

THE PARADOX OF DIGITAL ARCHIVAL TRANSFORMATION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT: A CASE STUDY OF SOUTH BOLAANG MONGONDOW, INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

The management of government archives is a mandatory administrative affair that serves as the backbone of state accountability and institutional memory. However, peripheral regions in Indonesia often face a "paradox of transformation," where national mandates fail to materialize at the local level. This study aims to evaluate the government archival service policy at the Library and Archives Service of South Bolaang Mongondow Regency using William Dunn's evaluation framework, focusing on four dimensions: effectiveness, adequacy, responsiveness, and accuracy. Employing a qualitative case study approach, data were gathered through semi structured interviews, non participant observations, and documentary analysis. The findings reveal that archival services in South Bolaang Mongondow currently operate in a state of "strategic neglect," characterized by an ineffective service model, insufficient regulatory instruments (the absence of JRA and Security Classification Systems), low public responsiveness, and fragmented data accuracy. The implementation is hindered by a "triple deficit": a professionalization gap among human resources, severe infrastructure degradation in rented facilities, and systemic budgetary marginalization. Conversely, the regency's low national ranking (484th) serves as a potential catalyst for reform. The study concludes that bridging the "implementation gap" requires a transition from symbolic formal compliance to substantive professionalization through the adoption of technical SOPs and dedicated fiscal allocation to protect the regency's administrative heritage.

Keywords : *Policy Evaluation; Government Archives; Public Service; Administrative Accountability; South Bolaang Mongondow.*

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary era of global governance, the preservation of administrative records has transcended its traditional role as a mere clerical task, evolving into a fundamental pillar of state accountability and institutional memory. Academic discourse in public administration increasingly emphasizes that archives are not static repositories of the past but active instruments that facilitate transparency and safeguard the civil rights of citizens within a democratic framework. Scholarly works globally argue that the integrity of a nation's archival system reflects its commitment to the principles of "Good Governance," particularly in mitigating information

asymmetry between the state and the public. Consequently, the establishment of a robust archival legal framework, such as Indonesia's Law Number 43 of 2009, is seen as a strategic step toward aligning national administrative standards with international benchmarks of public accountability.

However, the gap between the formal adoption of archival laws and their practical implementation remains a significant challenge, particularly in decentralized administrative systems across developing nations. Developing countries often lack the infrastructure, technical capabilities, and interoperability standards necessary for effective archival governance, leading to poor implementation of national policies at the

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local level [1][2]. International literature on policy implementation often highlights that the "decentralization of power" frequently outpaces the "decentralization of administrative capacity," leading to a state of institutional readiness disparity. In many Global South contexts, regional governments are granted mandatory authorities over archival affairs without being provided with the necessary technical infrastructure or specialized expertise required to maintain international standards [3]. This phenomenon, often referred to as "unfunded mandates," creates a systemic barrier where legal compliance becomes a secondary priority to immediate political and physical development agendas.

The digital transformation of public records adds another layer of complexity to this global administrative challenge, as modern governance demands a shift from physical to hybrid or fully digital archival environments. As theorized in the "Digital Maturity Model," the transition toward digital archiving requires not only technological investment but also a radical shift in bureaucratic culture and professional literacy. Many developing countries are at low maturity levels in digital archiving, facing profound challenges in infrastructure and governance [2][4]. Many international organizations, including the International Council on Archives (ICA), stress that without a standardized approach to digital preservation, the "digital dark age" poses a real threat to the continuity of government records. For local governments in developing countries, this technological leap often results

in "technological lag," where the lack of digital infrastructure leads to a permanent loss of vital administrative data [5][6].

Within the Indonesian context, the South Bolaang Mongondow (Bolsel) Regency serves as a critical case study illustrating the friction between national policy aspirations and local administrative constraints. While national regulations like Government Regulation Number 28 of 2012 provide an exhaustive roadmap for archival excellence, local entities often find themselves trapped in a cycle of "survival mode" governance. This study argues that the poor performance of local archival institutions is not merely a technical failure but a symptom of deeper structural and political economic misalignments within the regional bureaucracy. Poor implementation is often driven by a lack of infrastructure, funding, and skilled personnel [1]. By examining Bolsel's archival landscape, this research seeks to contribute to the global debate on why peripheral administrative units consistently fail to meet national and international standards of record keeping.

Institutional Theory suggests that organizational behavior is often driven by "Isomorphism," where local entities mimic national structures without truly internalizing the underlying professional values. Developing countries often mimic archival practices from developed nations without adapting them to local contexts, leading to ineffective implementation [1][7]. In the case of Bolsel's Library and Archives Service, the formal existence of the institution satisfies the legal requirements of Regional

Regulation Number 45 of 2011, yet its functional outputs remain suboptimal. This "decoupled" state of governance where the formal structure is separated from actual operational activities results in a lack of essential archival tools such as Archive Retention Schedules (JRA) and Security Classification Systems. This theoretical lens explains why Bolsel, despite having a legal foundation, continues to struggle with the basic tenets of archival organization and public service delivery.

The concept of "Path Dependency" further explains the stagnation of archival services in rural regencies, where historical neglect of non physical infrastructure creates a self reinforcing cycle of administrative underperformance. Historical reliance on outdated systems, such as paper based records, creates inertia that prevents the adoption of modern digital archives [8]. Historically, regional development priorities in Indonesia have heavily favored tangible infrastructure like roads and bridges, leaving "soft infrastructure" like archives at the periphery of budgetary concerns. This lack of historical investment means that modern archival initiatives in Bolsel must compete with established political priorities that offer more immediate and visible electoral returns for local elites. Consequently, the archival sector remains underfunded and understaffed, reinforcing its status as a "non strategic" sector within the local political economy.

Global assessments of archival supervision, including the 2020 report by the National Archives of Indonesia (ANRI), reveal a startling disparity in administrative

quality across different tiers of government. Nationally, the average performance of regional archival institutions in Indonesia sits at a "C" or "Sufficient" grade, which, in the eyes of international public policy evaluators, represents a high risk of "information loss." This national average masks even more severe deficiencies at the sub provincial level, where rural regencies often fall into the "Very Poor" category. Such data underscores the urgent need for a transformative approach to regional archival policy, moving beyond mere compliance checks toward a model of capacity building and strategic intervention.

The specific case of North Sulawesi Province, which ranks near the bottom of national archival performance, reflects a broader regional crisis of administrative professionalization. Within this struggling province, South Bolaang Mongondow Regency stands out as a critical outlier, ranking 484th out of 508 districts nationwide with a score of 8.85. This exceptionally low score is a theoretical anomaly that demands investigation: how can an administrative unit function with such a profound deficit in its record keeping capabilities? This research posits that such a low ranking is indicative of a "broken chain" in the policy transmission process, where national mandates are lost in the complexities of local implementation.

From the perspective of "Policy Effectiveness," the failure to implement standardized archival reproduction services in Bolsel illustrates a significant breakdown in the citizen state relationship. Standardized access to public records is a core component of "Open Government," yet in Bolsel,

researchers and students are forced to bypass formal protocols due to the lack of institutional facilitation. This informalization of archival access not only compromises the physical integrity of the records but also undermines the legal authority of the archival institution itself. When users must rely on their own devices and informal networks to access information, the state's role as the "trusted custodian" of public knowledge is effectively relinquished.

The dimension of "Adequacy" in public policy focuses on whether the available resources and regulations are sufficient to solve the targeted problem. In Bolsel, the total absence of technical regulations regarding Archive Security and Access Classification Systems represents a "regulatory void" that paralyzes the service's operational capacity. Without these guidelines, the institution cannot legally distinguish between documents that are "Publicly Accessible" and those that are "State Secrets," leading to a culture of administrative caution and opacity. This lack of regulatory clarity is a common feature in many rural bureaucracies, where the fear of making a legal error often leads to total service inertia.

"Public Responsiveness" is a critical metric in modern Public Management (NPM) theory, measuring how effectively an institution meets the needs and expectations of its stakeholders. Evaluation data from Bolsel suggests a profound lack of responsiveness, with users frequently experiencing delays and dissatisfaction when seeking government information. This

"bureaucratic silos" mentality, where departments operate in isolation and prioritize internal procedures over user satisfaction, is a significant barrier to archival reform. In an era where information is expected to be "on demand," the slow and unresponsive nature of Bolsel's archival services creates a digital divide that disenfranchises the local population.

"Accuracy" and "Authenticity" are the twin pillars of archival science, yet they are frequently compromised in local governments due to fragmented document management practices. In Bolsel, the lack of a unified system for tracking the history of the regency's formation has resulted in a disjointed and incomplete historical narrative. For archives to serve as a "Single Source of Truth," they must be captured, managed, and preserved in their original context, which is currently not the case in this region. This fragmentation poses a risk to "Evidence Based Policy Making," as future administrators will lack the documented precedents necessary to make informed decisions for the regency's development.

The "Content of Policy" at the local level often suffers from a lack of "Actionability," where high level goals are not translated into concrete operational tasks. Regional Regulation Number 45 of 2011 provides the "What," but fails to provide the "How," leaving staff in Bolsel without a clear roadmap for daily archival operations. This theoretical gap between "Policy Design" and "Policy Execution" is a primary reason why many well intentioned reforms fail at the local level. Without specific technical

instructions, the management of static and dynamic archives remains an abstract concept rather than a functional administrative process.

Human Resource (HR) management in the archival sector is plagued by the "Professionalization Gap," where staff are assigned to specialized roles without the necessary academic or vocational training. The fact that not a single certified archivist exists within Bolsel's Library and Archives Service is a stark violation of the "Merit System" and national archival standards. Internationally, the role of an archivist is recognized as a highly specialized profession requiring knowledge of conservation, metadata, and digital forensics. When these roles are filled by generalists without ongoing technical guidance, the institution loses its ability to innovate and remains stuck in obsolete practices.

The "Infrastructure Deficit" in Bolsel's archival sector is a physical manifestation of the regency's low administrative priority for record keeping. The use of a rented building and the lack of proper shelving (with files often kept on the floor) represent a significant "Operational Risk" to the state's assets. International standards for archival repositories, such as ISO 11799, emphasize the importance of environmental control and fire protection to ensure long term preservation. The total absence of "Finding Aids" or digital catalogs further compounds this infrastructure failure, making the recovery of information a near impossible task for both staff and the public.

"Fiscal Sustainability" is the backbone of any policy implementation, yet archival services in Bolsel are severely underfunded, receiving almost no budget for technical training or specialized equipment. This "Budgetary Marginalization" reflects a broader global trend where archival services are viewed as "back office" functions that can be sacrificed during fiscal constraints. The absence of a dedicated budget for archival facilities in the RKA (Budget Work Plan) from 2018 to 2021 indicates a long term strategic neglect. This financial starving of the archival sector ensures that any attempt at reform remains superficial and temporary.

The "Political Will" of regional leaders is perhaps the most decisive factor in determining the success or failure of archival policy in Indonesia's decentralized system. While the "Nawacita" policy at the national level promotes regional strengthening, this vision often gets diluted as it passes through various layers of local political interests. Without a "Policy Champion" at the executive level in Bolsel, archival affairs remain invisible and uncompetitive in the annual budget competition. The commitment of local leaders must be measured not by their rhetoric, but by their willingness to allocate prestige and resources to the preservation of the regency's administrative heritage.

The COVID 19 pandemic served as an "Exogenous Shock" that further paralyzed the already weak archival infrastructure in South Bolaang Mongondow. The subsequent "Budget Refocusing" policy prioritized immediate health and social safety nets,

resulting in the total cancellation of archival development programs. This scenario illustrates the "Vulnerability of Soft Infrastructure" during global crises, where long term intellectual assets are the first to be sacrificed for short term survival. The pandemic highlighted the urgent need for "Resilient Archival Systems" that can function autonomously even during periods of extreme fiscal and social disruption.

This research, therefore, positions the evaluation of Bolsel's archival policy as a critical inquiry into the "Resilience of Local Governance" in the face of national and global challenges. By utilizing the evaluation criteria of effectiveness, adequacy, responsiveness, and accuracy, this study seeks to provide a multidimensional assessment of archival performance. It moves beyond a simple descriptive report to provide a "Diagnostic Analysis" of why peripheral administrative units consistently underperform. The findings are expected to offer a replicable framework for evaluating archival policies in other similar rural and developing contexts.

Ultimately, this study titled "Evaluation of Government Archive Service Policy at the Library and Archives Service of South Bolaang Mongondow Regency" is an attempt to bridge the gap between archival theory and local practice. It advocates for a "Professionalization Turn" in regional archival management, emphasizing that archives are essential for "Transgenerational Justice" and historical continuity. By addressing the systemic failures in Bolsel, this research provides strategic

recommendations that could elevate the regency's archival standing and protect its administrative legacy for the future. This inquiry is not just a local assessment but a contribution to the global understanding of administrative development in transition economies.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design and Approach

This study employs a qualitative descriptive design with a case study approach to provide a nuanced understanding of policy implementation failures within a peripheral administrative context. This approach is well suited for understanding complex social phenomena, such as policy implementation gaps, within their natural context [9]. This method was selected because it allows for an in depth exploration of the complex socio technical phenomena surrounding archival services that cannot be captured through quantitative metrics alone. By adopting a "naturalistic inquiry" perspective, this research examines the evaluation of government archival policies at the South Bolaang Mongondow Library and Archives Service as they exist in their real world environment. The case study method is chosen for its ability to provide in depth insights into specific local government contexts, allowing for a detailed examination of archival policy practices and their outcomes [10]. The study specifically focuses on the interplay between regulatory mandates and local operational constraints, aiming to uncover the underlying reasons for administrative underperformance.

Data Sources and Informants

Data were gathered through a purposive sampling strategy to ensure the acquisition of rich, credible, and professionally relevant information. Stakeholders directly involved in archival policy implementation, such as archivists and administrative staff, were purposively selected to ensure the inclusion of participants with relevant expertise [10]. The primary informants included key decision makers within the Library and Archives Service, archival administrators, and field staff responsible for daily record keeping operations. Additionally, perspectives were sought from "policy beneficiaries," including academic researchers and local government employees who utilize archival services, to assess the responsiveness and accuracy of the service. This multi stakeholder approach ensures that the evaluation is balanced, reflecting both the "top down" implementation challenges and the "bottom up" user experiences.

Data Collection Techniques

A multi methodological triangulation approach was utilized for data collection to ensure the robustness of the findings. First, semi structured interviews were conducted to capture the subjective experiences and professional challenges faced by the staff, allowing for flexibility in exploring emergent themes [11]. Second, non participant observation was performed at the archival repository to evaluate the physical infrastructure, storage conditions, and the actual flow of service delivery. Direct observation provides contextual insights into the operationalization of policies [9][12].

Third, documentary analysis was carried out on a wide range of materials, including Regional Regulation No. 45/2011, Budget Work Plans (RKA), standard operating procedures (SOPs), and the 2020 ANRI archival supervision reports. This triangulation of methods allows the researchers to cross verify verbal claims against physical evidence and formal regulatory documentation.

Data Analysis Procedure

The data were analyzed following the thematic analysis framework proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which involves a continuous and interactive process of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing [10]. The raw data were first transcribed and organized into a manageable format, followed by a rigorous coding process where segments of information were labeled according to the evaluation criteria of effectiveness, adequacy, responsiveness, and accuracy. These codes were then categorized into broader themes to identify patterns of institutional failure and bureaucratic resistance. The analysis moved beyond mere description, seeking to synthesize the data into a coherent diagnostic model that explains the "implementation gap" within the local archival system.

Trustworthiness and Data Validity

To ensure the credibility and transferability of the research findings, several validation strategies were implemented. Source triangulation was applied by comparing data from different categories of informants (e.g., comparing the views of the Head of Service with those of

the field staff). Data from interviews, observations, and document analysis were cross verified to enhance credibility and reduce bias [13]. Methodological triangulation was further utilized by cross referencing interview transcripts with observational notes and official policy documents to ensure consistency. Furthermore, member checking was conducted by presenting the preliminary findings to the informants to verify the accuracy of the interpretations [11]. These steps were taken to eliminate researcher bias and to ensure that the study's conclusions provide a reliable and authentic representation of the archival policy landscape in South Bolaang Mongondow.

RESEARCH RESULTS

This section presents the research findings and deepens the analysis by integrating field data with the theoretical framework of public policy evaluation. The discussion is structured to address the three core research questions regarding the evaluation of archival services and the factors influencing their implementation at the South Bolaang Mongondow Library and Archives Service.

Evaluation of Government Archives Service Policy

The evaluation of the government archival service policy in South Bolaang Mongondow (Bolsel) is analyzed through the lens of William Dunn's evaluation framework. This multifaceted assessment reveals a significant disparity between the normative expectations set by national

regulations and the empirical reality of local administrative performance.

1. Effectiveness: The Gap Between Mandate and Reality

The research findings categorically indicate that the archival policy is not yet effective. Effectiveness in public policy is measured by the extent to which the desired outcomes are achieved, often reflected in the availability and accessibility of authentic records. In many developing regions, there is a significant gap between the policies established for record keeping and the actual availability of these records due to inadequate infrastructure and funding [1]. In this context, Law No. 43/2009 mandates that archival institutions must ensure the availability of authentic and reliable archives. However, the operational reality in Bolsel suggests a failure to meet these standards. A critical indicator of this ineffectiveness is the total absence of standardized archival reproduction services. When users, particularly academic researchers and students, are forced to document historical records using personal mobile cameras, it signifies a breakdown in official service protocols. This practice not only deviates from the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) of national archival institutions but also poses a long term risk to the physical preservation and legal authenticity of the documents. The institution has failed to transform the abstract "right to information" into a tangible, facilitated service.

2. Adequacy: Regulatory and Systemic Insufficiency

The level of adequacy within the service is classified as profoundly insufficient. Adequacy refers to whether the level of resources and the scope of the policy are enough to solve the problem at hand, often assessed based on the sufficiency of tools and instruments like a Joint Records Authority (JRA). In developing regions, these instruments are frequently poorly implemented or lack necessary support [3]. The institution's failure to equip itself with essential regulatory instruments specifically the Archive Retention Schedule (JRA) and the Archive Security and Access Classification System creates a systemic void. Without a JRA, the institution lacks a legal and technical basis for determining which documents should be preserved permanently and which should be destroyed, leading to an uncontrolled "document explosion" or, conversely, the accidental loss of vital records. Furthermore, the absence of a classification system for security and access rights means that there is no clear boundary between public transparency and state confidentiality, paralyzing the institution's ability to manage the lifecycle of administrative records effectively.

3. Responsiveness: Bureaucratic Inertia and User Dissatisfaction

The evaluation of responsiveness reveals low institutional engagement with its stakeholders. Responsiveness measures how well an institution reacts to the specific needs, values, and preferences of its target group, often evaluated through user satisfaction and New Public Management (NPM) principles [14]. In Bolsel, users consistently expressed high

levels of dissatisfaction regarding the "time to retrieval" and the quality of professional facilitation. The archival staff often operates in a reactive rather than proactive manner, lacking the professional drive to assist users in navigating complex historical data. This disconnect highlights the challenges faced by local governments in adapting to NPM principles, leading to a perception of inefficiency. This low responsiveness indicates that the institution has not yet internalised the "service oriented" culture required by modern NPM principles. Instead of being a dynamic hub for public information, the archives remain a passive, difficult to access warehouse, thereby failing to meet the community's expectations for transparency.

4. Accuracy: Usefulness vs. Fragmentation

From the perspective of accuracy which in this context relates to the substantive value, reliability, and reliability of the output the archives are considered only moderately useful due to their fragmented state. Accuracy in archiving requires that a record be "intact" and "contextualized." In developing regions, poor record keeping practices and lack of standardization often compromise the reliability of archival records [15]. While some useful information exists, the reliability of the collection is severely hampered by its partial nature. For instance, researchers seeking the "founding narrative" of the South Bolaang Mongondow Regency are met with incomplete story scripts and missing policy documents. When historical records are scattered and disconnected, they lose their value as "legal evidence" and "scientific data." The inability of the

Library and Archives Service to provide a complete, verified, and easy to access historical sequence indicates a failure to protect the transgenerational memory of the region.

Inhibiting Factors in Policy Implementation

The study identified a multifaceted set of inhibitors that systematically undermine the performance of archival services in South Bolaang Mongondow. These factors range from regulatory ambiguity to a severe deficit in institutional resources.

1. Policy Content Ambiguity and the Regulatory Vacuum

A primary inhibitor identified in this research is the lack of "actionable" policy content. Although Regional Regulation (Perda) No. 45/2011 provides a formal legal mandate, it remains at a highly abstract and general level. There is a glaring absence of derived technical policies, such as Regent Regulations (*Peraturan Bupati*) or Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), which are essential for governing specific archival domains. This absence of clear, formalized archival policies is a significant global barrier that leads to inconsistent practices and undermines compliance [16]. Without these technical guidelines, the policy lacks "operational teeth," leading to pervasive confusion among staff regarding their daily duties. In practice, the absence of a clear regulatory roadmap results in an improvised administrative environment where institutional memory is managed through trial and error rather than established scientific norms.

2. The Triple Deficit: Human, Physical, and Financial Resources

The implementation of archival policy in Bolsel is crippled by a systemic

resource deficit that manifests in three critical dimensions:

- a. **The Professionalization Gap (Human Resources):** Out of the 12 personnel currently assigned to the Library and Archives Service, not a single individual possesses professional archivist certifications. This lack of specialized expertise creates a "competency void," where archives are managed autodidactically. Records management success depends heavily on the continuous involvement and specialized training of all stakeholders, which is often lacking in peripheral administrative units [17][18]. The staff functions as "general administrators" rather than "information custodians," preventing the institution from evolving into a modern archival body.
- b. **Infrastructure Degradation (Physical Resources):** The physical environment of the archival service is a testament to institutional neglect. Operating from a rented building that was never designed for archival storage, the facility fails to meet basic safety and preservation standards. Field observations revealed a distressing scene: vital government files placed directly on the floor without shelving, exposed to humidity and physical damage. This mirrors broader trends where inadequate technological and physical infrastructure hinders the modernization of archival systems [16].
- c. **Budgetary Marginalization (Financial Resources):** A longitudinal analysis of the Budget Work Plan (RKA) from 2018 to 2021 reveals a zero allocation trend for archival technical training and facility procurement. This fiscal starvation indicates that archiving is not merely underfunded but is effectively invisible within the regional

government's financial planning. Budget constraints serve as a major barrier to implementing archival policies and acquiring necessary digital or physical resources [16].

Supporting Factors for Policy Implementation

Despite the overwhelming structural and operational barriers previously discussed, the research identified a critical "foundation for change" within the South Bolaang Mongondow Regency Government. This potential for reform is centered on the emerging political awareness of the regency's administrative standing at the national level.

1. Regulatory Legitimacy as an Entry Point

A significant supporting factor is the existence of a formal legal mandate through Regional Regulation (Perda) No. 45/2011. While this regulation has been criticized for its lack of technical detail, its existence is theoretically vital as it provides the legal entry point for all future administrative interventions. In a bureaucratic system, no transformation can occur without a prior legal basis. This regulation serves as a "sleeping giant" that, if awakened by the addition of technical bupati regulations and SOPs, could provide the necessary legitimacy to restructure the Library and Archives Service into a more professional body.

2. The "Supervision Ranking" as a Catalyst for Change

Perhaps the most potent supporting factor is the growing awareness among local elites regarding the 2020 ANRI National Supervision Ranking. The fact that South Bolaang Mongondow was ranked 484th out of 508 districts nationwide categorized as "Very Poor" has

created a sense of "administrative urgency" among top level decision makers. In the era of "Bureaucratic Reform" in Indonesia, such public rankings serve as a powerful external stimulus. This ranking has acted as a diagnostic mirror, forcing the local government to acknowledge its systemic deficiencies and triggering an emerging commitment to align with national standards. This awareness represents a shift from administrative indifference toward a recognition of archival performance as a metric of regional prestige.

DISCUSSION

Evaluation of Government Archives Service Policy

The empirical evidence from Bolsel suggests a phenomenon often described in public policy literature as the "Implementation Gap" or "Decoupling." According to William Dunn's theory, a policy is deemed successful only when it satisfies the criteria of effectiveness, efficiency, adequacy, equity, responsiveness, and appropriateness. In the case of Bolsel, the failure to meet these criteria demonstrates that the policy is currently stuck in a "symbolic implementation" phase. This gap is often exacerbated by resource constraints, lack of training, and bureaucratic resistance to change [10][9].

The institution is functioning at a formal structural level it exists as a building, it has staff, and it follows a regional regulation (Perda No. 45/2011). However, it has failed to reach the functional excellence

level. The absence of technical standards like the JRA and classification codes is not merely a technical oversight; it is a manifestation of "Institutional Isomorphism," where a local agency mimics the form of a national institution without adopting its professional substance. This mimetic isomorphism occurs when local governments imitate successful practices without adapting them to specific contexts, leading to compliance without meaningful change in practice [1]. This decoupling is dangerous because it creates an illusion of governance while the actual state of records continues to deteriorate.

The evaluation confirms that the South Bolaang Mongondow archival service has not yet reached its intended goals of protecting state interests and civil rights. The current state of "Very Poor" ranking (484th nationally) is an accurate reflection of this systemic failure. To bridge this gap, the institution must move beyond formal compliance and begin a rigorous process of professionalization.

Inhibiting Factors in Policy Implementation

The findings regarding these inhibitors align closely with the Implementation Framework of Van Meter and Van Horn, which posits that policy performance is a function of the available resources and the characteristics of the implementing agency. In the case of Bolsel, the "Professionalization Gap" serves as a primary variable for failure; without competent human agents and dedicated funding, even the most well drafted national laws remain stagnant.

However, a deeper theoretical analysis suggests that the stagnation in Bolsel is a symptom of "Soft Infrastructure Sacrifice" within local political economies. In many developing regions, local leaders prioritize "Hard Infrastructure" such as roads and bridges because these projects yield immediate, visible physical outputs that can be leveraged for electoral support. In contrast, "Soft Infrastructure" like archival management produces invisible, long term benefits that do not align with the short term cycles of local politics.

Furthermore, the "Policy Content Ambiguity" observed here reflects a failure in Policy Transmission. National mandates are lost in translation as they move toward the periphery, creating a "Compliance Facade" [16]. In this state, a regional government creates an institution to satisfy national requirements but fails to provide the technical regulations (SOPs) or budgets needed for it to work. The "rented building" and "files on the floor" are not just physical failures; they are symbols of an administrative culture that views archives as "waste" burdens rather than as a strategic asset for the digital age.

The inhibitors in Bolsel are not isolated technical problems; they are deeply rooted in a lack of Political Will and a structural misunderstanding of the role of archives in modern governance. To overcome these barriers, the regency must shift its perspective, recognizing that a government that cannot manage its records is a government that cannot guarantee its own accountability. Bridging this implementation gap requires more than just buying shelves; it

requires a fundamental re professionalization of the administrative apparatus.

Supporting Factors for Policy Implementation

The presence of political support and institutional commitment in Bolsel aligns with Bambang Sunggono's policy evaluation framework, which emphasizes "Support" as a decisive determinant in the policy process. Within this framework, political support acts as the "energy" that drives the administrative machinery. Without this baseline commitment, any technical recommendation for reform would likely be ignored.

However, the theoretical challenge identified in this study is the gap between Symbolic Support and Substantive Support. Currently, the support in Bolsel remains largely symbolic; the government acknowledges the problem (the low ranking) and has created the organization (the Perda), but has not yet channeled the necessary resources to solve it. For this support to become effective, it must undergo a process of "Institutional Crystallization." This means the political will must be translated into concrete actions: the allocation of a significant budget in the APBD, the physical construction of a dedicated archive depository (Depo Arsip), and the recruitment or training of certified professional archivists.

Furthermore, from the perspective of Institutional Theory, the local government's desire to improve its ranking can be viewed as a drive for "External Legitimacy." By striving to meet ANRI's national standards, Bolsel is attempting to validate its status as a modern, accountable administrative unit. This is a positive development, but the discussion warns that reform should not merely be a

"chase for scores" (numerical improvement). Instead, the commitment must be rooted in a genuine understanding of archives as the "Institutional DNA" of the regency.

The political legitimacy provided by the current commitment is the vital foundation for the revitalization of archival services in Bolsel. While technical and fiscal support is currently at its lowest ebb, the "awareness of failure" created by the national ranking serves as a strategic window of opportunity. If the local government can successfully bridge the gap between its current symbolic commitment and substantive administrative action, South Bolaang Mongondow has the potential to transform its archival sector from a national outlier into a model of regional recovery. Without this transition, the commitment will remain a mere formal gesture, and the regency's administrative memory will continue to fade into obsolescence.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings and discussion, several key conclusions can be drawn regarding the evaluation of archival service policies in South Bolaang Mongondow Regency:

1. Policy Performance: The evaluation using Dunn's criteria confirms that the archival service policy has not been implemented effectively. The institution suffers from a "regulatory void," lacking essential technical instruments such as Archive Retention Schedules (JRA) and Security Classification Systems. This leads to a service model that is unresponsive to user needs and provides fragmented, incomplete historical data, failing to

safeguard the regency's institutional memory.

2. Inhibiting Factors: The primary barriers to successful implementation are structural and resource based. The "Professionalization Gap" is evident as no certified archivists are employed, leading to autodidactic management. This is exacerbated by an "Infrastructure Deficit," where archives are stored in substandard rented buildings without proper shelving or finding aids. Furthermore, "Budgetary Marginalization" persists, with zero allocation for archival development in recent fiscal years, reflecting a low political priority for "soft infrastructure."
3. Supporting Dynamics: The main supporting factor is the emerging political awareness triggered by the regency's low national archival ranking. This "awareness of failure" serves as a crucial foundation for political legitimacy and future reform. However, for this commitment to be meaningful, it must shift from symbolic gestures such as merely maintaining the existence of the institution to substantive actions, including the recruitment of professional staff and the provision of adequate, permanent facilities.

Ultimately, South Bolaang Mongondow stands at a crossroads. Without a radical shift toward professionalization and strategic investment, the regency risks permanent "information loss" and a breakdown in administrative accountability. The findings of this study provide a diagnostic roadmap for local policymakers to revitalize archival governance and ensure that public records serve their democratic purpose as a "single source of truth."

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