

Toward Welfare-Driven Regional Autonomy: Strengthening Public Services in Indonesia

Hariyanto⁽¹⁾

Faculty of Sharia, Universitas Islam Negeri Profesor Kiai Haji Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto, Indonesia.

Email: hariyanto@uinsaizu.ac.id

Surya Perdana^{(2)*}

Faculty of Law, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara, Indonesia.

Email: suryaperdana@umsu.ac.id

Mabarroh Azizah⁽³⁾

Faculty of Law, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara, Indonesia.

Email: mabarroh@uinsaizu.ac.id

Tedi Sudrajat⁽⁴⁾

Faculty of Law, Universitas Jenderal Soedirman, Indonesia.

Email: tedi.unsoed@gmail.com

Muhammad Mutawalli Mukhlis⁽⁵⁾

Faculty of Sharia and Islamic Business Economics, Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri Majene, Indonesia.

Email: muhammadmutawalli@stainmajene.ac.id

Hajar Salamah Salsabila Hariz⁽⁶⁾

Faculty of Law, Universitas Jenderal Soedirman, Indonesia.

Email: hajar.hariz@mhs.unsoed.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Regional autonomy in Indonesia is meant to improve people's welfare by delivering better public services. In practice, however, implementation is still hindered by overlapping and fragmented regulations, weak coordination among institutions, uneven regional capacity, and limited readiness to provide digital public services. This study examines how regional autonomy policies shape public service delivery, highlights normative legal obstacles that affect welfare-oriented services, and proposes a more future-ready policy model. Using a normative juridical approach, the research applies statutory, historical, conceptual, and comparative methods. Legal materials are analyzed through qualitative legal reasoning, while Human Development Index (HDI) data are used only to provide context about differences in regional welfare. The findings suggest that Indonesia's public service regulation tends to follow a recurring pattern of "dispersed–codified–fragmented." While Law No. 25 of 2009 provides codification for public service standards, subsequent sector-specific regulations often re-separate related issues into different legal regimes. This fragmentation, in turn, undermines service quality standards, weakens complaint and accountability pathways, blurs institutional

responsibilities, and complicates digital-service governance. The study's novelty lies in designing a Dynamic, Innovative, Collaborative, and Participatory (DIC-P) model that connects regional autonomy, public service regulation, and welfare outcomes within a single normative framework. The model emphasizes e-service delivery, structured public service innovation, inter-institutional collaboration, and citizen participation that is not only encouraged but also enforceable. Overall, the research concludes that welfare-oriented regional autonomy requires more than devolving authority. It also depends on coherent legal norms, integrated institutions, regulation that reflects varying regional capabilities, and accountable, reliable service delivery.

Keywords: Digital Governance, Human Development Index, Public Services, Regional Autonomy, Welfare State.

I. INTRODUCTION

Granting the widest possible autonomy to regions is intended to speed up the realization of community welfare by improving public services, empowering local communities, and strengthening public participation. In today's globalized environment, broad regional autonomy is expected to help regions boost their competitiveness—while still upholding democratic principles, equality, justice, and respect for the unique needs and characteristics of the region within Indonesia's unitary state system (Abas et al., 2026; Hariyanto, Yeyeng, et al., 2025).

In this sense, regional autonomy reflects the idea of a welfare state. It is part of an effort to achieve one of the state's core objectives: welfare for citizens (Mukhlis et al., 2024). To date, many studies have explored how regional autonomy relates to public services and community welfare, drawing on different approaches—both normative and empirical.

Even though research on decentralization and public service performance has grown, several key gaps still remain. First, legal-policy angle is still limited. Many studies focus on administrative decentralization, fiscal policy, or the results of public service. By contrast, the legal policy side of regional autonomy—especially how it shapes in public services has received less attention. Second, weak connection to welfare indicators. Prior work seldom links the way public service regulations are structured to measurable welfare outcomes, such as the Human Development Index (HDI). Third, fragmentation and institutional design need deeper explanation. There is also a lack of analysis that clarifies how regulatory fragmentation and institutional arrangements under regional autonomy influence whether public services can effectively function as a welfare policy tool (Hariyanto, Mukhlis, et al., 2025). Because of these gaps, existing literature still lacks a systematic normative analysis that brings together regional autonomy's legal policy, public service governance, and welfare outcomes in a coherent way.

Recent studies help fill parts of this gap, but they also make the issue clearer: public service performance under decentralization is strongly shaped by local government capacity—not just financially, but also analytically, operationally, and politically. In Indonesia, research has shown that this capacity influences how well services are delivered. That means decentralization should not be assessed only by looking at whether authority is officially transferred. It also needs to be evaluated by whether local institutions are able to turn that authority into real service results (Setiawan et al., 2022). Similar concerns appear in studies of basic public services. Even when responsibilities are shared through concurrent governmental affairs, local-level

problems still persist—especially regarding infrastructure readiness, innovation, competitiveness, and the way governance policies are implemented (Faisal & Azhari, 2021). So, a legal-policy analysis of regional autonomy cannot be done in isolation. It should be linked to how capable local governments are, and to whether public service rules are actually enforceable in practice—not only on papers.

Based on these gaps, this study has two main goals. First, it examines normative constraints in how regional autonomy is implemented in public services—especially the kinds of legal or regulatory limitations that end up reducing service effectiveness and weakening welfare-focused results. Second, it proposes a more adaptive regional autonomy policy model for public services—one that connects legal norms with local institutional capacity, e-services, innovation, collaboration, and citizen participation.

What makes this study new is how it brings together three elements into one normative framework: regional autonomy’s legal policy, public service governance, and welfare outcomes. The Human Development Index (HDI) is used only as background context to describe differences in regional welfare conditions—not as evidence to prove causality. The key contributions of this article are: identifying a repeating regulatory pattern in Indonesian public service rules “dispersed–codified–fragmented” and offering a Dynamic, Innovative, Collaborative, and Participatory (DIC-P) model for regional autonomy in public services. Conceptually, the model highlights that welfare-oriented regional autonomy requires more than simply transferring authority. It also depends on clear and consistent service standards, well-integrated institutions, digital readiness, structured collaboration across stakeholders, and citizen participation that can actually be enforced. Normatively, this study provides a framework to strengthen public services so they can function more effectively as a real instrument for improving community welfare.

So, the challenges of regional autonomy should not be seen as political or administrative issues. They are also, and perhaps primarily legal-policy problems—because they shape well local governments are able to deliver welfare-oriented public services. Decentralization can improve governance and service performance only if transferring authority goes hand in hand with: clear accountability, institutional capacity, and consistent service standards (Faguet, 2014). But in Indonesian context, decentralization has often resulted in fragmented local governance and uneven institutional capacity, which then makes public service quality differ widely from one region to another (Hadiz, 2004). This is important for this study’s analytical framework. Regional autonomy is not measured only by how authority is divided. It is also measured by whether local governments can turn legal authority into public services that are accessible, accountable, and fair.

In public services, the issues most commonly complained about by the public include: complicated requirements, slow processing times, lack of transparency, bureaucratic red tape, insufficient facilities, high costs, services not matching expectation, and illegal fees (Hariyanto et al., 2024).

II. RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a normative legal approach, drawing on statutory, historical, conceptual, and comparative methods. It looks at the legal rules governing regional autonomy and public services, focusing especially on Law No. 25 of 2009, Law No. 23 of 2014, and relevant sector regulations. In

particular, it examines how service standards are set, who is responsible for institutions and delivery, how people can submit complaints, how digital services are handled, and how government responsibilities are divided. The study also traces how public service regulation has developed over time, checks whether it aligns with welfare-state values and citizens' social rights, and compares Indonesia's approach with Singapore, the Netherlands, England, and Georgia. The goal is to draw lessons from designing a welfare-oriented model of regional autonomy for Indonesia.

The research uses primary legal sources, secondary legal sources, and additional non-legal materials, including HDI data from BPS for 2015–2022. However, the HDI is used only as supporting context to describe regional welfare conditions—it does not change the study's normative juridical nature.

Legal materials are examined using qualitative legal reasoning through three main steps. First, legal mapping. The study first identifies where public service rules are found—both in general regulations and in sector-specific ones—so the full spread of the norms can be early seen. Second, systematic and teleological interpretation. Next, it checks whether the way the regulations handle key issues—such as service standards, institutional responsibilities, complaint channels, digital services, and cooperation in public services—fits the welfare-focused goals of regional autonomy. Third, normative synthesis. Finally, the study brings the findings to build a proposed *ius constituendum* (a future legal framework). It connects the gaps found in existing regulations with a new approach based on a dynamic, innovative, collaborative, and participatory model.

III. RESEARCH RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

A. Legal Policy on Regional Autonomy in Public Services for Community Welfare

This section examines Indonesia's legal policy on regional autonomy in the field of public services across two periods: before and after the enactment of Law No. 25 of 2009 on Public Services. The purpose of this division is to show how regulation initially moved from separate, sector-by-sector rules into a more codified public service framework, and then later became fragmented again due to subsequent sectoral regulations.

1. *Before the Public Service Law (Law No. 25 of 2009)*

Before Law No. 25 of 2009 was introduced, public services under regional autonomy were regulated in a partial and scattered way across various sectoral laws and regulations. As a result, the system had not yet formed a single, coherent policy model that was explicitly oriented toward the welfare of society (Dwiyanto, 2021).

In the early years of implementing regional autonomy, local governments often understood decentralization mainly as the transfer of administrative and fiscal authority. This transfer was not consistently followed by the development of clear public service policies aimed at improving people's quality of life and welfare (Ningsih et al., 2023).

Because of this, public services in the regions tended to focus more on procedural compliance and bureaucratic requirements, rather than on service outcomes that directly matter to citizens. Consequently, regional autonomy had not fully operated as an instrument of welfare-based policy (Dwiyanto, 2021).

In short, before the Public Service Law existed, regional autonomy in Indonesia was not supported by a systematic and measurable public service policy model that could clearly ensure and fulfill citizens' basic rights—rights that should be a key indicator of welfare.

2. *After the Enactment of the Public Service Law*

After Law No. 25 of 2009 concerning Public Services was enacted, public service regulation entered a more codified stage. The law set out general rules on key matters such as service standards, citizens' rights, information systems, complaint mechanisms, supervision, and sanctions. However, later legislative developments show that these general rules were not kept as one unified framework. Instead, many of them were distributed into different sectoral laws and implementing regulations. Because of this, the period after 2009 should not be seen only as "more regulation being added." It is better understood as a shift where codified public service norms were then re-split into sector-specific regimes—including areas such as regional government, population administration, disability rights, digital licensing, fiscal relations, and public service malls.

In practice, public service rules appear across several different legal instruments. As noted by (Mukhlis et al., 2025), public service provisions are often stated or referenced in various regulations. The fragmentation can be seen more clearly when comparing how similar issues are regulated in different ways. The fragmentation can be seen more clearly when comparing how similar issues are regulated in different ways—for example, whether service standards, citizens' rights, complaint mechanisms, institutional responsibility, and accessibility use consistent or conflicting approaches.

Fragmentation after Law No. 25 of 2009 means local governments end up dealing with many different legal references when setting things like standards, complaint mechanisms, access obligations, and procedures for digital service. The main issue is not simply that there are many regulations. The real problem is the lack of an integrated system that connects the following things in a coherent way: citizens' public service rights, what regional authority is

responsible for, the region's fiscal capacity, institutional responsibilities and how they translate into actual service outcomes.

To show how this dispersed–codified–fragmented pattern looks like, the paper includes Table 1, which compares similar public service provisions across several Indonesian laws.

Table 1.
Normative Comparison of Public Service Provisions Across Indonesian Laws

Normative issue	General norm in Law No. 25/2009	Sectoral / related norm	Normative inconsistency or fragmentation
Service standards	Articles 20–21 require providers to formulate and apply service standards by considering provider capacity, community needs, environmental conditions, and minimum components such as requirements, procedures, completion time, cost, facilities, competence, complaint handling, service guarantees, and evaluation.	Law No. 23/2014 places basic services within mandatory government affairs and uses Minimum Service Standards as an instrument to secure constitutional rights in regional government administration.	Law No. 25/2009 frames service standards as a general obligation of all providers, whereas Law No. 23/2014 narrows the operational focus to basic services under regional government affairs. This creates a dual standard-setting logic: one based on general public service obligations and another based on decentralized governmental affairs.
Citizens' rights and accessibility	Article 18 recognizes citizens' rights to know, supervise, complain, and obtain quality services; Article 30 regulates tiered services based on equality, openness, and affordability.	Law No. 8/2016 specifically requires accessibility and reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities in public services.	The Public Service Law recognizes equality and special treatment for vulnerable groups in general terms, while the Disability Law formulates a more specific accessibility-based obligation. The fragmentation lies not in direct contradiction, but in the absence of an integrated standard requiring every regional service unit to translate disability accommodation into its

			general public service standards.
Complaint mechanism	Articles 36–37 require providers to provide complaint facilities, appoint competent officers, process complaints within a certain time limit, and formulate complaint mechanisms. Article 54 attaches administrative sanctions to several violations.	Sectoral services such as population administration and licensing operate under their own procedural regimes and institutional channels.	The Public Service Law establishes a general complaint architecture, but sectoral regimes often develop separate complaint pathways. This may create uncertainty for citizens regarding whether complaints should be submitted through the general public service mechanism, sectoral administrative channels, Ombudsman supervision, or regional internal supervision.
Institutional responsibility	Law No. 25/2009 regulates public service providers broadly, including state institutions, corporations, independent bodies, and other legal entities providing public services.	Law No. 23/2014 divides governmental affairs between central, provincial, and regency/city governments and requires adequate fiscal capacity for delegated affairs.	The Public Service Law focuses on the provider–citizen relationship, while the Regional Government Law focuses on the distribution of governmental affairs and fiscal capacity. The two logics are not fully synchronized: citizens experience services as rights, but local governments implement them through authority and budget structures that vary by region.
Digital and integrated services	Article 23 recognizes electronic and non-electronic public service information systems, but Law No. 25/2009 does not provide a comprehensive chapter on electronic-based public services.	Government Regulation No. 24/2018 on OSS and Presidential Regulation No. 89/2021 on Public Service Malls regulate integrated and digital service models in specific contexts.	The digitalization of public services is regulated through implementing and sectoral instruments rather than being integrated into the main Public Service Law. This produces a fragmented legal basis for electronic services,

especially when regional capacity, internet infrastructure, and human resources differ substantially across provinces.

Source: Author's Analysis Based on Indonesian Public Service Legislation, 2026.

The fragmentation does not always appear as an obvious “contradiction” written in the text. Instead, it shows up as normative dispersion, different regulatory logics, and incomplete synchronization between general public service rules and sector-specific governance arrangements. Law No. 25 of 2009 frames public service as a rights-based relationship between citizens and service providers. Law No. 23 of 2014 then reshapes public services through the lens of governmental affairs distribution, minimum service standards, and regional fiscal capacity. After that, sectoral laws add more specific obligations, such as population administration standards, disability accommodations, data protection, and digital licensing. Taken together, this creates the dispersed–codified–fragmented pattern: public service rules were scattered before 2009, then became more “codified” through Law No. 25 of 2009, but were later broken up again by sectoral regulations that address similar issues without a single unified mechanism to coordinate them.

Regulatory fragmentation tends to cause three major problems: higher administrative transaction costs, weaker accountability, and wider inequality between regions. That is why regulatory coherence matters. Without it, regional autonomy can end up producing “compliance in form” rather than real improvements—such as better access to services, faster processing, and fairer service outcomes for all citizens.

This fragmentation also connects to how regional regulations are supervised. Recent legal scholarship notes that after the Constitutional Court removed the Government’s power to annul regional regulations, oversight became more dependent on judicial review by the Supreme Court. That model is reactive—it waits for a challenge from parties who have an interest (Sukardi & Wardana, 2024). In welfare-oriented public services, this is significant. If regional regulations are incoherent or poorly designed, they may continue to affect service delivery until someone challenges them in court. So, regulatory coherence should not be understood as “harmonizing rules when drafting.” It also needs to function as a preventive mechanism to reduce the chance of problematic regulations being used and evaluative mechanism to ensure regional legal products stay aligned with service standards and citizens’ welfare rights.

3. Community Welfare after the 2014 Regional Government Law Until 2022

To see whether regional autonomy is actually delivering community welfare, the country often uses the Human Development Index (HDI) as a benchmark. Based on BPS data (2015–2022), most provinces are still at a medium to high HDI range. but there are still noticeable gaps between regions, and the overall provincial HDI remains below the national HDI.

Table 2.
Human Development Index (HDI) in Indonesia 2015–2022

Year	HDI
2015	69.55
2016	70.18
2017	70.81
2018	71.39
2019	71.92
2020	71.94
2021	72.29
2022	72.91

Source: (BPS, 2025)

To avoid treating HDI only as a single national “summary number,” the provincial data are important because they reveal the inequality in welfare outcomes under regional autonomy. In 2022, for example, DKI Jakarta had the highest HDI (82.77), followed by DI Yogyakarta (80.65). Meanwhile, Papua recorded one of the lowest HDI scores (61.39). This gap matters for the legal-policy discussion because regional autonomy gives local governments major responsibility for public service delivery. But the capacities needed to carry out those responsibilities—such as fiscal resources, institutions, human resources, and digital capability—are not evenly distributed across regions.

Table 3.
Provincial Human Development Index Disparity in Indonesia, 2022

Province	HDI 2022	Position in the argument
DKI Jakarta	82.77	Highest provincial HDI; reflects stronger institutional, fiscal, and service capacity.
DI Yogyakarta	80.65	High HDI; shows stronger welfare performance outside Jakarta.
Papua	61.39	Lowest/among the lowest HDI; reflects persistent regional welfare disparity.
Indonesia	73.77	National benchmark; useful only as an aggregate reference.

Source: (BPS, 2022; BPS Papua, 2022)

It is also important to clarify that the study does not use HDI disparity to prove a direct cause-and-effect link between regulatory fragmentation and welfare outcomes. Instead, HDI disparity is used as contextual evidence—showing that regional autonomy is implemented in an environment with unequal capacities.

Overall, HDI in Indonesia shows a gradual improvement from 2015 to 2022. However, the improvements are still not as fast or as strong as one might expect if welfare gains were automatically produced by decentralization. More importantly, the disparities across provinces remain substantial—many eastern provinces are still in the medium HDI category. From a normative point of view, whether regional autonomy supports welfare depends on something more than transferring authority. Delegated responsibility will only translate into better welfare outcomes if the following elements work together: coherent service standards, clear institutional responsibility, adequate fiscal capacity, and effective complaint and accountability mechanisms. So, HDI differences should be read not as direct proof of one single causal story, but as a sign that welfare-oriented regional autonomy needs stronger alignment between public service norms and local implementation capacity.

In conclusion, these disparities suggest that welfare-oriented regional autonomy requires a capacity-sensitive regulatory structure. Public service obligations should be supported by enforceable minimum standards, targeted capacity-building for lagging regions, and accountability based on performance—especially outcomes connected to citizens' welfare.

B. Normative Constraints in Implementing regional Autonomy Policies in Public Services

The main normative issue is that Law No. 23 of 2014, which governs decentralization and regional government affairs, is not fully aligned with Law No. 25 of 2009, which frames public services as a rights-based relationship between citizens and service providers (Hariyanto et al., 2023).

Implementing regional autonomy for public services, there are three key normative constraints: public service administration, cooperation and institutional integration, and human-resource quality (Salomo & Rahmayanti, 2023). These constraints suggest that the problem is not simply that there are too few rules. The deeper problem is a mismatch between legal authority, institutional capacity, and how policies are actually carried out.

1. Normative Constraints in Public Service Administration

The first constraint relates to how public services are administered—especially how service standards, service charters, and public service information systems are formulated, published, and put into practice under

Law No. 25 of 2009. Law No. 25 of 2009 (Articles 20 and 21) requires public service providers to design and implement service standards by considering institutional capacity, community needs, and environmental conditions. At minimum, the standards must include details such as the legal basis, requirements and procedures, time limits, costs, service products, facilities, staff/implementer competence, internal supervision, complaint handling, service and security guarantees, and performance evaluation. On paper, these provisions are fairly complete. But the legal problem is that they treat these duties mainly as general administrative obligations, without building a stronger link between national standards, regional ability to implement them, and sector-specific service procedures. As a result, service standards may exist officially, but they may not be translated consistently into real operational procedures—particularly in regions with limited fiscal resources, institutions, and qualified human-resources.

The same weakness appears in the regulation of the service charter. Article 22 requires providers to prepare and publish a service charter as a written commitment to deliver services according to established standards. Ideally, it should serve as an accountability tool—turning service-standards into a public promise that citizens can monitor. However, the law does not clearly state what happens if a service charter is missing, only symbolic, or not properly connected to complaint handling and sanction mechanisms. So, the normative gap is not just “people may not comply.” It is also about how limited the charter’s practical legal force becomes as an accountability instrument in regional public services.

A similar issue exists in Article 23, which regulates public service information systems. The law calls for a national information system and requires providers to manage service information—whether electronic or non-electronic—including provider profiles, standards, charters, complaint management, and performance assessments. Yet the regulation is not detailed enough on things like interoperability between systems, minimum digital service capacity, updating obligations, and what consequences apply to local governments that do not provide accessible and accurate information. This creates a gap between legal recognition of information systems and the real administrative capacity needed to run them effectively (Rismana & Hariyanto, 2021). It is also supported by the Ombudsman’s compliance assessments, which evaluate service delivery using indicators such as service standards, facilities, staff competence, and complaint management. This points to the same conclusion: administrative compliance under Law No. 25 of 2009 remains a core issue in public service governance. So, the normative constraints here come from the weak operational enforceability of service standards, service charters, and public service information systems within decentralized governance.

The administrative constraints become even more complicated for digital public services. Digitalization changes the public-service “encounter” between citizens and public officials. It does not only move processes from offline to online—it also affects the skills required from both users and officials, the length and scope of service interactions, and how institutions design the service relationship (Lindgren et al., 2019). Indonesian research also shows gaps in municipal digital public services, especially in peripheral local governments—particularly in technology infrastructure, financial resources, human resources, and public digital readiness (Wargadinata & Tendean, 2024). Therefore, electronic services should not be regulated only as “information systems.” They should be treated as rights-based service mechanisms, supported by assisted access, interoperability, clear data updating responsibilities, and safeguards for digital inclusion.

2. Normative Constraints in Public Services Cooperation and Institutions

Public Service Malls (MPP) are meant to make public services better, easier to access, and more efficient. But in practice, the rules around MPPs still treat “integration” mainly as an administrative arrangement, not as a strong, binding system of inter-agency cooperation. In other words, the framework does not clearly set out things like minimum integration standards, who funds what, how complaints are handled across agencies, and what accountability applies if integration does not work.

Comparing MPP coverage with the overall number of government areas, the mismatch is clear. Indonesia has 34 provinces, 416 regencies, and 98 cities, but only 152 MPP units have been established. This means MPPs have not yet been distributed in a way that matches regional service needs. At the institutional level, many regional service structures still rely heavily on the One-Stop Integrated Service (PTSP), and in some places the model is still at the ‘first generation’ stage—One-Stop Service (PTSA). This matters because it shows that the integration agenda behind MPPs still faces real challenges in many local governments, including institutional transformation and shifting to a more integrated service model.

The limited number of MPPs also signals that integrated services are not reaching all regions equally. If the expectation is one MPP per province, regency, and city, Indonesia would require 548 MPPs, but only 152 exist. This creates a normative-institutional constraint: citizens in regions without MPPs still have to rely on fragmented service channels, rather than benefitting from unified, integrated access.

The lack of sanctions is important, but the deeper problem is the absence of an enforceable link between the obligation to build integrated services and measurable improvements in service delivery. Presidential Regulation No. 89

of 2021, for example, does not sufficiently regulate minimum integration standards, institutional accountability, complaint coordination, interoperability between service outlets, and consequences for regions that fail to provide integrated access. Because of this, regional governments may comply on paper with the idea of integration, but citizens may still experience services that are not faster, not simpler, and not truly accountable. As a result, cooperation between institutions tends to depend on local political will and administrative initiative, rather than on binding legal standards.

Therefore, the normative constraint in cooperation and institutions can be summarized like this: the legal framework recognizes MPPS as tools for integrated service delivery, but it has not yet turned them into a mandatory, accountable, and capacity-sensitive cooperation system. To ensure regional autonomy supports welfare-oriented public services, MPP regulations need to specify clear requirements such as clear division of authority, shared funding responsibilities, minimum integration standards, interoperable digital “back-office” systems, integrated complaint handling, and performance-based evaluation. Without these, MPPs may end up as symbolic institutional—improving administrative appearance but not significantly improving accessibility, timeliness, accountability, and fairness for citizens.

Recent evaluations also support this concern. Studies note that MPPs are intended as an expansion of DPMPSTP and as an integrated service model, but their real performance depends on service integration, organizational capacity, citizen satisfaction, and measurable outcomes, not just on whether a physical facility exists (Rahayu et al., 2022). Research further shows that strong public satisfaction relates to service quality and transformative services—nor merely the existence of an integrated venue. This reinforces the idea that institutional integration must be followed by service quality, responsiveness, and user-oriented improvement (Daniel & Mansur, 2020; Sari et al., 2025). Therefore, the legal design of MPPs should include minimum integration standards, enforceable inter-agency accountability, digital back-office integration, and periodic evaluation based on user satisfaction and complaint resolution.

3. Normative Constraints in Human Resource Quality

Licensing through OSS (Online Single Submission) should be understood within Indonesia’s broader risk-based business licensing framework. Even though OSS is centralized and handles electronic licensing, its real effectiveness still depends on what happens at the regional level—especially administrative capacity, internet access, the availability of assistance, and institutional coordination.

In theory, these regulations aim to simplify business licensing. But in practice, many regions still lack the capacity to manage OSS properly—

particularly human resources, and also the office facilities and infrastructure, which are often insufficient in parts of Indonesia, especially in the eastern regions.

OSS also uses a commitment-based approach. Under Government Regulation No. 24 of 2018, a business license can be issued through OSS even before all substantive requirements are fully completed. The business actors is then required to fulfill the remaining requirements later through the “commitment” mechanism. This can speed up formal licensing, but it also creates legal and administrative problems when businesses do not fully understand how commitments work, businesses fail to complete the required commitments, or businesses struggle to access and use the OSS system. Assegaf et al. (2019), for example, found that OSS implementation in DPMPSTP Central Java faced obstacles such as limited business actors’ understanding of the system, failure to complete commitments, and internet access difficulties—again, especially for regions like eastern Indonesia. This suggests the core normative problem is not only a shortage of trained officers. It is also a mismatch between a “digital-by-default” design and uneven realities on the ground, including the differences in administrative literacy, infrastructure, and institutional readiness.

Because OSS implementation still runs on issues related to user understanding, commitment completion, and internet access, OSS regulation needs to be supported by stronger and more capacity-aware policy elements, such as assisted-service obligations, regional capacity standards, post-licensing supervision, and differentiated capacity-building, focusing more support on regions with weaker digital infrastructure.

C. Comparative Lessons for Indonesian Regional Autonomy Policy

This section pulls out practical lessons from Singapore, the Netherlands, England, and Georgia, with a focus on four themes: digital governance, collaborative innovation, citizen-centric service design, and one-stop service delivery.

Table 4.
Comparative Governance Models of Public Services

Aspect	Indonesia	Singapore	Netherlands	England	Georgia
Governance orientation	Decentralized regional autonomy	Centralized digital governance	Collaborative governance	Citizen-centric digital services	Integrated public service halls
Institutional integration	Fragmented regulations	Whole-of-government services	Multi-stakeholder collaboration	Government Digital Service (GDS)	One-stop service system

Digital service system	Developing e-government	Advanced digital public services	Expanding digital service innovation	Integrated digital platforms	Integrated digital-physical services
Policy objective	Administrative decentralization	Efficient citizen-oriented services	Inclusive service innovation	User-focused service design	Institutional efficiency and accessibility

Source: Compiled and analyzed by the author based on comparative legal and policy review (2026).

Table 4 is not meant to compare countries in a descriptive “each one is best at X” way. Instead, it maps policy functions that Indonesia may be able to borrow and adapt. Singapore represents the function of digital coordination, the Netherlands represents collaborative innovation, England represents user-centered digital standardization, and Georgia represents institutional integration for one-stop services. These functions connect directly to the problems identified in Indonesia: fragmented service standards, weak institutional integration, unequal digital and human-resource capacity, and limited citizen participation. So, each country is “relevant” not because Indonesia should copy its whole system, but because its approach aligns with specific constraints Indonesia faces. For example: Singapore matters for interoperable electronic services; The Netherlands matters for structured multi-stakeholder collaboration; England matters for service standards shaped around citizens and improvement driven by complaints; and Georgia matters for strengthening Public Service Malls as integrated systems. In other words, the comparative approach avoids treating these examples as a ready-made catalog of best practices. It uses them as a guide to identify which elements can be selectively adapted into Indonesia’s decentralized governance.

More recent public service research design also supports the importance of citizen-centered digital service design. Digital public services should be understood from a user experience and service ecosystem perspective—because service value emerges from interactions among citizens, service providers, supporting actors, and the institutional rules around them (Trischler & Trischler, 2022). That means lessons from England and Singapore should not be reduced to “adopt digital platforms.” For Indonesia, the key is to design digital services that are accessible, easy to understand, interoperable, and supported by non-digital assistance for citizens who face digital literacy or infrastructure barriers. If these elements are adapted to Indonesia’s decentralized structure and unequal regional capacity, they support the proposed Dynamic, Innovative, Collaborative, and Participatory model.

1. Singapore and the Netherlands: Centralized Digital Governance and Collaborative Innovation

Singapore offers a model where societal welfare is the main goal, supported through strong coordination of digital-based services. The government uses e-government as a policy tool to improve access, efficiency, and service quality — so citizens can receive state services quickly and transparently (Mansawan & Saiba, 2025).

However, digitization should not be seen only as “making bureaucratic faster.” It also changes how citizens and government interact. Effective digital services require user-oriented design, institutional coordination, and digital inclusion. Digital service literature shows that digitalization changes the skills citizens and officials need, and it reshapes the “public service encounters.” Service design emphasizes citizen-centered digital services depend on user experience and service ecosystem (Lindgren et al., 2019; Trischler & Trischler, 2022).

The Netherlands approaches public service delivery as welfare-oriented, but it emphasizes collaboration. The Dutch government encourages public service innovation by involving government, academics, industrial, and the community through multi-stakeholder collaboration frameworks. The aim is to ensure service policies are not only administrative, but also responsive to citizen needs (Vries et al., 2015).

This kind of collaboration can strengthen the government’s ability to develop inclusive and sustainable digital public services. Over time, this affects access to services and can support broader improvement in social welfare (Ansell & Gash, 2008).

The key takeaway for Indonesia is selective adaptation, not institutional imitation. Singapore’s model is attractive because it shows the benefits of strong coordination, interoperable platforms, and integrated data governance. But Indonesia cannot simply replicate Singapore’s centralized structure. Indonesia’s public services operate through provinces, regencies, and cities with different fiscal and administrative capacities. What Indonesia can transfer is not centralization itself, but the creation of binding national digital service standards, minimum interoperability requirements, and central support for regions with weaker capacity. The Netherlands’ collaborative model fits well with the DICP framework because it supports innovation through interaction among government, academia, industry, and society. Still, collaboration will only improve public services if roles, accountability, funding, and performance indicators are clearly regulated — otherwise it may become symbolic and fail to solve fragmented service delivery.

2. Georgia and England: One-Stop Service Integration and Citizen-Centric Digital Design

Georgia's experience suggests that integrating public services at the institutional level can genuinely support community welfare. Through the establishment of the Public Service Hall, Georgia brought together various central and local government services into a single integrated system. As a result, citizens experience services that are faster, simpler, and easier to access (World Bank, 2022).

Importantly, this reform also appears to affect something beyond procedures: public trust in government increased, the business climate improved, and that—according to the same report—feeds into broader improvements in economic welfare for communities (World Bank, 2022).

England, meanwhile, offers a different emphasis: improving community welfare through citizen-centric digital services. The key lesson from England's digital service reform is not just "build a digital institution," but standardize digital services around user experience. For Indonesia, the transferable idea is that digital public services should be designed to be easy to use and understand, accessible, and supported by coordination across agencies—while still providing assisted access for citizens who may have limited digital ability (Lindgren et al., 2019; Trischler & Trischler, 2022; Wargadinata & Tendean, 2024).

This approach reflects a broader view in service design: when public services are built around user experience and supported by a strong institutional framework, service quality improves—and the impact can reach welfare outcomes in a measurable way (Margetts & Dunleavy, 2013).

Georgia and England can still offer Indonesia useful—but not complete—lessons. Georgia's Public Service Hall is relevant to Indonesia's Public Service Mall agenda because it shows how bringing services together in one place can make procedures simpler and lower costs for citizens. But it should not be treated as "just build another office." Whether the concept can work in Indonesia depends on things like how widely services are covered, whether funding is sustainable, whether front-office are properly trained, and whether back-office systems are digitally connected. Without these conditions, Public Service Malls could end up looking like formal buildings that do not actually deliver truly integrated services. England's Government Digital Service (GDS) model is also relevant because it puts user experience, shared service standards, and coordination across agencies at the heart of reform. Still, England's experience shows that digital-first services need strong supporting policies—especially for people who lack access or digital skills. That means offline options, help channels, and targeted digital inclusion support. For Indonesia, this suggests digital services should not replace regional access. Instead, they

should strengthen it through assisted digital services, local service points, and baseline digital infrastructure standards.

Brom the broader comparison, the relevance of the four foreign models for Indonesia boils down to four transferable elements. First, Singapore highlights how dynamic e-services can work when supported by national digital standards, interoperability, and central capacity-building. Second, the Netherlands emphasizes innovation through structured, multi-stakeholder collaboration. Third, England contributes a citizen-focused and participatory approach—especially user experience, accessibility, and service improvement driven by complaints. Fourth, Georgia provides a model of institutional integration through one-stop service delivery, which directly informs the idea of Public Service Malls in Indonesia. Together, these lessons become the analytical foundation for the Dynamic, Innovative, Collaborative, and Participatory model discussed next. However, Indonesia’s decentralized governance means each element must be adapted to local context. Digitalization requires minimum infrastructure and assisted access; innovation needs room for regulatory experimentation and performance incentives; collaboration must be supported by clear accountability and funding arrangements; and participation requires feedback mechanisms that are enforceable—not just symbolic. If these conditions are missing, borrowing foreign models may lead to reform that looks better on paper, but does not improve everyday welfare outcomes citizens care about.

D. Regional Autonomy Policies in Public Services for Future Community Welfare

This section proposed the DICP as a practical and normative framework to address three key challenges facing regional public services: service standards and information systems that are not yet well implemented, weak integration across institutions, and uneven capacity in human resources and digital infrastructure. The DICP model includes four main components: dynamic electronic-based services, innovative regional public services, collaborative service governance, and active citizen participation.

Table 5.
Linkage Between Normative Constraints and the DICP Model

Normative constraints identified in Section B	Relevant DICP element	Proposed implementation mechanism	Measurable indicators
Weak operational enforceability of service standards, service charters,	Dynamic electronic-based services and	Establish mandatory electronic public service standards, interoperability	Availability of updated online service standards; percentage of services connected

complaint mechanisms, and public service information systems under Law No. 25 of 2009	participatory service governance	requirements, periodic data updating obligations, and integrated complaint-handling channels linked to service charters	to integrated complaint systems; response time for complaints; publication of service charter compliance reports
Limited institutional integration in Public Service Malls and unclear cooperation mechanisms among service providers	Collaborative public service governance	Strengthen Public Service Malls as integrated service nodes supported by clear division of authority, shared budget responsibility, service-outlet obligations, and digital back-office integration	Number of integrated services in each MPP; number of agencies connected to MPP; service completion time; user satisfaction score; proportion of regions using existing public assets for MPP infrastructure
Unequal human-resource capacity and digital infrastructure in OSS and electronic services, especially in regions with weaker administrative capacity	Dynamic and innovative public service capacity	Require regional PTSP offices to provide assistance desks, technical guidance, digital literacy support, and periodic evaluation of commitment fulfillment in OSS-based licensing	Number of trained service officers; availability of assisted digital service desks; completion rate of OSS commitments; number of failed or incomplete applications due to digital-access problems
Public service innovation remains partial and depends heavily on local leadership commitment	Innovative regional public services	Require each region to formulate public service innovation plans based on local needs, vulnerable-group accessibility, service simplification, and measurable welfare-oriented outcomes	Number of innovations adopted into regional planning documents; service simplification rate; accessibility improvement for vulnerable groups; linkage between innovation programs and minimum service standards
Citizen participation is formally recognized but not sufficiently linked to service design, monitoring, and accountability	Participatory citizen charter	Strengthen citizen charters as binding public commitments by requiring consultation, publication of rights and obligations, complaint feedback loops, and annual service-performance evaluation involving citizens	Number of public consultations; publication of citizen charter documents; complaint resolution rate; citizen satisfaction index; corrective actions taken after public evaluation

Source: *Constructed by the author based on normative findings and model-development analysis*

Before explaining the proposed approach to regional autonomy policies in public services, the discussion first outlines the current condition of public services in Indonesia. This is followed by a proposed *ius constituendum* (the ideal legal direction) for strengthening the public service framework, as presented in Table 6.

Table 6.
Proposed *Ius Constituendum* for Strengthening the Public Service Law

Aspect	Current normative gap	Proposed substance of future regulation
Electronic-Based Services	Law No. 25 of 2009 recognizes public service information systems, but it does not comprehensively regulate electronic-based public services, interoperability, minimum digital capacity, data updating, or assisted digital services	A new chapter should regulate that every public service provider is obliged to provide electronic-based services that are accessible, interoperable, regularly updated, and integrated with complaint-handling mechanisms. The chapter should also require assisted digital service facilities for citizens who lack internet access or digital literacy
Public Services Innovation	Public service innovation is not expressly formulated as a binding obligation within the Public Service Law	A new provision should require regional governments to formulate public service innovation programs based on local needs, service simplification, vulnerable-group accessibility, and measurable welfare-oriented outcomes. Innovation should be integrated into regional planning and evaluated periodically
Cooperation in the implementation of public services	Cooperation in public service delivery remains limited and is not sufficiently linked to institutional integration, funding responsibility, and accountability	A new chapter should regulate cooperation among central government, local governments, state-owned enterprises, regional-owned enterprises, private actors, universities, communities, and the media. Public Service Malls should be regulated not merely as buildings, but as integrated

		service systems supported by shared standards, digital back-office integration, and clear responsibility among participating institutions
Community participation	Public participation is recognized, but it is not sufficiently connected to binding citizen charters, service monitoring, and corrective action	The Public Service Law should strengthen citizen charters by requiring service providers to involve citizens in formulating service standards, publish rights and obligations of service users and providers, provide accessible complaint mechanisms, and report corrective actions based on public evaluation

Source: Developed and synthesized by the author based on normative findings and future regulatory design analysis.

To ensure these reforms remain effective in the future, the next-stage regulations should also explicitly include personal data protection and independent oversight. This is important because electronic public services increasingly depend on population data, identity verification, and data sharing across institutions. Recent work in administrative law highlights that protecting population data requires stronger supervisory authority, since digital transformation can increase the risk of data leakage and misuse (Kusworo et al., 2022). Therefore, electronic-based public services should be supported by minimum data protection standards, clear rules on authority between data controllers and users, clear complaint and remedy mechanisms for data misuse, and independent supervision to ensure accountability.

The proposed reform should be presented as *ius constituendum*, not just a broad policy aspiration. To make the revision of the Public Service Law effective, it should at least include four normative clusters. First, electronic-based public services need binding rules covering interoperability, data accuracy, assisted digital access, and links to complaint and dispute-resolution mechanisms. Second, public service innovation should become a regional obligation—grounded in local needs, ensuring access for vulnerable groups, simplifying services, and focusing on welfare outcomes that can be measured. Third, cooperation in service delivery should be expanded into a legally structured collaboration model that can involve government, private actors, universities, communities, and the media, with clear accountability and funding arrangements. Fourth, citizen participation should be strengthened through an enforceable citizen charter that ties together consultation, service

standards, complaint handling, and annual performance evaluation. Together, these provisions would make the DICP model more operational by giving each element a clear legal foundation, an institutional mechanism, and measurable indicator.

Below are suggested core formulations that could be included as future amendment.

Article X — Electronic-Based Public Services

- a) Every public service provider must provide electronic-based public services that are accessible, reliable, interoperable, and integrated with public service information systems and complaint-handling mechanisms.
- b) Electronic-based public services must, at minimum, include information on service requirements, procedures, completion time, costs, service products, officer competence, complaint channels, and service-performance information.
- c) Central and local governments must provide assisted digital service facilities for citizens who face barriers in internet access, disability access, digital literacy, or geographical accessibility.
- d) Further rules on interoperability standards, data updating, cybersecurity, and assisted digital services shall be regulated through government regulation.

Article Y — Public Service Innovation

- a) Regional governments must develop public service innovation based on local needs, service simplification, accessibility for vulnerable group, and improvement in welfare-oriented service outcomes.
- b) Innovation must be included in regional planning and budgeting documents and evaluated periodically through measurable indicators.
- c) The central government must provide guidance, incentives, and capacity-building support for regions with limited fiscal, institutional, and digital capacity.

Article Z — Collaborative Public Service Delivery

- a) Public services may be delivered through cooperation involving multiple actors, such as central and local governments, state-owned and region-owned enterprises, private entities, universities, civil society organizations, communities, and mass media.
- b) This cooperation must be based on written agreements that clearly regulate who has authority to do what, funding responsibilities, accountability, data sharing, service standards, and performance evaluation.
- c) Public Service Malls should be developed as integrated service systems, not just physical buildings. They should be supported by digital back-

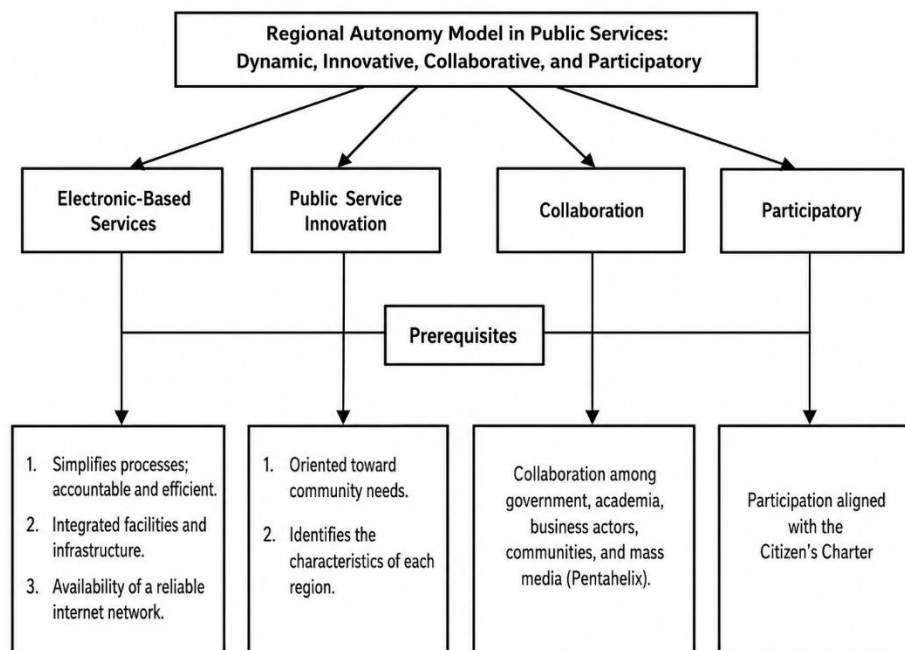
office integration and by clear division of responsibility among participating institutions.

Article AA — Citizen Charter and Public Participation

- a) Public service providers must prepare and publish a citizen charter. The charter should be a binding public commitment that includes service standards, citizens' rights and the responsibilities of both users and providers, complaint mechanisms, and service guarantees.
- b) Citizen charters must be drafted through public consultation and reviewed periodically based on complaint data, user satisfaction, and service-performance evaluation.
- c) If a provider fails to formulate, publish, or implement the citizen charter, that should count as an administrative violation, subject to corrective actions and sanctions according to applicable laws.

Based on the analysis above, this article proposes a future model for regional autonomy aimed at achieving welfare-oriented public services.

Figure 1.
Regional Autonomy Model in Public Services



Source: Developed by the author based on normative legal analysis and comparative public service governance review.

The novelty of the proposed approach is the DICP framework—a regional autonomy model built around four governance elements: dynamic, innovative, collaborative, and participatory governance.

Figure 1 shows how the DICP model links to Indonesia's key current problems—such as fragmented standards, weak institutional integration, unequal digital capacity, and limited citizen participation—and turns them into concrete reform directions. the goal is to improve accessibility, service quality, accountability, and equity in public services.

In the DICP model, electronic-based services, innovation, collaboration, and participation are meant to work together as complementary policy instruments, not as separate ideas. To keep the model from remaining purely conceptual, each element needs clear indicators, institutional requirements, and implementation safeguards. For example, the “dynamic electronic” component can be measured through the availability of service standards online, interoperability between regional and national systems, regularly updated service information, and assisted access for citizens who face digital barriers. This requires minimum digital infrastructure, trained service officers, solid data-governance protocols, and budget support (Wibisono et al., 2026). The innovative component can be assessed by how many regional innovations are adopted into regional planning documents, whether procedural steps are reduced, service completion time improves, and vulnerable groups gain better access—supported by regulatory flexibility, committed leadership, incentives, and evaluation mechanisms. Similarly, the collaborative element can be measured by the number of agencies and non-government actors involved in integrated services, how clearly cooperation agreements are defined, whether shared funding mechanisms exist, and how performance accountability is enforced. The participatory component can be evaluated through the existence of citizen charters, the frequency of public consultation, complaint-resolution rates, and whether corrective actions are taken based on citizen feedback. Participation should also be connected to broader access-to-justice and rights-protection systems. A recent study on the transfer of consumer dispute settlement authority (after Law No. 23 of 2014) suggests that shifting authority from regency/city governments to provincial governments can weaken citizens' access to justice when users must travel to more distant institutions (Jannani et al., 2024). Even though the study focuses on consumer disputes, the lesson is relevant here: any regional autonomy reform—especially transfers, integrations, or digitalization of service authority—should be assessed for its impact on accessibility, affordability, complaint effectiveness, and protection of vulnerable users. This means the model should require accessible information, inclusive consultation forums, complaint channels that genuinely work, and administrative consequences for ignoring public input.

Digitalization, innovation, collaboration, and participation work best when they are treated as one connected package, not separate forms. Digitalization can improve access and transparency only if supported by adequate

infrastructure and the public's readiness to use it. Innovation becomes valuable when it genuinely simplifies procedures and matches local needs. Collaboration strengthens government capacity only when rules on accountability and funding are clearly. Participation gains legitimacy when citizens' feedback leads to real follow-up—such as action and performance evaluation (Pratama, 2019; Setiawan et al., 2022; Wargadinata & Tendean, 2024). Putting these four together is therefore necessary to make welfare-oriented regional autonomy work in practice.

This integration is also a response to weaknesses identified earlier. Digitalization helps fix fragmented information and weak access. Innovation helps address the problems of standard procedures that do not fit diverse local conditions. Collaboration helps overcome limited institutional capacity of local governments. Participation helps address the weak enforcement of service charters and complaint mechanisms. Importantly, the literature supports this view. Public-sector innovation is not only creating new programs—it can also mean changing services, processes, governance arrangements, and even how the service idea is framed to create better public value (Vries et al., 2015). Likewise, co-production research emphasizes that citizens and communities actually help create public value when their involvement is linked to outcomes they care about—and when public agencies respond seriously to that input (Bovaird & Loeffler, 2012). That is why the DICP model is stronger academically: each component is tied to a specific governance problem and a specific reform instrument, so the logic is traceable—not just conceptual.

Electronic-based services are often seen as delivering the biggest early benefits—greater efficiency, more convenience, and easier access for the public to receive government services. With this approach, public service processes are expected to become more accountable and run more systematically. To make that possible, regions need strong supporting facilities and infrastructure, along with reliable internet connectivity.

The second element is public service innovation. Each region is encouraged to develop breakthroughs to improve service quality, but the innovation should be grounded in community needs and tailored to local characteristics—not copied blindly from elsewhere. The third element is collaboration. For services to work well, government alone cannot do it; this model emphasizes collaboration among multiple stakeholders, including the government, academics, business actors, the community, and the mass media, often referred to the pentahelix approach. In this setup, those different groups commit to the same goals and coordinate their roles to strengthen public service outcomes.

Finally, participation in this model uses the Citizen Charter approach. In the simple terms, a citizen charter is a service commitment that puts people at the center. It shifts public service delivery away from being driven mainly by

the providers' interests, and instead makes community rights and obligations the reference point. Importantly, the citizen charter should not be treated as the same thing as digitalization. Rather, it works as an accountability tool: it turns service standards into a public agreement between service providers and citizens. In the DICP model, citizens use charter to understand their rights and duties, monitor whether standards are met, file complaints, and push for corrective action when services fall short. Digital platforms may support this process, but they do not replace the core needs for consultation, transparency, effective complaint handling, and enforceable administrative accountability.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Regional autonomy in public services should be viewed as a legal and policy tool to achieve welfare-oriented service delivery, not simply as a transfer of authority to local governments. This study also finds that Indonesian public service regulation tends to follow a recurring pattern—large dispersed—codified—fragmented—which creates real implementation problems. Those challenges stem from differences in fiscal capacity across regions, gaps in institutional coordination, uneven human-resource readiness, and varying levels of digital infrastructure. At the heart of the issue is weak alignment between legal rules, the capability of institutions, and the practical mechanisms used to deliver services. This shows up in weak enforcement of service standards and complaint systems, limited integration across institutions, and uneven readiness to run electronic-based services. Lessons from countries such as Singapore, the Netherlands, England, and Georgia suggest that reforms work better when they emphasize digital interoperability, collaborative innovation, citizen-centered design, and integrated one-stop services. However, Indonesia should adapt these models wholesale; it needs to adapt them selectively through a Dynamic, Innovative, Collaborative, and Participatory (DICP) framework. Because this is a normative juridical study, its conclusions are mainly legal and conceptual in nature. Future empirical research is needed to test the DICP model in real regional settings and to examine how it actually affects welfare outcomes.

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