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RECONSTRUCTING PUBLIC SERVICE OVERSIGHT THROUGH A MALADMINISTRATION PREVENTION APPROACH IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION IN GORONTALO

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ABSTRACT
Although Indonesia's public service oversight framework spans the Public Services Law, the Ombudsman Law, and the Government Administration Law, and Ombudsman Regulation No. 61 of 2025 shifted assessment toward maladministration risk, local governments in Gorontalo still show uneven service quality, exposing gaps in coordination and preventive oversight. This study analyzes the legal framework governing public service oversight, identifies institutional challenges in preventing maladministration, and formulates an integrated preventive oversight model for local government in Gorontalo, using a qualitative descriptive-analytical approach through documentary analysis, interpreted via Friedman's legal system theory and collaborative governance. Results show the 2025 scores for Gorontalo Province (76.82), City (75.57), Regency (64.79), and Boalemo Regency (75.55) fall under "moderate without maladministration" yet vary considerably, reflecting gaps in capacity and accountability. The study proposes an Integrated Preventive Oversight Model connecting risk identification, coordination, preventive measures, and accountability evaluation.

ABSTRAK
Meskipun kerangka pengawasan pelayanan publik Indonesia mencakup Undang-Undang Pelayanan Publik, Undang-Undang Ombudsman, dan Undang-Undang Administrasi Pemerintahan, serta Peraturan Ombudsman Nomor 61 Tahun 2025 telah mengalihkan penilaian ke arah risiko maladministrasi, pemerintah daerah di Gorontalo masih menunjukkan kualitas pelayanan yang tidak merata, sehingga memperlihatkan kesenjangan dalam koordinasi dan pengawasan preventif. Penelitian ini menganalisis kerangka hukum pengawasan pelayanan publik, mengidentifikasi tantangan kelembagaan dalam pencegahan maladministrasi, serta merumuskan model pengawasan preventif terintegrasi bagi pemerintah daerah di Gorontalo, menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif-analitis melalui analisis dokumen, yang diinterpretasikan melalui teori sistem hukum Friedman dan collaborative governance. Hasil menunjukkan skor tahun 2025 untuk Provinsi Gorontalo (76,82), Kota (75,57), Kabupaten (64,79), dan Kabupaten Boalemo (75,55) berada pada kategori "sedang tanpa maladministrasi" namun bervariasi cukup signifikan, mencerminkan kesenjangan dalam kapasitas dan akuntabilitas. Penelitian ini mengusulkan Model Pengawasan Preventif Terintegrasi yang menghubungkan identifikasi risiko, koordinasi, langkah preventif, dan evaluasi akuntabilitas

1. Introduction

Public services constitute one of the most tangible manifestations of the state's presence in fulfilling the rights and needs of society. The quality of public service delivery not only reflects the government's capacity to provide administrative services, goods, and other services but also demonstrates the extent to which the principles of the rule of law are implemented in the relationship between the government and its citizens (Jayanti Armida Sari, Mary Ismowati, Nur Sukmawati 2022). From the perspective of administrative law, public services must be delivered in accordance with the principles of legality, legal certainty, transparency, accountability, and non-discrimination. However, the existence of regulatory frameworks and oversight institutions has not entirely eliminated the risk of maladministration. Procedural irregularities, undue delays, abuse of authority, and failure to fulfil legal obligations remain persistent concerns requiring attention. These circumstances emphasise that public service oversight should not be directed solely towards addressing violations but should also prioritise preventing maladministration before it causes harm to the public(A. S. P. and R. Hidayat 2025).

Normatively, the state's obligation to provide public services is legally established under Law Number 25 of 2009 concerning Public Services, which regulates the rights and obligations of both service providers and recipients, service standards, and oversight and complaint mechanisms. This regulatory framework is closely related to Law Number 37 of 2008 concerning the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia, which confers authority to oversee public service delivery. Meanwhile, Law Number 30 of 2014 concerning Government Administration emphasises the importance of exercising governmental authority in accordance with the law and the General Principles of Good Governance (*Asas-Asas Umum Pemerintahan yang Baik*). These three legal instruments collectively establish the legal foundation for protecting the public against improper administrative actions. However, the existence of regulatory provisions dispersed across several legislative instruments requires integrated implementation to ensure that oversight extends beyond mere compliance with administrative obligations(Indonesia n.d.).

A significant development in the public service oversight system was marked by the enactment of Regulation of the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia Number 61 of 2025 concerning the Assessment of Maladministration in Public Service Delivery, which replaced Ombudsman Regulation Number 22 of 2016 concerning the Assessment of Compliance with Public Service Standards. This regulatory change signifies a shift in the orientation of assessment from compliance with service standards towards an examination that places greater emphasis on the risks and manifestations of maladministration in public service delivery(Indonesia 2025). This approach is important because administrative compliance does not necessarily indicate that the rights of the public have been fulfilled. A government institution may possess adequate operational standards, facilities, and complaint-handling mechanisms without necessarily being able to guarantee that every service delivery process is conducted fairly, promptly, and without abuse of authority. Accordingly, the prevention of maladministration must be understood as an integral component of the legal responsibilities of government administrators rather than merely an instrument for evaluating bureaucratic performance(Sutiani 2024).

The urgency of this issue is evident in developments concerning public service oversight in Gorontalo Province. According to the results of the 2025 Assessment of Maladministration in Public Service Delivery, announced by the Gorontalo Representative Office of the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia in February 2026, the Gorontalo Provincial Government received a score of 76.82, with a classification of moderate service quality without maladministration. The Gorontalo City Government obtained a score of 75.57, Gorontalo Regency 64.79, and Boalemo Regency 75.55, all receiving the same classification(Yoesvizar 2025). These assessment results cannot be interpreted as evidence that all services provided by local governments are entirely free from the possibility of maladministration, given that the assessments were conducted using specific indicators and selected service delivery units. Instead, variations in the assessment results provide an opportunity to examine how oversight instruments can be utilised continuously to improve public service governance and strengthen the protection of citizens' rights.

Within the development of legal scholarship, Ombudsman oversight and the prevention of maladministration have attracted academic attention. (Yoesvizar 2025) examined the role of the Ombudsman in preventing maladministration based on the General Principles of Good Governance, emphasising the importance of good governance principles in public service delivery(Manda

Maulana, Fauziah Kurniati 2024). investigated Ombudsman oversight through an evaluation of maladministration in public services in the Greater Jakarta area. Meanwhile, analysed the legal foundations of preventive Ombudsman oversight in digital public service delivery. also examined changes in maladministration assessment instruments as an effort to improve public service quality. These studies demonstrate growing academic attention to maladministration prevention through the strengthening of government administration principles, institutional oversight, and the reform of public service evaluation instruments.

Nevertheless, previous studies leave a research gap concerning the legal relationship between external oversight conducted by the Ombudsman and internal oversight exercised by local governments in establishing an integrated maladministration prevention system. This issue is particularly important because the two oversight mechanisms have different institutional positions, powers, and procedures(Brits, A. M., Grant, C., & Burns 2022). The Ombudsman exercises external oversight pursuant to its statutory authority, whereas government internal supervisory bodies perform oversight functions within the governmental structure(Buana, Herlina Juni Risma Saragih, and Aritonang 2018). These differences do not necessarily indicate a conflict of authority but may give rise to coordination problems if mechanisms for information exchange, follow-up on oversight findings, and responsibilities for improving public services are not clearly defined. Therefore, research on maladministration prevention should focus on interinstitutional relationships rather than solely on the effectiveness of individual institutions in isolation.

Theoretically, these issues can be analysed through Lawrence M. Friedman's legal system theory, which identifies legal substance, legal structure, and legal culture as interrelated components(Fahrizal S.Siagian 2023). Legal substance concerns the clarity of oversight norms and public service obligations; legal structure encompasses the institutional relationships and powers of oversight bodies; and legal culture relates to the attitudes of public officials towards compliance, integrity, and responsibility in service delivery. This framework is relevant in explaining that the existence of oversight regulations alone is insufficient to guarantee the prevention of maladministration without institutional coordination and a service culture oriented towards protecting the rights of the public. This study also proceeds from the premise that preventive and repressive oversight are not mutually exclusive approaches. Both are necessary; however, preventive oversight requires further strengthening to ensure that potential administrative irregularities can be identified and addressed before they develop into administrative violations(Jannah et al. 2024).

Based on these issues, this study offers an original contribution through the development of an integrated preventive oversight model that connects the authority of the Ombudsman, local government internal supervisory bodies, and public service delivery units. The proposed model integrates maladministration risk identification, evaluation of service standards, coordination of oversight findings, and monitoring of follow-up measures into a unified framework of legal accountability. This study does not proceed from the assumption that all existing oversight mechanisms have failed. Rather, it is grounded in the need to assess the adequacy of legal norms and institutional relationships in preventing maladministration. Through this approach, the proposed reconstruction seeks to strengthen the existing system by clarifying responsibilities, improving coordination, and establishing mechanisms for service improvement that can be implemented continuously.

This study aims to analyse the legal framework governing public service oversight, identify normative and institutional challenges in preventing maladministration, and formulate a preventive oversight model appropriate to local government administration in Gorontalo. Employing a normative legal approach, the study seeks to demonstrate that protecting the rights of the public requires the integration of clear legal provisions, oversight authority, and follow-up measures for improving public services. The central argument advanced in this study is that strengthening integrated preventive oversight can provide a legal foundation for more accountable public service delivery, enhance legal certainty, and prioritise the prevention of harm to the public.

2. Metode

This study employs a qualitative approach using a descriptive-analytical method to examine public service oversight governance and maladministration prevention in local government administration in Gorontalo Province. The research is conducted through documentary analysis, with Gorontalo Province serving as the institutional and geographical context of the study(Malandrino 2024).

The qualitative approach enables an in-depth interpretation of regulatory provisions, institutional relationships, oversight mechanisms, and bureaucratic accountability as reflected in official documents and relevant scholarly literature. Documentary analysis is employed as the principal research technique because the study relies exclusively on secondary data rather than primary data obtained through interviews, surveys, or direct observation. The analytical process focuses on identifying institutional patterns, governance challenges, and opportunities for reconstructing preventive public service oversight(Widowati 2024). The findings are interpreted through the theoretical perspectives of good governance, public accountability, and collaborative governance to formulate an integrated preventive oversight model appropriate to local government administration in Gorontalo Province.

The research relies on secondary data obtained through documentary research and a literature review, including maladministration assessment reports issued by the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia, local government policy documents, public service evaluation reports, relevant regulations, scholarly articles, and previous research. The data were collected by selecting documents based on source credibility, substantive relevance, and their applicability to the context of local government administration in Gorontalo(Özkan 2023). Qualitative data analysis was conducted through the stages of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing, following the analytical model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. The data were categorised according to the dimensions of institutional coordination, oversight capacity, transparency, accountability, public participation, and maladministration prevention mechanisms. The trustworthiness of the findings was strengthened through documentary source triangulation by comparing information obtained from official reports, regulations, and academic publications. The results of the analysis were used to formulate an integrated preventive oversight model aimed at strengthening coordination between oversight institutions and public service providers to improve the quality of local government governance, bureaucratic accountability, and the protection of citizens' rights(Cruzz, Abdillah, and Rahman 2025).

3. Results and Discussion

a. How Is Public Service Oversight Governed to Prevent Maladministration in Local Government Administration in Gorontalo Province?

Public service oversight governance constitutes an essential component of local government administration aimed at meeting public needs and protecting citizens' rights. From the perspective of Government Studies, oversight is understood not merely as an activity involving the examination of public officials' compliance with administrative regulations but also as an instrument for controlling and improving the performance of governmental organisations. Effective oversight enables governments to identify procedural deficiencies, improve interinstitutional coordination, enhance bureaucratic responsiveness, and ensure that public services are delivered in accordance with the needs of the community. Accordingly, maladministration prevention must be positioned as an integral component of government governance that emphasises accountability, transparency, institutional effectiveness, and continuous improvement in public service delivery(Dwiki Oktobrian, Juliana Dwi Natasya, Cece Wiranti 2025).

The findings of this study, based on documentary analysis, indicate that public service oversight in Gorontalo Province operates through interactions among external oversight conducted by the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia, internal oversight mechanisms within local governments, and public participation through complaint submissions. Institutionally, the Ombudsman performs an independent oversight function concerning public service delivery, whereas local governments are responsible for exercising control and conducting evaluations of regional government agencies responsible for providing public services. Members of the public occupy a dual position as service recipients and sources of information regarding problems arising in actual service delivery. The relationship among these three elements demonstrates the multidimensional nature of public service oversight, encompassing governmental authority, organisational capacity, administrative processes, and interactions between the government and society(D. M. and A. Hidayat 2025).

A significant development in public service oversight is reflected in the implementation of Regulation of the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia Number 61 of 2025 concerning the Assessment of Maladministration in Public Service Delivery. This regulation replaced the previous approach to assessing compliance with public

service standards established under Ombudsman Regulation Number 22 of 2016. The regulatory change broadens the scope of assessment by incorporating input, process, output, and public complaint dimensions(Indonesia 2025). This shift has significant implications for government governance because the existence of service standards does not necessarily reflect the actual quality of public service delivery. In this context, oversight is increasingly directed towards understanding the relationships among institutional readiness, procedural implementation, service outcomes, and the experiences of citizens as service recipients.

Data from the 2025 Assessment of Maladministration in Public Service Delivery, announced by the Gorontalo Representative Office of the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia in February 2026, reveal variations in the quality of public services among the local governments assessed. The Gorontalo Provincial Government obtained a score of 76.82, the Gorontalo City Government 75.57, Gorontalo Regency Government 64.79, and Boalemo Regency Government 75.55. All four local governments received the classification of moderate service quality without maladministration (Indonesia 2026a). The differences in these scores indicate that the quality of public service delivery is not entirely uniform, even though the local governments were assessed using the same evaluation framework. These findings can be utilised to identify areas requiring institutional capacity-building and to determine priorities for strengthening oversight based on the respective assessment results of each local government.

Table 1. Results of the 2025 Assessment of Maladministration in Public Service Delivery in Gorontalo Province

Local Government	Assessment Score	Classification
Gorontalo Provincial Government	76.82	Moderate Service Quality without Maladministration
Gorontalo City Government	75.57	Moderate Service Quality without Maladministration
Gorontalo Regency Government	64.79	Moderate Service Quality without Maladministration
Boalemo Regency Government	75.55	Moderate Service Quality without Maladministration

Source: Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia, Gorontalo Representative Office, Results of the 2025 Assessment of Maladministration in Public Service Delivery, announced in February 2026.

Table 1. shows that Gorontalo Regency Government obtained a lower assessment score than the other three local governments evaluated. Although all four local governments received the same classification, the differences in their assessment results highlight the importance of considering the characteristics and capacities of individual governmental organisations. However, these assessment results cannot be interpreted as a comprehensive representation of the quality of all public services in Gorontalo Province, as the assessments were conducted in selected service delivery units. Bone Bolango, North Gorontalo, and Pohuwato Regencies were not included in the scope of these local government assessments. Accordingly, the evaluation results should be regarded as reflecting service delivery conditions within the assessed units rather than as a comprehensive measure of overall local government performance(Indonesia 2026a).

The analysis at the regional government agency level reveals more specific variations in performance. Within the Gorontalo Provincial Government, dr. Hasri Ainun Habibie Regional General Hospital obtained a score of 84.11, the Social Affairs Office 77.55, and the Education and Culture Office 68.79. Meanwhile, the Social Affairs Office of Gorontalo Regency received a score of 52.20, while Dunda Regional General Hospital obtained 67.30(Indonesia 2026b). These variations indicate that organisational capacities to meet public service assessment indicators may differ even within the same governmental system. Such differences provide grounds for local governments to evaluate performance not only at the aggregate governmental level but also by considering service characteristics, resource readiness, operational procedures, and the specific improvement needs of individual service delivery units.

From a governance perspective, these findings reinforce the importance of oversight based on organisational risks and needs. Service delivery units with lower assessment scores require further examination to identify indicators that need improvement. At the same time, units achieving higher scores may serve as sources of institutional learning regarding service governance practices that align with the assessment indicators. Nevertheless, differences in assessment scores do not, in themselves, establish that a particular organisation has engaged in maladministration or possesses specific institutional weaknesses. Identifying the underlying causes requires more detailed information concerning service delivery processes,

complaint management, staff competencies, and corrective measures already implemented. Therefore, the primary function of these assessment results is to provide preliminary information for formulating institutional development policies and improving public service delivery(A. S. P. and R. Hidayat 2025).

Another finding concerns public complaints as an instrument of oversight. According to the performance report of the Gorontalo Representative Office of the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia, a total of 165 public reports were handled throughout 2025, comprising 146 regular complaints, 18 reports processed through the Ombudsman's Rapid Response mechanism, and one own-initiative investigation. Of these reports, 105 were resolved during the examination stage, while 11 remained under examination when the performance report was published. Furthermore, between January and June 2026, the Gorontalo Ombudsman received 151 public reports, together with 57 consultations and 14 copied reports. Complaints during the first half of 2026 primarily concerned education, banking, and public-sector employment. These figures demonstrate that complaint-based oversight continues to provide an important mechanism through which citizens can report service delivery problems to an external oversight institution.

From the perspective of Government Studies, public complaints should not be understood solely as indicators of dissatisfaction with service delivery. They also represent a form of public participation that provides information about citizens' experiences in interacting with the bureaucracy. Such information can be utilised to identify recurring problems, determine which services require particular attention, and assess governmental responsiveness to public needs. Nevertheless, the number of complaints cannot be used directly to determine the prevalence of maladministration, as complaint figures may be influenced by access to information, public trust, and the accessibility of reporting mechanisms. Consequently, complaint management should be directed not only towards resolving individual cases but also towards utilising complaint-related information as a foundation for institutional learning and improvements in public service governance(Hidayat 2026).

Developments in the implementation of oversight in Gorontalo also indicate the existence of preventive assessment and institutional assistance activities. In 2026, the Gorontalo Representative Office of the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia conducted maladministration assessment coordination activities with local governments and provided assistance to regional government agencies. These activities demonstrate that external oversight is not necessarily undertaken only after complaints arise but may also be directed towards improving service providers' understanding of assessment indicators and maladministration risks. Nevertheless, the existence of coordination and assistance activities alone is insufficient to establish that sustained improvements in service quality have occurred. Assessing their impact requires further information regarding the implementation of follow-up measures, procedural changes, the handling of recurring complaints, and developments in assessment results during subsequent periods.

Theoretically, the findings of this study can be explained through the concept of *good governance*, which identifies accountability, transparency, responsiveness, and participation as essential elements of government administration. Maladministration assessment data provide information on service delivery performance, while complaint mechanisms enable citizens to communicate their experiences and the problems they encounter. These two instruments perform complementary functions in strengthening governmental accountability. However, the available information can generate broader governance benefits only when it is utilised by public service providers to improve procedures and enhance the quality of decision-making. Accordingly, accountability concerns not only the government's obligation to explain its actions but also the organisational capacity to respond to oversight findings through corrective measures whose implementation and outcomes can be evaluated(Widowati 2024).

The findings can also be integrated with the concept of *collaborative governance* developed by Ansell and Gash (2008), which emphasises the importance of interactions among stakeholders in achieving shared governance objectives. In the context of public service delivery in Gorontalo, this perspective is relevant to understanding the need for coordination among the Ombudsman, local governments, internal supervisory bodies, regional government agencies, and the public. However, collaboration does not imply consolidating all oversight powers within a single institution. Each institution continues to exercise its respective statutory mandate and responsibilities. Collaboration is primarily required in the lawful exchange of information, follow-up on evaluation findings,

identification of service delivery problems, and formulation of accountable improvement measures(Gash 2008).

Based on a synthesis of these findings, this study develops the concept of public service oversight as a continuous process of institutional learning. Within this framework, maladministration assessment results and public complaints are not treated as the final outputs of oversight activities but rather as inputs that enable local governments to identify risks, establish improvement priorities, implement corrective measures, and evaluate their outcomes. This concept extends the orientation of oversight beyond compliance examinations towards preventive oversight that is directly connected to organisational improvement processes. The proposed development is conceptual in nature and requires further empirical investigation to determine the effectiveness of its implementation within local government administration(Ariyanti, Amir, and Ramayana 2024).

Thus, the findings demonstrate that public service oversight governance in Gorontalo Province is supported by maladministration assessment mechanisms, external oversight conducted by the Ombudsman, public complaint management, and coordination and assistance activities involving public service providers. The 2025 assessment data reveal variations in service quality among the local governments and regional government agencies included in the evaluation. Meanwhile, complaint data from 2025 and the first half of 2026 emphasise the importance of public participation in providing information for oversight activities. These findings indicate that strengthening oversight governance cannot be achieved merely by expanding examination activities but also requires the systematic utilisation of assessment results and complaints as a basis for decision-making, service improvement, and the continuous prevention of maladministration risks. Therefore, integration between external oversight, internal control, and the responsiveness of public service providers constitutes an essential foundation for developing more accountable and citizen-oriented local government governance.

b. Institutional Challenges, Coordination among Oversight Institutions, and Bureaucratic Accountability in Implementing Preventive Oversight of Public Service Maladministration in Gorontalo Province

The implementation of preventive oversight of maladministration in public service delivery constitutes an essential aspect of achieving responsive, transparent, and accountable local government governance. From the perspective of Government Studies, oversight concerns not only the ability of supervisory institutions to identify administrative irregularities but also the capacity of governmental organisations to identify risks, establish coordination mechanisms, and ensure continuous improvements in public service delivery. The findings indicate that the challenges associated with preventive oversight in Gorontalo Province need to be analysed through three interrelated dimensions: institutional capacity, coordination among oversight institutions, and bureaucratic accountability in following up on oversight findings. These three dimensions determine whether information obtained from assessment results and public complaints can be translated into policies for improving public services or merely remains documented in administrative evaluation reports(A. S. P. and R. Hidayat 2025).

Institutionally, the public service oversight system involves the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia as an external oversight institution, government internal supervisory bodies (*Aparat Pengawasan Intern Pemerintah*, APIP) as internal oversight mechanisms, and regional government agencies (*Organisasi Perangkat Daerah*, OPD) as public service providers. These institutions exercise distinct but interconnected powers aimed at improving the quality of public service delivery. The Ombudsman is responsible for overseeing alleged maladministration and encouraging improvements in public service administration, whereas internal supervisory bodies perform control, evaluation, and examination functions within the governmental structure. These differences in institutional position can strengthen the oversight system by enabling administrative practices to be examined from both internal and external perspectives. However, the separation of functions also creates a need for clearly defined coordination mechanisms to ensure that oversight findings are followed up by government units authorised to implement the necessary changes(Guan Kusuma, Tenripada, Andi Chairil Furqan 2025).

The results of the 2025 Assessment of Maladministration in Public Service Delivery show that the Gorontalo Provincial Government obtained a score of 76.82, the Gorontalo City Government 75.57, Gorontalo Regency Government 64.79, and Boalemo Regency Government 75.55. All four local

governments received the classification of moderate service quality without maladministration(Indonesia 2026a). These differences indicate variations in assessment outcomes among local governments within the same province. However, such variations cannot automatically be interpreted as evidence of inadequate internal oversight capacity or weak institutional coordination. Instead, the assessment results are more appropriately used as a starting point for examining institutional development needs, procedural improvements, and oversight priorities based on the conditions of individual service delivery units.

From the perspective of institutional capacity, the principal challenge lies in the ability of governmental organisations to translate evaluation findings into measurable preventive actions. Public service providers must not only understand the assessment indicators but also establish internal mechanisms for evaluating operational processes, identifying the underlying causes of service deficiencies, and determining the parties responsible for implementing improvements. In this context, bureaucratic capacity encompasses the competencies of public officials, access to relevant information, organisational leadership, and continuity of evaluation. Limitations in any of these elements may hinder maladministration prevention efforts. Nevertheless, this document-based study does not provide sufficient evidence to determine the level of personnel capacity across all regional government agencies in Gorontalo. Accordingly, institutional capacity is identified as a governance challenge requiring preventive attention rather than as evidence of the failure of any particular organisation(Edyanto and Suripatty 2023).

The reform of oversight policy through Ombudsman Regulation Number 61 of 2025 further reinforces this need. The regulation governs the objects, measurement mechanisms, and stages of maladministration assessment and replaces Ombudsman Regulation Number 22 of 2016 concerning the Assessment of Compliance with Public Service Standards. This regulatory change requires public service providers to adopt a more comprehensive understanding of assessment rather than regarding it merely as an examination of the completeness of service standards. Consequently, institutional readiness becomes essential to ensuring that oversight encompasses the quality of service delivery processes, service outcomes, and complaint mechanisms available to the public (Indonesia 2025).

Regarding developments in oversight implementation during 2026, the Gorontalo Provincial Government expressed its commitment to strengthening public service standards, improving the capacity of public officials, utilising information technology, and enhancing internal oversight. At the maladministration assessment meeting held in July 2026, the local government also emphasised the importance of using previous evaluation findings as guidelines for improvement. This commitment demonstrates institutional recognition of the importance of preventive oversight. Nevertheless, policy commitments must be distinguished from evidence of their implementation. The effectiveness of follow-up measures can only be assessed when documentation is available concerning the corrective actions undertaken, performance indicators achieved, and evaluation results obtained after the improvements have been implemented.

The next challenge concerns coordination among oversight institutions. Within the local government system, coordination is necessary to connect information obtained through external oversight with internal control and decision-making processes within local governments. The Ombudsman may identify service delivery problems through assessments and complaint examinations, while local governments bear organisational responsibility for following up on findings within the scope of their respective authority. When these processes operate without adequate information exchange and institutional coordination, there is a risk that similar problems may recur despite previous examinations or evaluations. This risk highlights the importance of documented follow-up mechanisms, clearly defined responsibilities, and joint evaluations without compromising the independence of the respective institutions(D. M. and A. Hidayat 2025).

From the perspective of *collaborative governance*, Ansell and Gash (2008) emphasise the importance of stakeholder relationships, dialogue, and trust-building in achieving public objectives. Their framework is relevant to explaining why preventive oversight requires sustained interaction among oversight institutions, public service providers, and the public. However, the application of collaborative governance to oversight has distinct characteristics because the Ombudsman must maintain its institutional independence. Collaboration should not be interpreted as the involvement of oversight institutions in all administrative decisions made by local governments but rather as coordination in information sharing, discussions concerning corrective measures, and

monitoring the implementation of recommendations in accordance with the respective authority of each institution(Gash 2008).

Public complaint data provide further insights into the importance of such coordination. Throughout 2025, the Gorontalo Representative Office of the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia handled 165 reports, comprising 146 regular complaints, 18 reports processed through the Rapid Response mechanism, and one own-initiative investigation. Of these reports, 105 were resolved during the examination stage, while 11 remained under examination at the time the performance report was published. During the first half of 2026, the Ombudsman received 151 public complaints, with education, banking, and public-sector employment constituting the three most frequently reported areas of concern.

These data demonstrate that public complaints constitute an important source of information for public service oversight. However, not all complaints received by the Ombudsman concern local governments, as its supervisory jurisdiction also extends to regional offices of central government institutions and other public service providers. Accordingly, complaint data should be interpreted as reflecting oversight activities within the Gorontalo region rather than as a direct measure of the prevalence of maladministration within local governments.

Table 2. Identification of Challenges in Preventive Public Service Oversight in Gorontalo Province

Oversight Dimension	Documentary Findings	Identified Governance Challenges
Institutional Capacity	Variations in the 2025 maladministration assessment scores across four local governments	The need for capacity-building and institutional strengthening based on the specific conditions of individual service delivery units
Interinstitutional Coordination	Assessment, assistance, and coordination activities conducted by the Ombudsman in collaboration with local governments in 2026	The need to integrate external oversight findings into internal improvement programmes
Bureaucratic Accountability	Local government commitments to following up on the Ombudsman's assessment results	The need for documented evidence of corrective actions and evaluation of improvement outcomes
Complaint Management	165 reports in 2025 and 151 reports between January and June 2026	The need to utilise complaint data to identify risks and prevent recurring maladministration
Continuous Oversight	Maladministration assessments and assistance activities involving regional government agencies have been conducted	The need to monitor changes in public service quality following evaluation

Source: Compiled and processed from publications issued by the Gorontalo Representative Office of the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia, 2025–2026. The identified governance challenges represent the researcher's analytical interpretations rather than findings or official statements issued by the Ombudsman.

Table 2. demonstrates that the principal challenges of preventive oversight cannot be reduced merely to limitations in the number of oversight institutions. Rather, the existence of multiple oversight mechanisms requires local governments to manage institutional relationships more effectively. The Ombudsman's assessment findings need to be translated into improvement programmes with clearly designated responsible parties, measurable indicators of success, and monitoring mechanisms. Without such integration, oversight risks placing greater emphasis on compliance with assessment indicators than on substantive improvements in public service delivery processes (Ardlillah, Yanti, and Izza 2024).

The third dimension concerns bureaucratic accountability. In government administration, accountability refers not only to the obligation of public officials to justify the exercise of their authority but also to the capacity of governmental organisations to explain their decisions, actions, and service delivery outcomes to the public. Bovens conceptualises accountability as a relationship in which an actor is obliged to explain and justify their conduct to a forum that has the capacity to question and evaluate that conduct(Bovens 2007). This perspective is relevant because preventive oversight requires accountability for improvement processes rather than merely the presentation of examination findings.

In the context of Gorontalo, the commitment of local governments to use the Ombudsman's assessment results as a basis for institutional improvement constitutes a relevant development. However, substantive accountability requires documentation of the actions undertaken, the

resulting procedural changes, and their benefits to the public. The publication of assessment scores or statements of commitment is insufficient to demonstrate that maladministration risks have been reduced. Accordingly, follow-up reporting mechanisms are essential to enable both the public and oversight institutions to understand the relationship between evaluation findings and improvements implemented in public service delivery.

Accountability challenges are also closely related to bureaucratic organisational culture. Preventive oversight requires an institutional environment that is receptive to criticism, open to public complaints, and committed to treating evaluation findings as opportunities for organisational learning. Conversely, when oversight is perceived merely as an administrative obligation to satisfy assessment indicators, organisations may prioritise documentary completeness over substantive service improvements. This relationship represents a conceptual risk that warrants consideration rather than an empirical finding that such an organisational culture has developed within particular institutions in Gorontalo. Further research involving interviews and observations is necessary to assess how organisational leaders and public officials respond to oversight findings in actual administrative practice.

The findings can be examined through the theoretical perspectives of institutional capacity and collaborative governance. From the perspective of Government Studies, oversight capacity is determined not only by the adequacy of personnel resources but also by an organisation's ability to process information, coordinate actions, and maintain policy continuity. Meanwhile, the collaborative governance approach conceptualises interinstitutional relationships as processes requiring clearly defined objectives, an appropriate allocation of responsibilities, and mutual commitment. These two perspectives demonstrate that preventive oversight requires the integration of internal organisational capacity and coordinated relationships with external oversight institutions.

Based on this synthesis, the study identifies three principal requirements for strengthening preventive oversight: organisational capacity to identify maladministration risks, institutional coordination in following up on oversight information, and bureaucratic accountability for improvement outcomes. These three dimensions form an interdependent relationship. Organisational capacity enables the identification of problems, coordination provides mechanisms for addressing issues across institutional boundaries, and accountability ensures that corrective measures can be evaluated and justified. If any of these elements does not function adequately, the benefits of oversight may remain confined to administrative procedures.

c. A Reconstruction Model of Public Service Oversight Based on Maladministration Prevention through Strengthening Institutional Collaboration, Transparency, and Accountability in Local Government Administration in Gorontalo Province

The reconstruction of public service oversight represents an effort to improve the relationships among oversight institutions, government administrators, and the public so that oversight can function as an instrument for the continuous prevention of maladministration. From the perspective of Government Studies, reconstruction does not necessarily entail establishing new institutions or replacing the entire existing system. Rather, it may be achieved by restructuring institutional relationships, improving coordination mechanisms, and strengthening accountability in public service delivery. Based on the findings presented in the preceding discussion, an appropriate oversight model for Gorontalo Province is one that integrates information obtained from public service assessments, public complaints, internal government oversight, and external evaluations conducted by the Ombudsman into a process of organisational improvement. This approach positions maladministration prevention as a shared responsibility exercised in accordance with the respective authority of each institution.

The need for such reconstruction is grounded in the results of the 2025 Assessment of Maladministration in Public Service Delivery, which revealed variations in performance among local governments in Gorontalo. The Gorontalo Provincial Government obtained a score of 76.82, the Gorontalo City Government 75.57, Gorontalo Regency Government 64.79, and Boalemo Regency Government 75.55. All assessed local governments received the classification of moderate service quality without maladministration. However, these assessment results do not necessarily indicate that all public services have achieved ideal conditions. Instead, the differences in assessment scores highlight the importance of improvement measures that consider the particular needs of each local government and service delivery unit. Accordingly,

the reconstruction of oversight should focus on strengthening the capacity of local governments to utilise evaluation findings as a basis for institutional development, decision-making, and maladministration risk prevention.

Conceptually, existing public service oversight mechanisms need to evolve from periodic evaluations towards a more anticipatory form of oversight. Anticipatory oversight incorporates the identification of risks before administrative irregularities occur as an integral component of government administration. This approach does not eliminate the functions of examination and complaint handling but connects them with institutional development activities and improvements in service delivery procedures. Public complaints, for example, should not only be used to determine whether a particular service involves maladministration but may also be analysed to identify recurring patterns of service delivery problems. Where complaints concerning unclear procedures or service delays occur repeatedly, local governments can utilise such information to evaluate service delivery workflows, the allocation of responsibilities among public officials, and the adequacy of information provided to the public.

From the perspective of *collaborative governance*, reconstructing oversight requires structured working relationships among the Ombudsman, regional inspectorates, regional government agencies, and the public. identify dialogue, trust-building, commitment, and shared understanding as essential elements of collaborative governance. This framework indicates that effective coordination depends not merely on the existence of meeting forums or administrative agreements but also on the ability of the parties involved to develop a shared understanding of common objectives and responsibilities. In local government administration, these objectives can be pursued by establishing a common understanding of service standards, maladministration risks, complaint mechanisms, and obligations to implement improvements. Nevertheless, cooperation must be undertaken without obscuring institutional boundaries of authority, particularly because the Ombudsman is an external oversight institution that must maintain its independence.

Developments in public service oversight in Gorontalo demonstrate the existence of an institutional foundation upon which such relationships can be established. In July 2026, the Gorontalo Provincial Government and the Ombudsman conducted an initial maladministration assessment meeting involving regional government leaders and regional government agencies. The meeting was intended to strengthen public service providers' understanding of and commitment to maladministration prevention. Subsequently, in August 2026, the Gorontalo Representative Office of the Ombudsman provided assessment assistance to several regional government agencies in Boalemo Regency. These activities included explanations of assessment dimensions, evaluation stages, and monitoring procedures. Such developments demonstrate the availability of coordination mechanisms that can be further developed into more sustainable processes of institutional learning. However, the implementation of meetings and assistance activities does not, in itself, establish that a fully integrated oversight system has been achieved.

The reconstruction proposed in this study is centred on the development of an *Integrated Preventive Oversight Model Based on Collaboration and Accountability,* a governance framework that connects risk identification, institutional coordination, the implementation of corrective measures, service transparency, and continuous evaluation. This model is not intended to transfer the Ombudsman's oversight authority to local governments or vice versa but rather to strengthen functional relationships among institutions. The Ombudsman continues to undertake assessments and external oversight in accordance with its statutory mandate, regional inspectorates perform internal oversight functions within their respective authority, and regional government agencies remain responsible for improving public service delivery. Through this arrangement, oversight findings can inform bureaucratic performance management without compromising the institutional independence of the respective bodies.

The proposed integrated preventive oversight model comprises five interconnected components: risk identification, institutional coordination, the implementation of preventive measures, transparency of service information, and accountability evaluation. Risk identification is conducted by utilising Ombudsman assessment results, public complaint reports, and internal evaluations undertaken by regional government agencies. Institutional coordination is directed towards ensuring that each finding is addressed by the institution possessing the relevant authority. The implementation of preventive measures constitutes the responsibility of public service providers through procedural improvements, capacity-building among

public officials, and strengthened internal controls. Meanwhile, transparency is necessary to ensure that citizens have access to information concerning service standards and complaint channels, whereas accountability evaluation ensures that corrective measures are implemented and produce measurable improvements.

Figure 1. Integrated Preventive Oversight Model Based on Institutional Collaboration and ccountability

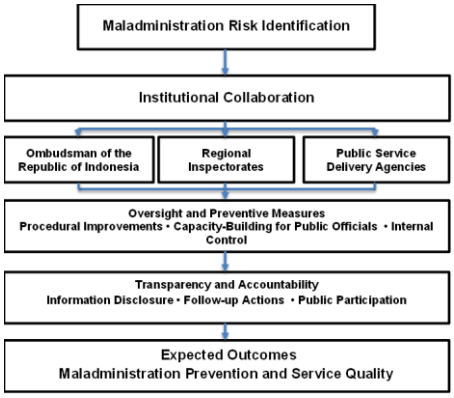

Figure 1. illustrates an integrated preventive oversight model that connects maladministration risk identification, institutional collaboration, preventive measures, and transparency and accountability in public service delivery. The model establishes a coordinative relationship among the Ombudsman, regional inspectorates, and regional government agencies in accordance with their respective statutory authority. Continuous evaluation serves as a feedback mechanism to improve administrative procedures, strengthen bureaucratic capacity, and prevent the recurrence of maladministration.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

The findings of this study demonstrate that public service oversight governance in Gorontalo Province has been implemented through external oversight conducted by the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia, internal oversight mechanisms within local governments, maladministration assessments, and public complaint management. However, the implementation of preventive oversight continues to face challenges related to the need to strengthen institutional capacity, coordination among oversight institutions, transparency, and accountability in following up on oversight findings. Variations in the 2025 public service assessment results highlight the importance of adopting an oversight approach that considers the specific conditions and needs of individual public service delivery organisations. This study develops an Integrated Preventive Oversight Model Based on Collaboration and Accountability, which connects maladministration risk identification, institutional coordination, preventive measures, information disclosure, and continuous evaluation. The proposed model offers an oversight governance approach that focuses not only on resolving public complaints but also on systematically preventing administrative irregularities and improving the quality of public service delivery.

Based on these findings, the Gorontalo Provincial Government and its regency and municipal governments are recommended to integrate maladministration assessment results into the planning and performance evaluation processes of regional government agencies to strengthen the prevention of service delivery irregularities. Regional inspectorates should develop risk-based oversight mechanisms and monitor corrective measures to ensure that evaluation findings are followed up through measurable actions. The Gorontalo Representative Office of the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia is encouraged to strengthen coordination, institutional assistance, and monitoring activities within the scope of its statutory authority to promote improvements in public service quality without compromising the independence of external oversight. Meanwhile, regional government agencies should enhance information disclosure, improve complaint-handling mechanisms, and strengthen the competencies of public officials to ensure that citizens receive responsive and accountable public services. The implementation of the proposed model also requires further empirical testing to assess its effectiveness in ensuring the continuous prevention of maladministration.

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