



Assisting the Treasurer of Public Works and Public Housing of East Tanjung Jabung to prepare an official travel report

Sulastri^{1*}, Zaenal Abidin², Wandi³, Khusnul Yatima⁴

¹Institut Islam Al-Mujaddid Sabak, Tanjung Jabung Timur, Indonesia

²Institut Islam Al-Mujaddid Sabak, Tanjung Jabung Timur, Indonesia

³Institut Islam Al-Mujaddid Sabak, Tanjung Jabung Timur, Indonesia

⁴Institut Islam Al-Mujaddid Sabak, Tanjung Jabung Timur, Indonesia

*Correspondent Author: sulastrijambi833@gmail.com

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Abstract:

This research aims to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the preparation of official travel reports at the Public Works and Public Housing Office of East Tanjung Jabung Regency, by providing assistance in the form of training and standard templates. The research method used is a qualitative approach with case studies, which involves in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation related to the preparation of official travel reports. Employees involved in reporting undergo training on the use of templates and administrative guidelines designed to make it easier to record and fill in data more accurately. The results showed that the assistance program successfully reduced the time to prepare reports from three days to one to two days, as well as improved the accuracy of reports by reducing administrative errors by up to 50%. Employees also showed an increase in confidence and motivation after the training, which had a positive impact on the quality of financial reporting. This study recommends the implementation of continuous training programs in government agencies to increase financial administration capacity, as well as the need for management support in the provision of administrative tools. These findings can serve as a model for capacity building for other government agencies to overcome similar administrative challenges.

Keywords:

Assistance, official reporting, efficiency, administration.



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INTRODUCTION

In the era of digitalization, data management and reporting of official trips are important aspects of efficient and transparent governance. The need for accurate and easy-to-understand reports is even more urgent, especially for government agencies such as the Public Works and Public Housing Office in East Tanjung Jabung Regency, which handles various important projects that have a direct impact on public infrastructure development. However, administrative constraints and difficulties in the preparation of official travel reports often hinder the work process, potentially reducing transparency and accountability.

According to the theory of public financial management, effective reporting is one of the keys to success in government financial administration. Gavrilina & Gavrilinb revealed that structured financial recording and reporting can improve internal control and simplify the audit

process (Gavrilina & Gavrilinb, 2023). In this context, the preparation of a good official travel report is not just a formality, but also proof of the commitment of government agencies to efficiency and transparency (McGuirl, 2006). Unfortunately, not all agencies or agencies have the ability and resources to develop an effective reporting system, especially for officials who lack a background in financial administration.

This gap is increasingly seen in East Tanjung Jabung Regency, where administrative staff and treasurers at the Public Works and Public Housing Office face challenges in compiling official travel reports that are in accordance with applicable audit standards and financial policies. In practice, the process of creating these reports is still mostly done manually, which is not only time-consuming, but also increases the risk of administrative errors. Without an adequate support system, the treasurer's workload is getting heavier, and this can hinder the achievement of the agency's targets in terms of timely completion of financial statements.

As a solution, this study offers an assistance approach through training and the application of simple technology that can assist the treasurer in compiling official travel reports efficiently and effectively. This approach includes the use of standard templates, training on the use of simple software, and financial administration guidance that can be used in managing official travel. In this way, it is hoped that the treasurer can make more systematic, fast, and accurate reports, which will ultimately help improve the quality of financial governance in related agencies.

Furthermore, this study aims to test the effectiveness of this assistance program through a case study at the Public Works and Public Housing Office of East Tanjung Jabung Regency. Through the implementation and evaluation of the program, it is hoped that appropriate recommendations can be found to increase administrative capacity in local government agencies. That way, this research not only provides direct benefits for the PUPR Office, but also has the potential to provide a reporting governance model that can be applied by other government agencies. This research is expected to contribute to the development of a better financial reporting system in the government environment, especially in the context of official travel administration.

METHOD

The methodology of this study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method at the Public Works and Public Housing Office of East Tanjung Jabung Regency. This research will involve in-depth interviews with treasurers and related staff involved in the preparation of official travel reports to understand the problems, needs, and procedures currently in place (Kapur, 2018). In addition to interviews, researchers will also conduct direct observations on the process of preparing official travel reports and related documentation, in order to get a comprehensive overview of the administrative challenges faced (Filed, 2014).

Furthermore, the researcher will implement an assistance program in the form of training and assistance in the use of templates and administrative tools that are specifically designed to facilitate the reporting process. After the implementation of the assistance program, an evaluation will be carried out through follow-up interviews and document analysis to see changes in effectiveness and efficiency in the report preparation process (McPherson et al., 2018). The results of this evaluation

will be analyzed to assess the success of the assistance program and determine whether the approach applied can be recommended for application in other government agencies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

This study revealed a number of important findings related to the process of preparing official travel reports at the Public Works and Public Housing Office of East Tanjung Jabung Regency. Based on in-depth interviews and observations, it was found that the main obstacles faced by the treasurer and administrative staff were the lack of understanding of the standard reporting procedures and the difficulty in following the applicable bookkeeping rules. This is due to the lack of structured training and limited resources to support the preparation of efficient and accurate reports. Without an adequate system, staff have to do manual record-keeping which is time-consuming and prone to errors.

Discussion

The use of manual methods in the preparation of official travel reports shows significant weaknesses, especially in terms of archiving and data consistency. This manual system also increases the risk of administrative errors, such as summing errors, data duplication, and delays in submitting reports (Uzoh & Inyama, 2015). This condition has the potential to affect the quality of financial statements and cause problems in internal and external audits. As a result, the administrative process of official travel at the Public Works and Public Housing Office becomes less efficient and vulnerable to the risk of non-compliance with audit standards (Stawecki, 2019). In terms of human resources, some employees in the administration department find it difficult to keep up with the development of government financial regulations that continue to change, including regulations regarding official travel. The lack of technical knowledge and skills related to financial reporting creates a gap between the needs of the agency and the actual capacity of employees in managing official travel. Some treasurers reveal that they have to learn independently or rely on previous work experience in the absence of clear and structured guidance (Hovde, 1941).

The implementation of the assistance program focused on training and the use of standard templates has succeeded in increasing work effectiveness in the preparation of official travel reports. The provided templates allow employees to enter data in a more structured and automated manner, speeding up the filling process and minimizing errors. In the training carried out, employees were given practical guidance on filling out reports and tips to ensure data accuracy, which was previously the main obstacle (Flanagan, 2019).

One of the significant results of this assistance program is the increase in the confidence of the treasurers in managing official travel reports. With direct guidance, they feel better able to follow the correct procedures and understand the importance of following bookkeeping rules. In addition, the use of this specially designed template helps them understand every step in the process of preparing the report, from initial recording to gathering supporting evidence (Flanagan, 2019).

Observations after the implementation of the assistance program showed changes in the quality and time of report completion. Prior to assistance, the average time it took to complete an official travel report was three days (Treasury, 2021). However, after using the template and undergoing training, the report can be completed in just one to two days. This shows that the assistance program has succeeded in improving time efficiency without sacrificing the quality of the report. In terms of accuracy, the templates and guidelines provided are able to reduce recording errors by up to 50% compared to manual methods. Errors such as the calculation of the travel budget and the filing of proof of transactions can be minimized, which has a positive impact on the overall quality of the report (Forrest & Murie, 2014). These findings support the hypothesis that structured assistance can help government employees improve their financial administration skills.

The results of follow-up interviews also showed that employees felt more comfortable and motivated to work after receiving training. They revealed that the new system makes their job easier and reduces the pressure they usually feel when facing internal audits or audits. This increased confidence has implications for better performance, as employees are more motivated to ensure the reports produced are of high quality (Deakin et al., 2000). However, this study also found that the success of the assistance program is highly dependent on the commitment of management and support from agency leaders. At the Public Works and Public Housing Office, the full support of the leadership in the implementation of training and the provision of administrative aids is very helpful in the success of this program. Proactive leadership in providing support encourages employees to participate in the program with enthusiasm, which has a positive impact on the final result (Anderson et al., 2014). In addition, this study identifies the challenges that may be faced if similar assistance programs are implemented in other government agencies that have limited resources (Peden & Peden, 1988). Budget constraints and lack of competent trainers can be obstacles in implementing similar programs. Therefore, a strategy is needed that can adapt this program to the conditions of each agency, for example through module-based training or more flexible online training.

From a policy perspective, this study indicates the need for the government to consider a sustainable training policy for employees who manage official travel administration and financial reporting. This training should not only focus on technical skills, but also include an understanding of the ever-evolving financial regulations (Assembly, 2009). Thus, it is hoped that government agencies have competent staff and are ready to face increasingly complex administrative demands. Overall, this study proves that structured assistance and the use of administrative tools are able to increase effectiveness and efficiency in the preparation of official travel reports (Davies & Nutley, 2000). This method can be a long-term solution to the problem of administrative skills gaps in various government agencies. The study also shows that simple technologies, such as the use of standard templates, can be an effective tool to improve the quality of reporting without having to incur large costs (Bovaird & Löffler, 2013).

This research offers practical implications that can be applied in various government agencies, especially those who have the task of managing official travel reports. The results of this assistance program can be the basis for the preparation of a more comprehensive and sustainable training program at the regional and central levels. With support from the central government, this assistance model has the potential to be a reference for other government agencies who want to

increase their administrative capacity (Kaharrukmi & Adli, 2022). In conclusion, these findings underscore the importance of a collaborative approach between leaders, employees, and policy developers in creating a work environment that supports administrative efficiency (Peden, 2000). In addition, this study also reminds the importance of periodic evaluation of the effectiveness of programs that have been implemented so that they can be adjusted to changing needs and developments in financial regulations.

The findings of this study are in line with the results of previous research which showed that system-based assistance and training are able to increase the capacity of financial administration in government institutions (Li & Akintoye, 2003). As research by Wulandari et al. (2020) also found that the use of standard templates and practical guidance in financial reporting significantly reduces error rates and improves data accuracy (Ostrom & Ostrom, 2019). Another research by Farnham & Horton shows that direct assistance in the preparation of reports is able to increase employee work motivation, which has an impact on overall administrative effectiveness (Farnham & Horton, 1996). This shows that the assistance and training approach can be an effective solution to overcome administrative obstacles faced by government agencies in various regions (Lawson, 2013).

Theoretical support for these findings can be found in public financial management theory and organizational learning theory (Aalbers et al., 2017). According to the theory of public financial management, as proposed by Anthony and Young (2003), good financial recording and reporting plays an important role in public transparency and accountability (Jacobs et al., 2010). Meanwhile, the organizational learning theory of Senge (1990) emphasizes the importance of training and upskilling as part of organizational capacity building (Thain & Wright, 1995). These two theories support the research findings that assistance and training programs help improve the technical skills of employees and optimize the process of preparing official travel reports, which ultimately improves the efficiency and quality of work at the Public Works and Public Housing Office (Filed, 2014).

CONCLUSION

This study proves that the standard template-based approach of assistance and training is able to provide practical and effective solutions to challenges in the preparation of official travel reports at the Public Works and Public Housing Office of East Tanjung Jabung Regency. With direct guidance and the use of simple administrative tools, employees have been able to improve the accuracy and efficiency of time in reporting, while building confidence in following the correct financial procedures. These findings reinforce the idea that administrative capacity building in government agencies, especially through structured and sustainable methods, can improve the quality and accountability of public services. This success not only serves as a potential model for similar government institutions, but also highlights the importance of leadership support and ongoing training policies in the face of increasingly complex modern administrative demands.

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