



## The effect of the implementation of e-government and bureaucratic accountability on the level of public trust in public services in ambon city

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Article Info	Abstract
<p><b>Article history:</b></p> <p>Received: Jan 13, 2026 Revised: Feb 25, 2026 Accepted: March 13, 2026</p> <hr/> <p><b>Keywords:</b></p> <p>Ambon City; Bureaucratic accountability; E-government; Public services; Public trust.</p>	<p>This study examines the influence of e-government implementation and bureaucratic accountability on public trust in public services in Ambon City. Digital transformation in governance requires transparent, efficient, and accountable systems to build public trust. A quantitative approach with a survey design was used, involving 400 respondents selected through proportionate stratified random sampling. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale and analyzed using multiple linear regression. The results show that e-government implementation positively and significantly affects public trust, with a regression coefficient of 0.368 (<math>t = 8.745</math>; <math>p = 0.000</math>). Bureaucratic accountability also significantly affects public trust, with a regression coefficient of 0.412 (<math>t = 9.832</math>; <math>p = 0.000</math>). Simultaneously, both variables have a significant effect on public trust, with an F-value of 187.542 (<math>p = 0.000</math>) and an <math>R^2</math> of 48.6%. The findings suggest that bureaucratic accountability plays a more dominant role than e-government in shaping public trust. This study recommends a synergy between the development of digital systems and strengthening accountability practices to enhance public service quality and increase trust in local governments.</p>
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### INTRODUCTION

The era of digital transformation has brought significant changes to governance in various countries, including Indonesia. The implementation of E-Government has become inevitable in efforts to improve the quality of public services and create a more transparent, efficient, and accountable government. According to Wirtz et al. (2022), the application of information technology in government administration not only optimizes bureaucratic processes but also opens up greater opportunities for public participation in the oversight and evaluation of government performance. The rapidly evolving concept of E-Government encompasses various dimensions, ranging from online administrative services, public information transparency, to integrated complaint and feedback systems within a digitally engaged society (Wijaya et al., 2024).

Ambon City, as the capital of Maluku Province, faces unique challenges in implementing E-Government and developing bureaucratic accountability. The city's geographical characteristics as an archipelago, limited technological infrastructure, and varying levels of digital literacy significantly affect the effectiveness of the electronic government systems. Rahmadany (2021) highlights that the success of E-Government relies heavily on technological infrastructure readiness, human resource competence, and comprehensive policy support. While various public service digitization initiatives have been launched in Ambon, their effectiveness and impact on public trust still require thorough and systematic investigation (Kaplale & Yoernaldi, 2025).

Bureaucratic accountability is a fundamental element in building public trust in government institutions. The concept of accountability extends beyond financial transparency to include responsiveness to public needs, integrity in decision-making, and consistency in regulatory enforcement. Nabatchi et al. (2023) found that strong bureaucratic accountability positively

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correlates with public trust and encourages active citizen participation in regional development processes. In Ambon, bureaucratic accountability is a key concern, as public complaints continue regarding complex procedures, lack of information transparency, and uncertain service completion times (Abbasov, 2025).

Public trust in public services is a primary indicator of governance success. Grimmelikhuijsen and Knies (2021) argue that public trust is influenced by perceptions of service quality, the integrity of public officials, and the government's ability to meet citizens' expectations. In Ambon, the dynamics of public trust in local government are shaped by various factors, including firsthand experiences in accessing services, the effectiveness of government communication, and perceptions of anti-corruption efforts. Van Ryzin (2021) supports the idea that innovations in public services, including the use of digital technology, can serve as catalysts in rebuilding eroded public trust (Maulan & Fitriani, 2025). While several studies have examined the impact of E-Government and bureaucratic accountability on public trust separately, there is limited research that integrates both dimensions into a comprehensive analysis, especially within the context of Ambon City. Additionally, studies that explore the concrete impact of E-Government on public trust in regions with limited infrastructure and geographical challenges remain scarce. Most existing studies also fail to address how these two factors—E-Government and bureaucratic accountability that interact to influence citizens' perceptions of local government (Setyarto et al., 2025). Therefore, this study focuses on integrating both aspects to provide a deeper understanding of how they collectively shape public trust in Ambon.

This research is important because it explores the causal relationship between the implementation of E-Government and bureaucratic accountability with public trust in public services in Ambon City. Unlike previous studies that have tended to examine these variables in isolation, this study integrates both dimensions into a single comprehensive analytical framework. According to Porumbescu and Grimmelikhuijsen (2023), such an integrative approach provides a more holistic understanding of the dynamics between government and society in the digital age. This study aims to contribute theoretically to the field of public administration and provide practical recommendations for policymakers in Ambon City on how to design strategies to improve responsive and accountable public services (Setyarto et al., 2025; Yigitcanlar et al., 2024).

## METHOD

This study employs a quantitative approach with a survey research design to analyze the influence of E-Government implementation and bureaucratic accountability on public trust in public services in Ambon City. A quantitative approach was selected as it enables the researcher to quantify variables numerically and test causal relationships between them through structured statistical analysis. The survey design allows for data collection from a representative sample, enabling generalization of the findings to the broader population. As noted by Creswell and Creswell (2022), quantitative methods are particularly effective in assessing public perceptions and attitudes toward government service innovations, while identifying the factors that impact public trust. The population for this study consists of all individuals aged 17 and older in Ambon City who have utilized local government public services in the past year. The sampling technique used is proportionate stratified random sampling, where the population is divided into strata based on sub-districts, and a random sample is selected from each stratum to ensure geographical representativeness. The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula with a 5% margin of error, resulting in a minimum of 400 respondents for the analysis. This sampling method aligns with survey methodology principles, which emphasize sample representativeness to produce reliable estimates of population parameters (Taherdoost, 2020).

Data collection was conducted using a structured questionnaire, which was distributed directly to respondents with the assistance of trained enumerators. The questionnaire, based on a 5-point Likert scale, measured three key variables: E-Government implementation (independent variable), bureaucratic accountability (independent variable), and public trust (dependent variable). The instrument was adapted and modified from previously validated tools to fit the specific context of public services in Ambon City. Prior to primary data collection, the questionnaire was tested for validity and reliability through a pilot study involving 30 respondents to ensure that each item was

clearly understood and measured the intended constructs. This approach aligns with the methodological standards for quantitative research, which emphasize the importance of verifying the quality of research instruments before full-scale implementation (Bolarinwa, 2022).

Data analysis was performed using multiple linear regression techniques to examine the effects of the independent variables on the dependent variable. Before conducting the regression analysis, a series of classical assumption tests, including normality, multicollinearity, heteroscedasticity, and linearity tests, were conducted to ensure that the regression model met statistical assumptions and produced a Best Linear Unbiased Estimator (BLUE). Data processing was carried out using IBM SPSS software version 26, which facilitates complex statistical analysis with a high degree of accuracy. The results of the regression analysis were interpreted based on the regression coefficients, the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), and the level of statistical significance at an alpha of 0.05 to determine the acceptance or rejection of the research hypotheses. This systematic approach to data analysis adheres to standard protocols in quantitative research, ensuring the internal and external validity of the study's findings (Mishra et al., 2019).

To ensure the validity and reliability of the research, several quality control measures were implemented, including enumerator training, field supervision, and thorough data verification and cleaning before analysis. The ethical aspects of the study were also rigorously addressed by obtaining informed consent from all respondents, guaranteeing the confidentiality of their identities and personal data, and assuring participants of their right to voluntarily withdraw from the study without any consequences. This ethical approach reflects the researcher's commitment to maintaining scientific integrity and respecting the rights of participants (Saunders, 2023).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

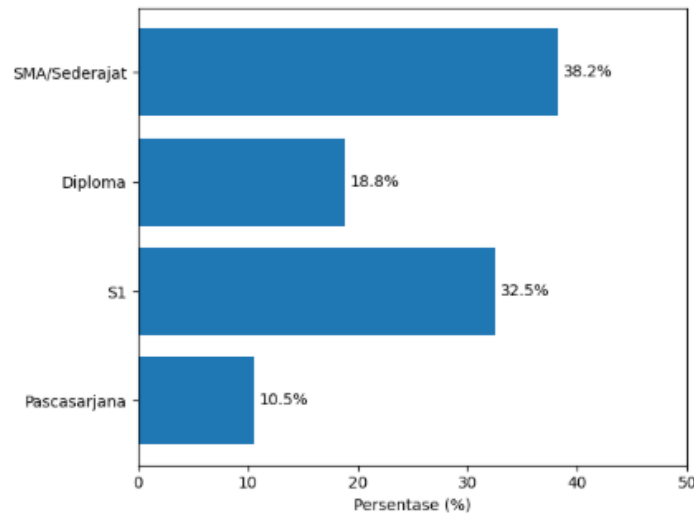
#### *Respondent Characteristics*

This study involved 400 respondents from the people of Ambon City who have used local government public services in the past year. The composition of the respondents showed a balanced distribution between males (52.5%) and females (47.5%). The majority of respondents were in the age range of 26-35 years (35.8%), followed by 36-45 years old (28.3%). The level of education is dominated by high school graduates/equivalent (38.2%) and undergraduate (32.5%). Job characteristics show the composition of private employees (28.7%), self-employed (25.3%), and civil servants/civil servants (22.5%). The geographical distribution covers all sub-districts with Sirimau (24.2%), Nusaniwe (22.8%), and Baguala (20.5%) as the largest contributors. As many as 42.3% of respondents access government services 2-3 times a year, with population administration services (68.5%) and business licensing (45.2%) being the most frequently used.

**Table 1.** Distribution of Respondent Characteristics

Characteristics	Categories	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>	Male	210	52,5
	Women	190	47,5
<b>Age</b>	17-25 years old	82	20,5
	26-35 years old	143	35,8
	36-45 years old	113	28,3
	>45 years old	62	15,4
<b>Education</b>	High School/Equivalent	153	38,2
	Diploma	75	18,8
	S1	130	32,5
	Postgraduate	42	10,5

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2025



Source: Primary Data Processed, 2025

**Figure 1.** Distribution Chart of Respondents by Education Level

### ***Instrument Validity and Reliability Test***

Validity testing of 45 statement items showed that all items had an r-count value greater than the r-table (0.098), so they were declared valid. The variables for the implementation of *e-government* have an r-count ranging from 0.412-0.687, bureaucratic accountability 0.398-0.705, and public trust 0.425-0.693. Reliability tests using *Cronbach's Alpha* yielded values of 0.892 for *e-government*, 0.908 for bureaucratic accountability, and 0.885 for public trust. The three values were well above the minimum limit of 0.70, indicating that the research instrument had excellent internal consistency.

**Table 2.** Validity and Reliability Test Results

Variable	Range r-count	Cronbach's Alpha	Remarks
Implementation of <i>E-Government</i>	0,412 - 0,687	0,892	Valid & Reliable
Bureaucratic Accountability	0,398 - 0,705	0,908	Valid & Reliable
Public Trust	0,425 - 0,693	0,885	Valid & Reliable

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2025

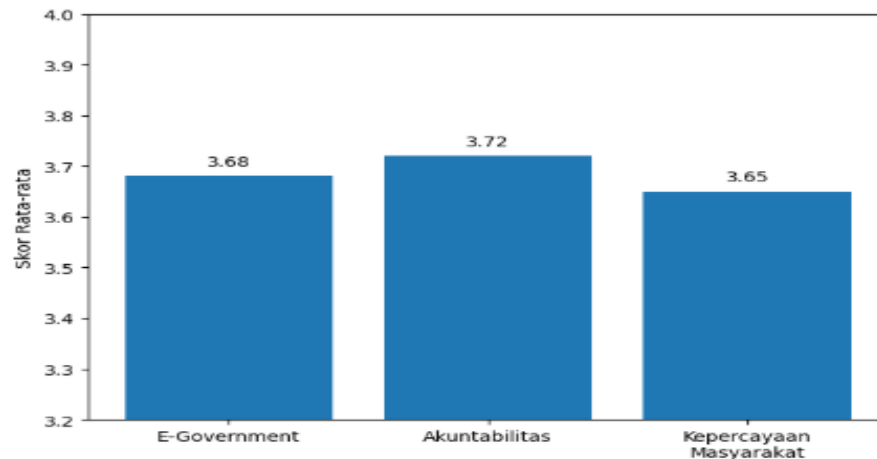
### ***Descriptive Analysis of Research Variables***

The e-government implementation variable obtained a *mean value* of 3.68 (good category) with a standard deviation of 0.742. The accessibility dimension of digital platforms recorded the highest score (3.85), while the ease of use was the lowest (3.52). Bureaucratic accountability recorded a *mean* of 3.72 (good category) with a standard deviation of 0.698. Information transparency received the highest score (3.88), while responsiveness was lowest (3.58). Public confidence has a *mean* of 3.65 (good category) with a standard deviation of 0.715. Trust in the integrity of officers was highest (3.79), while the speed of service completion was lowest (3.48).

**Table 3.** Description of Research Variable Statistics

Variable	Red	Std. Deviation	Categories
Implementation of <i>E-Government</i>	3,68	0,742	Good
Bureaucratic Accountability	3,72	0,698	Good
Public Trust	3,65	0,715	Good

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2025



Variables Source: Primary Data Processed, 2025

**Figure 2.** Comparison Diagram of Mean Values of Research

### Classic Assumption Test

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test yielded a significance of 0.128 ( $>0.05$ ), indicating normal distributed data. The multicollinearity test showed a *Tolerance* value of 0.487 and a VIF of 2.053 for both independent variables, indicating no multicollinearity. The Glejser heteroscedasticity test yielded significance of 0.342 and 0.287 ( $>0.05$ ), proving that there was no heteroscedasticity. The linearity test showed a significant *deviation from linearity* of 0.215 and 0.198 ( $>0.05$ ), confirming the linear relationship between variables.

**Table 4.** Summary of the Classical Assumption Test

Test Type	Value	Conclusion
Normality (K-S)	Sig. 0.128	Data Normal
Multicollinearity (VIF)	2,053	No Multicollinearity
Heteroscedasticity	Sig. 0.342; 0,287	No Heteroscedasticity
Linearity	Sig. 0.215; 0,198	Linear Relationships

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2025

### Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

The regression equation formed:  $Y = 0.425 + 0.368X_1 + 0.412X_2$ . The *e-government coefficient* (0.368) indicates that every one unit increase will increase confidence by 0.368 units. The bureaucratic accountability coefficient (0.412) indicates that every increase of one unit increases confidence by 0.412 units. The t-test yielded t-counts of 8.745 ( $X_1$ ) and 9.832 ( $X_2$ ) with a significance of 0.000, proving a partially significant influence. The F-test yielded an F-count of 187.542 (sig. 0.000), proving a significant effect simultaneously. The coefficient of determination  $R^2 = 0.486$  shows that 48.6% of the confidence variation is explained by the two independent variables.

**Table 5.** Regression Analysis Results

Components	Value	Significance
Constant	0,425	-
Coefficient $X_1$	0,368	0,000
$X_2$ coefficient	0,412	0,000
F-count	187,542	0,000
$R^2$	0,486	-

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2025

### Hypothesis Testing

All three hypotheses are accepted.  $H_1$ : *E-government* has a significant effect on public trust ( $t=8.745$ ;  $\text{sig}.0.000$ ).  $H_2$ : Bureaucratic accountability has a significant effect on public trust ( $t=9.832$ ;  $\text{sig}.0.000$ ).  $H_3$ : Both variables simultaneously had a significant effect on public confidence ( $F=187.542$ ;  $\text{sig}.0.000$ ).

**Table 6.** Hypothesis Testing Summary

Hypothesis	t/f-count	Sig.	Verdict
$H_1$	8,745	0,000	Accepted
$H_2$	9,832	0,000	Accepted
$H_3$	187,542	0,000	Accepted

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2025

### Discussion

The first hypothesis test showed that the implementation of E-Government had a positive and significant effect on public trust, with a regression coefficient of 0.368 and a t-value of 8.745 ( $p = 0.000$ ). This suggests that improving the quality of E-Government systems in Ambon City can enhance public trust in government services. The highest rating was given to the accessibility dimension of digital platforms, with a mean score of 3.85, indicating that the public values the ease of access to online services. This finding aligns with Ilmiyah (2024), who highlights that digital transformation in public services responds to the public's demand for faster, more efficient, and transparent services. However, the usability dimension received the lowest score (mean = 3.52), suggesting that there is still room for improvement in the system's user interface and navigation, especially to accommodate varying levels of digital literacy among users.

While progress has been made in improving telecommunications infrastructure and human resource capacity for better service delivery, significant regional disparities in digital participation and service equity remain, particularly in Ambon (Malizal & Pratama, 2025). Although digital infrastructure exists, challenges related to digital literacy and the socialization of the system persist. In regions with limited digital infrastructure and low digital literacy, issues such as underutilization of digital services and suboptimal system integration remain prevalent (Hamim et al., 2024). These findings emphasize the need for a comprehensive strategy to improve the system's user interface, strengthen digital literacy programs, and enhance technological infrastructure across the city to ensure effective use of E-Government systems.

The second hypothesis test confirmed that bureaucratic accountability significantly influences public trust, with a regression coefficient of 0.412 and a t-value of 9.832 ( $p = 0.000$ ). The higher coefficient for bureaucratic accountability compared to E-Government indicates that bureaucratic practices play a more dominant role in shaping public trust. The transparency dimension, which received the highest score (mean = 3.88), reflects the public's appreciation for the Ambon City government's information disclosure practices. The introduction of real-time document tracking features in population administration services has greatly enhanced transparency and accountability in government services (Hamim et al., 2024). However, the responsiveness dimension received the lowest score (mean = 3.58), indicating that improvements are needed in the speed and responsiveness of the bureaucracy to public complaints.

Despite improvements in transparency, challenges such as bureaucratic resistance and limited inter-agency coordination persist, which continue to affect public trust (Rohmah et al., 2021). While bureaucratic reform has improved service speed and boosted public trust, other aspects such as responsiveness and integrity still require strengthening through more robust supervision mechanisms. The use of E-Government can support transparency and improve access to public service information, encouraging greater citizen participation in oversight, but overcoming bureaucratic resistance will require significant capacity-building efforts for government employees (Rizky et al., 2025). Therefore, E-Government and bureaucratic accountability must be viewed as complementary elements that together enhance public trust.

Finally, the interaction between E-Government and bureaucratic accountability was tested in combination, revealing a significant effect on public trust, with an F-value of 187.542 ( $p = 0.000$ ) and an  $R^2$  of 0.486. This indicates that both factors together explain 48.6% of the variation in public trust, suggesting that digital transformation and bureaucratic reform must work in tandem to maximize

their impact. The relative contributions of E-Government and bureaucratic accountability showed that the latter has a slightly greater impact ( $\beta = 0.412$ ), reinforcing that public trust is shaped more by the integrity and responsiveness of government officials than by technological sophistication alone. The study highlights that strengthening both digital infrastructure and institutional accountability is essential to build a more transparent, inclusive, and sustainable digital governance system (Hamim et al., 2024; Saputra et al., 2024).

## CONCLUSION

Based on the data analysis, this study concluded that the implementation of E-Government and bureaucratic accountability significantly influences public trust in public services in Ambon City. E-Government contributes 36.8% to public trust, showing that the use of information technology improves public perception of government performance. While the accessibility of digital platforms is appreciated, the ease of use needs improvement to accommodate varying digital literacy levels. Bureaucratic accountability has a more dominant impact, contributing 41.2%, emphasizing the importance of integrity, transparency, and responsiveness in building trust. The combined effect of E-Government and bureaucratic accountability explains 48.6% of the variation in public trust, indicating that digital transformation should go hand in hand with bureaucratic reform. The synergy between an accessible E-Government system and strengthened accountability creates a more credible and responsive public service ecosystem. However, 51.4% of factors influencing public trust remain unexplored, such as organizational culture, leadership, and local socio-political conditions, which should be investigated in future research. Based on these findings, it is recommended that the Ambon City Government prioritize developing an intuitive E-Government interface, enhance digital literacy programs, and improve bureaucratic accountability through transparent, responsive complaint systems. Additionally, increasing civil servants' digital competence and improving technology infrastructure across the city are crucial long-term investments. Future research should adopt a longitudinal design and a mixed-methods approach to better understand the dynamics of public trust and explore factors such as leadership, community participation, and the role of social media in shaping public trust in the digital age.

## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

Author is the sole author of this manuscript and was responsible for all aspects of the research and writing process. The author conceptualized the study, designed the research methodology, conducted data collection and analysis, interpreted the results, and wrote and revised the manuscript. The author has read and approved the final version of the manuscript for publication.

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