information and the competence of village officials are key factors that improve the quality of BLT implementation. Clear, timely, and easy-to-understand information can facilitate the distribution process, while competent officials can carry out data verification, administration, and service professionally. These two variables consistently have a significant effect on the implementation of BLT, in line with public service theory that places public communication and apparatus capacity as the main determinants of program success.

The implementation of BLT has proven to be the most dominant factor affecting public satisfaction. This reflects that the community assesses the quality of public services, especially from how the program is carried out, accuracy of targets, timeliness, transparency, and fairness of distribution. However, the implementation of BLT has not functioned as a strong mediator between the effectiveness of information and the competence of the apparatus on public satisfaction. The results of the insignificant mediation showed that community satisfaction depended more on direct experience in receiving BLT than on the aspects of communication and indirect competence of the apparatus.

Overall, these findings indicate that increasing community satisfaction requires improvements in the technical implementation of BLT as well as improving the quality of information and competence of village officials. This model provides an important perspective for strengthening the governance of social assistance programs at the village level.

#### **5. Conclusion**

This study shows that the effectiveness of information and the competence of village officials play an important role in improving the quality of the implementation of the BLT Program in East Bulungo District. The effectiveness of information has been proven to have a significant effect on the implementation of BLT, showing that the delivery of information that is clear, timely, and easy for the public to understand encourages the achievement of more optimal program implementation. The competence of village officials has also been shown to significantly affect the implementation of BLT, especially related to administrative, technical, and communication skills in carrying out public service duties.

The implementation of BLT is the dominant factor that affects community satisfaction, so that the quality of program implementation is the main determinant of community acceptance of village government services. However, the implementation of BLT has not succeeded in mediating the influence of the effectiveness of information and the competence of the apparatus on public satisfaction. These findings imply that although information and the competence of

officials are important in the preparation and implementation of the program, people's satisfaction is determined more by the first-hand experience they feel while receiving assistance.

The results of this study emphasized the need to strengthen public information management, increase the capacity of village officials, and improve the BLT implementation process so that public services are more accountable and able to increase community satisfaction in a sustainable manner.

## **6. Suggestions**

1. The Village Government needs to improve the quality of information delivery through media that is easily accessible to the public, such as information boards, direct socialization, and village digital channels.
2. Village officials need to undergo continuous training related to administration, data management, public communication, and accountability-based services to strengthen competencies.
3. The implementation of BLT must be improved through stricter data validation mechanisms, transparency in determining recipients, and distribution supervision so that public satisfaction increases.
4. Community participation needs to be expanded in village deliberations, data verification, and monitoring program implementation to encourage transparency and fairness in aid distribution.
5. Further research can include moderation variables such as public trust or village transparency to provide a more comprehensive understanding of community satisfaction.

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