Research Article

One Roof, Many Users: Public Acceptance of The Integrated Public Service Mall in Maros, Indonesia

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Abstract

Integrated public service malls have been promoted across Indonesia to end the fragmentation of administrative services, yet their success is usually assessed through institutional performance rather than through the acceptance of the citizens who use them. This study analyses public acceptance of the Public Service Mall (Mal Pelayanan Publik, MPP) of Maros Regency, South Sulawesi, which has brought together services from national, provincial, and regional agencies and state-owned enterprises in a single location since August 2022. A qualitative single case study was conducted through in-depth interviews with eight service users, comprising first-time users, repeat users, and a micro-enterprise owner, together with three service staff for triangulation, supported by direct observation of service flows and analysis of regulations and service documents. Acceptance was examined through five perceived attributes of innovation: relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability. The findings show that relative advantage is the strongest attribute, as users no longer move between village, district, and agency offices and save time and transport costs, especially when handling several documents. Compatibility is high because the one-stop concept matches long-standing expectations of simple procedures and covers the documents most needed by households. Complexity is low for most users, but the WhatsApp-based queue creates barriers for middle-aged users with declining eyesight. Trialability is supported by open access for first-time users and by scheduled trials and evaluations. Observability is high, as benefits spread through family and relatives. Acceptance is broadly positive but uneven, requiring inclusive queue design and structured community outreach.

Keywords: Diffusion Of Innovation; Integrated Public Services; One-Stop Service; Citizen Acceptance; Digital Inclusion.

1 Introduction

Public service reform in many countries has moved from organising services around agencies toward organising them around citizens. Research on digital government identifies several understandings of citizen-centricity, ranging from end results and service design to governance arrangements and the active role of users (Dechamps et al., 2025), while a systematic review warns that user-centric designs can collide with established public values such as equal treatment and accountability (Weigl et al., 2024). Digital transformation can improve governmental efficiency when departments coordinate their work (Yang et al., 2024), but public organizations may also decouple reform initiatives from everyday operations in ways that weaken performance (Crusoe et al., 2024). Integrated service delivery therefore depends not only on institutional arrangements but also on how citizens experience and accept the new service model.

Indonesia has pursued integrated service delivery through the Public Service Mall (Mal Pelayanan Publik, MPP). Presidential Regulation No. 89 of 2021 defines the MPP as a location that integrates services from ministries, agencies, regional governments, and state-owned and regionally owned enterprises in one place, applying face-to-face, electronic, and self-service modes. The policy builds on Law No. 25 of 2009 on Public Services, which requires services to be fast, easy, affordable, measurable, and legally certain. Public sector innovation is positively associated with development outcomes in Indonesian districts (Hilmawan et al., 2023), yet digital innovation adoption in Indonesian local government does not automatically improve public services even when it strengthens government performance (Purnamasari et al., 2025). The presence of a service building and the number of participating agencies are therefore insufficient indicators of the success of an MPP.

Citizen acceptance is shaped by a combination of perceived benefits, ease of use, and trust. Use of e-government services in Indonesia is influenced by government capacity, information quality, service quality, trust, and perceived risk (Maktub et al., 2025), and government support improves digital literacy and intention to use digital technology among small enterprises (Desmaryani et al., 2024). Disclosure of information about government performance can increase trust (Ripamonti, 2024), and a large field experiment found that informative and social-norm messages more than doubled the adoption of online tax filing among late adopters (Hyytinen et al., 2022). Acceptance is also unequal: digital participation platforms in Indonesian cities face

uneven citizen access (McDermott et al., 2025), and usability barriers such as small fonts and complex navigation persist for older users (Khamaj & Ali, 2024).

Diffusion of innovation theory provides a framework for analysing acceptance from the perspective of adopters. Rogers (2003) identifies five perceived attributes that shape the rate of adoption: relative advantage, the degree to which an innovation is perceived as better than the idea it supersedes; compatibility, its consistency with existing values, past experiences, and needs; complexity, the degree to which it is perceived as difficult to understand and use; trialability, the degree to which it may be experimented with on a limited basis; and observability, the degree to which its results are visible to others. Empirical studies show that these attributes do not operate uniformly: in higher education, relative advantage and observability predicted adoption, while trialability had no significant effect (Menzli et al., 2022).

The MPP of Maros Regency provides a relevant case for applying this framework. Established under Regent Regulation No. 68 of 2022 and inaugurated on 19 August 2022, it began operating with 97 services from 20 agencies, managed by the Investment, One-Stop Integrated Service, and Manpower Office (DPMPTSP). The participating agencies include the population and civil registration office, the regional revenue agency, the land office, the tax office, the immigration office, the vehicle tax office, national health and employment insurance agencies, the regional water and electricity companies, and the regional development bank. The facility is located in the former old terminal in Turikale District, in the centre of the regency capital, and uses a WhatsApp-based queue that also collects satisfaction surveys. At the same time, the South Sulawesi representative office of the national Ombudsman continues to record regional governments as the most frequently reported public service providers.

Previous studies of public service malls in Indonesia have largely examined policy implementation, institutional coordination, or service quality, and some have mixed Rogers' attributes with indicators of organizational performance. Such approaches blur the distinction between how well a policy is implemented and how far citizens accept the innovation. This study addresses that gap by focusing exclusively on the perceptions of citizens as adopters and by treating the five attributes as dimensions that may move independently in a hybrid innovation combining physical integration with a digital queue. The study aims to analyse public acceptance of the MPP of Maros Regency through the five perceived attributes of innovation.

2. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative single case study design, which is suited to examining a contemporary phenomenon in depth within its real-life context (Yin, 2018). The case was the MPP of Maros Regency, and the unit of analysis was citizens' acceptance of the innovation rather than the performance of the managing institution. Informants were selected purposively and the number was determined by information power, with data collection ending when patterns were repeated and no significant new information emerged. Eight service users were interviewed as the primary source: two first-time users obtaining identity cards, five repeat users handling family cards, birth certificates, and motor vehicle tax payments, and one micro-enterprise owner handling an environmental management statement. Their ages ranged from 17 to 48 years, and their visits to the MPP ranged from one to six. Three MPP staff, a receptionist and two registration counter officers, were interviewed only to provide policy and operational context for triangulation. Interviews were conducted between 7 and 23 September 2026.

Data were collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews guided by the five attributes of innovation, direct observation of service flows, the queue system, and interactions between staff and users at the MPP, and analysis of regulations, service profiles, and requirements for each service. Data were analysed deductively using the five attributes as main categories while remaining open to emerging themes, through data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification (Miles et al., 2014). Credibility was ensured through source triangulation between users and staff, method triangulation between interviews, observation, and documents, and member checking with key informants.

3. RESULTS

The findings are presented according to the five perceived attributes of innovation. The attributes are interconnected in users' experiences: the advantages of integration explain why the MPP matches citizens' expectations, the ease of the service process determines whether these advantages can be obtained by all users, the openness to first-time use shapes how new users enter the system, and the visibility of benefits determines how acceptance spreads to others.

3.1 Relative Advantage: Ending the Journey Between Offices

The clearest finding of this study is that users perceive the MPP as markedly better than the fragmented service system it replaced. Before the MPP, residents handling population documents moved from the village or urban village office to the district office and then to the civil registration office, and users who had obtained an identity card several years earlier recall visiting two to three offices before the document was issued. At the MPP, the same services are completed in one location, and a family card renewal can be finished within one to two days of a single visit. Users describe savings in time, fuel, and transport costs, as well as relief from the uncertainty of not knowing which office should be visited first. A first-time user obtaining an identity card waited less than 30 minutes in the queue and was promised the card within five working days, a timeframe that was met.

The strength of relative advantage varies according to the user's needs. The advantage is felt most strongly by users who handle more than one document or require services from several agencies, because integration eliminates the movement between offices that previously multiplied costs. Users handling a single document perceive the MPP mainly as fast, comfortable, and accessible, but are less able to articulate a specific advantage because they have no direct comparison with the earlier system. Relative advantage is therefore relational: it emerges from the comparison between past and present experience, and its intensity depends on the number of services needed in a single visit. Research on e-government adoption in Indonesia confirms that perceived performance gains are central to citizens' intention to use public services (Maktub et al., 2025), and evidence from digital transformation shows that efficiency gains are greatest when agencies coordinate their work (Yang et al., 2024).

Table 1. Perceived relative advantage of the MPP of Maros Regency by user situation

User situation	Experience before the MPP	Experience at the MPP	Perceived advantage
Repeat user, family card (I-3)	Village office, district office, then civil registration office	All steps completed in one location	Savings in fuel and time
Repeat user, family card renewal (I-5)	Identity card required visits to 2–3 offices	Single visit; completed within 1–2 days	Lower transport cost and faster completion
Repeat user, birth certificate (I-4)	Services scattered across separate offices	All services gathered in one building	Efficiency and comfort
First-time user, identity card (I-1)	No prior experience	Queue under 30 minutes; card in 5 working days as promised	Speed and ease, without a specific comparison

Source: Interviews with service users (September 2026), processed by the authors.

These findings show that relative advantage is the strongest attribute in public acceptance of the MPP of Maros Regency. Relative advantage refers to the degree to which an innovation is perceived as better than the idea it supersedes and is among the strongest predictors of the rate of adoption (Rogers, 2003). The Maros case confirms this proposition, since users who experienced the earlier fragmented system immediately recognise the savings in time, cost, and uncertainty that integration provides. It also refines the proposition by showing that relative advantage is not uniform, because it depends on the user's prior experience and on the number of services needed in one visit. First-time and single-document users experience the advantage as convenience rather than as a clear improvement over the past. The MPP management should communicate concrete comparisons of time and cost savings, particularly for combined document services, through targeted information to residents who have not yet used the MPP, as informative and social-norm messages have been shown to double the adoption of digital public services among late adopters (Hyytinen et al., 2022).

3.2 Compatibility: Meeting Long-Standing Expectations

The advantages of integration are accepted readily because they match what citizens have long expected from public services. Users expect procedures with few requirements and no unnecessary steps, and the MPP meets this expectation; one repeat user renewing a family card needed to bring only the old card. The services most frequently needed by ordinary households, namely identity cards, family cards, birth certificates, and motor vehicle tax payments, are all available at the MPP, and users also note the availability of pawnshop, tax, and business services in the same building. The one-stop concept therefore does not introduce an unfamiliar value but responds to a need that the earlier system had failed to accommodate. Compatibility also operates at the

institutional level, as the MPP reflects the national bureaucratic reform agenda under Presidential Regulation No. 89 of 2021, although the analysis here focuses on the level of individual users.

Compatibility at the level of the service concept does not automatically extend to every element of service delivery. The physical integration of agencies matches users' habits of handling documents in person, whereas the electronic queue introduces a digital step that is compatible with the habits of younger users but less so with those of users who rarely operate smartphones. Table 2 shows that the documents sought by users in this study correspond to agencies present at the MPP, which explains why no user reported having to leave the building to complete a service. Compatibility is therefore high for the substance of services and more conditional for the digital tools that accompany them. Research on citizen-centric digital government shows that service design, governance, and user involvement must be aligned for services to fit citizens' needs (Dechamps et al., 2025), while user-centric designs can conflict with public values when some users are not considered (Weigl et al., 2024).

Table 2. Services sought by informants and the corresponding agencies at the MPP of Maros Regency

Service sought	Informants	Agency at the MPP	Availability in one location
Identity card (KTP)	I-1, I-2	Population and Civil Registration Office	Available
Family card (KK) and renewal	I-3, I-5	Population and Civil Registration Office	Available
Birth certificate	I-4, I-10	Population and Civil Registration Office	Available
Environmental management statement (SPPL)	I-6	DPMPTSP licensing services	Available
Motor vehicle tax payment	I-11	Joint vehicle tax office (Samsat)	Available

Source: Interviews with service users (September 2026) and the official MPP Maros service list, processed by the authors.

These findings show that compatibility in the MPP of Maros Regency is high for the service concept and conditional for its digital components. Compatibility refers to the degree to which an innovation is perceived as consistent with existing values, past experiences, and the needs of potential adopters, and higher compatibility reduces uncertainty and resistance (Rogers, 2003). The MPP fulfils this condition because it gives citizens what they already wanted, namely simple requirements and all frequently needed documents in one place. The case also shows that a single innovation may contain components with different degrees of compatibility, since the physical one-stop concept fits all users while the digital queue fits mainly those accustomed to smartphones. This distinction links compatibility directly to the next attribute, as conditional compatibility becomes visible as complexity for certain user groups. The MPP management should periodically map the documents and service combinations most needed by residents and adjust the composition of agencies and service channels accordingly, as citizen-centric digital government requires the continuous alignment of service design and governance with users' needs (Dechamps et al., 2025).

3.3 Complexity: A Simple Flow, a Demanding Queue

The conditional compatibility of the digital queue appears as complexity for some users. For most users, the service flow is easy to follow: a reception desk at the entrance directs visitors, service codes are printed on a sheet at the desk, users send a WhatsApp message with the service code and their name, receive a queue number within one to two minutes, and wait to be called at the counter. Written information and explanations from the receptionists make the procedure clear even for first-time visitors, and several users consider the queue easy because almost everyone has WhatsApp. Younger and middle-aged users accustomed to smartphones describe the process as fast and simple, and the micro-enterprise owner who handled a licensing service found no difficulty in following the flow. Electronic communication between public services and citizens saves time, although it can also increase the demand placed on frontline staff (Løberg, 2021).

The same queue creates barriers for users with declining eyesight. A 48-year-old user could not read the WhatsApp screen and had to wait for her child to obtain a queue number, while a 43-year-old user found the printed service codes too small and asked staff to read them aloud. Their difficulty does not concern the service procedure as a whole but a chain of small interactions, namely reading the service code, opening the application,

typing the message format, and reading the reply, each of which appears simple but accumulates into a real obstacle. Complexity is therefore concentrated in one segment of users rather than distributed across the population, and the need to ask staff repeatedly compensates for information that could not be obtained independently. Digitalisation tends to reduce service work to codifiable steps that omit personal contact (Andersson et al., 2022), yet in Maros it is precisely the personal contact at the reception desk that enables these users to complete the digital step. Studies of administrative simplification show that reducing procedural requirements lowers exclusion errors in public programs (Asri et al., 2022), and research on e-government chatbots finds that messaging-based tools mainly support simple information tasks and are rarely evaluated for usability among diverse users (Cortés-Cediel et al., 2023).

Table 3. Steps of the WhatsApp-based queue and difficulties experienced by users

Step	Experience of most users	Difficulty for users with declining eyesight
Direction at the reception desk	Immediate guidance at the entrance	Requires assistance from staff
Reading the service code	Codes printed on the desk sheet are clear	Print too small to read (I-10)
Sending the WhatsApp message	Easy because WhatsApp is widely used	Screen text not visible; relied on a child (I-5)
Receiving the queue number	Reply within 1–2 minutes	Reply difficult to read without help
Waiting for the counter call	Simple once the number is obtained	No reported difficulty

Source: Interviews with service users and staff, and observation at the MPP of Maros Regency (September 2026), processed by the authors.

These findings show that complexity in the MPP of Maros Regency is low for most users but concentrated among users with declining eyesight and limited smartphone habits. Complexity is the only attribute that is negatively related to the rate of adoption, because innovations perceived as difficult to understand and use are adopted more slowly (Rogers, 2003). The Maros case refines this proposition by showing that complexity does not arise from the core of the innovation, the integration of services, but from an additional digital layer intended to increase efficiency. Because this layer assumes that all users can read and type on a smartphone screen independently, the barrier is a matter of design accessibility rather than of users' willingness to adopt. Left unaddressed, it may slow adoption among middle-aged and older residents, who frequently need population document services. The MPP management should enlarge the printed service codes, provide dedicated assistance for queue registration, and offer a parallel non-digital queue option, since small fonts and complex navigation have been shown to be recurring barriers that require simpler interfaces and stronger accessibility features for older users (Khamaj & Ali, 2024).

3.4 Trialability: Open Entry and Iterative Testing

Despite the barriers faced by some users, entry to the MPP remains open to anyone who wishes to try it. First-time users can walk in without prior registration or membership, are met by the reception desk, and obtain a queue number immediately, so the cost of a first try is low. The two first-time users in this study, both obtaining identity cards, were able to use the service on their first visit, with staff explaining the service code and message format where needed. Trialability for users is therefore high: residents can test the MPP with a single document before relying on it for more complex needs, and a positive first experience encourages return visits, as shown by repeat users who had visited between two and six times.

Trialability is also embedded in the way the MPP was introduced and is managed. Before official operation, all services were tested and repaired until they were considered ready, and the electronic queue and digital services were introduced gradually to match the readiness of staff and users. After operation began, evaluations have been conducted monthly, every six months, and at the end of each year, each with a different focus. The WhatsApp channel used for queuing also collects satisfaction surveys, providing a feedback loop through which users' input can inform these evaluations, consistent with evidence that substantive public input is associated with greater changes in public rules (Ingrams, 2023). This combination of open entry for users and iterative testing by the provider reduces the likelihood that new users repeatedly encounter the same errors. Public sector innovation benefits from small, short, and low-cost pilots that allow problems to be corrected before full implementation (Soe, 2023), and organizational learning and empowerment are known to improve public sector performance (Imam et al., 2025). Internal control and organizational culture also drive innovation in Indonesian

public agencies (Maqdliyan & Setiawan, 2023), and change readiness strengthens the agility of public services (Almazrouei et al., 2024).

Table 4. Trial and evaluation mechanisms supporting trialability at the MPP of Maros Regency

Stage	Mechanism	Function for adoption
Before official operation	Testing of all services, repair, and re-testing	Corrects design errors before users encounter them
Introduction of digital services	Gradual introduction of the electronic queue and digital services	Matches the readiness of staff and users
Monthly evaluation	Review of service processes and problems	Rapid correction of recurring issues
Six-monthly and annual evaluation	Evaluation with different focuses	Consolidates improvements over time
First visit by users	Walk-in access without prior registration; staff guidance	Low-cost first trial with a single document

Source: Interviews with MPP staff and service users (September 2026), processed by the authors.

These findings show that trialability at the MPP of Maros Regency is high and supported from two sides. Trialability refers to the degree to which an innovation may be experimented with on a limited basis, and innovations that can be tried reduce uncertainty for potential adopters (Rogers, 2003). Users can try the MPP with minimal risk, while the provider treats trials and evaluations as a continuing learning cycle rather than a one-time launch. This dual form of trialability is significant because open access without systematic evaluation would expose successive new users to inconsistent experiences, whereas iterative evaluation ensures that what is tried continues to improve. The evaluations, however, are conducted internally and are not yet documented as written reports, so organizational learning still depends on individual staff. The MPP management should document its periodic evaluations and involve users in assessing services, since co-production that includes co-design and co-assessment with citizens has been shown to generate administrative, societal, and citizen value in digital public service transformation (Scupola & Mergel, 2022).

3.5 Observability: Benefits That Travel Through Families

The experiences gained through trial and repeated use become visible to others and drive further adoption. Users learned about the MPP mainly from family members and relatives who had used it earlier; one user came after a relative reported fast service, and another after a sibling who had handled health insurance services recommended it. The benefits that users observe and pass on are concrete: clear service flows, completion within the promised time, comfortable facilities, and complete information. The large number of visitors to the MPP further signals to residents that the facility is widely used. Observability is therefore high, and diffusion proceeds largely through interpersonal communication rather than through formal promotion.

Observability, however, has limits in reach and direction. Information travels most effectively within social networks connected to the regency capital, and users note that residents in remote areas at the edges of the regency may not yet know about the MPP. Interpersonal communication also works in both directions: positive experiences accelerate diffusion, but negative experiences, such as difficulties with the queue, can discourage potential users who have not yet tried the MPP. The consistency of service quality therefore determines whether the stories that circulate among residents remain predominantly positive. Research on word-of-mouth shows that face-to-face conversations are usually consulted early in information search and depend on network size and tie strength (Bartschat et al., 2022), that diffusion in clustered networks is shaped by homophily and social reinforcement (Tur et al., 2024), and that information credibility and trust determine whether peer information influences decisions (Ngo et al., 2024; Handoyo, 2024).

These findings show that observability at the MPP of Maros Regency is high but geographically bounded. Observability refers to the degree to which the results of an innovation are visible to others, and visible results stimulate peer discussion that reduces uncertainty among potential adopters (Rogers, 2003). In Maros, the benefits of the MPP are observed directly by users and retold to family and relatives, making interpersonal networks the main channel of diffusion. This channel is effective because it is based on real experience, but it reaches mainly those who are socially connected to existing users in and around the regency capital. The effectiveness of observability also depends on the consistency of service quality, linking it back to the complexity experienced by some users. The MPP management should strengthen interpersonal diffusion in a structured

way through village and urban village governments and community figures who can share users' experiences in remote areas, since face-to-face word-of-mouth is consulted early in people's information search and its influence depends on network size and tie strength (Bartschat et al., 2022).

4. CONCLUSION

Public acceptance of the Public Service Mall of Maros Regency is broadly positive, but it is not uniform across the five attributes of innovation or across user groups. Relative advantage is the strongest attribute, as users no longer move between village, district, and agency offices and save time, transport costs, and uncertainty, especially when handling several documents. Compatibility is high because the one-stop concept matches long-standing expectations of simple procedures and brings the documents most needed by households into one location. Complexity is low for most users, but the WhatsApp-based queue creates a concentrated barrier for middle-aged users with declining eyesight and limited smartphone habits. Trialability is high because first-time users can walk in without prior registration and the provider tests and evaluates services periodically. Observability is high because benefits spread through family and relatives, although this channel reaches mainly residents connected to the regency capital.

The strengths of the innovation lie in its core concept of integration, while its main weakness lies in a supporting digital layer that can be corrected without changing the overall service model. Enlarged service codes, assisted queue registration, a parallel non-digital queue, documented evaluations involving users, and structured outreach through village governments are required to ensure that no group of residents is left behind. This study is limited to a single case and a small number of informants, and it did not examine adopter categories or the diffusion process over time. Further research should compare public service malls in several regions and combine qualitative analysis with visitor and satisfaction data to trace acceptance across user groups.

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