

Effectiveness of Protocol and Leadership Communication in Local Government Governance: A Study in Southeast Aceh Regency

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the effectiveness of protocol and leadership communication in supporting the performance of the regional head in Southeast Aceh Regency and identified the factors that facilitated or constrained that effectiveness. A qualitative descriptive-analytical approach was employed. Informants were selected purposively on the basis of their involvement, knowledge, and experience, while data were obtained through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. The evidence was analyzed interactively through data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing, with source and technique triangulation used to strengthen credibility. The findings showed that the Protocol and Leadership Communication Section had performed its basic functions but had not yet achieved fully institutionalized effectiveness. Of 144 regional-head activities in 2025, 109 met protocol standards, 21 experienced delays of 15-25 minutes, eight underwent sudden agenda changes, and six encountered documentation problems. Effectiveness was further constrained by limited resources, manually managed cross-agency coordination, fragmented information flows, and informal post-event evaluation. The study concluded that stronger standardization, workload and competency mapping, resource reinforcement, integrated information management, and systematic evaluation were required to make organizational support more anticipatory, consistent, and less dependent on individual improvisation



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INTRODUCTION

Local government administration requires regional heads not only to formulate and make policy decisions but also to ensure that governmental agendas are conducted in an orderly, coordinated, communicative, and publicly accountable manner. Within this institutional setting, protocol and leadership communication perform a strategic function because they connect the agenda of the regional head with local government agencies, official guests, the media, and the community. Protocol work therefore extends beyond the arrangement of precedence, ceremonies, and official honors as stipulated in Law No. 9 of 2010 on Protocol. It also contributes to the timeliness, orderliness, and institutional dignity of leadership activities. At the same time, leadership communication is expected to ensure that policy messages, activity information, and government responses are transmitted rapidly, consistently, and in forms that can be understood by relevant stakeholders. The quality of the Protocol and Leadership Communication Section (hereafter Prokopim) is thus closely related both to the smooth execution of the regional head's agenda and to the quality of governmental communication.

The increasing speed and digitalization of governmental work have made these functions more complex. Prokopim must respond to changes in schedules, information requirements across local agencies, field dynamics, documentation, publication needs, and the regional head's demand for accurate information within short timeframes. Technology use and information integration are important because digital transformation in the public sector is not merely a matter of adopting technological devices; it also requires changes in work processes, coordination arrangements, and organizational capacity to produce more responsive public services (Mergel et al., 2019). Consequently, Prokopim effectiveness cannot be assessed solely by whether an event is eventually completed. It must also be examined through goal attainment, implementation quality, resource utilization, interunit

coordination, and the mechanisms through which the organization evaluates and learns from its activities.

These issues are directly relevant to the Protocol and Leadership Communication Section of the Regional Secretariat of Southeast Aceh Regency. Documentary records for 2025 show that Prokopim facilitated 144 activities of the regional head, including coordination meetings, inaugurations and audiences, official visits, ceremonial activities, reception of official guests, and community-oriented events. The intensity and diversity of these agendas indicate a substantial coordination burden, particularly when several activities occur within short intervals. At the same time, the research evidence identified fragmented information flows from Satuan Kerja Perangkat Kabupaten (SKPK, or regency government work units), information delivery that tended to be partial and reactive, coordination that was frequently conducted manually, and a Prokopim function that remained more visible in ceremonial and documentation tasks than in systematic policy communication. These conditions created operational risks in the form of delays, sudden agenda changes, interunit misunderstandings, and weak post-event learning.

Previous studies have demonstrated that Prokopim performance depends on more than technical protocol competence. Heranita and Akhmad (2024) found that work discipline and the use of information technology are important to the performance of protocol and leadership communication functions. Apriady et al. (2023), in a different local-government context, showed that leadership communication is associated with improved civil-service performance in communication and protocol units. These findings suggest that the effectiveness of Prokopim cannot be separated from internal communication patterns, leadership practices, the readiness of personnel, and the organizational arrangements within which technical tasks are performed.

Coordination has also been a recurring concern in the literature. Hasim et al. (2024) identified coordination within a Protocol and Leadership Communication Section as an important element in improving service quality in a regional secretariat. Kungsiang et al. (2022) emphasized Prokopim's role in disseminating local-government information to the public, whereas Darlan et al. (2024) linked Prokopim governance to the implementation of good-governance principles. Taken together, these studies establish that the unit's function goes beyond event administration. Prokopim is connected with organizational coordination, public information, service quality, and broader governmental governance.

Nevertheless, previous research has tended to examine role performance, coordination, communication, or governance as relatively separate objects of analysis. Studies that simultaneously assess protocol and leadership communication as an integrated organizational function remain limited, particularly when effectiveness is linked to event workload, implementation quality, resource sufficiency, cross-agency coordination, and post-event evaluation in relation to support for the regional head's performance. This gap is important because organizational success is not determined merely by the formal completion of events. It also depends on whether the organization can manage resources and information consistently enough to make leadership agendas timely, orderly, and supported by adequate communication.

To address this gap, the study applies Richard M. Steers's organizational-effectiveness perspective. Effectiveness is interpreted through the relationship among organizational goal attainment, the quality of work implementation, resource utilization, coordination, and evaluation of performance outcomes (Steers, 1985). This framework permits the analysis to move beyond a descriptive account of Prokopim duties and to assess whether the work process as a whole effectively supports the regional head. In this study, organizational effectiveness is operationalized through five analytical dimensions: goal attainment, implementation quality, resource utilization, interunit coordination, and continuous evaluation.

The study offers three principal contributions. First, it treats protocol and leadership communication as an integrated organizational process rather than as separate ceremonial and publication functions. Second, it connects the five dimensions of organizational effectiveness with empirical evidence from the regional head's 2025 activities in Southeast Aceh Regency, allowing recurring operational weaknesses to be located more precisely. Third, it positions information integration and cross-agency coordination as central components of Prokopim effectiveness. This approach differs from earlier studies that have primarily emphasized role performance, leadership communication, coordination, or governance in isolation (Apriady et al., 2023; Darlan et al., 2024; Hasim et al., 2024; Heranita & Akhmad, 2024; Kungsiang et al., 2022).

Accordingly, this study aimed to analyze the effectiveness of protocol and leadership communication in supporting the performance of the regional head in Southeast Aceh Regency and to identify the factors that supported or constrained that effectiveness. Academically, the study contributes to public-administration scholarship by integrating protocol, communication, resources, coordination, and evaluation within a single framework for examining a leadership-support unit in local government. Practically, the findings are intended to inform improvements in work procedures, personnel competence, resource allocation, cross-agency coordination, information management, and the gradual use of digital tools to improve the timeliness and quality of organizational support for the regional head.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical design to develop an in-depth understanding of the effectiveness of protocol and leadership communication in supporting the regional head in Southeast Aceh Regency. A qualitative design was appropriate because the research focused not only on the final outcomes of official activities but also on work processes, coordination patterns, resource utilization, the experiences of organizational actors, and the constraints that emerged in the performance of Prokopim functions. This design enabled the researchers to interpret the phenomenon within its institutional context and in relation to the experiences of those directly involved (Fadli, 2021; Creswell & Poth, 2018). The research setting was the Protocol and Leadership Communication Section of the Regional Secretariat of Southeast Aceh Regency, the organizational unit directly responsible for protocol and communication support for the regional head.

Research participants were selected using purposive sampling. Selection was based on direct involvement in, knowledge of, and experience with Prokopim functions and their coordination with local government agencies and the community. The informant categories comprised the Head of Prokopim, protocol implementation staff, representatives of SKPK, a public-policy observer, and representatives of the local community. The study did not use a statistical sample-size formula or a percentage-based quota. Instead, participant selection emphasized the adequacy and relevance of information obtained from the predetermined categories, consistent with the logic of purposive sampling in qualitative research, which seeks information-rich sources rather than statistical representation of a population (Campbell et al., 2020). This approach clarifies the basis of selection without assigning an unsupported numerical total to the participant pool.

The study relied on both primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews and participant observation during official activities of the regional head. The interviews explored informants' experiences and assessments concerning goal attainment, implementation quality, resource utilization, interunit coordination, evaluation mechanisms, and the factors that facilitated or obstructed Prokopim work. Participant observation was used to capture work situations and implementation processes in context, including patterns of interaction and coordination during events. Secondary data were obtained from documentary analysis of Prokopim activity reports for 2025 and other documents relevant to the research focus. The combination of interviews, observation, and documentary evidence made it possible to compare different forms of evidence rather than relying on a single source (Aspers & Corte, 2019).

Data credibility was strengthened through source triangulation and technique triangulation. Source triangulation involved comparing information from Prokopim personnel, SKPK representatives, the public-policy observer, and community representatives. Technique triangulation involved comparing evidence obtained from interviews, participant observation, and documentary records. Where information differed, the discrepancy was reconsidered in relation to context and supporting evidence before it was incorporated into the analytical conclusions. This procedure was used to reduce the risk that a finding would depend exclusively on one participant or one type of evidence and to improve the credibility of the interpretation (Mekarisce, 2020).

Data analysis was conducted interactively from the stage of data collection through completion of the study. The procedure followed the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña model, which comprises data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification (Miles et al., 2020). During data condensation, interview, observation, and documentary materials were selected and grouped according to the research focus. The evidence was then displayed narratively and comparatively under the five analytical dimensions: goal attainment, implementation quality, resource utilization, interunit coordination, and continuous evaluation. The final stage identified patterns, consistencies, differences,

and relationships across the evidence in order to answer the research objectives and identify supporting and constraining factors. Analysis was cyclical, so provisional interpretations were repeatedly checked against the available evidence before being treated as findings (Rijali, 2018; Miles et al., 2020).

The unit of analysis was therefore the process through which Prokopim functions were implemented within the Regional Secretariat of Southeast Aceh Regency, rather than individual employees as isolated units. The analysis focused on how implementation processes, resources, coordination, and evaluation influenced the quality of support provided to the regional head's agenda. The documentary record of 144 activities in 2025 provided a measurable operational context, while interview and observational evidence were used to interpret how and why recurring patterns occurred. The study did not include a formal workload analysis or an independently calculated staffing standard; consequently, it does not claim to determine an ideal number of personnel. This limitation is explicitly retained in the interpretation of resource-related findings

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that the effectiveness of protocol and leadership communication in Southeast Aceh Regency cannot be judged solely by the administrative completion of the regional head's agenda. During 2025, Prokopim facilitated 144 activities covering coordination meetings, inaugurations and audiences, official visits, ceremonial events, reception of official guests, and social or community activities. Documentary evidence showed that 109 activities were conducted in accordance with protocol standards, 21 experienced delays of 15-25 minutes, eight involved sudden changes to the order of events, and six encountered documentation constraints. Triangulated interview and observational evidence placed these figures within a broader organizational context, showing that recurring operational disruptions were associated with coordination practices, the availability of resources, the flow of information, and the limited institutionalization of post-event evaluation.

Calculated against the total number of activities, 109 standard-compliant events represented approximately 75.69% of the annual agenda. Delays occurred in approximately 14.58% of activities, sudden agenda changes in 5.56%, and documentation problems in 4.17%. These percentages are descriptive results derived from the research documentation and are used to identify operational patterns rather than to infer causal relationships. The important point is that approximately one quarter of recorded activities experienced some form of operational disruption. In a unit that supports the regional head, even relatively small technical disruptions can have wider effects because a single event commonly involves several local agencies, guests, community participants, media personnel, security arrangements, and time-sensitive leadership decisions.

The findings were interpreted using the five dimensions of organizational effectiveness adapted from Steers (1985). This framework is useful because an event may eventually be completed while still revealing organizational weaknesses. An activity that requires extensive improvisation, is delayed because information arrives late, depends on personnel whose workload is repeatedly stretched, or produces no documented organizational learning cannot be regarded as fully effective simply because it took place. Table 1 summarizes the empirical findings and their analytical meaning before each dimension is discussed in greater depth.

Table 1 Summary of Findings on the Effectiveness of Protocol and Leadership Communication

Dimension	Empirical Finding	Analytical Meaning
Goal attainment	Functions were performed, but orientation remained strongly administrative and ceremonial.	Support for the leadership agenda had not fully developed into integrated policy-communication support.
Implementation quality	109 of 144 activities met standards; 21 were delayed, 8 changed suddenly, and 6 faced documentation problems.	Basic implementation capacity existed, but consistency and process resilience remained limited.
Resource utilization	8 active personnel; 3 functioning handheld radios, 1 operational laptop, 2 cameras, and 1 operational vehicle.	Resources were available, but redundancy and reserve capacity were very limited.
Interunit coordination	Coordination was situational, relying on WhatsApp and sudden instructions; no integrated system or standardized SOP was in place.	The risk of delayed information and misunderstanding increased when agendas changed rapidly.

Continuous evaluation

Post-event evaluation remained informal and was not documented systematically.

The organization lacked a reliable learning base for preventing repeated problems.

Source: Processed from research data, 2025.

Goal Attainment: From Orderly Events to Substantive Support for the Regional Head

The first dimension concerns the extent to which Prokopim achieves its organizational purpose. The evidence shows that the section was capable of performing the basic function of facilitating the regional head's activities, but its orientation remained strongly concentrated on administrative and ceremonial requirements. This distinction is important. The finding does not indicate that the unit failed to perform its duties; most activities were in fact facilitated successfully. The issue lies instead in the level of organizational maturity. If effectiveness is defined only as the completion of an event, performance appears satisfactory. If the objective is broadened to include the provision of timely information, cross-unit readiness, consistency of official messages, and support for leadership responses to changing policy situations, effectiveness remains incomplete.

Interview and observational evidence indicated that Prokopim personnel frequently worked within an information environment in which inputs from SKPK were not fully integrated and could arrive in partial form. This condition encouraged a reactive mode of work: personnel adjusted to the information that happened to be available at a particular time rather than operating from a consistently shared information base. Organizationally, this creates a gap between formal purpose and operational capacity. Prokopim is expected both to ensure orderly leadership agendas and to support governmental communication, yet the attainment of these objectives is partly determined by the quality and timeliness of information supplied by other units. The effectiveness problem is therefore not exclusively internal to Prokopim; it is also a problem of organizational connectivity within the regency government.

This finding is consistent with Kungsiang et al. (2022), who positioned Prokopim as an important actor in disseminating local-government information. It also supports Darlan et al. (2024), who linked Prokopim governance with good governance. The significance of these comparisons is that protocol order and communication quality should not be separated analytically. An event can be orderly yet still be weak in substantive communication if briefing materials, policy messages, or information flows are incomplete. Conversely, high-quality information cannot fully support the leadership function if protocol preparation is inadequate. Effectiveness therefore depends on the integration of both functions rather than the optimization of either one in isolation.

From Steers's (1985) perspective, organizational effectiveness involves the consistent achievement of objectives while resources are managed and the organization adapts to environmental demands. The Southeast Aceh findings show that adaptation was frequently sustained through individual experience and improvisation. Such adaptability is valuable because it allows activities to continue under changing conditions, but it should not be equated with institutionalized capacity. When success depends excessively on particular employees, tacit knowledge, or last-minute improvisation, the organization becomes vulnerable to workload peaks, staff absence or turnover, and unexpected agenda changes. The contribution of this study is therefore to redefine Prokopim goal attainment as a combination of successful event delivery and integrated communication support for the regional head.

Implementation Quality: Majority Compliance does not Eliminate Operational Uncertainty

The second dimension provides the most directly measurable picture of implementation performance. Of the 144 activities, 109 were conducted in accordance with protocol standards. This result demonstrates that the unit possessed a functioning foundation of technical competence and was capable of producing relatively orderly events under normal conditions. However, the 21 activities delayed by 15-25 minutes should be interpreted as an organizational signal rather than as a series of isolated technical incidents. In the regional head's schedule, a delay can affect subsequent meetings, guest readiness, personnel mobilization, security arrangements, documentation, and the working time of other government units involved in the same sequence of activities.

The study associated delays particularly with transportation constraints and venue readiness. These sources of delay demonstrate that implementation quality depends on preparedness across several functions. Transportation concerns the mobility of the regional head and support team, whereas venue readiness may depend on the organizing SKPK, local protocol personnel, equipment, and event facilities. Accordingly, not every aspect of implementation quality lies within Prokopim's direct control.

The organizational implication is that quality assurance should be designed around pre-event control points rather than only around procedures applied on the day of the event. Confirmation of venue readiness, travel time, named persons in charge, escalation channels, and deadlines for agenda changes would provide a stronger preventive mechanism.

Eight activities underwent sudden changes in the order of events. Such changes are not inherently evidence of poor performance because leadership agendas are dynamic and some adjustments are unavoidable. The critical issue is the organization's capacity to absorb change without creating informational disorder. The evidence revealed that this capacity remained limited because coordination was largely manual and situational. A change becomes more disruptive when there is no clearly recognized single source of current information, when different versions of a schedule circulate simultaneously, or when instructions are distributed through separate personal communications rather than through a controlled coordination process.

This interpretation overlaps with Heranita and Akhmad (2024), who emphasized work discipline and information-technology use in Prokopim performance, and with Apriady et al. (2023), who highlighted the relationship between leadership communication and employee performance. In Southeast Aceh, the need is not simply for more communication channels. The core requirement is communication governance that reduces ambiguity when the agenda changes. Technology becomes useful when it distributes the same authoritative information quickly, records changes, and helps users distinguish current instructions from obsolete ones. Without that governance function, additional channels may increase rather than reduce information fragmentation.

Documentation problems occurred in six activities and represent another component of implementation quality. Documentation is sometimes treated as an auxiliary task, yet in local government it supports administration, public information, accountability, reporting, and institutional memory. Weak documentation can reduce the quality of publication, complicate reporting, and eliminate evidence needed to review how an event was implemented. The resource data are relevant here: the unit had two cameras, leaving limited reserve capacity if two activities occurred simultaneously or a device failed. The finding therefore links implementation quality to resource redundancy and task prioritization rather than attributing documentation failure solely to individual competence.

Overall, the 75.69% compliance rate demonstrates an operational foundation but not fully stable implementation quality. Mature organizational quality is reflected in the capacity to maintain standards under pressure and change, not only under routine conditions. The evidence therefore directs improvement toward standardized pre-event checks, explicit change-management procedures, backup arrangements for critical equipment, and an official information channel that can function as a shared reference point. These measures would convert existing individual competence into a more reliable organizational process.

Resource Utilization: Multitasking as an Adaptive Strength and a Structural Vulnerability

Prokopim in Southeast Aceh Regency was supported by eight active personnel: one head of section, two heads of subsections, and five implementation staff. During the same year, the unit facilitated 144 activities. A simple division produces an average of 18 activities per employee per year, but this figure should not be interpreted as the actual individual workload because most activities require more than one employee and task distribution is not necessarily equal. The analytical value of the staffing data lies instead in showing the limited reserve capacity available when several activities occur close together or when one employee must perform multiple roles.

The qualitative evidence showed that personnel routinely used multitasking to maintain continuity of service. On one hand, this practice reflects commitment, flexibility, and experiential competence. Employees with secretariat experience were able to shift between functions when the regional head's agenda changed rapidly. On the other hand, persistent multitasking becomes a vulnerability if it is institutionalized as the principal mechanism for compensating for resource limitations. The Job Demands-Resources perspective suggests that high job demands are more sustainable when organizations provide adequate resources such as organizational support, equipment, competence, role clarity, and discretion (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). The adaptive capacity of Prokopim personnel should therefore be maintained but supported by clearer workload distribution and stronger organizational resources.

This finding is consistent with Heranita and Akhmad (2024), who showed that Prokopim performance is influenced not only by technical understanding but also by work conditions and technological support. Individual competence remains important, yet organizational effectiveness should not depend on a small number of employees being consistently able to absorb additional tasks. In Steers's (1985) framework, resource utilization should be assessed in terms of the fit between available resources and the requirements of organizational objectives. For Southeast Aceh, the primary issue is therefore not merely the number of employees but the alignment of competence profiles, task allocation, reserve staffing capacity, and facilities with the dynamic character of leadership agendas.

The material-resource profile reinforces this conclusion. The unit had three functioning handheld radios, one operational laptop, two documentation cameras, and one operational vehicle that had to be shared. Several of these resources created potential single points of failure. With only one operational laptop, there was no internal backup if the device failed or if two document-processing tasks had to be completed at the same time. A single operational vehicle created high dependence on scheduling and vehicle availability. Two cameras permitted some division of documentation tasks but still left little reserve capacity during simultaneous activities or equipment failure.

Resource limitations were directly connected with implementation quality. The six documented problems and part of the observed delays cannot be separated analytically from the capacity of personnel and equipment. This relationship illustrates one of the study's most important findings: the five dimensions of effectiveness are interdependent. Quality is produced through the interaction of personnel, facilities, coordination, and information readiness. Increasing the number of resources would therefore be insufficient if roles and coordination remained unclear, while digitalization would also be ineffective if personnel and devices were not prepared to use the system consistently.

The study deliberately avoids claiming an ideal staffing number because the available evidence did not include a formal workload analysis or an official staffing-needs standard. Any decision to add personnel should be grounded in job analysis and measurable workload evidence. What the present data do establish is the narrow margin of redundancy and the continuing dependence on multitasking. A practical first step is therefore to map workload peaks, specific competencies, functions that frequently overlap, and critical equipment requirements. Only after that mapping should the organization determine whether the appropriate response is staff addition, competency development, task redesign, equipment procurement, or a combination of those measures.

Interunit Coordination: the Central Weakness Lies in Governance of Information Flows

Interunit coordination emerged as the dimension in which structural weaknesses were most visible. Cross-agency coordination was conducted largely through situational communication, WhatsApp groups, and sudden instructions, while a standardized written SOP and an integrated communication-information system were not yet available. The use of WhatsApp is not itself a problem; it can be an efficient tool for rapid communication. The organizational risk appears when an informal conversational platform simultaneously becomes the primary medium for decisions, agenda changes, document distribution, attendance confirmation, and problem escalation without a consistent mechanism for recording authoritative information.

Under these conditions, miscommunication is not necessarily caused by insufficient communication. It can also result from a high volume of communication that lacks structure. Information may be dispersed across different conversations, altered without a clear version history, or received by different units at different times. Cejudo and Michel (2017) argue that fragmented government action requires coordination, coherence, and integration rather than merely a higher frequency of communication. Indonesian e-government studies similarly indicate that successful digitalization depends on organizational-process readiness and the capacity to integrate information and services (Nugraha, 2018; Wirawan, 2020). The principal requirement for Prokopim is therefore not simply a faster communication application, but a mechanism that establishes an authoritative information source, assigns responsibility for updates, and records changes in a traceable manner.

Hasim et al. (2024) identified coordination as a key element in improving services in a Protocol and Leadership Communication Section. The Southeast Aceh findings support that conclusion while adding the problem of information governance. Effective coordination should not be measured primarily by the frequency of contact among employees or agencies. Its quality is better assessed by whether information has a clear source, responsibilities can be traced, changes are known by relevant

actors, and decisions can be followed through. From this perspective, the reliability of the information flow is more important than the number of messages exchanged.

Digital transformation can contribute to improvement, but digitalization should not be understood as moving the same unstructured conversations from one application to another. Mergel et al. (2019) and Vial (2019) define digital transformation as change that affects processes, information flows, work structures, and the ways organizations create value through technology. Tangi et al. (2021) likewise show that digital-government transformation is shaped by organizational drivers and barriers, meaning that technology does not automatically improve performance if underlying procedures and coordination remain unclear. A leadership-agenda dashboard would therefore be valuable only after responsibilities, update authority, data standards, and the use of one official information source had been established.

The governance implications also relate to accountability. Darlan et al. (2024) connect Prokopim governance with good governance, and the present findings show why documented coordination matters. Clear and recorded instructions allow the organization to trace how a problem developed and to identify whether information was delayed, not confirmed, or changed without appropriate notification. Such traceability shifts post-event review away from blaming individuals and toward identifying weaknesses in the process. It also creates an evidence base for improving future events.

Coordination reform cannot be implemented by Prokopim alone. The section may improve its internal procedures, but it remains dependent on timely and accurate information from the SKPK responsible for particular activities. A cross-agency SOP is therefore required. At minimum, the procedure should specify when event information must be submitted, who is authorized to change the agenda, which documents are mandatory, who is responsible at the venue, which channel constitutes official confirmation, and how urgent changes are escalated. Without shared rules across units, digitalization could simply add another platform without improving information discipline.

Continuous Evaluation: Weak Documentation Limits Organizational Learning

The study found that post-event evaluation had not yet been implemented in a structured, measurable, and periodic manner. Evaluation generally took the form of informal discussions without systematic documentation of corrective action. Such discussions may help personnel respond to an immediate problem, but they do not ensure that the knowledge generated by experience is stored and reused. In an organization handling 144 activities in one year, the absence of a documented evaluation mechanism means that similar problems may recur without a reliable record of their frequency, causes, or the effectiveness of attempted solutions.

This weakness limits improvement in the other four dimensions. Delays cannot be reduced consistently if their causes are not categorized and followed up. Documentation problems cannot be addressed precisely if the organization does not know whether the main cause was equipment, task allocation, file handling, or an agenda change. Coordination problems cannot be distinguished between late information, unclear responsibility, and changing decisions if there is no post-event record. Evaluation is therefore the process through which field experience is converted into organizational knowledge.

In Steers's (1985) framework, adaptation and sustained organizational effectiveness require feedback. The Southeast Aceh evidence shows that feedback existed informally but had not yet been institutionalized. The lack of formal evaluation also makes successful practices difficult to reproduce. Organizations tend to notice and remember failure more readily than the factors that enabled 109 activities to meet protocol standards. A useful evaluation mechanism should therefore record not only deficiencies but also effective practices that can be converted into routine standards.

The required evaluation system does not need to be complex. A concise post-event form could record actual start time, agenda changes, transportation issues, venue readiness, communication problems, documentation constraints, corrective decisions, and the person responsible for follow-up. A short format used consistently is likely to be more valuable than an elaborate report that is rarely completed. Once accumulated over several months, these records can be analyzed for recurring patterns and used to prioritize corrective action. Evaluation would then function as part of performance management rather than as an administrative formality.

Evaluation is also relevant to public communication. Kungsiang et al. (2022) emphasize Prokopim's role in disseminating government information. If documentation and evaluation are weak, the quality of public communication may also be weakened because information materials, records of activities, and learning from public responses are not stored consistently. Post-event evaluation should therefore integrate both protocol and communication components, ensuring that these functions are treated as one organizational process rather than as parallel tasks.

Synthesis of Findings: Effectiveness is Shaped by Relationships Among Dimensions

The supporting and constraining factors identified in the study did not operate independently. Basic competence, secretariat experience, and employees' willingness to multitask were important supporting factors and helped explain why most activities could proceed even when facilities and coordination mechanisms were limited. However, these strengths were concentrated largely in individual capacity. By contrast, the constraining factors - limited resources, restricted field-communication equipment, fragmented data, manual coordination, and informal evaluation - were structural and systemic. The imbalance meant that organizational success depended heavily on the resilience of personnel rather than on a system that reliably supported them.

The findings extend the work of Heranita and Akhmad (2024), Apriady et al. (2023), Hasim et al. (2024), Kungsiang et al. (2022), and Darlan et al. (2024). The present study confirms the importance of communication, coordination, technology, work discipline, and governance, but it additionally shows how these factors intersect within one operational chain. Limited facilities can reduce implementation quality; manual coordination can increase the risk associated with agenda changes; agenda changes can increase employee workload; higher workload can intensify multitasking; and the absence of documented evaluation can allow the same problems to recur. Because these relationships are cumulative, partial solutions are unlikely to produce lasting improvement.

The substantive novelty of the study lies in conceptualizing Prokopim as an integrated support system for the regional head rather than as a set of separate ceremonial and communication tasks. This perspective shifts the benchmark of effectiveness from the successful completion of an event to the organization's capacity to maintain timely agendas, consistent information, resource readiness, cross-agency coordination, and post-event learning. The 109 activities that met standards therefore represent the beginning rather than the end of the analysis: they provide a basis for identifying the conditions that support success, while the remaining disruptions reveal where organizational systems require reinforcement.

The practical implications can be arranged in a sequence of institutional priorities. The first priority is to standardize cross-SKPK coordination by defining one authoritative agenda source, responsible officers, deadlines for information submission, and procedures for approving and communicating changes. The second is to map workloads and competencies so that task distribution, staff development, and any future decision on personnel additions are based on actual organizational needs. The third is to reinforce critical communication, documentation, document-processing, and mobility resources according to usage patterns and backup requirements. The fourth is to establish routine post-event evaluation with documented follow-up. These priorities are consistent with public-sector innovation literature that emphasizes process, service, and governance renewal as foundations for improved local-government performance (Kurniawan, 2016; Pratama, 2020; Wicaksono, 2018).

These improvements need not begin with a complex technology platform. The immediate requirement is process discipline and clear ownership of information. Technology adds value when the process being digitalized is already understood. Mergel et al. (2019) similarly emphasize that public-sector digital transformation involves changes in organizational processes. Consequently, a leadership-agenda dashboard or integrated coordination platform should be introduced only in conjunction with cross-unit SOPs, clearly assigned update authority, common data standards, and organizational commitment to one official information source. In this sense, digitalization should institutionalize a better process rather than merely automate an existing fragmented one.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that protocol and leadership communication in Southeast Aceh Regency performed their basic role in supporting the regional head's agenda, but organizational effectiveness had not yet been fully institutionalized. Of 144 activities in 2025, 109 (75.69%) met protocol standards, while the remainder included delays, sudden agenda changes, and documentation constraints. When interpreted through the five dimensions of organizational effectiveness, the central issue was not simply the final execution of events but the interaction among limited resource redundancy, intensive multitasking, manually managed cross-agency coordination, fragmented information flows, and post-event evaluation that remained largely informal. Individual competence and experience enabled many activities to succeed, but continuing dependence on personal adaptation and improvisation indicated that performance was not yet sufficiently supported by standardized organizational systems.

The principal practical implication is the need to institutionalize coordination and learning before relying on more complex digital solutions. Southeast Aceh Regency should establish a cross-SKPK SOP that defines the official source of agenda information, responsibilities, submission deadlines, and procedures for approving and communicating changes. Workload and competency mapping should precede decisions on staffing, while critical communication, documentation, document-processing, and mobility resources should be strengthened according to demonstrated needs and backup requirements. A concise and consistently documented post-event evaluation should become a routine organizational practice. These measures would enable Prokopim to develop from an event-facilitation unit that depends substantially on personal adaptability into an integrated leadership-support system capable of providing more anticipatory, consistent, accountable, and information-based support.

The study is limited by the absence of a formal workload analysis and by its focus on a single regency context. Future research may compare Prokopim effectiveness across regencies or combine qualitative analysis with formal workload measurement and stakeholder-satisfaction assessment. Such extensions would allow a more comprehensive evaluation of organizational effectiveness and provide a stronger basis for comparing resource needs, coordination models, and communication practices across local governments.

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