



Governance In Transition: A Content Analysis Of The Papua Barat Daya Regional Parliament Secretariat

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Abstract This study examines the institutional discourse and administrative practices of the Secretariat of the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) in the newly established province of Southwest Papua, Indonesia. Utilizing a qualitative content analysis approach, the research analyzes a corpus of official documents produced between 2022 and 2025, with particular attention to how the principles of good governance—transparency, accountability, participation, and effectiveness—are reflected and operationalized in a transitional bureaucratic setting. The findings reveal that while procedural transparency and organizational effectiveness are relatively well-articulated in formal documents, mechanisms for accountability and citizen participation remain underdeveloped and largely symbolic. This indicates that the new administrative structures are still in the process of consolidating practices that meaningfully incorporate civic engagement. The study further identifies significant patterns of institutional isomorphism, wherein bureaucratic templates, legal frameworks, and administrative routines from older provincial governments are mimicked and reproduced. Although such imitation provides a sense of stability and legitimacy, it may come at the expense of local relevance and the incorporation of context-specific innovations. In particular, reliance on inherited bureaucratic models risks marginalizing indigenous governance traditions and community-driven practices that could enhance inclusivity and responsiveness. The analysis underscores the performative and symbolic dimensions of governance during periods of institutional formation, highlighting the tension between adopting established administrative norms and fostering context-sensitive practices tailored to the realities of frontier provinces. Methodologically, the study demonstrates the value of document analysis in capturing governance dynamics where field access is limited, politically sensitive, or constrained by security issues. The study concludes by offering practical recommendations: strengthening participatory frameworks to ensure more substantive public involvement, integrating indigenous governance values to enhance legitimacy, and designing flexible policy models that can adapt to the unique sociopolitical challenges of Southwest Papua. In doing so, the research contributes both to the broader scholarship on governance in post-conflict and frontier regions and to the practical debates on institutional development in Indonesia's newest province.

Keywords: Good Governance, Institutional Isomorphism, Content Analysis, Southwest Papua, Public Administration.

1. INTRODUCTION

The establishment of new administrative regions, such as the Southwest Papua Province in Indonesia, represents a multifaceted challenge that encompasses not just territorial realignment but a broader institutional transformation. This transformation necessitates the development of governance frameworks, bureaucratic capacity, and legitimate institutions to effectively manage local governance and meet the emerging expectations of the populace.

In Indonesia, the enactment of Law No. 29 of 2022 is a significant step in promoting decentralization, aimed at enhancing local service delivery and responding to socio-political aspirations, especially in the historically marginalized Papua region. This legislative change reflects a broader trend in which administrative restructuring and decentralization efforts are pursued to respond to regional demands for better governance and local representation (Wang

& Yeh, 2019). The establishment of a new province is thus entwined with the need to create new legislative, executive, and judicial frameworks from the ground up, which presents acute challenges, including the need for skilled personnel and resources to facilitate effective governance (Cartier, 2015).

Furthermore, integration and coordination among various governmental agencies is vital. As evident from health service integration in established regions, incorporating health and social services under a singular administrative structure can improve efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery (Eskandarian et al., 2024; Santos & Campos, 2015). The experience of Indonesia in establishing Southwest Papua Province will also likely demand enhanced coordination among sectors to avoid fragmentation, a concern notably observed in attempts at regional governance in other contexts (Tiirinki et al., 2022)

The urgency of these developments is underscored by the socio-political dynamics of the region, where identity and governance are interlinked. The establishment of new administrative entities often influences regional identity formation and social cohesion, as suggested by studies exploring the relationship between governance and regional identity (Lorne et al., 2019). In regions undergoing similar transformations, fostering regional identity can enhance institutional legitimacy and public trust in new governance structures. This dynamic suggests that in crafting governance frameworks for Southwest Papua, attention to regional identity will be crucial for efficacy and acceptance (Wear, 2012).

The necessity of building bureaucratic capacity cannot be overstated, as robust institutions require both human and material resources. Adequate funding and training programs are essential to develop the capabilities of local government officials and agencies tasked with implementing governance reforms (Gao et al., 2024). The tension between central and local government authority is further complicated by the need for clear jurisdictional definitions and responsibilities, a common pitfall in newly established regions (Antonsich, 2010). Thus, analytical frameworks drawn from studies of urban and regional development can provide relevant insights into the governance challenges faced by newly established provinces like Southwest Papua (Konopski, 2021).

In conclusion, the transition process in Southwest Papua exemplifies the complexities of administrative reconfigurations. The successful development of governance frameworks, the fostering of regional identity, and the augmentation of bureaucratic capacity are critical to ensuring that the new province not only meets its initial objectives of decentralization but also becomes a model of effective local governance and service delivery.

The newly established Secretariat of the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) of Southwest Papua plays a critical role in the administrative architecture of regional governance. As a central component of the legislative framework, the Secretariat functions as the backbone of the DPRD, providing essential logistical and bureaucratic support to elected council members. This includes organizing meetings, drafting documentation, coordinating with other governmental bodies, and facilitating the legislative process. In a transitional governance environment, where continuity and stability are imperative, the Secretariat must be both technically proficient and strategically significant in cultivating a cohesive bureaucratic culture and legislative practice (Febrian, 2022; Rasyid et al., 2022).

The DPRD Secretariat's dual roles in supporting legislative duties while adapting to new frameworks highlight its importance in ensuring smooth operational transitions. Effective legislative support depends on strong institutional commitments, the capacity for public participation, and innovative practices among council members and their staff. This is particularly crucial in areas where personnel from prior administrative units may be reassigned, potentially affecting institutional knowledge and operational continuity (Hosim et al., 2025). The Secretariat serves as a mediator in navigating these shifts, ensuring that legislative responsibilities are met amid personnel changes, thus contributing to establishing a robust framework for local governance.

Moreover, the effectiveness of the Secretariat directly impacts the performance of the DPRD, influencing planning and execution of legislative agendas, employee performance through supervisory structures, and adherence to regulatory frameworks (Ibrahim et al., 2024; Khairunnisa et al., 2024). Studies show that when the Secretariat effectively oversees operational aspects such as budget planning and human resource management, it enhances the legislative body's capacity to function optimally and respond to its constituents' needs (Gunanto & Junaidi, 2025; Karly & Setiawan, 2024). Promoting a culture of professionalism and accountability within the Secretariat is fundamental for fostering good governance practices within the newly formed legislative body.

In conclusion, the Secretariat of the DPRD in Southwest Papua embodies both operational necessity and strategic importance within the local governance framework. As it navigates transitional challenges, its role in shaping the evolving bureaucratic landscape will be pivotal in enhancing legislative efficacy and establishing a governance model that balances authority with responsiveness to community needs.

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The concept of good governance has gained significant traction as a vital benchmark for assessing the effectiveness of governmental institutions worldwide, with noteworthy contributions from organizations such as the UNDP and the World Bank articulating its principles, including transparency, accountability, participation, rule of law, effectiveness, and responsiveness (Abhayawansa et al., 2021; Justice et al., 2006). These principles serve as actionable standards that define whether governance structures can genuinely cater to public

interests and enhance democratic integrity (Joss, 2010). For example, the interplay of transparency and accountability has been acknowledged as crucial in curbing corruption and fostering good governance, where the absence of such measures can undermine the legitimacy of decision-making processes (Bauhr & Grimes, 2017).

Furthermore, the relationship between accounting practices and governance is integral to achieving accountability in government. International harmonization of public sector accounting standards enhances the capacity for transparency and performance evaluation, thereby facilitating better governance outcomes. Research indicates that effective accounting methods, such as performance-based budgeting, are essential for improving government accountability and effectiveness (Sellami & Gafsi, 2017; Yusuf, 2020). These methodologies enable local governments to meet their mandates and align closely with good governance principles, as they foster a culture of responsibility and responsiveness to citizens' needs (Setiawan et al., 2022).

The importance of collaborative governance models, particularly highlighted during crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, has underscored the necessity of adapting traditional governance frameworks to allow for greater public engagement (Sørensen & Torfing, 2021). Incorporating the insights of various societal stakeholders can enhance dialogue and accountability, thus ensuring governance remains attuned to public expectations (Devas & Grant, 2003). However, concerns remain regarding how these collaborative arenas are held accountable in the wider context of governance, indicating the need for robust accountability measures to sustain these initiatives (Sørensen & Torfing, 2021).

In the context of Indonesia, the principles of good governance are significantly influenced by legal reforms, administrative capacity, and political willingness at the local level. As Hartati et al. (2020) note, these principles are not merely theoretical constructs but necessitate practical implementation amidst challenges. Newly formed regions grapple with translating these principles into administrative practice under conditions characterized by uncertainty, lack of legal precedent, and institutional immaturity. The successful instantiation of good governance necessitates careful consideration of these local contexts.

For instance, the Government of West Kalimantan Province has undertaken initiatives aimed at empowering village officials to enhance their administrative capacities, which illustrates a proactive step towards ensuring the execution of good governance principles (Hartati et al., 2020). By adopting targeted training programs and activities, these efforts exemplify how local governments can confront the challenges posed by a lack of experience

in governance. Furthermore, findings from various studies emphasize that inadequate governmental support for socialization and coordination can hinder effective governance. Issues related to overlapping roles between central and local authorities have emerged, complicating the governance landscape (Sulistyaningsih et al., 2021).

Moreover, the application of good governance principles is intricately linked with the effectiveness of the state's administrative mechanisms. The regional administrative capacity can be bolstered through technological integration, such as e-government initiatives, which have been identified as crucial for enhancing service delivery and accountability in local administrations (MULIATI et al., 2023). This reliance on technology underscores the necessity for local governments to adapt and modernize their practices to improve responsiveness to citizen needs while adhering to good governance frameworks.

An additional aspect of implementing good governance is addressing the socio-political dynamics prevalent in Indonesia. Evaluation of government effectiveness reveals a disparity between declared principles and actual practices, as bureaucratic inefficiencies and corruption undermine the aspirations of governance reforms (Handayani & Nur, 2019). Local governance structures must, therefore, reconcile these discrepancies through transparent practices that promote citizen participation and accountability (Dharmayuni & Khairuddin, 2023).

Finally, the challenges related to good governance should not only be seen from a policy implementation lens but also analyzed through the quality and coherence of governance-related documents produced by local governments. These documents serve as crucial artifacts that embody the discourse around governance principles, thereby offering insights into both the intentions and practices of governance at local levels (Haitami & Rengganis, 2021). In this regard, the manifestation of governance principles through documentation can reflect broader governmental sentiments towards accountability and operational efficiency.

Research concerning legislative institutions in Indonesia has predominantly centered around well-established regional parliaments in Java and Sumatra, where institutionalization processes have matured significantly (Mustika et al., 2023). Conversely, new autonomous regions (Daerah Otonomi Baru, or DOB), such as Papua Barat Daya, remain insufficiently studied. This gap in research raises critical questions about administrative dynamics and governance efficacy in these regions, particularly given their strategic significance in reinforcing state presence within national peripheral areas (Sinen et al., 2022).

The unique political and social conditions in Papua Barat Daya make the study of its legislative institutions essential for understanding the broader context of Indonesia's governance. For instance, as pointed out by Rachmawati et al., resource conflicts and land ownership issues have underscored the socio-political challenges faced by local communities in Papua, affecting their representation and engagement with legislative bodies (Rachmawati et al., 2024). Furthermore, the successful institutionalization of governance in new regions is paramount for balancing national interests with those of indigenous populations, thereby fostering stability and sustainable development.

To effectively analyze the legislative frameworks in these under-researched areas, it is vital to consider how local governance correlates with broader national policies and initiatives. The intricacies of community engagement in the decision-making process, as outlined by Toansiba, highlight the need for localized approaches to governance that consider the unique cultural and environmental contexts of regions like Papua Barat Daya (Toansiba, 2023). Enhancing the understanding of these legislative bodies can, therefore, contribute significantly to both policy-making and theoretical frameworks within public administration in Indonesia, particularly in the context of decentralization and local autonomy.

Moreover, the strategic geolocation of Papua Barat Daya, as highlighted by Pugu, not only underscores its significance within the Indo-Pacific framework but also amplifies the importance of effective legislative institutions in addressing regional issues such as economic development and resource management (Pugu, 2024). As the region grapples with the dual imperatives of state integration and regional autonomy, the insights gained from studying its legislative landscape could serve as valuable lessons for policymakers and scholars alike.

In this study, the methodological framework is enriched by the adoption of document analysis as the primary research strategy. The reliance on qualitative methods, particularly the use of interviews and field observations, often encounters significant hurdles when dealing with newly established institutions, such as organizational fluidity, confidentiality concerns, and political sensitivities. These constraints make document analysis an advantageous alternative; it provides an unobtrusive yet insightful way to investigate the administrative behaviors and institutional norms that shape governance. Document analysis allows scholars to engage with written artifacts that embody governance communication, making it particularly useful for exploring how institutional practices are constructed and legitimized within the political sphere (Morgan, 2022; Seyedin et al., 2019).

Within the context of the Secretariat of DPRD Papua Barat Daya, an array of documents—including press releases, plenary meeting summaries, and coordination letters—offers a substantial corpus for examination. Utilizing a qualitative content analysis approach similar to that employed by Özçınar et al. (2019) and Greckhamer and Cilesiz (2020), this study can systematically categorize and interpret these texts to elucidate the framing and enactment of good governance principles during the institution's formative period. Such an analysis provides insights into how these documents serve not only as vehicles of information but also as instruments for reinforcing the organizational identity and securing legitimacy in a nascent institutional environment (Arthur, 2021). Through this lens, the documents function as manifestations of ceremonial conformity to established governance models, as suggested by institutional theorists (Anzai & Matsuzawa, 2013).

Moreover, the content analysis approach aligns with prior research that emphasizes the importance of discerning underlying themes in governance documentation. For example, experiences documented in studies like those by Kurniasih et al. (2023) and Morgan (2022) illustrate the potential of document analysis to yield rich insights into institutional norms, priorities, and the power structures at play. The Secretariat's outputs can thus be viewed as indicative of the organization's strategic intent and its alignment with broader governance discourses, affirming the significance of employing this methodology to unpack institutional narratives and the dynamics of power and authority they reveal (Mukhlis & Perdana, 2022; Seyedin et al., 2019).

This study, therefore, does not aim to evaluate the performance of DPRD Secretariat per se, but rather to understand how institutional identity is constructed through textual practices in a context of governance transition. Such understanding is important for scholars and practitioners interested in the sociology of institutions, post-division governance, and document-based policy analysis.

To summarize, this research is guided by the following objectives: (1) to identify how good governance principles are reflected in the Secretariat's documents; (2) to examine the institutional implications of administrative discourse in a new legislative body; and (3) to demonstrate the methodological relevance of document analysis in post-division bureaucratic research. In doing so, the study hopes to provide a grounded contribution to the literature on local governance, institutional development, and public administration research methods.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This study is grounded in two main theoretical perspectives: the principles of good governance as developed in development and public administration literature, and institutional theory, particularly the concept of institutional isomorphism. Both frameworks provide an analytical lens through which to interpret the content of the documents produced by the Secretariat of the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) of Southwest Papua Province during its formative phase.

Good governance is a normative concept promoted by various international development institutions, most notably the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Bank, and OECD. According to the UNDP (1997), good governance is defined as the exercise of economic, political, and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels. It comprises mechanisms, processes, and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations, and mediate their differences. Central to the concept are several core principles: transparency, accountability, participation, effectiveness and efficiency, equity, responsiveness, consensus orientation, and adherence to the rule of law.

Transparency, in this framework, means that decisions taken and their enforcement are done in a manner that follows rules and regulations. It also means that information is freely available and directly accessible to those who will be affected by such decisions and their enforcement (UNDP, 1997). Accountability implies that decision-makers in government, the private sector, and civil society organizations are accountable to the public, as well as to institutional stakeholders. This requires clearly defined roles, rules, and responsibilities, and the provision of feedback mechanisms (Bovens, 2007).

Participation refers to both direct and representative forms of citizen involvement in governance processes. According to Arnstein's (1969) 'Ladder of Citizen Participation', participatory processes range from manipulation and tokenism to citizen control, suggesting that many government processes remain superficial unless real power is delegated to citizens. Meanwhile, effectiveness and efficiency in public administration denote the proper utilization of available resources to meet the needs of society while maintaining sustainability and operational pragmatism (Grindle, 1997).

Institutional theory, on the other hand, provides a sociological perspective on how organizations develop their structures, practices, and routines. As conceptualized by Scott (2004), institutions consist of cognitive, normative, and regulative structures that provide

stability and meaning to social behavior. They are not only formal rules and policies but also informal norms and belief systems that shape how organizations behave. Institutions are both constraining and enabling; they determine what actions are possible and acceptable in a given context.

Of particular interest is the concept of institutional isomorphism, developed by DiMaggio and Powell (2021), which explains why organizations in similar fields tend to become homogeneous over time. Isomorphism refers to the process through which organizations imitate the structure and practices of others in order to gain legitimacy, even if such mimicry does not necessarily improve efficiency. They identify three mechanisms of isomorphism: coercive (stemming from formal and informal pressures), mimetic (copying in times of uncertainty), and normative (professional standards and training).

In newly established government institutions such as the Secretariat of the DPRD Papua Barat Daya, institutional isomorphism may occur through the adoption of structures and behaviors that resemble those of more established regional parliaments. This may be motivated by a desire to gain recognition from national-level actors, establish credibility among citizens, and fulfill bureaucratic expectations. Often, in early stages of institutional development, these imitative behaviors are not accompanied by deep-rooted values or functional efficiency but are symbolic in nature—what Meyer and Rowan (1977) refer to as 'ceremonial conformity.'

Thus, this study employs the theory of good governance to examine the normative claims and procedural integrity embedded within the Secretariat's administrative documents, while institutional theory, especially isomorphism, serves to interpret the patterns of adaptation and legitimacy-building present in a newly formed institution. The integration of these two frameworks enables a multidimensional understanding: good governance addresses the desired administrative ideals, and institutional theory interrogates the socio-organizational realities that influence how such ideals are interpreted and enacted.

3. METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative research design with a specific reliance on content analysis of publicly available documents. Qualitative research is particularly suited for exploring meanings, processes, and institutional dynamics within their natural settings. In the context of newly established institutions such as the Secretariat of DPRD Papua Barat Daya, qualitative approaches allow for in-depth exploration of how governance ideals are

represented and symbolized through administrative texts, especially when direct access to informants may be limited or politically sensitive.

Document analysis, as a form of unobtrusive research, is defined as a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents—both printed and electronic (Bowen, 2009). It is particularly useful in situations where data collection from human informants is constrained or when the documents themselves are central to the process of interest. In this study, documents are not treated as neutral carriers of facts but as social artifacts that reflect institutional intentions, strategic positioning, and bureaucratic values.

The corpus of analysis includes press releases, meeting summaries, event documentation, internal reports, and public communications produced or authorized by the Secretariat of DPRD Papua Barat Daya from 2022 to 2025. These documents were retrieved from official institutional websites, verified news portals, and regional government publications. Selection criteria include: (1) relevance to institutional roles and governance processes; (2) public accessibility; and (3) production within the transitional phase of the province's establishment.

The analysis employed a deductive coding strategy based on the theoretical categories derived from the good governance framework—namely transparency, accountability, participation, and effectiveness. Each document was examined for textual evidence that aligns with these categories, and then subjected to interpretive analysis to reveal patterns, tensions, and symbolic representations (Krippendorff, 2018).

To ensure rigor, the study applied triangulation by comparing different document types (e.g., policy memos vs. public communications) and validating them against external contextual information, such as media reports and legal documents. Furthermore, audit trails were maintained to record coding decisions, category development, and interpretive notes. These measures align with Lincoln and Guba's (1985) principles of trustworthiness in qualitative inquiry: credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability.

By employing this methodology, the research achieves two objectives: (1) capturing the administrative discourse of a nascent public institution in a post-division context; and (2) demonstrating how principles of governance are negotiated and framed through textual representations in the absence of mature bureaucratic structures or stable informant access.

4. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the empirical findings derived from a qualitative content analysis of official documents issued by the Secretariat of the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) of Southwest Papua Province. The findings are organized thematically according to the four main principles of good governance: transparency, accountability, participation, and effectiveness. Each theme is supported by textual evidence and interpretive analysis of the Secretariat's documented practices during the post-division phase from 2022 to 2025.

1) Transparency

One of the most recurring features found in the Secretariat's documents is a consistent attempt to provide access to information related to parliamentary sessions, institutional agendas, and coordination meetings. Public announcements concerning plenary meetings, formation of internal committees, and legislative scheduling were frequently disseminated via the official government website and local media. For instance, the document titled “Notulen Rapat Paripurna DPRD PBD, 7 November 2024” included summaries of decisions and outlined the steps taken toward establishing six political factions within the newly formed regional parliament.

This visibility aligns with the transparency requirement outlined by UNDP (1997), which posits that open decision-making processes are essential for public trust. However, certain limitations were also evident. For example, documents rarely contained detailed deliberations or access to full legislative transcripts, limiting the depth of public scrutiny. While procedural transparency was emphasized, substantive transparency—such as rationale behind legislative choices—was generally underdeveloped. This supports Meijer's (2013) argument that information openness must go beyond availability to encompass accessibility and interpretability.

2) Accountability

The Secretariat's documents reflected early steps toward accountability through routine reporting and bureaucratic formalization. Annual plans such as “Agenda Kerja Sekretariat DPRD PBD Tahun 2024” laid out timelines, budget estimations, and performance indicators. These documents reveal the Secretariat's effort to develop a culture of administrative responsibility and internal tracking, despite the structural infancy of the institution.

One critical example was the issuance of a letter to the provincial executive office requesting clarification on cross-sectoral budgeting delays. This correspondence not only

illustrates inter-institutional accountability but also the Secretariat's recognition of its facilitative role in supporting legislative functions. Nonetheless, the accountability mechanisms remain mostly inward-facing—targeted toward internal actors or higher authority (e.g., Ministry of Home Affairs), with limited public-facing accountability. Bovens (2007) notes that true accountability requires clarity in expectations, reporting mechanisms, and the capacity for sanction or redress, elements which are still nascent in the DPRD PBD context.

3) Participation

Evidence of participatory governance in the Secretariat's activities was relatively limited. Most documents reflected top-down communication, with few explicit references to public consultation or citizen input. Invitations to attend parliamentary open sessions were issued to executive agencies and formal stakeholder institutions, yet no systematic procedures for involving civil society or marginalized groups were evident. For instance, the Secretariat's press release on a regional development discussion made no mention of participatory mechanisms or public comment periods.

This aligns with Arnstein's (1969) caution that many participatory claims remain symbolic unless structured mechanisms are in place. The lack of participation may be attributed to the transitional nature of the institution, as administrative energy is often consumed by internal coordination and basic functioning. Nevertheless, this absence raises concern over the inclusivity of early decision-making processes, particularly in a politically sensitive region like Papua.

4) Effectiveness and Efficiency

Documents show significant efforts by the Secretariat to support the procedural operations of the legislative body. This includes the formation of six political factions, the facilitation of inaugural plenary sessions, and logistical support for legislative visits. Such activities reflect the Secretariat's effectiveness in mobilizing resources and coordinating political actors within a constrained environment.

An internal document titled "Laporan Pelaksanaan Fasilitasi Paripurna DPRD PBD, Desember 2023" outlined the administrative steps taken to ensure legislative continuity, including budget reallocations, interdepartmental coordination, and physical setup of legislative chambers. These reflect adaptive capacity and procedural innovation in response to organizational gaps, consistent with Grindle's (1997) emphasis on governance as performance under pressure.

However, efficiency in resource use was more difficult to assess due to limited access to financial records or procurement transparency. Reports were often vague in detailing cost breakdowns, leaving unanswered questions regarding fiscal responsibility. Thus, while operational effectiveness is observable, efficiency remains a gray area in need of further documentation and transparency.

4.5 Patterns of Institutional Isomorphism

Beyond the good governance indicators, one of the most salient patterns observed in the Secretariat's documentation was the adoption of administrative templates, language, and structures similar to those found in established provincial parliaments. Organizational charts, internal memos, and formal titles often mirrored those of DPRD in Java or Sulawesi, despite the distinct cultural and institutional context of Papua Barat Daya.

This phenomenon can be interpreted as a form of institutional isomorphism, particularly mimetic and coercive. According to DiMaggio and Powell (2021), organizations under uncertainty often model themselves after more legitimate counterparts. The Secretariat's early conformity to bureaucratic templates from other provinces suggests an effort to gain legitimacy in the eyes of national agencies and donors, even at the cost of local relevance.

For example, while structural mimicry was evident, the documents lacked references to customary governance structures or indigenous advisory councils common in Papua. This absence indicates a disconnect between symbolic conformity and contextual responsiveness—a gap often highlighted in studies of ceremonial bureaucracy (Meyer & Rowan, 1977).

These findings affirm that institutional development is not solely a matter of functional necessity but also of normative alignment and political symbolism. The Secretariat's documents act as both administrative tools and performative texts signaling governance legitimacy in a new provincial context.

5. DISCUSSION

The findings presented in the previous section reveal the multifaceted role of the Secretariat of DPRD Papua Barat Daya as both an administrative apparatus and a symbol of institutional legitimacy in a newly established province. This discussion section interprets these findings considering the theoretical frameworks previously outlined, with specific emphasis on the translation of good governance principles into bureaucratic practice and the patterns of institutional isomorphism that characterize the Secretariat's adaptation.

First, the Secretariat's emphasis on transparency, as evidenced by frequent publication of meeting schedules and press releases, suggests a procedural commitment to openness. This finding is consistent with Meijer's (2013) assertion that transparency is often the most accessible and publicly visible component of good governance, particularly in newly formed institutions seeking legitimacy. However, the lack of depth in content—e.g., absence of detailed legislative transcripts or policy rationales—also supports critiques that transparency in developing bureaucracies can become performative rather than substantive. This aligns with Grindle's (1997) argument that administrative capacity and institutional maturity are prerequisites for transparency to be transformative.

Second, the Secretariat's initial steps toward internal accountability through work plans and coordination letters reflect bureaucratic rationalization. The use of formal procedures and reporting aligns with Weberian ideals of bureaucracy, where predictability and rule-based functioning are emphasized (Weber, 1978). However, as Bovens (2007) cautions, accountability mechanisms must extend beyond internal administration to include answerability to the public and mechanisms for oversight—elements not yet fully visible in the Secretariat's documentation.

The limited evidence of participatory governance, particularly the absence of documented engagement with civil society and indigenous communities, raises concerns about the inclusivity of early legislative processes. This is particularly significant in a Papuan context, where customary leadership and local wisdom play critical roles in governance legitimacy (Warmenhoven, 2015). The Secretariat's documents suggest a tendency toward bureaucratic closure and technocratic prioritization, potentially at odds with the participatory ideals promoted by UNDP (1997) and Arnstein (1969).

In terms of effectiveness, the Secretariat demonstrated commendable capacity in facilitating the institutionalization of DPRD processes, such as faction formation and plenary organization. These findings resonate with Grindle's (1997) concept of 'good-enough governance,' where the priority in transitional settings is not perfection but the establishment of functional routines. The Secretariat's adaptive problem-solving in coordinating resources and supporting political actors illustrates the potential for administrative agency in overcoming institutional vacuum.

Perhaps the most significant theoretical contribution of this study lies in the documentation of institutional isomorphism. The Secretariat's adoption of bureaucratic forms and procedural templates from older DPRD, especially those in Java, confirms DiMaggio

and Powell's (2021) theory that under conditions of uncertainty, organizations mimic others perceived as legitimate. In this case, isomorphism functions as a strategy of institutional survival and acceptance by national elites. However, as Meyer and Rowan (1977) note, ceremonial conformity often masks a gap between formal structures and actual practices, a pattern visible in the Secretariat's highly formalistic but politically cautious documents.

This discussion underscores the hybrid nature of governance in post-division contexts. On the one hand, there is an aspiration to emulate national governance standards through the vocabulary of good governance. On the other hand, the performative and symbolic dimensions of institutional behavior remain dominant, driven by the need to demonstrate procedural legitimacy rather than foster genuine democratic practice.

Methodologically, the study demonstrates the value of document analysis as a tool for capturing early-stage institutional dynamics, especially when field access is limited. Documents serve not only as records but also as discursive spaces where power, legitimacy, and governance principles are negotiated. As Bowen (2009) and Yanow (2007) argue, analyzing texts allows researchers to access the cognitive and normative dimensions of bureaucratic behavior.

In summary, the Secretariat of DPRD Papua Barat Daya provides a compelling case of how institutional forms and governance principles are selectively appropriated, symbolically enacted, and strategically framed through official documentation. While many practices reflect standard public administration procedures, their meaning and impact are deeply shaped by the transitional and political context of a new province.

6. CONCLUSION

This study explored the institutional development and governance discourse within the Secretariat of the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) of Southwest Papua Province through a content analysis of publicly available documents produced during the province's formative years (2022–2025). The analysis employed the theoretical lenses of good governance and institutional isomorphism to examine how bureaucratic values, administrative practices, and symbolic legitimacy are articulated in textual form.

The findings reveal that while the Secretariat has made considerable progress in establishing procedural routines and facilitating parliamentary functions, many of its actions reflect a symbolic conformity to national governance norms rather than localized innovations or participatory models. Transparency and effectiveness were the most salient principles

demonstrated, largely through visible communication and administrative coordination. In contrast, accountability and especially participation remained underdeveloped, revealing a technocratic bias in the institution's early trajectory.

Moreover, the Secretariat's documentation strategy showed clear patterns of mimetic isomorphism, wherein structures and practices from more established regional parliaments were adopted in an effort to project legitimacy and bureaucratic order. This mirrors the theoretical proposition of DiMaggio and Powell (2021) that institutions under uncertainty often emulate others to gain credibility. However, such mimicry risks creating a façade of governance rather than fostering authentic institutional capacity or democratic responsiveness.

These conclusions point to the hybrid nature of governance in newly established provinces: a tension between normative ideals and strategic adaptation, between standardization and contextual sensitivity. The Secretariat serves not only as a bureaucratic entity but also as a political actor navigating expectations from both national institutions and local constituents.

Methodologically, this study also contributes to the scholarship on public administration by demonstrating the analytical potential of document analysis in capturing early-stage institutional behaviors. In contexts where informant access is constrained or data sensitivity is high, administrative documents offer valuable insights into how public values, institutional roles, and governance principles are framed and performed.

Ultimately, the study underscores the need for further research that incorporates comparative provincial cases, triangulates textual data with informant perspectives, and examines the evolution of governance practices beyond the initial phase of institutional formation. Future studies should also explore how indigenous values, and customary governance can be integrated into formal bureaucratic structures in ways that enhance both legitimacy and effectiveness.

By focusing on how governance is represented and enacted in written form, this study offers a critical lens on the performative dimensions of institution-building in decentralized Indonesia and highlights the complexities of administrative reform in frontier provinces.

7. IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section outlines the theoretical, practical, and policy implications of the study, followed by specific recommendations that address the challenges and opportunities identified through the analysis of the Secretariat of DPRD Papua Barat Daya's documents.

A. Theoretical Implications

The study contributes to the expanding discourse on public administration in transitional governance settings by highlighting the duality of governance practices—between the normative ideals of good governance and the performative strategies of institutional survival. It reinforces DiMaggio and Powell's (2021) theory of institutional isomorphism by documenting how newly established bureaucracies often emulate more mature models to gain legitimacy. At the same time, the findings nuance theory by showing how such mimicry may produce symbolic, rather than functional, alignment with governance ideals.

Additionally, the integration of document analysis in institutional research enriches methodological approaches to studying bureaucratic behavior in contexts with limited informant access or political sensitivity. This reinforces Bowen's (2009) proposition that public documents are not merely neutral records, but also sites of meaning-making and discursive performance.

B. Practical Implications

From a bureaucratic development perspective, the study suggests that early-stage administrative actors such as the Secretariat can play a decisive role in setting institutional tone, norms, and routines. By actively managing how governance is communicated and enacted through official documents, secretariats influence public perceptions and institutional legitimacy. The Secretariat's current emphasis on transparency and procedural organization can serve as a foundation for deeper reform if complemented by efforts to expand participation and enhance accountability mechanisms.

In addition, the study highlights the risk of over-standardization and loss of local relevance. The Secretariat's tendency to emulate templates from other provinces may inadvertently sideline the unique socio-political and cultural context of Papua Barat Daya. Therefore, practical adaptations should include mechanisms to incorporate local governance wisdom and traditional institutions into formal structures.

7.3 Policy Implications

For national-level stakeholders, such as the Ministry of Home Affairs and BAPPENAS, the findings suggest a need to revise oversight strategies for new provinces by emphasizing context-sensitive capacity building. Technical assistance and performance monitoring should go beyond procedural benchmarks to include metrics for participatory governance, civic engagement, and integration of indigenous values.

Moreover, policies that regulate bureaucratic formation in new provinces must include guidelines for establishing participatory frameworks. Institutional blueprints should be flexible enough to accommodate region-specific innovations, avoiding one-size-fits-all models that replicate the weaknesses of existing systems.

C. Recommendations

1. The Secretariat should develop inclusive engagement frameworks, such as citizen advisory boards, townhall sessions, and online consultation platforms, to enhance participatory governance.
2. Internal accountability systems should be strengthened by adopting public-facing audit reports and third-party evaluations to build trust and transparency.
3. Documentation practices should be expanded to include rationale for decisions, conflict resolutions, and policy deliberations, which would enhance substantive transparency.
4. Capacity-building programs should incorporate indigenous governance values and promote collaboration with traditional leaders to align formal bureaucracy with local legitimacy.
5. National agencies must adopt differentiated models of oversight and support, recognizing that frontier provinces like Papua Barat Daya require tailored strategies, not duplication of Java-centric governance templates.

By implementing these recommendations, the Secretariat and broader governance structures can transition from performative legitimacy to substantive institutional development that aligns with the principles of good governance and contextual responsiveness.

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