

# Innovation of “Virtual Living Room” in Improving the Quality of Public Services at the Bengkulu Food and Drug Administration: A Case Study

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**ABSTRACT**

This study aims to analyze the “Virtual Living Room” innovation at the Bengkulu POM Office in improving the quality of public services. The Virtual Living Room is a video conference-based consultation service that allows the public to connect directly with BPOM officers via the Zoom application without having to physically come to the office. The study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. Data collection techniques include in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation. The results of the study show that the Virtual Living Room innovation has contributed positively to improving the quality of public services, particularly in terms of ease of access, speed of response, and time efficiency. This innovation has also been expanded to the MPPs of Central Bengkulu and North Bengkulu Regencies. Challenges faced include public digital literacy, network infrastructure, and suboptimal socialization. The study recommends strengthening the capacity of officers, optimizing socialization, and developing service features to ensure the sustainability of the innovation.

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## 1. Introduction

The development of digital technology has brought fundamental changes in the delivery of public services. The era of digitalization requires governments to continue innovating to provide services that are fast, easy, transparent, and accessible to all levels of society without the constraints of distance and time (Yunaningsih & Indah, 2021). The digitalization of public services is no longer just an option, but a necessity in efforts to achieve good governance and increase public satisfaction (Anggraini et al., 2025).

The Indonesian government has demonstrated its commitment to promoting digital transformation through various strategic policies. Presidential Regulation No. 95 of 2018 concerning Electronic-Based Government Systems (SPBE) provides the legal basis that requires all government agencies to integrate information technology into government processes and public services (Presidential Regulation No. 95, 2018). This policy aims to create an effective, efficient, transparent, and accountable bureaucracy through the use of digital technology (Aditya et al., 2025). However, the implementation of SPBE at the regional level still faces various challenges, ranging from infrastructure readiness and human resources to resistance to change (Wicaksono, 2025).

Amidst these challenges, the Bengkulu Food and Drug Supervisory Agency (BPOM) has emerged as one of the government agencies that has consistently demonstrated its commitment to transforming public services. Various achievements and awards have been received, including the Excellent Public Service award in the Impactful Bureaucratic Reform assessment for the category of public services that are friendly to vulnerable groups from the Ministry of PANRB in 2024 (RRI, 2024). BPOM Bengkulu was deemed highly qualified and has met the standards for public services that are friendly to vulnerable groups, such as providing adequate information and facilities for the elderly, people with disabilities, pregnant women, and other vulnerable groups (Haluan Bengkulu, 2024).

One of the latest innovations launched by the Bengkulu POM Office is the “Virtual Living Room”. This innovation was introduced directly at the Bengkulu BPOM counter located in the Bengkulu City

Public Service Mall (MPP) area in May 2025, as a form of digital-based service transformation (Bengkulu BPOM Office, 2025). Through the Virtual Living Room, the public can easily access various information and services related to drug and food supervision online without having to physically visit the BPOM office (Bengkulutoday, n.d.).

The Virtual Living Room innovation was not only introduced at the Bengkulu City MPP, but also expanded to the Central Bengkulu Regency MPP and North Bengkulu Regency MPP in April 2025 (Bengkulu Food and Drug Monitoring Agency, 2025). This expansion was carried out to respond to the needs of business actors, particularly Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), who require assistance with licensing, product safety, and complaints. This step is in line with research findings that the digitization of public services can strengthen local economic empowerment if designed with specific user needs in mind (Pedoman Bengkulu, 2025).

The Head of the Bengkulu POM Office, Yogi Abaso Mataram, emphasized that this innovation is part of BPOM's commitment to continuous innovation in service. "We want to ensure that the public, especially MSME players, can easily obtain information and assistance, regardless of distance. This is part of our efforts to support healthy and competitive business growth" (Balai POM di Bengkulu, 2025). This statement reflects the awareness that the success of e-government implementation is not only determined by the availability of technology, but also by strong political commitment and leadership (Zakaria et al., 2025).

Technically, the Virtual Living Room allows the public to connect directly with BPOM officers through the Zoom application (Riyanto et al., 2025). The public can visit the BPOM counter at the Bengkulu City MPP and immediately use the Virtual Living Room facility, with the assistance of officers who are available to help every Monday to Friday from 08.00 to 15.00 WIB (Qonita & Rokhish, 2024). This service is designed to overcome geographical and time constraints, so that people in remote areas can also receive consultation services equivalent to those in urban areas (Ariska & Kadafi, 2025).

Research on the digitization of public services in various regions shows that similar innovations have had a positive impact. Gempani et al. (2025) in their study on the implementation of BPOM Mobile in

Padang City found that the application made it easier for the public to verify product distribution permits, report violations, and access food safety information in real-time [18]. Riyanto et al. (2025) in their research on real-time food safety information (Sumiyati & Raharjo, 2025). Riyanto et al. (2025) in their research at BPOM Pangkal Pinang also found that service digitization and strengthening human resource competencies are key strategies in increasing public satisfaction (Leyn et al., 2026).

However, various studies have also identified challenges in the implementation of public service digitization. Qonita & Rokhish (2024) found that the low level of understanding and utilization of public service applications by the community was due to limited digital literacy, minimal socialization, and unequal access to technology (Sidabutar, 2025). Zakaria et al. (2025) in their study on the implementation of the SRIKANDI system found that the main challenges include information security, limited human resources, and disparities in political commitment between regions (Aziz, 2020).

Based on the background description above, the research questions in this study are: (1) How is the Virtual Living Room innovation implemented in public services at the Bengkulu POM Center? (2) How does the Virtual Living Room innovation contribute to improving the quality of public services at the Bengkulu POM Center? (3) What are the supporting and inhibiting factors in the implementation of the Virtual Living Room innovation at the Bengkulu POM Center? This study aims to describe the implementation of innovation, analyze its contribution to service quality, and identify the supporting and inhibiting factors of implementation. The novelty of this research lies in its in-depth study of video conference-based consultation service innovations at BPOM, which have rarely been studied, especially in the southern part of Sumatra.

## **2. Method**

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. A qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to understand the phenomenon of Virtual Living Room innovation at the Bengkulu POM Center in depth and holistically (Creswell, 2014). The

case study method was used because this study focuses on exploring specific cases in a real-life context (Yin, 2014).

The research was conducted at the Bengkulu Food and Drug Supervisory Agency (BPOM) located at Jalan Depati Payung Negara KM. 13 No. 29 Pekan Sabtu, Bengkulu City, and at the Bengkulu City Public Service Mall (MPP) where the Virtual Living Room service was operated (Moleong, 2017). The research was also conducted at the MPP of Central Bengkulu Regency and the MPP of North Bengkulu Regency to observe the expansion of services (Sugiyono, 2017). The research was conducted over a period of six months, from August 2025 to January 2026.

The data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with informants selected using purposive sampling (Miles et al., 2014). The criteria for informants included direct involvement in the formulation and implementation of innovations, experience in using services, and willingness to participate. Informants consisted of the Head of the Bengkulu POM Office (1 person), structural officials involved in innovation (2 people), Virtual Guest Room officers at the Bengkulu City MPP (2 people), assistant officers at the Central Bengkulu Regency MPP (1 person), assistant officers at the North Bengkulu Regency MPP (1 person), and service users (5 people) (Parasuraman et al., 1988).

Secondary data were obtained from documentation, archives, official publications of the Bengkulu POM Office, annual reports, standard operating procedures (SOPs), service statistics, and various related literature such as journals, books, and laws and regulations (Mulgan & Albury, 2003). Data collection techniques were carried out through in-depth interviews with semi-structured guidelines, participatory observation during the research period, and documentation studies (Rogers, 2003).

Data analysis was conducted using the interactive model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which consists of three stages: data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing/verification (BPOM RI, 2023). Data validity was tested through source triangulation, technique triangulation, member check, peer debriefing, and audit trail (Benzaghta et al., 2021).

### **3. Results And Discussion**

#### **3.1 Implementation of Virtual Living Room Innovation**

Based on interviews with the Head of the Bengkulu POM Office, the Virtual Living Room innovation was born out of an awareness of the need for service transformation in the digital age, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic, which limited physical interaction (Kepala Balai POM Bengkulu, komunikasi pribadi, 15 September 2025). The innovation formulation process involved various stakeholders, including the Bengkulu Provincial Communication and Information Agency, the Bengkulu City MPP, and representatives of MSME actors (Pejabat Struktural BPOM Bengkulu, komunikasi pribadi, 20 September 2025). Discussions and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) were held for three months before the innovation was finally launched in May 2025 (Balai POM di Bengkulu, 2025).

Technically, the Virtual Living Room is implemented through the provision of adequate hardware and software at each service counter. Based on the researchers' observations, each counter is equipped with a high-specification computer, HD camera, headset with noise-canceling microphone, institutionally licensed Zoom application, dedicated internet connection with a minimum bandwidth of 50 Mbps, and backup staff who provide technical assistance, from opening the Zoom application, connecting to BPOM officers, to guiding the consultation process (Petugas Pendamping MPP Kota Bengkulu, komunikasi pribadi, 12 Oktober 2025).

Data from BPOM Bengkulu shows that during the period May-December 2025, the number of users of the Virtual Living Room service reached 1,247 people, with details of 678 people in MPP Kota Bengkulu, 312 people in MPP Bengkulu Tengah, and 257 people in MPP Bengkulu Utara (Balai POM di Bengkulu, 2025). The most utilized services were product licensing consultations (45%), food safety information (30%), and product complaints (15%) (Balai POM di Bengkulu, 2025).

## 3.2 Contribution to Service Quality

To analyze the contribution of Virtual Living Room innovation to improving the quality of public services, this study uses the five dimensions of SERVQUAL from Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988), which have been adapted to the context of digital public services (Parasuraman et al., 1988).

### 3.2.1 Tangibles (Physical Evidence)

The Virtual Living Room is equipped with adequate, high-quality technology. Special counters are provided at each MPP with a comfortable, informative, and vulnerable group-friendly design (Observasi fasilitas Ruang Tamu Virtual di MPP Kota Bengkulu, 15 Oktober 2025). A 65-year-old informant said: "I was initially hesitant because I was not familiar with technology. But the officers here were very patient in helping me. The room is comfortable, there are seats, and the officers explain everything clearly" (Pengguna Layanan Lansia, komunikasi pribadi, 18 Oktober 2025).

### 3.2.2 Reliability Dimension

The service operates consistently every working day during the specified service hours. The BPOM officers on duty are competent officers who have undergone special training on virtual services (Petugas Pelayanan BPOM, komunikasi pribadi, 22 Oktober 2025). BPOM Bengkulu data shows that the service reliability rate has reached 98.5%, measured by the percentage of consultation sessions that were successfully held without significant technical obstacles (Balai POM di Bengkulu, 2025).

### 3.2.3 Responsiveness Dimension

The average time to receive consultation services is 5-10 minutes, which is much faster than conventional services that can take 30-60 minutes (Observasi waktu tunggu pelayanan di MPP Kota Bengkulu, November 2025). One service user stated, "I used to have to go to the BPOM office, wait in line, and sometimes run out of time. Now, I just go to the MPP, sit in the virtual room, and connect directly with the officer."

### 3.2.4 Gujuih Assurance Dimension

The Bengkulu BPOM has clear service standards as stipulated in the Head of Office Decree Number: HK.01.02.7A.7A4.06.21.1690 concerning Public Service Standards (Balai POM di Bengkulu, 2021). The public can submit complaints through various channels such as WhatsApp ULPK, HaloBPOM, and official social media (Observasi saluran pengaduan BPOM Bengkulu, November 2025).

### 3.2.5 Empathy Dimension

This innovation demonstrates concern for the ease of access for vulnerable groups such as the elderly, people with disabilities, and pregnant women (Balai POM di Bengkulu, 2025). An informant with a visual impairment revealed, "I came to the MPP with a companion. The officer was very helpful, even reading the information from the layer for me" (Informan Penyandang Disabilitas, komunikasi pribadi, 12 November 2025).

## 3.3 Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

### 3.3.1 Supporting Factors

This includes the strong commitment and leadership of the Head of the Bengkulu POM Office, who consistently encourages innovation (Kepala Balai POM Bengkulu, komunikasi pribadi, 15 September 2025); policy and regulatory support such as the Presidential Regulation on SPBE and POM Regulations (Balai POM di Bengkulu, 2025); the competence of human resources who have undergone training (Balai POM di Bengkulu, 2025); and achievements and reputation that build motivation (Balai POM di Bengkulu, 2025).

### 3.3.2 Inhibiting Factors

These include the varying levels of digital literacy among the population, particularly among the elderly and those with low levels of education (Observasi interaksi masyarakat dengan layanan Ruang Tamu Virtual, 2025); limited network infrastructure in some districts (Balai POM di Bengkulu, 2025); suboptimal dissemination, with only 35% of MPP visitors aware of this service (Balai POM di Bengkulu, 2025); limited human resources, with only 3 officers in the City MPP and 1 in the District MPP (Balai POM di Bengkulu, 2025); and internal

bureaucratic resistance from a small number of employees who are comfortable with the way things are done (Staf BPOM Bengkulu, komunikasi pribadi, 25 November 2025).

#### **4. Conclusion**

Based on the results of the research and discussion, several conclusions can be drawn. First, the implementation of the Virtual Living Room innovation at the Bengkulu POM Center was carried out through the provision of video conference facilities at the Central Bengkulu City MPP and the North Bengkulu MPP. The innovation formulation process involved collaboration between various stakeholders and was based on the real needs of the community. Technically, this service is equipped with adequate facilities and support staff who are ready to assist the community. Second, the Virtual Living Room innovation contributed significantly to improving the quality of public services in all dimensions of SERVQUAL: tangibles (adequate facilities), reliability (consistent service), responsiveness (fast waiting time), assurance (professional officers), and empathy (attention to vulnerable groups). Third, supporting factors for implementation include leadership commitment, policy support, inter-agency collaboration, human resource competence, and institutional performance. Hindering factors include community digital literacy, infrastructure limitations, suboptimal socialization, human resource limitations, and internal bureaucratic resistance.

This study recommends strengthening the capacity of officers through continuous training, optimizing socialization through various channels, improving infrastructure and developing service features, strengthening collaboration with various parties, developing a participatory evaluation system, and strengthening information security aspects. For future researchers, it is recommended to conduct quantitative research to measure the level of public satisfaction in a more measurable manner, comparative studies with similar innovations in other provincial BPOMs, and assess the long-term impact of innovation on the economic empowerment of MSMEs.

## Declaration of Conflicting Interest

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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