

Public Services in the Raskin Program: Evaluation in Damai Bahagia Subdistrict, South Balikpapan

Murdelina ¹⁾, Aji Ratna Kusuma ²⁾, Santi Rande ³⁾, Zekeri Momoh ⁴⁾

^{1, 2, 3)} *Departement of Public Administration, Mulawarman University of Bontang, Indonesia*

⁴⁾ *Indo Pacific Studies Center, Australia*

Corresponding Author: Murdelina, Email: deliabangir87@gmail.com

History: Received 22/04/2026 | Revised 10/05/2026 | Accepted 20/06/2026 | Published 30/06/2026

Abstract. Persistent urban poverty and uneven food assistance delivery continue to challenge equitable public service provision in Indonesian cities. This study evaluates public service delivery in the Raskin Program in Damai Bahagia Subdistrict, South Balikpapan, with specific attention to service procedures, targeting accuracy, distribution transparency, and beneficiary satisfaction. A descriptive qualitative design was applied through in-depth interviews with local officials, program implementers, community representatives, and beneficiary households, supported by direct observation and document review. Data were analyzed using an interactive qualitative model involving data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, with source and method triangulation to strengthen credibility. The findings show that the program reached low-income beneficiaries and was supported by positive staff attitudes and responsive interpersonal service. However, its effectiveness was constrained by unclear procedures, limited information access, distribution delays, uneven transparency, and weak beneficiary-data updating, which increased the risk of inclusion and exclusion errors. The study concludes that food assistance effectiveness depends on local administrative capacity, procedural clarity, data governance, and accountability mechanisms. The novelty of this study lies in integrating service quality, targeting accuracy, transparency, and satisfaction in a localized urban Raskin evaluation. The findings contribute to public service and social assistance governance by offering empirical insights for improving equitable, transparent, and accountable food assistance delivery.

Keywords: *Public Service Effectiveness; Raskin Program; Targeting Accuracy and Transparency; Damai Bahagia*

INTRODUCTION

Poverty remains one of the most persistent challenges in social and economic development, particularly in countries where rapid urbanization, uneven income distribution, and unequal access to basic services continue to shape household vulnerability. In Indonesia, poverty is not merely a matter of income insufficiency but is also closely related to the capacity of citizens to access food, housing, health services, education, and administrative protection. Social assistance policies therefore occupy a central position in public governance because they represent the state's obligation to protect vulnerable groups and reduce socioeconomic exclusion. Among these interventions, food assistance has long served as a strategic instrument for ensuring minimum household consumption, particularly for low-income families whose purchasing power is highly sensitive to fluctuations in food prices. The Raskin Program, which was designed to provide subsidized rice for poor households, reflects this broader commitment to social protection, welfare protection, and poverty prevention through public service mechanisms (Ilato et al., 2022; Rammohan & Tohari, 2024).

The relevance of food assistance becomes increasingly significant in urban areas, where poverty is often less visible but institutionally complex. Urban poor households may live close to markets, schools, hospitals, and government offices, yet they often remain constrained by unstable employment, informal income sources, limited administrative access, and weak social safety nets. In this context, the effectiveness of assistance programs is determined not only by the availability of subsidies but also by the quality of public services that mediate access to those subsidies. Service delivery becomes a crucial administrative bridge between policy objectives and beneficiary experiences. When procedures are unclear, information is unevenly distributed, beneficiary data are inaccurate, or distribution is delayed, a social assistance policy may fail to achieve its intended redistributive function despite being formally implemented. Such conditions are closely related to administrative burden, which may prevent citizens from fully accessing public benefits even when they are formally entitled to them (Giest & Samuels, 2023; Stenderup & Pedersen, 2025).

The implementation of social assistance programs, including the Raskin Program, depends heavily on the quality of public services provided by government institutions at both central and local levels. Effective, transparent, accountable, and responsive public services are essential for ensuring that assistance reaches the intended population and is perceived as fair by the community. Previous studies have emphasized that the implementation of social welfare policies is shaped by coordination capacity, administrative responsiveness, and institutional readiness at the local level (Rulandari et al., 2022; Saa & Patty, 2025). However, the implementation of such programs frequently encounters practical constraints, including weak beneficiary data collection, delayed distribution, inaccurate targeting, limited supervision, and insufficient public information. These conditions indicate that the success of a policy is not determined solely by policy design but also by governance quality, administrative capability, and the performance of frontline public service actors. In developing country contexts, frontline workers often need to improvise when service gaps emerge, especially where formal procedures do not fully correspond to community needs or institutional resources (Campos & Peeters, 2022; Rauhaus, 2022).

At the regional and local levels, the implementation of the Raskin Program is influenced by the social, economic, and administrative characteristics of each area. Local governments operate within specific institutional environments, resource limitations, demographic dynamics, and community expectations. Studies on local policy implementation suggest that territorial context, local administrative capacity, and socioeconomic variation can affect the ability of government institutions to deliver public programs effectively (Guerrero et al., 2021; Mariyah & Wobcke, 2025). Damai Bahagia Subdistrict in South Balikpapan represents an important local setting for examining these issues because it is located within an urban environment characterized by

socioeconomic diversity, population mobility, and differentiated household needs. As Balikpapan continues to develop as an urban economic area, the governance of social assistance at the subdistrict level becomes increasingly important for understanding how public services operate in heterogeneous urban communities. This local context is particularly relevant because public service quality in poverty-related programs is shaped by both administrative capacity and the ability of local institutions to respond to citizens' changing socioeconomic conditions (Acharya & Scott, 2022; Ilato et al., 2022).

From a public administration perspective, the evaluation of Raskin service delivery should be situated within the principles of good governance. Transparency, participation, accountability, responsiveness, and procedural clarity should be reflected in every stage of program implementation, from beneficiary identification and verification to distribution and complaint handling. The role of local government is particularly significant because frontline institutions are responsible for translating national or regional policy frameworks into concrete services received by citizens. Intergovernmental coordination also matters, especially when social assistance programs require alignment between central policy standards, local administrative interpretation, and community-level execution (Asmorowati et al., 2022; Widiarto et al., 2025). Without adequate coordination and procedural consistency, program implementation may become fragmented, leading to uneven service quality and declining public trust. Governance networks are therefore important because public service delivery frequently requires coordination among multiple actors, including government units, community representatives, and service users (Ugyel, 2022; Williams et al., 2023).

The quality of public service delivery is therefore a determining factor in the effectiveness of the Raskin Program. In public service studies, quality is commonly associated with accessibility, reliability, responsiveness, clarity of procedure, fairness, and the ability of service providers to meet citizens' needs. In the case of social assistance, these indicators become closely linked to social justice because service weaknesses may directly affect whether vulnerable households receive assistance. Unprofessional, non-transparent, or unresponsive services may create dissatisfaction, perceptions of favoritism, social jealousy, and even horizontal tension among residents. Conversely, services that are clear, timely, courteous, and accountable can strengthen public trust, enhance government legitimacy, and encourage community participation in policy implementation (Pratiwi, 2025; Sari, 2023). Empirical studies on public service quality and citizen satisfaction also indicate that public satisfaction is strongly shaped by perceived service reliability, procedural fairness, and the capacity of institutions to respond to user expectations (Nurhadian & Khoirunurrofik, 2022; Zhao et al., 2025). Thus, evaluating public

service delivery in the Raskin Program is not only an administrative exercise but also an assessment of how governance practices influence social equity.

Recent literature has increasingly emphasized the importance of targeting accuracy, transparency, and citizen satisfaction in the implementation of social assistance programs. Targeting accuracy is essential because limited public resources must be allocated to households that genuinely meet eligibility criteria. Inaccurate targeting may lead to inclusion errors, where non-eligible households receive assistance, and exclusion errors, where eligible households are omitted from beneficiary lists. Studies on poverty targeting and social protection highlight the importance of reliable data systems, local verification mechanisms, and contextual understanding in identifying beneficiaries (Mariyah & Wobcke, 2025; Rammohan & Tohari, 2024). At the same time, transparency is necessary to ensure that communities understand beneficiary criteria, distribution schedules, allocation amounts, and complaint channels. Public trust in assistance programs is strengthened when citizens perceive that information is accessible, decisions are accountable, and distribution mechanisms are fair (Afandi et al., 2023; Sofyani et al., 2022). Public information services are therefore essential for reducing uncertainty and improving citizens' ability to access, monitor, and evaluate public programs (Gao et al., 2024).

Several studies have examined related issues in social assistance and public service governance. Hartina Dewinta and Rahman (2025) examined recipient criteria in regional rice assistance and showed that beneficiary selection remains a critical issue in determining program effectiveness. Rupaiedah et al. (2021) analyzed Raskin innovation and demonstrated that local adaptation is important for improving food assistance delivery. Sarumaha et al. (2023) studied Raskin management and its relationship with community welfare, emphasizing that distribution practices influence perceived benefits at the local level. In addition, studies on social welfare implementation, local government capability, transparency, and citizen satisfaction have shown that program outcomes depend on both administrative systems and citizens' experiences of service delivery (Acharya & Scott, 2022; Lee & Kim, 2024; Moreno-Albarracín et al., 2021; Zhao et al., 2025). Other studies on public service delivery further show that program performance can be improved through co-production, citizen engagement, digital service innovation, and institutional capacity-building (Azmat et al., 2025; Cai & Zhang, 2023; Gawron, 2023; Wang et al., 2025).

Despite these contributions, there remains a research gap in localized evaluations that simultaneously examine service procedures, targeting accuracy, distribution transparency, and beneficiary satisfaction within an urban subdistrict context. Previous studies often focus on program management, poverty alleviation outcomes, beneficiary criteria, or general public service satisfaction, but fewer studies integrate these dimensions into a single evaluative

framework for assessing how local administrative practices shape the effectiveness of Raskin service delivery. Moreover, empirical attention to Damai Bahagia Subdistrict remains limited, even though the area provides an important case for understanding social assistance governance in a heterogeneous urban setting. This study therefore offers novelty by linking public service quality, data validity, targeting fairness, transparency, and citizen satisfaction in the evaluation of the Raskin Program at the subdistrict level. This integrated approach is important because public programs may fail not only because of poor policy design, but also because implementation systems do not adequately address local service gaps, citizen expectations, and administrative burdens (Campos & Peeters, 2022; Giest & Samuels, 2023; Schaffner et al., 2025).

Based on this gap, this study aims to evaluate public service delivery in the implementation of the Raskin Program in Damai Bahagia Subdistrict, South Balikpapan. The scope of the study is limited to four main dimensions: service procedures and mechanisms, targeting accuracy, distribution transparency, and public perception and satisfaction. The study is guided by the following research questions: How are service procedures and mechanisms implemented in the Raskin Program in Damai Bahagia Subdistrict? To what extent is beneficiary targeting perceived as accurate and fair? How transparent is the distribution process from the perspective of implementers and beneficiaries? How do community members perceive and evaluate the quality of services received? By addressing these questions, this study contributes to the literature on public service evaluation and social assistance governance by demonstrating how local administrative capacity, procedural clarity, beneficiary data management, transparency, and citizen participation jointly influence the effectiveness of food assistance delivery in an urban Indonesian context.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Public service delivery is a central concern in public administration because it determines the extent to which public policies are translated into concrete benefits for citizens. In the context of social assistance programs, service delivery is not merely an administrative activity but a governance mechanism through which the state ensures access, fairness, responsiveness, and accountability for vulnerable groups. Effective public services require clear procedures, accessible information, adequate institutional capacity, and consistent interaction between service providers and beneficiaries. Previous studies indicate that local governments often face structural and operational limitations in providing community services, particularly when resources, coordination systems, and administrative capabilities are unevenly distributed (Acharya & Scott, 2022; Sager & Gofen, 2022). Public service quality is also influenced by the capacity of institutions to reduce barriers faced by citizens when accessing public programs, especially when

administrative requirements, unclear information, or limited service channels create additional burdens for vulnerable groups (Giest & Samuels, 2023; Stenderup & Pedersen, 2025). Therefore, evaluating public service delivery in social assistance programs requires attention not only to whether assistance is distributed, but also to how procedures, data systems, administrative burdens, and institutional practices shape citizens' access to program benefits.

The implementation of social assistance programs is strongly influenced by the relationship between policy design and implementation capacity. A well-designed policy may produce limited outcomes when local institutions lack sufficient administrative readiness, intergovernmental coordination, or operational clarity. Studies on social welfare responses in Indonesia show that policy implementation is shaped by tensions between central policy direction, local autonomy, and the human agency of frontline actors (Asmorowati et al., 2022). Similarly, the success of social assistance programs during periods of economic vulnerability depends on the ability of government institutions to maintain consistent service standards while adapting to local social and administrative conditions (Rulandari et al., 2022; Saa & Patty, 2025). Implementation studies further show that service gaps often require frontline workers to improvise when formal policy instruments do not adequately match field-level realities (Campos & Peeters, 2022; Rauhaus, 2022). These findings suggest that implementation effectiveness should be understood as a product of policy design, administrative capacity, coordination quality, frontline discretion, and the responsiveness of local service providers.

In social assistance governance, the local level occupies a strategic position because it represents the point at which public policy directly encounters citizen needs. Local governments are responsible for interpreting regulations, identifying beneficiaries, organizing distribution, communicating information, and responding to complaints. However, local implementation is often affected by limited personnel, weak data systems, insufficient infrastructure, and fragmented coordination. Acharya and Scott (2022) demonstrate that local governments may possess important proximity to communities but still face institutional constraints in delivering services effectively. In a similar vein, Widiarto et al. (2025) emphasize that the relationship between central and local government authority can influence the consistency of regulatory implementation. Governance network studies also show that public service delivery often requires collaboration among government agencies, community actors, and service users to improve implementation outcomes (Ugyel, 2022; Williams et al., 2023). These perspectives are relevant to the Raskin Program because the program depends on local administrative actors to ensure that subsidized rice reaches eligible households through procedures that are clear, coordinated, accountable, and publicly trusted.

The Raskin Program, as a food assistance policy for low-income households, is closely related to broader debates on poverty alleviation, food security, and social protection reform. Food assistance programs are designed to reduce household vulnerability by improving access to basic consumption needs, particularly rice as a staple food. Rammohan and Tohari (2024) show that food-based social protection can influence household dietary outcomes when assistance mechanisms are properly targeted and accessible. In Indonesia, previous studies on Raskin and similar rice assistance programs have highlighted the importance of beneficiary criteria, management quality, and local implementation practices. Hartina Dewinta and Rahman (2025) emphasize that the evaluation of recipient criteria is essential for ensuring that rice assistance reaches eligible households. Rupaiedah et al. (2021) demonstrate that local innovation in Raskin implementation can support program adaptation, while Sarumaha et al. (2023) show that Raskin management affects community welfare outcomes. Poverty-oriented public service research in Indonesia also indicates that poverty prevention programs require service mechanisms that are administratively accessible and responsive to local community conditions (Ilato et al., 2022). These studies indicate that the effectiveness of Raskin cannot be assessed only through distribution volume, but must also be examined through targeting, service quality, administrative accessibility, and perceived fairness.

Targeting accuracy is one of the most critical dimensions of social assistance effectiveness. It refers to the capacity of implementing institutions to identify and reach households that genuinely meet eligibility criteria. Inaccurate targeting may generate inclusion errors, where non-eligible households receive assistance, and exclusion errors, where eligible households are omitted. Such errors may weaken program legitimacy, reduce distributive justice, and create dissatisfaction among community members. Mariyah and Wobcke (2025) underline the relevance of area-level features and proxy-based targeting models in identifying poverty conditions across rural, semi-urban, and urban settings. Their findings imply that beneficiary targeting must account for spatial and socioeconomic variation. In local social assistance programs, targeting accuracy is also shaped by the quality of beneficiary data, the frequency of data updating, and the involvement of local stakeholders in verification. Administrative burden literature further suggests that documentation requirements may support program integrity, but they may also reduce access when they are too complex or poorly communicated to service users (Stenderup & Pedersen, 2025). Therefore, beneficiary identification in the Raskin Program should be understood as both a technical data-management issue and a governance issue involving fairness, legitimacy, accountability, and administrative accessibility.

Transparency is another key determinant of public trust in social assistance delivery. Transparency refers to the openness of information regarding beneficiary criteria, allocation

amounts, distribution schedules, complaint mechanisms, and implementing responsibilities. Without transparency, even well-targeted programs may be perceived as unfair because citizens lack sufficient information to understand how decisions are made. Studies on open government and public accountability show that transparency can strengthen trust when information is meaningful, accessible, and connected to accountability mechanisms (Afandi et al., 2023; Sofyani et al., 2022). Moreno-Albarracín et al. (2021) further argue that transparency indicators are important for improving accountability in organizations that manage public or social responsibilities. In the context of social assistance, Geng (2024) emphasizes that transparency must be designed with a clear governance purpose rather than treated as mere information disclosure. Public information service studies also show that accessible information channels can improve citizens' ability to understand and use public programs effectively (Gao et al., 2024). Thus, transparency in the Raskin Program should include not only public announcements but also understandable procedures, accessible complaint channels, and mechanisms that allow citizens to verify whether distribution is conducted fairly.

The relationship between transparency and public support has been widely discussed in governance literature. Heinzel et al. (2025) and Hillo and Vento (2025) indicate that transparency can influence citizen support for public agencies and aid allocation processes, particularly when citizens can observe how resources are distributed and justified. However, transparency is not automatically effective when institutional responsiveness is weak. Information disclosure must be accompanied by credible follow-up mechanisms, public participation, and administrative accountability. Arthur et al. (2023) and Edlmann and Grobbelaar (2021) emphasize that stakeholder engagement and community participation can improve the effectiveness of service coverage and collaborative responses to complex social challenges. Co-production studies similarly show that citizen participation can strengthen the delivery of professional public services by incorporating user knowledge into service design and implementation (Gawron, 2023; Wang et al., 2025). Applied to the Raskin Program, these insights suggest that transparency should be integrated with participatory data verification, community consultation, and clear channels for reporting targeting errors or distribution problems.

Public service quality also depends on procedural clarity and administrative reliability. Clear procedures reduce uncertainty for citizens, guide frontline officials, and minimize opportunities for arbitrary interpretation. When service procedures are not clearly communicated, beneficiaries may experience confusion regarding eligibility, administrative requirements, distribution timing, and complaint processes. Research on administrative systems and service effectiveness suggests that procedural consistency supports institutional performance and service reliability (Nasrullah et al., 2025; Ramadhan & Ifransyah, 2025). In addition, policy

implementation studies indicate that a strong fit between policy design and implementation arrangements is necessary for achieving desired outcomes (Van Geet et al., 2021). Evidence from public service program evaluation also indicates that program failure may occur when implementation design, service delivery capacity, and user needs are poorly aligned (Schaffner et al., 2025). For the Raskin Program, procedural clarity is particularly important because food assistance is distributed to vulnerable households that may have limited access to bureaucratic information. Therefore, service procedures must be simple, consistent, publicly accessible, and supported by responsive staff.

Public perception and citizen satisfaction represent important evaluative dimensions in public service studies because they reflect how beneficiaries experience the quality and fairness of services. Satisfaction is shaped not only by the material benefit received, but also by the manner in which services are delivered. Staff attitude, responsiveness, timeliness, procedural clarity, and transparency can influence whether citizens perceive a program as legitimate and useful. Lee and Kim (2024) demonstrate that gaps may exist between objective performance indicators and citizens' subjective assessments of public service organizations. Zhao et al. (2025) similarly show that differences between objective and subjective perceptions of public service facilities have implications for planning and decision-making. In the Indonesian public service context, service quality has also been shown to influence public satisfaction, especially when citizens evaluate the reliability, responsiveness, and fairness of government programs (Nurhadian & Khoirunurrofik, 2022). These studies indicate that public service evaluation should consider both institutional performance and beneficiary experience. In the Raskin Program, this means that rice distribution may be administratively completed, but citizens may still perceive the service as ineffective when information is unclear, distribution is delayed, or targeting is considered unfair.

Trust is a crucial outcome of effective public service delivery. Public trust emerges when citizens perceive government institutions as fair, responsive, competent, and accountable. In social welfare policies, trust is particularly important because assistance programs often involve distributive decisions that directly affect community relations. Pratiwi (2025) argues that government communication plays an important role in building public trust in the implementation of social welfare policies. Sari (2023) also emphasizes that good governance contributes to the quality of public management decision-making. In line with this perspective, inclusive and equitable service delivery requires attention to sociocultural sustainability and citizen-oriented governance (Burlacu et al., 2023). Public involvement literature further indicates that service users, including underserved groups, should be engaged in the development and improvement of public services to ensure that service systems respond to real community needs (Sheldon et al., 2024). These arguments suggest that social assistance programs should not be treated as technical

distribution schemes alone. They must also be understood as trust-building mechanisms that require transparent communication, fair procedures, citizen engagement, and consistent responsiveness.

The literature also suggests that data governance is increasingly important in social assistance implementation. Beneficiary data must be accurate, regularly updated, verifiable, and responsive to changes in household socioeconomic conditions. Weak data governance can result in outdated beneficiary lists, misallocation of assistance, and disputes among citizens. Kalkar and González Alarcón (2023) emphasize that responsible data flows require mechanisms that are valuable, accessible, and accountable. Although their discussion is broader than social assistance, the principle is relevant for programs that depend on beneficiary databases. Digital public service studies also suggest that digital innovation may improve service delivery when it reduces administrative complexity and improves access to information, although technology must be adapted to local capacity and user readiness (Cai & Zhang, 2023; Nawafleh, 2022). In the Raskin Program, data validity is central to targeting accuracy because the distribution of subsidized rice depends on the reliability of household eligibility information. Participatory data updating, local verification, transparent complaint mechanisms, and appropriate digital support are therefore necessary to prevent exclusion and inclusion errors.

Institutional capacity-building is another important issue in public service delivery. Social assistance programs require frontline actors who understand program objectives, beneficiary needs, administrative standards, and ethical service principles. When officials lack training or organizational support, program implementation may depend excessively on individual discretion, which can produce inconsistent service quality. Studies on capacity-building and SDG-aligned public services show that training programs can strengthen the ability of public officials to deliver inclusive and development-oriented services (Azmat et al., 2025). This perspective is relevant to the Raskin Program because the effectiveness of local service delivery depends not only on program rules but also on the competence and responsiveness of the actors who communicate procedures, verify data, distribute assistance, and handle complaints. Strengthening institutional capacity can therefore support more consistent, transparent, and equitable food assistance services.

Based on the reviewed literature, four analytical points can be identified. First, the effectiveness of social assistance programs depends on the interaction between policy design, local administrative capacity, and frontline service delivery (Asmorowati et al., 2022; Campos & Peeters, 2022; Rulandari et al., 2022; Sager & Gofen, 2022). Second, targeting accuracy and transparency are core governance dimensions because they shape fairness, accountability, and public trust in resource distribution (Afandi et al., 2023; Geng, 2024; Mariyah & Wobcke, 2025;

Sofyani et al., 2022). Third, beneficiary satisfaction must be understood as a multidimensional assessment involving interpersonal service quality, procedural clarity, timeliness, and perceived fairness (Lee & Kim, 2024; Nurhadian & Khoirunurrofik, 2022; Pratiwi, 2025; Zhao et al., 2025). Fourth, contemporary public service improvement increasingly requires participatory governance, reduced administrative burden, digital support, and capacity-building for frontline implementers (Azmat et al., 2025; Cai & Zhang, 2023; Gawron, 2023; Giest & Samuels, 2023; Wang et al., 2025). However, previous studies have not sufficiently integrated these dimensions into a localized evaluation of Raskin service delivery in an urban subdistrict setting. This study addresses that gap by examining service procedures, targeting accuracy, distribution transparency, and public perception in the implementation of the Raskin Program in Damai Bahagia Subdistrict, South Balikpapan.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research design with a descriptive analytical approach to examine public service delivery in the implementation of the Raskin Program in Damai Bahagia Subdistrict, South Balikpapan. A qualitative design was considered appropriate because the study sought to understand service practices, institutional procedures, beneficiary experiences, and community perceptions within their natural administrative and social context. Rather than measuring program effectiveness only through statistical indicators, this approach enabled an in-depth exploration of how government officials, program implementers, community representatives, and beneficiary households interpreted the quality, fairness, transparency, and responsiveness of the services provided. Descriptive qualitative inquiry is suitable for studies that aim to produce a systematic explanation of social phenomena based on participants' meanings, experiences, and contextual realities (Furidha, 2024; Ramanadhan et al., 2021). In public service evaluation, qualitative approaches are also useful for identifying implementation gaps, service constraints, and user experiences that may not be captured adequately through administrative records alone (Martin et al., 2022; Schaffner et al., 2025).

The research was conducted in Damai Bahagia Subdistrict, South Balikpapan, Balikpapan City. This location was selected purposively because it represents an urban administrative area in which social assistance delivery is shaped by diverse socioeconomic conditions, population mobility, and varying household needs. The subdistrict context is relevant for evaluating the Raskin Program because the effectiveness of food assistance is strongly influenced by local administrative capacity, beneficiary data validity, distribution mechanisms, and community access to information. Previous studies have shown that local government capacity, institutional coordination, and administrative arrangements play an important role in determining the

implementation quality of public programs and community services (Acharya & Scott, 2022; Asmorowati et al., 2022; Sager & Gofen, 2022). Therefore, the selected site provided an appropriate empirical setting for examining how broader social assistance objectives are translated into local public service practices.

The subjects of this study consisted of actors directly involved in or affected by the implementation of the Raskin Program. Informants were selected using purposive sampling because the study required participants who possessed relevant knowledge, experience, or direct involvement in the program. The informants included five key participants representing different perspectives: a subdistrict government official, a staff member involved in social welfare or administrative services, a local program distribution actor, a community or neighborhood representative, and a beneficiary household member. The inclusion of these categories was intended to capture institutional, operational, community-level, and beneficiary perspectives. Purposive selection was based on three criteria: direct involvement in program implementation or receipt of assistance, knowledge of service procedures or distribution practices, and willingness to provide detailed information during the research process. This selection strategy was also aligned with the need to examine public service implementation from both provider and user perspectives.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews, direct observation, and documentation review. In-depth interviews were used as the primary technique because they allowed the researcher to explore informants' perceptions, experiences, and evaluations of service procedures, targeting accuracy, distribution transparency, and satisfaction with service delivery. The interviews were semi-structured and guided by an interview protocol containing open-ended questions related to service flow, information access, beneficiary data, distribution schedules, complaint mechanisms, staff responsiveness, and perceived fairness. This flexible format allowed the researcher to maintain comparability across informants while also enabling follow-up questions when important issues emerged during the interview. The use of interviews in qualitative public service research is relevant because it provides access to subjective assessments and practical experiences that may not be visible in formal administrative records (Mulisalsabilla & Rodiyah, 2025; Nevedal et al., 2021).

Direct observation was conducted to complement interview data and to understand the practical conditions of service delivery in the field. The observation focused on administrative interactions, communication between service providers and community members, the availability of service information, the clarity of procedures, the accessibility of service locations, and the general implementation environment of the Raskin Program. Observation was important because public service quality is not only expressed through official procedures but also through everyday

practices, staff behavior, information flow, and the ease with which citizens access services. The observation results were recorded in field notes and used to compare informants' statements with actual service conditions. This procedure helped strengthen the contextual interpretation of the findings and reduced reliance on interview narratives alone.

Documentation review was also carried out to obtain supporting information related to program implementation. The documents reviewed included administrative records, beneficiary lists where accessible, distribution notes, local reports, relevant regulations, service announcements, and other materials related to the Raskin Program. Documentation was used to examine whether formal procedures, beneficiary data, and distribution mechanisms corresponded with information obtained from interviews and observation. The combination of interview, observation, and documentation data enabled the study to develop a more complete understanding of program implementation. This multi-source strategy is consistent with qualitative research principles that emphasize contextual depth and evidence triangulation in examining public programs (Furidha, 2024; Mulisalsabilla & Rodyyah, 2025).

The main research instrument was the researcher, supported by interview guidelines, observation sheets, and documentation checklists. As the primary instrument, the researcher was responsible for identifying relevant information, probing emerging issues, interpreting contextual meanings, and maintaining consistency throughout the data collection process. The interview guideline was developed based on the study's four evaluation dimensions: service procedures and mechanisms, targeting accuracy, distribution transparency, and public perception and satisfaction. The observation sheet was designed to record field conditions related to procedural clarity, staff responsiveness, service accessibility, and information availability. The documentation checklist was used to organize relevant administrative and program documents. These instruments were prepared to ensure that data collection remained focused while still allowing sufficient flexibility for qualitative exploration.

Data analysis was conducted using an interactive qualitative analysis model consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction was performed by selecting, simplifying, coding, and categorizing information from interviews, observations, and documents. The coding process was guided by both deductive and inductive procedures. Deductive codes were derived from the study's analytical dimensions, namely service procedures, targeting accuracy, distribution transparency, and satisfaction. Inductive codes emerged from the field data, including unclear procedures, delayed distribution, limited information access, outdated beneficiary data, inclusion and exclusion errors, staff responsiveness, and public trust. This approach allowed the analysis to remain aligned with the research objectives while also accommodating unexpected findings from the field. Interactive qualitative analysis is widely used

to organize complex field data and to generate systematic interpretations from empirical evidence (Anisa et al., 2024; Mashami et al., 2023; Nevedal et al., 2021; Ramanadhan et al., 2021).

Data display was carried out by organizing the coded information into narrative summaries, thematic matrices, and visual representations. The thematic matrices were used to compare patterns across informants and to identify dominant issues in each evaluation dimension. The figures presented in the results section were developed from qualitative coding outputs. Word frequency visualization was used to identify frequently recurring terms in informant narratives, while thematic distribution was used to summarize coded issues related to service procedures and mechanisms. The heatmap was constructed to display the relative intensity of coded themes across five informants, with higher intensity indicating more frequent or more strongly emphasized issues in the qualitative narratives. The radar chart was used to summarize interpretive scores for public perception and satisfaction indicators, including transparency, service speed, staff attitude, procedural clarity, and overall satisfaction. These visualizations were not intended as inferential statistical measurements, but as descriptive tools to support qualitative interpretation.

To ensure data credibility and trustworthiness, this study applied source triangulation and method triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from government officials, implementation actors, community representatives, and beneficiaries. This process enabled the researcher to identify convergence and divergence among institutional and community perspectives. Method triangulation was conducted by comparing data from interviews, observations, and documents. For example, statements about distribution delays, beneficiary data validity, and information access were checked against field observations and available administrative documents. Triangulation is important in qualitative research because it strengthens credibility by ensuring that findings are not derived from a single source or method (Arthur et al., 2023; Edlmann & Grobbelaar, 2021; Furidha, 2024).

Additional steps were taken to enhance the dependability and confirmability of the research. Interview notes and coding decisions were reviewed systematically to maintain an audit trail of the analytical process. Emerging interpretations were checked against the original data to ensure that conclusions remained grounded in informants' statements and observed conditions. Where clarification was necessary, selected information was reconfirmed with relevant informants to reduce the risk of misinterpretation. The study also maintained ethical considerations by explaining the purpose of the research to informants, ensuring voluntary participation, and protecting the confidentiality of personal information. Informants were not identified by name in the analysis; instead, coded identifiers were used to preserve anonymity. These procedures were applied to ensure that the study met the ethical and methodological standards expected in qualitative public administration and public service evaluation research.

RESULTS

The findings indicate that public service delivery in the Raskin Program in Damai Bahagia Subdistrict has generally functioned as a local food assistance mechanism for low-income households, yet its implementation remains uneven across the main dimensions evaluated in this study. Three dominant empirical patterns emerged from interviews, field observation, and documentation review. First, service procedures and mechanisms were formally present but were not always communicated clearly to beneficiaries. Second, targeting accuracy and distribution transparency were constrained by weaknesses in beneficiary data validity, irregular information dissemination, and limited complaint mechanisms. Third, public satisfaction was relatively positive in relation to staff attitude and interpersonal responsiveness, but less favorable in relation to procedural clarity, service speed, and transparency. These findings were developed from qualitative coding of narratives from five informants and were supported by direct observation and available program documents. The presentation of findings follows an interactive qualitative logic in which empirical patterns are identified through data reduction, thematic display, and interpretation of recurring meanings in the data (Nevedal et al., 2021; Ramanadhan et al., 2021).

Quality of Service Procedures and Mechanisms

The first finding concerns the quality of service procedures and implementation mechanisms in the Raskin Program. Interviews show that beneficiaries generally recognized the existence of a service mechanism for rice distribution, but their understanding of the procedural flow varied substantially. Some informants stated that information about distribution was usually obtained through local officials or neighborhood representatives rather than through standardized written announcements. This indicates that the service mechanism depended heavily on informal communication channels. Although such channels helped maintain communication between officials and residents, they also created the risk of uneven information access, especially for beneficiaries who were not closely connected to local community networks. This condition reflects a practical service gap in which formal program arrangements exist but are not fully translated into accessible service information for all users (Campos & Peeters, 2022; Giest & Samuels, 2023).

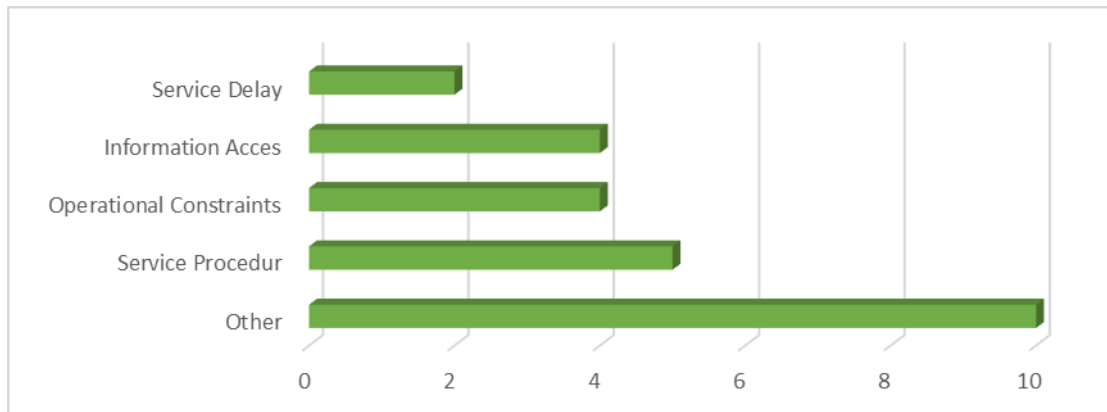


Figure 1. Thematic Distribution of Service Procedure Issues Based on Interview Coding
 Source: Data processed by the author (2026).

Figure 1 summarizes the thematic distribution of service procedure issues identified from interview coding. The figure was developed from recurring terms and coded statements related to service procedures, information access, delays, operational constraints, and other implementation issues. The frequency values represent the number of coded references in informant narratives and should be interpreted as descriptive qualitative indicators rather than statistical measurements. The most frequently appearing terms in the informants' statements included "procedure," "information," "service," "clear," and "delay." These terms show that the main concerns of informants were related to the clarity of service flow, the availability of information, and the timeliness of distribution. This pattern is consistent with public service studies that emphasize the importance of clear procedures, administrative reliability, and accessible information in improving service quality (Asamoah, 2025; Nasrullah et al., 2025; Sager & Gofen, 2022).

The thematic coding further indicates that service procedure and information access were the most dominant issues. Several informants described that the distribution process could be followed when information was delivered directly by local actors, but confusion emerged when schedules changed or when beneficiaries did not receive information at the same time. Informant I1 emphasized the importance of clearer communication regarding the stages of distribution, while Informant I2 indicated that beneficiaries often waited for confirmation from neighborhood-level actors before taking action. Field observation also suggested that written information regarding service flow, beneficiary requirements, and complaint procedures was not consistently visible in public service spaces. This finding shows that the procedure was operationally implemented but not fully institutionalized as an accessible public service standard. From a service quality perspective, inconsistent procedural communication may increase administrative burden for beneficiaries, particularly when they must rely on informal clarification to understand their entitlements and obligations (Giest & Samuels, 2023; Stenderup & Pedersen, 2025).

The issue of delay also emerged as a recurring theme, although with lower frequency than procedural clarity and information access. Informants associated delays with coordination problems, administrative preparation, and uncertainty about distribution timing. From the beneficiary perspective, delays were not interpreted merely as technical inconvenience but as a factor that affected household planning, particularly because low-income households rely on predictable food assistance. This finding suggests that timeliness is an important component of service effectiveness in the Raskin Program. It also indicates that service quality depends not only on the availability of assistance but also on whether the assistance is delivered through mechanisms that are predictable, understandable, and responsive to community needs (Gridley et al., 2022; Ramadhan & Ifransyah, 2025).

Overall, the results for this dimension show that the strongest weakness in service procedures lies in communication consistency and procedural visibility. The program was not perceived as entirely inaccessible, but beneficiaries did not always receive the same level of information regarding distribution schedules, service stages, or administrative requirements. This condition implies a gap between formal service mechanisms and the way these mechanisms are experienced by citizens. In practical terms, the service system still relies heavily on interpersonal explanation by officials and community intermediaries rather than on a standardized, transparent, and publicly available service flow.

Targeting Accuracy and Distribution Transparency

The second finding relates to targeting accuracy and distribution transparency. The data show that beneficiary targeting remained one of the most sensitive issues in the implementation of the Raskin Program. Informants acknowledged that the program had reached many low-income households, but they also identified problems related to outdated beneficiary data, households that no longer met eligibility criteria, and vulnerable households that were not included in the recipient list. This indicates that the beneficiary database had not fully reflected recent socioeconomic changes in the community. In social assistance governance, such weaknesses may result in inclusion and exclusion errors, which can reduce perceived fairness and weaken program legitimacy (Hartina Dewinta & Rahman, 2025; Mariyah & Wobcke, 2025; Rammohan & Tohari, 2024).

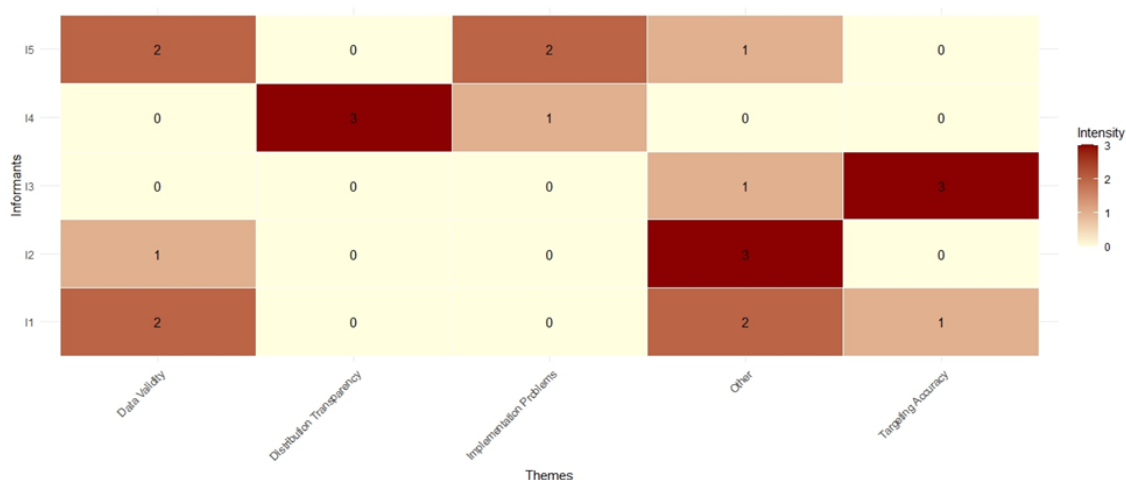


Figure 2. Heatmap of Targeting Accuracy and Distribution Transparency Issues
Source: Data processed by the author (2026).

Figure 2 presents a heatmap of issues related to targeting accuracy and distribution transparency across five informants. The heatmap was constructed from qualitative coding of interview narratives. The coding intensity represents the degree to which each issue appeared in each informant’s account, with higher intensity indicating more frequent or more strongly emphasized statements. The values should not be interpreted as inferential statistics but as a descriptive representation of thematic emphasis. The coded themes include data validity, distribution transparency, implementation issues, targeting accuracy, and other contextual issues.

The heatmap shows that data validity was strongly emphasized by Informants I1 and I5. These informants highlighted that the beneficiary list did not always correspond to current household conditions. Some recipients were perceived as no longer meeting the criteria, while several households considered economically vulnerable were not registered as beneficiaries. This problem suggests that the data updating process was not sufficiently regular or participatory. Data validity is central to targeting accuracy because social assistance distribution depends on the reliability of household eligibility information. Weak data governance can distort the distribution of benefits and produce perceptions of unfairness among residents (Kalkar & González Alarcón, 2023; Mariyah & Wobcke, 2025). The finding also indicates that documentation and verification procedures must balance program integrity with accessibility, because excessive or unclear administrative requirements may unintentionally limit citizens’ access to assistance (Stenderup & Pedersen, 2025).

Targeting accuracy was most strongly emphasized by Informant I3. This informant’s narrative suggested concern over whether assistance was consistently received by households with the greatest need. The finding indicates that community perceptions of fairness are shaped not only by formal eligibility rules but also by visible comparisons among households in the same

neighborhood. When residents observe discrepancies between economic conditions and beneficiary status, they may question the credibility of the program. This finding reinforces the importance of local verification mechanisms and community participation in beneficiary data updating. Participatory verification can help reduce errors because local actors often possess contextual knowledge about household vulnerability that may not be captured in formal administrative data (Arthur et al., 2023; Edlmann & Grobbelaar, 2021). Co-production in public services can also strengthen service accuracy when citizens and community representatives are meaningfully involved in identifying needs and monitoring program implementation (Gawron, 2023; Wang et al., 2025).

Distribution transparency was most strongly emphasized by Informant I4. The main issues identified were limited information regarding distribution schedules, unclear communication of beneficiary criteria, and insufficient awareness of complaint channels. Although some information was conveyed through local networks, it was not always perceived as open, timely, or equally accessible. This finding indicates that transparency in the Raskin Program was partial rather than fully institutionalized. Transparency requires more than the disclosure of information; it also requires that information be understandable, accessible, and connected to accountability mechanisms (Afandi et al., 2023; Geng, 2024; Moreno-Albarracín et al., 2021; Sofyani et al., 2022). The importance of information access is also supported by studies showing that public information services can improve users' ability to understand, use, and evaluate government services (Gao et al., 2024).

Implementation issues also appeared among Informants I4 and I5. These issues included distribution delays, coordination constraints, and limited administrative support. Such problems affected the overall perception of service effectiveness because beneficiaries evaluated the program not only from the perspective of whether assistance was received, but also from the perspective of how reliably and fairly it was delivered. The findings suggest that the Raskin Program in Damai Bahagia Subdistrict faced a combination of data, coordination, and communication challenges. These challenges are consistent with broader studies showing that public program implementation depends on institutional capacity, policy design fit, and coordination among implementing actors (Acharya & Scott, 2022; Asmorowati et al., 2022; Van Geet et al., 2021). They also align with public service evaluation research indicating that program performance may decline when service delivery capacity and user needs are not sufficiently aligned (Schaffner et al., 2025).

Taken together, the findings in this dimension demonstrate that targeting accuracy and transparency were mutually connected. Weak data validity affected perceptions of targeting accuracy, while limited transparency made it more difficult for citizens to understand or contest

distribution decisions. The presence of complaint mechanisms was also not sufficiently clear to all informants. As a result, beneficiaries tended to rely on informal communication with local actors when seeking clarification. This pattern shows that the distribution system requires stronger data updating, clearer information disclosure, and more accessible accountability channels.

Public Perception and Satisfaction Level

The third finding concerns public perception and satisfaction with Raskin service delivery. The interviews indicate that beneficiaries generally appreciated the attitude and responsiveness of service staff. Informants described staff as relatively friendly, cooperative, and willing to provide assistance when contacted directly. This interpersonal aspect contributed positively to public satisfaction, particularly because beneficiaries often interacted with officials or neighborhood actors during the distribution process. However, positive perceptions of staff attitude did not fully eliminate dissatisfaction with systemic aspects of service delivery, especially transparency, speed, and procedural clarity.

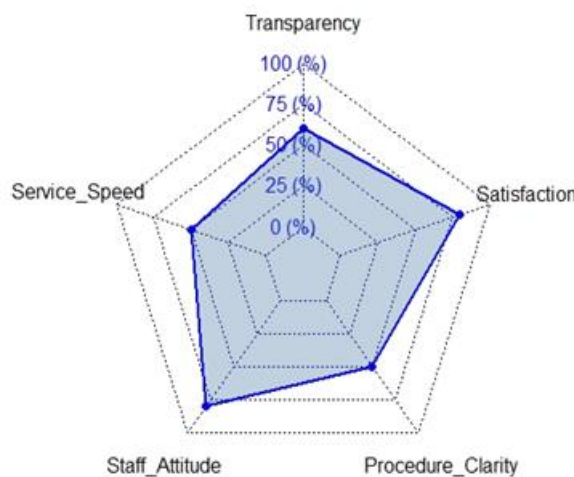


Figure 3. Public Perception and Satisfaction Profile
 Source: Data processed by the author (2026).

Figure 3 presents a radar chart summarizing public perception and satisfaction indicators. The chart includes five indicators: transparency, service speed, staff attitude, procedural clarity, and overall satisfaction. The scores range from one to three and were derived from qualitative coding of informant narratives. A score of one indicates weak or negative perception, a score of two indicates moderate or mixed perception, and a score of three indicates relatively strong or positive perception. These values are interpretive qualitative scores and are not intended as statistical measurements. They provide a visual summary of the relative strength of each indicator based on interview coding.

The radar chart shows that staff attitude and overall satisfaction received higher scores than the other indicators. This suggests that beneficiaries' positive evaluation of the program was influenced primarily by interpersonal service quality. Staff responsiveness helped reduce uncertainty and provided beneficiaries with a sense of being served respectfully. This finding is consistent with public service studies showing that citizen satisfaction is shaped not only by formal service outputs but also by the quality of interaction between service providers and users (Lee & Kim, 2024; Zhao et al., 2025). In the Indonesian public service context, perceived service quality has also been found to influence public satisfaction, especially when users evaluate reliability, responsiveness, and fairness in service provision (Nurhadian & Khoirunurrofik, 2022). In the Raskin Program, interpersonal responsiveness functioned as an important compensating factor in a service system that still had procedural and transparency limitations.

By contrast, transparency, service speed, and procedural clarity were positioned at a moderate level. Informants did not describe these dimensions as entirely poor, but they indicated that improvements were still needed. Moderate transparency reflected limited access to information regarding schedules, quota allocation, and complaint mechanisms. Moderate service speed reflected delays or uncertainty in distribution timing. Moderate procedural clarity reflected beneficiaries' incomplete understanding of service flow and administrative requirements. These findings indicate that the main challenge of the program lies not in staff behavior but in the institutionalization of service standards and information systems. Public satisfaction can therefore be considered relatively positive at the interpersonal level but incomplete at the systemic level.

The asymmetrical pattern of the radar chart further indicates an imbalance in service quality. The stronger scores for staff attitude and satisfaction suggest that direct interactions between officials and beneficiaries were relatively favorable. However, the lower scores for transparency, service speed, and procedural clarity show that the institutional mechanisms supporting service delivery were less developed. This pattern is important because reliance on individual staff responsiveness may produce short-term satisfaction but does not guarantee sustainable service quality. A public service system requires procedures, data systems, and transparency mechanisms that remain consistent regardless of individual personnel performance (Burlacu et al., 2023; Pratiwi, 2025; Sari, 2023). Therefore, the positive interpersonal dimension identified in this study should be strengthened through institutional procedures that support consistent, equitable, and accountable service delivery.

Overall, the results show that the Raskin Program in Damai Bahagia Subdistrict has provided tangible assistance and maintained generally positive interpersonal relations with beneficiaries. However, several structural weaknesses continue to affect service effectiveness. The most prominent issues are unclear procedural communication, uneven information access,

distribution delays, outdated beneficiary data, risks of targeting inaccuracy, and limited transparency in complaint mechanisms. These findings demonstrate that the effectiveness of the program cannot be assessed solely through whether rice assistance was distributed. It must also be evaluated through the quality of the service process, the fairness of beneficiary selection, the openness of distribution information, and the satisfaction of citizens who depend on the program.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that the effectiveness of the Raskin Program in Damai Bahagia Subdistrict is shaped not only by the formal existence of food assistance policy but also by the quality of local public service delivery through which the policy is implemented. The main contribution of this study lies in showing that service procedures, targeting accuracy, distribution transparency, and beneficiary satisfaction are interdependent dimensions of social assistance governance. The program has generally reached low-income households and has been supported by relatively positive interpersonal relations between officials and beneficiaries. However, the findings also reveal that unclear procedures, limited information access, delayed distribution, outdated beneficiary data, and uneven transparency continue to constrain service effectiveness. This confirms that social assistance outcomes are determined by the interaction between policy design, administrative capacity, frontline implementation, and citizen experience (Costa & Andreaus, 2021; Rulandari et al., 2022; Saa & Patty, 2025).

The first important issue concerns the gap between formal service mechanisms and beneficiaries' understanding of those mechanisms. Figure 1 shows that procedural clarity, information access, and distribution delay were dominant themes in informant narratives. This finding indicates that the Raskin Program was not implemented in the absence of procedures, but that the procedures were not sufficiently visible, standardized, or consistently communicated to beneficiaries. From the perspective of public service quality, this condition reflects a weakness in procedural accessibility. Public services cannot be considered effective merely because administrative steps exist internally; they must also be understandable and usable by citizens. This is consistent with studies emphasizing that institutional arrangements and implementation procedures strongly influence whether policies can be translated into practical benefits for the public (Sager & Gofen, 2022; Van Geet et al., 2021). It also aligns with research on administrative burden, which shows that unclear procedures and complex documentation requirements may reduce access to public benefits, particularly for vulnerable groups (Giest & Samuels, 2023; Stenderup & Pedersen, 2025).

This finding extends previous arguments on local government capacity by showing that procedural weakness is not only caused by the absence of rules but also by limited communication

infrastructure, inconsistent procedural socialization, and dependence on informal service channels. Acharya and Scott (2022) note that local governments often face capability constraints when delivering community services, particularly when service responsibilities exceed available administrative resources. Similarly, Asmorowati et al. (2022) emphasize that local implementation of social welfare policies depends on policy capacity, coordination, and human agency. The present study supports these arguments by demonstrating that frontline actors may remain responsive at the interpersonal level, but service quality may still be weakened when institutional procedures are not sufficiently formalized for public use. In developing-country settings, frontline workers often improvise to address public service gaps when formal systems are unable to respond adequately to practical community needs (Campos & Peeters, 2022). Therefore, improving the Raskin Program requires not only encouraging staff responsiveness but also strengthening the administrative system that structures citizen access to services.

The second major issue concerns targeting accuracy and data validity. Figure 2 indicates that data validity and targeting accuracy were among the most prominent concerns raised by informants. This finding is critical because social assistance programs depend on the credibility of beneficiary identification. When recipient lists do not reflect current socioeconomic conditions, the program may generate inclusion and exclusion errors. Inclusion errors occur when households that no longer meet eligibility criteria continue to receive assistance, while exclusion errors occur when eligible households are not included in the program. Such errors do not merely reduce technical efficiency; they also weaken the moral legitimacy of the program because community members evaluate fairness by comparing visible household conditions with beneficiary status. Previous studies on rice assistance and poverty targeting similarly emphasize that recipient criteria and data accuracy are fundamental to program effectiveness (Hartina Dewinta & Rahman, 2025; Mariyah & Wobcke, 2025; Rammohan & Tohari, 2024).

The centrality of beneficiary data also shows that targeting accuracy should be understood as a governance issue rather than a purely technical matter. Beneficiary lists are not neutral administrative documents; they represent distributive decisions that influence public perceptions of justice, trust, and government credibility. Kalkar and González Alarcón (2023) argue that responsible data flows must be valuable, accessible, and accountable. Applied to the Raskin Program, this means that beneficiary data should be regularly updated, locally verified, and supported by clear mechanisms through which residents can report changes in household conditions. The findings suggest that the data updating process in Damai Bahagia Subdistrict has not fully captured socioeconomic mobility, household vulnerability, and local perceptions of need. Participatory verification involving local officials, community representatives, and beneficiary groups is therefore necessary to reduce data errors and improve social legitimacy.

This argument is supported by studies on co-production, which show that citizen participation can strengthen public service delivery by incorporating user knowledge into service design, monitoring, and correction mechanisms (Gawron, 2023; Wang et al., 2025).

The third issue concerns transparency in distribution. The findings show that information about distribution schedules, beneficiary criteria, rice allocation, and complaint channels was not always equally accessible to all residents. This confirms the argument that transparency is more than the publication of information. Transparency becomes meaningful only when information is understandable, timely, accessible, and connected to accountability mechanisms. Studies on open government and public accountability show that transparency contributes to public trust when citizens can use information to evaluate government decisions and when institutions are responsive to public concerns (Afandi et al., 2023; Moreno-Albarracín et al., 2021; Sofyani et al., 2022). Geng (2024) further emphasizes that transparency should be designed according to its governance purpose. In the Raskin Program, the purpose of transparency is not simply to inform beneficiaries that rice will be distributed, but to enable citizens to understand who is eligible, when assistance will be distributed, how much assistance should be received, and how complaints can be submitted. Public information services are therefore central to reducing uncertainty and strengthening citizens' ability to access and monitor government programs (Gao et al., 2024).

The findings also suggest that limited transparency interacts with weaknesses in targeting accuracy. When beneficiary data are outdated and distribution information is unclear, residents may interpret the program as unfair, even if implementers do not intend to act unfairly. This aligns with studies showing that transparency can influence citizen support for public agencies and aid allocation processes, particularly when distribution decisions are visible and justifiable (Heinzel et al., 2025; Hillo & Vento, 2025). However, transparency alone is insufficient if it is not linked to participation, complaint handling, and institutional responsiveness. Arthur et al. (2023) and Edlmann and Grobbelaar (2021) emphasize that stakeholder engagement can improve service coverage and strengthen collaborative responses to complex social problems. In addition, governance network studies suggest that public service delivery is more effective when multiple actors coordinate across institutional boundaries and share responsibility for service outcomes (Ugyel, 2022; Williams et al., 2023). For the Raskin Program, this implies the need for community-based data verification forums, publicly accessible beneficiary criteria, clear distribution notices, and complaint mechanisms that are easy for vulnerable households to use.

The fourth issue concerns beneficiary satisfaction and public perception. Figure 3 shows that staff attitude and overall satisfaction received stronger evaluations than transparency, service speed, and procedural clarity. This pattern indicates that the interpersonal dimension of service delivery is one of the strengths of the Raskin Program in Damai Bahagia Subdistrict. Beneficiaries

perceived staff as relatively cooperative and responsive, which helped maintain trust and reduce dissatisfaction in direct interactions. This finding is consistent with public service literature showing that citizen satisfaction is shaped not only by formal outputs but also by subjective experiences of interaction, respect, responsiveness, and perceived care (Lee & Kim, 2024; Zhao et al., 2025). In the Indonesian public service context, perceived service quality has also been shown to influence public satisfaction, particularly when citizens evaluate reliability, responsiveness, and fairness in service provision (Nurhadian & Khoirunurrofik, 2022). In this study, positive staff attitude functioned as a form of social capital that supported service acceptance, even though systemic weaknesses remained.

Nevertheless, the relatively positive perception of staff should not obscure the need for institutional reform. Satisfaction that depends heavily on individual staff behavior is fragile because it may change when personnel change or when informal relationships are disrupted. A sustainable public service system requires institutionalized standards, transparent information systems, predictable schedules, and clear accountability structures. Burlacu et al. (2023) argue that inclusive and equitable public services require sociocultural sensitivity as well as institutional resilience. Pratiwi (2025) also emphasizes that government communication plays an important role in building public trust in social welfare policy implementation. The findings of this study support these perspectives by showing that interpersonal responsiveness is valuable but insufficient without reliable administrative systems. Thus, the Raskin Program should move from personality-based service quality toward system-based service quality, supported by standard procedures, accessible information, and consistent institutional accountability.

The relationship among Figures 1, 2, and 3 provides a coherent explanation of the overall service condition. Figure 1 shows that beneficiaries were concerned with procedure, information, and delay. Figure 2 shows that data validity and targeting accuracy were central problems in distribution governance. Figure 3 shows that satisfaction was stronger in interpersonal aspects than in systemic aspects. Collectively, these findings indicate that the program's main weakness lies not in the absence of implementation but in the uneven quality of implementation. The Raskin Program functions as a social assistance instrument, but its effectiveness is moderated by procedural clarity, data governance, transparency, and institutional reliability. This supports the broader argument that public program performance should be evaluated through both administrative processes and citizen experiences (Costa & Andreaus, 2021; Lee & Kim, 2024; Sari, 2023). It also resonates with public service evaluation studies showing that program failure often occurs when service design, implementation capacity, and user needs are poorly aligned (Schaffner et al., 2025).

Compared with previous Raskin and rice assistance studies, this research confirms the importance of beneficiary criteria, distribution management, and local implementation in determining program outcomes. Hartina Dewinta and Rahman (2025) highlight the need to evaluate recipient criteria in rice assistance programs, while Sarumaha et al. (2023) show that Raskin management influences community welfare. Rupaiedah et al. (2021) also demonstrate that local innovation can improve Raskin implementation. The present study extends these findings by emphasizing that public service quality must be integrated into the evaluation of Raskin implementation. The issue is not only whether the program improves welfare, but also whether the service process is transparent, procedurally clear, accurately targeted, and trusted by beneficiaries. This integrated perspective strengthens the analytical link between social assistance policy and public administration.

Several practical implications can be drawn from these findings. First, the local government should develop a clear and publicly visible service standard for Raskin implementation, including information on eligibility, administrative requirements, distribution schedules, rice allocation, and complaint procedures. Second, beneficiary data should be updated regularly through participatory mechanisms involving subdistrict officials, neighborhood representatives, and community members. Third, transparency should be strengthened through multiple communication channels, including public notice boards, community meetings, direct announcements through neighborhood structures, and, where feasible, digital information platforms. Studies on e-government and smart city initiatives suggest that digital systems can improve public service delivery when they reduce information gaps and simplify access, although technological adoption must be aligned with local capacity and user readiness (Cai & Zhang, 2023; Nawafleh, 2022). Fourth, complaint mechanisms should be formalized so that beneficiaries can report data inaccuracies, distribution delays, or perceived unfairness without depending solely on informal access to officials. Fifth, staff responsiveness should be preserved through training, service ethics reinforcement, and institutional capacity-building. Capacity-building for public officials is essential for improving inclusive and development-oriented service delivery (Azmat et al., 2025).

The findings also have theoretical implications for public service and social assistance governance. They show that effectiveness in food assistance programs is multidimensional and cannot be reduced to distribution completion. A program may reach beneficiaries and still remain administratively weak if procedures are unclear, data are outdated, and transparency is uneven. Conversely, positive interpersonal service can strengthen satisfaction but cannot fully compensate for systemic weaknesses. Therefore, future evaluations of social assistance should integrate service quality, targeting accuracy, data governance, transparency, administrative burden, citizen participation, and public satisfaction into a single analytical framework. Such integration is

particularly important in urban subdistricts, where poverty is dynamic, household mobility is high, and administrative data may quickly become outdated.

For institutional improvement, Damai Bahagia Subdistrict requires a shift from reactive service delivery to preventive and participatory service governance. Reactive service delivery responds to problems after beneficiaries complain, whereas preventive governance reduces problems by clarifying procedures, updating data, disclosing information, and establishing accountability channels before disputes arise. Participatory governance can also reduce the distance between formal administrative data and local knowledge of household vulnerability. By combining accurate data management, transparent distribution procedures, responsive frontline service, and inclusive community participation, the Raskin Program can better fulfill its function as a food assistance mechanism that supports equity, trust, and accountable public service delivery.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the implementation of the Raskin Program in Damai Bahagia Subdistrict, South Balikpapan, has functioned as an important food assistance mechanism for supporting low-income households, although its effectiveness as a form of public service delivery remains not fully optimal. The findings show that beneficiaries generally perceived staff attitude and interpersonal responsiveness positively, which contributed to relatively favorable levels of public satisfaction. However, several structural weaknesses continue to constrain service performance, particularly unclear service procedures, uneven access to information, distribution delays, limited transparency, and insufficient updating of beneficiary data. These weaknesses create risks of inclusion and exclusion errors and may reduce public perceptions of fairness and trust.

The study contributes to public service and social assistance governance literature by demonstrating that the effectiveness of food assistance programs depends not only on policy design or distribution completion, but also on the quality of local administrative capacity, procedural clarity, data governance, transparency, and accountability mechanisms. Practically, the findings imply the need for regular beneficiary data verification, clearer service standards, accessible complaint channels, and stronger participatory monitoring at the subdistrict level. This study is limited by its qualitative scope and focus on a single urban subdistrict. Future research should conduct comparative studies across different subdistricts or municipalities and employ mixed-method approaches to measure beneficiary satisfaction, targeting accuracy, and the potential role of digital data systems in improving social assistance governance.

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