

Revisiting New Public Management and Public Service Performance: A Leadership Behavior Perspective

Herman Herman¹, Shofia Amin^{2*}, Sigit Indrawijaya³, Sry Rosita⁴

Universitas Jambi, Jambi, Indonesia^{1,2,3,4}

herman.unja25@gmail.com¹, shofiaamin@unja.ac.id^{2*}, sigit_indra@unja.ac.id³,

sryrosita@gmail.com⁴



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Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to revisit the relationship between New Public Management (NPM) and public service performance by examining leadership behavior as a mediating mechanism within the Jambi Provincial Government.

Research Methodology: This study used a quantitative explanatory design in the context of the Jambi Provincial Government, Indonesia. Data were collected from 126 civil servants across seven regional agencies through stratified random sampling and analyzed using SEM-PLS with SmartPLS 4.0.

Results: The findings show that New Public Management significantly influences task-, change-, and relationship-oriented leadership behaviors and directly improves public-service performance. However, leadership behavior neither significantly affected service performance nor mediated the relationship between NPM and service performance.

Conclusions: These findings suggest that managerial reforms associated with NPM contribute directly to improvements in public service performance while simultaneously shaping leadership behavior in public organizations. Nevertheless, leadership behavior does not function as a statistically significant mediating mechanism in the relationship between NPM and the service performance.

Limitations: This study is limited to civil servants in selected regional government agencies in Jambi Province and relies on perception-based survey data, which may reduce generalizability and introduce subjective bias.

Contributions: This study contributes to the NPM and public leadership literature by clarifying that leadership behavior does not necessarily function as a mediating mechanism in the relationship between NPM and public service performance in local government contexts.

Keywords: *Bureaucratic Reform, Leadership Behavior, Local Government, New Public Management, Public Service Performance*

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1. Introduction

The shift in governance paradigms has moved the public sector toward more efficient, accountable, and results-oriented management practices. This shift is known as New Public Management (NPM), an approach that adapts private-sector management principles to public bureaucracy. NPM emphasizes performance, service effectiveness, and accountability, which are commonly assessed using measurable performance indicators. Since the implementation of national bureaucratic reform in Indonesia, many local governments have adopted NPM principles as part of their strategy to modernize public administration and enhance the quality of public services (Bovaird & Löffler, 2023).

Although NPM has become an important foundation for public sector reform, the effectiveness of its implementation largely depends on the behavior and commitment of public-sector leaders. Bureaucratic leaders play a strategic role in driving the values of efficiency, innovation, and accountability that form the core of NPM. Public reform can only succeed when supported by leaders capable of translating policies into measurable, results-oriented managerial practices. Without effective leadership, reform initiatives often stagnate at the procedural level and fail to produce tangible improvements in organizational performance ([Schädeli & Ritz, 2024](#)). This challenge is evident in many local governments in Indonesia, including the Jambi Provincial Government, which continues to strive to enhance the effectiveness of bureaucratic reform efforts.

Although NPM implementation has been widely examined in developed countries, empirical studies in developing countries such as Indonesia remain limited, particularly at the local government level. Previous research has not comprehensively examined the mediating role of leadership behavior in linking NPM to the service performance. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by examining how NPM principles are internalized in public leadership behavior in Jambi Province and how this process affects public service performance.

Public service performance in Jambi Province varies across regional apparatus organizations. Some units have achieved performance-based service targets, while others continue to face structural constraints and an administrative work culture that limits their performance improvement. This condition suggests that the implementation of modern management systems has not been fully accompanied by changes in leadership behavior and organizational culture ([Ayesoro, Ojo, & Peter, 2025](#); [Hidayat, 2025](#); [Nasution, Yudianto, & Mulyani, 2025](#)). This phenomenon highlights the need for a deeper analysis of how NPM principles leaders internalize by public principles and the extent to which their behavior influences service outcomes.

Leadership behavior can be understood through three primary dimensions: task, change, and relationship orientation. These dimensions reflect the balance between leaders' efforts to direct employees, encourage innovation, and foster cooperation among them. Balanced leadership behavior contributes to sustainable organizational effectiveness in the public sector ([Li & Khan, 2023](#)). However, previous studies have reported inconsistent results. Some studies have identified task-oriented behavior as the dominant factor influencing service performance, while others have emphasized the importance of adaptive and collaborative behaviors as drivers of service innovation ([Fernández, Fernández, Hidalgo, Aliaga, & Guillén, 2023](#); [Fernandez & Rainey, 2017](#); [Hidayat, 2025](#); [Knies & Leisink, 2017](#); [Ritz, Brewer, & Neumann, 2016](#)).

These inconsistencies create an opportunity to re-examine the role of public leadership as a linking mechanism between NPM and service performance. Jambi Province was selected as the research setting because it experienced a significant increase in its Bureaucratic Reform Index from category B (61.23) in 2023 to BB (78.86) in 2024. This improvement reflects strong managerial reform dynamics but also reveals variations in service performance across regional organizations. This indicates that the implementation of NPM principles has not been fully supported by strong leadership behavior and an adaptive work culture. Therefore, Jambi provides a relevant context for examining how leadership behavior mediates the influence of NPM on service performance in the local government.

A conceptual model that positions leadership behavior as a mediating variable offers a more comprehensive understanding of the mechanism through which NPM influences organizational outcomes ([Arsy, Supriyono, & Sentanu, 2025](#)). Accordingly, this study empirically tests the effect of New Public Management on public service performance, with leadership behavior as a mediating variable in the Jambi Provincial Government. The findings are expected to contribute to modern public management theory and provide practical insights into enhancing the effectiveness of regional bureaucratic reform.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

The scholar examined past research in national and international peer-reviewed journals on Public Service Performance and the private sector, including New Public Management and Leadership Behavior ([Arsy et al., 2025](#); [Dewi, Sahputra, & Zulfikar, 2023](#)). Furthermore, this study examined the relationship between New Public Management and Public Service Performance through Leadership Behavior.

2.1 New Public Management

New Public Management (NPM) emerged as a paradigm of public administration reform that emphasizes efficiency, accountability, and results-oriented. NPM is widely described as a managerial movement that adopts private-sector practices to improve the bureaucratic performance. Its core principles include a strong focus on outcomes, competition among work units, performance measurement, and the provision of greater managerial autonomy to public leaders ([Schädeli & Ritz, 2024](#)). The success of NPM also depends on the extent to which public leaders can internalize these modern management principles into the organizational work system ([Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017](#)).

The implementation of NPM can be observed through bureaucratic reform initiatives, the adoption of results-based performance systems, and the expansion of digital public service. These reforms aim to create public services that are more efficient, responsive and transparent ([Christensen & Læg Reid, 2022](#)). Empirical studies suggest that NPM implementation improves service quality by encouraging more rational, measurable, and performance-driven resource management ([Christensen & Læg Reid, 2022](#); [Ferlie, 2017](#); [Læg Reid, 2017](#)). Therefore, NPM functions not only as an administrative framework but also as a foundation for managerial behavior that shapes leadership practices in the public sector.

In this context, New Public Management does not merely introduce structural or procedural reforms within public organizations. Rather, it reshapes managerial expectations and leadership practices by emphasizing accountability, performance measurement, and results-oriented management. Consequently, public leaders must adopt behaviors that align organizational processes with performance targets and service outcomes. Therefore, NPM implementation can be understood not only as a policy reform but also as a mechanism that influences how leaders guide employees and manage organizational performance.

2.2 Leadership Behavior

Leadership behavior refers to the concrete actions undertaken by leaders to direct, motivate, and facilitate the work of their subordinates ([Amin, Adriani, & Widiastuti, 2022](#); [Makmut, Setiawan, & Manune, 2025](#)). It is generally categorized into three dimensions: task orientation, change orientation, and relationship orientation. Task orientation encompasses leadership behaviors that focus on planning, coordinating, and supervising tasks. Change orientation reflects a leader's ability to adapt to environmental dynamics and to promote innovation. Relationship orientation describes behaviors that strengthen communication, empathy, and collaboration among employees ([Khaddam, Alzghoul, Khawaldeh, & Alnajdawi, 2023](#); [Pradikto, Prasetya, & Hutahayan, 2025](#)).

Public leadership is considered effective when leaders can balance these three orientations according to the organizational context ([Dugan, 2024](#); [Hidayat, 2025](#); [Sobral & Furtado, 2019](#)). Empirical studies indicate that effective leadership behavior contributes to employee satisfaction, commitment, and organizational adaptability ([Glennon, Hodgkinson, & Knowles, 2019](#); [Knies & Leisink, 2017](#); [Kuknor & Bhattacharya, 2020](#); [Sanjaya, W., & Sajiyo, 2024](#)). Change- and relationship-oriented behaviors, in particular, have been shown to encourage public organizations to become more adaptive and innovative ([Knies & Leisink, 2017](#)). Thus, leadership behavior plays a crucial managerial role in bridging the principles of New Public Management and service performance outcomes.

From a managerial perspective, leadership behavior represents the operational mechanism through which management reform is translated into organizational practice. Leaders interpret policy directions, communicate performance expectations, and coordinate employees to achieve their service targets.

Consequently, leadership behavior is a key organizational process that connects managerial reforms with measurable service outcomes in public organizations.

2.3 Public Service Performance

Service performance refers to the extent to which government organizations deliver services that are effective, efficient, and responsive to community needs ([Lesmana, Rosadi, Hermana, Liu, & Winarno, 2022](#)). It is often used as an indicator of the success of public sector reform, as it reflects the government's ability to transform resources into outcomes that generate a tangible societal impact. Key indicators of service performance typically include service quality, speed, accuracy, and user satisfaction ([Helalat, Sharari, Alhelalat, & Al-Aqrabawi, 2025](#); [Mishra & Hassen, 2023](#); [Sismiati, Susanto, Gunawan, & Fahriza, 2025](#)).

The implementation of New Public Management is expected to enhance service performance by strengthening accountability mechanisms and results-based evaluation systems. Studies have shown that performance-based management systems derived from NPM principles positively influence service quality and organizational effectiveness ([Bonache & Festing, 2020](#); [Jotabá, Fernandes, Gunkel, & Kraus, 2022](#)). Therefore, successful service performance is shaped not only by managerial systems but also by leadership behavior that directs employees toward productive, accountable, and results-oriented work practices.

Conceptually, the relationship between New Public Management, leadership behavior, and service performance can be understood as an integrated managerial framework. NPM introduces systems of accountability, performance measurement, and managerial autonomy that redefine public organizations' operations. However, the effectiveness of these systems largely depends on leadership behavior in implementing, interpreting, and operationalizing reform principles within daily administrative practice. In this sense, leadership behavior functions as an organizational mechanism that potentially links managerial reform to service outcomes, making it an important variable for understanding the effectiveness of public sector reforms ([Hameduddin & Engbers, 2022](#); [Knies & Leisink, 2017](#)).

2.4 Influence of New Public Management on Leadership Behavior

New Public Management principles encourage public leaders to adopt managerial behaviors that are efficient, adaptive, and results-oriented. In modern bureaucratic environments, leaders are expected to implement policies and initiate and sustain organizational change. Empirical evidence suggests that NPM implementation is closely associated with improvements in managerial capacity and leadership competencies, including innovative and performance-driven behaviors ([Dugan, 2024](#); [Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017](#)).

Based on this theoretical and empirical foundation, the following hypotheses are proposed.

H_{1a}: New Public Management positively influences Task-Oriented Leadership

H_{1b}: New Public Management has a positive influence on Change-Oriented Leadership

H_{1c}: New Public Management positively influences Relation-Oriented Leadership

2.5 Influence of New Public Management on Service Performance

New Public Management (NPM) prioritizes efficiency, accountability, and results orientation as key measures of public service performance. Local governments that implement results-based management systems tend to achieve better service outcomes because their organizational processes are directed toward meeting clear and measurable targets. Empirical evidence shows that adopting performance-based management significantly improves the quality of public service delivery ([Christensen & Læg Reid, 2022](#); [Ferlie, 2017](#)). Similar findings indicate that managerial decentralization and transparency under NPM reforms strengthen service effectiveness and responsiveness ([Xiaolong & Christensen, 2022](#)). Based on these findings, the following hypothesis was formulated:

H₂: New Public Management has a positive influence on Service Performance

2.6 Leadership Influence Behavior towards Service Performance

Effective leadership behavior is critical to achieving high levels of public service performance. Task-oriented leadership helps clarify responsibilities, strengthen coordination, and improve work efficiency. Relationship-oriented behaviors enhance employee motivation and job satisfaction, whereas change-oriented leadership enables organizations to adapt to increasingly dynamic societal demands (Hogan, Curphy, Kaiser, & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2018; Uhl-Bien & Arena, 2018). Previous studies have found that adaptive and collaborative leadership practices contribute significantly to improvements in service quality and organizational effectiveness (Glennon et al., 2019; Knies & Leisink, 2017). Based on this discussion, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H_{3a}: Task-oriented leadership positively influences Service Performance

H_{3b}: Change-Oriented Leadership has a positive influence on Service Performance

H_{3c}: Relation-Oriented Leadership positively influences Service Performance

2.7 The Role of Leadership Mediation Behavior

Several studies suggest that NPM's influence on service performance is often indirect, as it requires leadership behavior to function as an internal driving mechanism within public organizations. Leadership behavior serves as a mediating pathway that translates NPM principles into concrete managerial practices and employee work behavior in the public sector (Luna-Arocas & Lara, 2020). Furthermore, public leadership plays a strategic role in ensuring that managerial reforms result in measurable improvements in organizational performance (Hameduddin & Engbers, 2022). Based on the above arguments, leadership behavior can be conceptualized as a mediating mechanism through which New Public Management influences service performance. Through task-oriented, change-oriented, and relationship-oriented behaviors, leaders translate managerial reform principles into operational practices that may affect the service outcomes.

H₄: Leadership behavior mediates the relationship between New Public Management and Public Service Performance

2.8. Conceptual Research Model

Based on the development of the above hypothesis, the conceptual model of this research illustrates that the implementation of New Public Management encourages three dimensions of task-oriented, change-oriented, and human-oriented leadership, which directly and indirectly influence Service Performance. This model also assumes a mediating effect on the relationship between NPM and service performance, as shown in Figure 1.

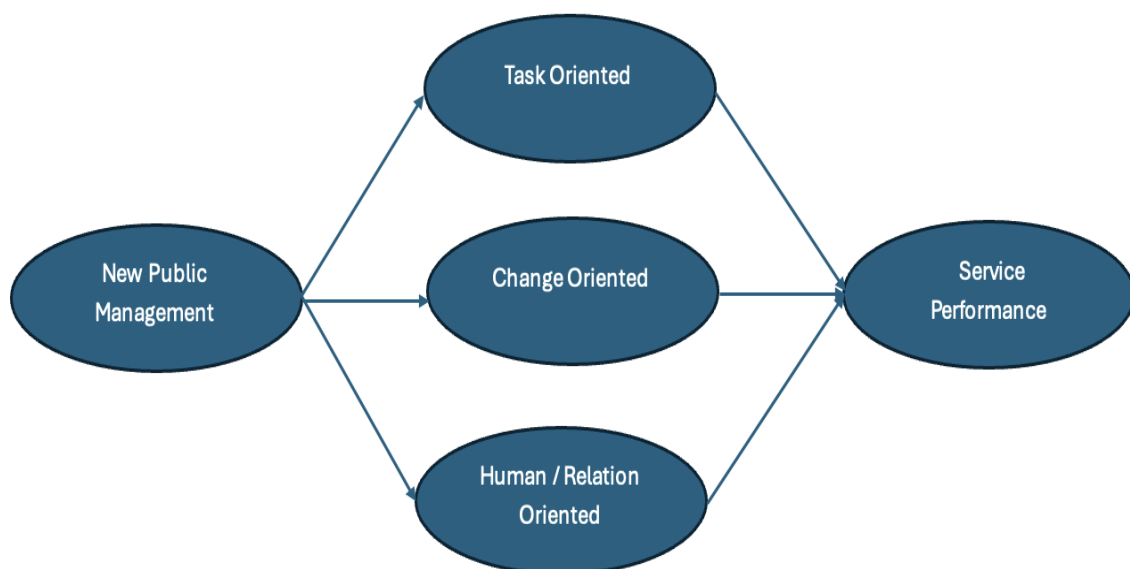


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

3. Methodology

This study employs a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design aimed at testing the causal relationships among New Public Management (NPM), leadership behavior, and service performance. Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS), as this method is appropriate for complex causal models involving latent variables and moderate sample sizes. The use of SEM-PLS is also justified by the predictive nature of the model, which includes constructs with reflective and formative indicators. This approach is consistent with the methodological recommendations for examining mediation effects and non-linear causal relationships in public sector research ([Hair Jr et al., 2021](#)). SEM-PLS enables the assessment of both direct and indirect relationships, including the mediating role of leadership behavior in linking NPM implementation and service performance.

The study population consisted of all civil servants working in Regional Apparatus Organizations within the Jambi Provincial Government, Indonesia. A stratified random sampling technique was applied based on the types of public service agencies. The research strata included the Regional Civil Service Agency, Health Office, Education Office, Transportation Office, Social and Civil Registration Office, Mental Hospital, and Regional General Hospital. A total of 126 respondents were analyzed, comprising echelon III and IV structural officials, functional officers, and implementing staff directly involved in public service delivery. This sample size was considered adequate for SEM-PLS models with moderate complexity, in accordance with the established recommendations ([Hair Jr et al., 2021](#)).

In addition, sample adequacy was considered in relation to model complexity. The structural model specifies one main endogenous construct (service performance) predicted by four exogenous constructs (NPM, task-oriented, change-oriented, and relationship-oriented leadership behavior). Following the SEM-PLS sample size logic recommended by [Hair Jr et al. \(2021\)](#), a sample of 126 is sufficient for estimating the model parameters and generating stable bootstrapping estimates, particularly given the moderate number of constructs and indicators and the use of 5,000 bootstrap subsamples.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The NPM variable was adapted from the Grand Design framework of National Bureaucratic Reform and indicators developed in prior studies, encompassing eight dimensions of reform ([Christensen & Læg Reid, 2022](#); [Ferlie, 2017](#)). Leadership behavior was measured using a three-dimensional framework that includes task-, change-, and relationship-oriented behaviors ([Hogan et al., 2018](#); [Salicru, 2023](#); [Uhl-Bien & Arena, 2018](#)). Service performance was assessed based on the SERVQUAL dimensions expanded in public sector contexts, including tangibility, responsiveness, assurance, and reliability ([Glennon et al., 2019](#); [Gregory, 2019](#)). Content validity was ensured through expert review and a pilot test involving 30 respondents to confirm the item clarity and internal consistency.

Data analysis using SmartPLS 4.0 was conducted in two stages: evaluation of the measurement and structural models. The measurement model assessment included tests of composite reliability ($CR > 0.70$), convergent validity through average variance extracted ($AVE > 0.50$), and discriminant validity based on the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) criterion (< 0.90). Structural model evaluation was performed to examine the strength of the relationships among variables using R^2 values, effect size (f^2), predictive relevance (Q^2), and hypothesis testing through bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples. The choice of SEM-PLS is also appropriate for prediction-oriented models with relatively moderate sample sizes and does not require multivariate normality assumptions, which suits survey-based public sector research ([Hair Jr et al., 2021](#)). All analytical procedures followed the established SEM-PLS guidelines ([Hair Jr et al., 2021](#)).

To ensure reporting accuracy, all statistical values presented in the narrative (e.g., path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values) were cross-checked with the SmartPLS output tables. All hypothesis interpretations were based strictly on the reported bootstrapping results (t-statistics and p-values), and the same rounding format was consistently applied across tables and text ([Hair Jr et al., 2021](#)).

4. Results and Discussions

4.1 Results

The scholar examined the hypothesis formulated in the SEM analysis using SMART PLS. The scholar first tested the validity and reliability of the collected primary data, specifically focusing on Cronbach's alpha, rho_A, Composite Average Variance Extracted (AVE), outer loading, and VIF. The next step was to conduct a summary analysis of the respondents' demographic profiles. The SEM path analysis and summary of the model fit were measured. Finally, the hypothesis was tested by boosting the simulation model ([Hair Jr et al., 2021](#)).

4.1.1 Descriptive Statistics and Respondent Profile

The study involved 126 respondents representing seven regional apparatus organizations of the Jambi Provincial Government. The demographic characteristics of the respondents are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (n = 126)

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Man	77	61
	Woman	49	39
Age	<30 years	15	12
	31–40 years	39	31
	41–50 years	48	38
	>50 years	24	19
Position	Echelon III	25	19.9
	Echelon IV	48	40.4
	Functional/Staff	53	39.7
Length of service	<5 years	23	17.3
	5–10 years	39	31.7
	>10 years	64	51.0

4.1.2 Evaluation of the Measurement Model

The measurement model was assessed to determine the suitability of the indicators for the research constructs. All indicators showed factor loadings greater than 0.70. The composite reliability value was above 0.90, and the average Variance Extracted (AVE) exceeded 0.50, indicating that all constructs had excellent reliability and convergent validity. Table 2 displays the results of the measurement model test, which indicates that all constructs met the established measurement quality standards.

Table 2. Evaluation of Measurement Model

Variables	Indicator	Outer loadings	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Change Oriented Behaviour	LB9;LB10; LB11;LB12	0,893;0,932; 0,921;0,891	0,936	0,937	0,955	0,840
New Public Management	NPM1;NPM2; NPM3;NPM4; NPM5;NPM6; NPM8;NPM9; NPM10;NPM11; NPM13;NPM14; NPM15;NPM16	0,823;0,859; 0,832;0,836; 0,842;0,848; 0,852;0,893; 0,807;0,869; 0,875;0,892; 0,826;0,774	0,969	0,970	0,972	0,715
Relations Oriented Behaviour	LB5;LB6; LB7;LB8	0,902;0,903; 0,855;0,928	0,938	0,940	0,956	0,844
Service Performance	SP6;SP7; SP8;SP9; SP10;SP11;	0,827;0,862; 0,863;0,880; 0,732;0,829;	0,965	0,966	0,969	0,674

Variables	Indicator	Outer loadings	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
	SP12;SP13; SP14;SP15; SP16;SP17; SP18;SP19; SP20	0,848;0,815; 0,775;0,772; 0,756;0,810; 0,826;0,834; 0,868				
Task Oriented Behaviour	LB1;LB2; LB3;LB4	0,849;0,919; 0,959;0,896	0,900	0,902	0,931	0,770

Table 2 show factor loadings exceeded 0.70, Composite Reliability (CR) values were above 0.90, and Average Variance Extraction (AVE) values exceeded 0.50, indicating adequate convergent validity (Hair Jr et al., 2021). These values indicate high internal consistency and confirm that the indicators adequately represent the theoretical constructs. This indicates that the research measuring instrument met the acceptable validity and reliability standards in quantitative research based on SEM PLS.

4.1.3 Subtop Model Fit and Predictive Relevance

The structural model exhibited satisfactory predictive power. The R² values were as follows:

Table 3. R² values

Variables	R-square	R-square adjusted
Change Oriented Behaviour	0,691	0,688
Relations Oriented Behaviour	0,618	0,615
Service Performance	0,493	0,476
Task Oriented Behaviour	0,626	0,623

Table 3 show R² value shows that the leadership variable, task-oriented, change-oriented, and relationship-oriented behaviors have strong explanatory power, while the service performance variable shows an R² of 0.493. This means that the combination of NPM and Leadership Behavior can explain 49.3 percent of the variation in Service Performance. This value is considered strong according to the criteria.

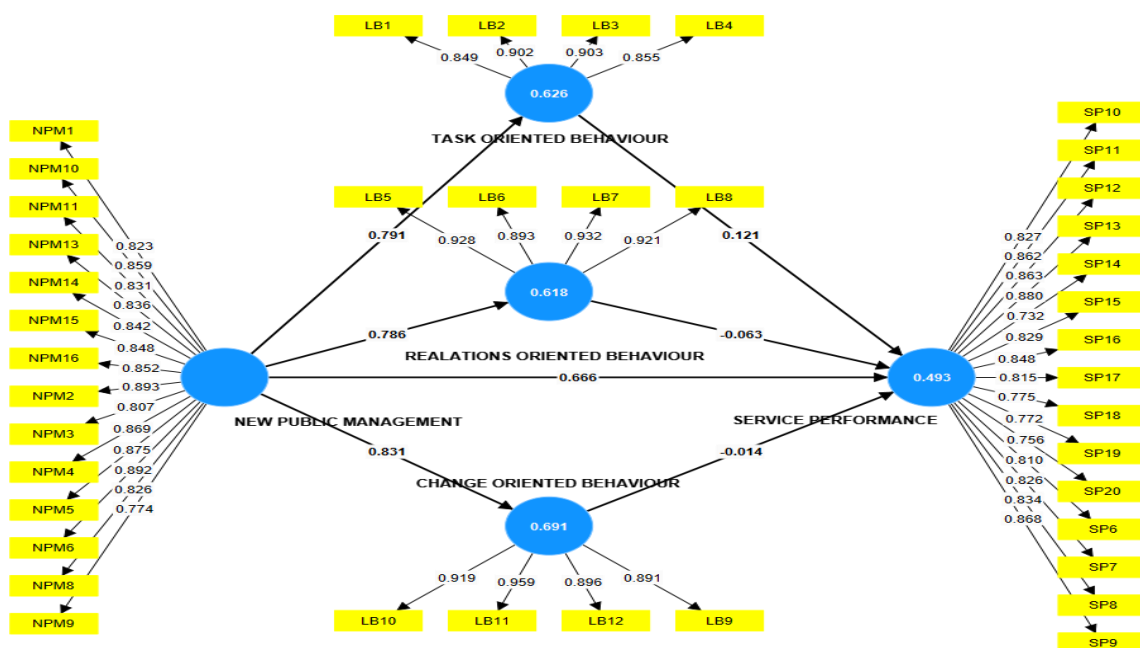


Figure 1. Inner model of Smart PLS

4.1.4 Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing

Table 4. Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Test Results

Variables	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Change Oriented Behaviour → Service Performance	-0.014	-0.006	0.168	0.084	0.933
New Public Management → Change Oriented Behaviour	0.831	0.832	0.041	20.091	0.000
New Public Management → Relations Oriented Behaviour	0.786	0.788	0.041	19.131	0.000
New Public Management → Service Performance	0.700	0.710	0.063	11.175	0.000
New Public Management → Task Oriented Behaviour	0.791	0.797	0.053	14.887	0.000
Relations Oriented Behaviour → Service Performance	-0.063	-0.082	0.207	0.306	0.760
Task Oriented Behaviour → Service Performance	0.121	0.140	0.244	0.495	0.621
New Public Management → Change Oriented Behaviour → Service Performance	-0.012	-0.005	0.141	0.083	0.934
New Public Management → Relations Oriented Behaviour → Service Performance	-0.050	-0.067	0.165	0.301	0.763
New Public Management → Task Oriented Behaviour → Service Performance	0.096	0.115	0.200	0.478	0.633

The results Table 4 of the path coefficient test show that the relationship between NPM and all dimensions of leadership behavior is statistically significant, with p-values below 0.001. The strongest path was observed between NPM and change-oriented behavior ($\beta = 0.831$), followed by NPM and task-oriented behavior ($\beta = 0.791$) and NPM and relationship-oriented behavior ($\beta = 0.786$). The relationship between NPM and service performance was also statistically significant ($\beta = 0.700$; $p < 0.001$).

However, the direct effects of leadership behavior on service performance were not statistically significant, as indicated by p-values greater than 0.05. Similarly, the indirect effects representing the mediating role of leadership behavior were not statistically significant. These findings indicate that although NPM significantly shapes leadership behavior, it does not significantly mediate the relationship between NPM and service performance in this model.

4.2 Discussion

Overall, the findings of this study confirm the relevance of the relationship model between New Public Management (NPM), leadership behavior, and service performance within the context of regional bureaucracy. This result is consistent with previous studies conducted in the United Kingdom and the

Netherlands, which found that some previous studies found task-oriented leadership has a strong impact on public service performance ([Glennon et al., 2019](#); [Sanjaya et al., 2024](#)). However, unlike the findings from the United States that emphasized the significant influence of change-oriented leadership, the results of this study suggest that this dimension has not yet been fully internalized within the bureaucratic environment of Jambi Province ([Fernández et al., 2023](#); [Fernandez & Rainey, 2017](#)). This indicates that the effectiveness of NPM implementation is strongly shaped by the institutional context and regional organizational culture.

4.2.1 Influence of New Public Management on Task-Oriented Leadership

The results show a significant value of $p = 0.000$, indicating that New Public Management has a strong positive influence on task-oriented leadership. Public leaders operating in bureaucratic environments shaped by NPM principles tend to emphasize planning, division of responsibilities, and the monitoring of employee performance.

These findings support theoretical arguments suggesting that NPM requires bureaucracies to adopt private-sector managerial styles that prioritize efficiency, control, and results orientation ([Podger, 2024](#)). Furthermore, modern public management reforms are more effective when leaders develop behavior oriented toward clear work structures and measurable outcomes ([Kumalo & Scheepers, 2021](#)). In Jambi Province, OPD leaders implementing results-based reforms have demonstrated an increased ability to systematically manage task allocation and oversee program execution. The implementation of e-performance systems strengthens task-oriented leadership because each official is required to meet specific responsibilities and outcome indicators. Therefore, H_{1a} is accepted, confirming that NPM strengthens leadership behavior focused on efficiency and performance targets.

4.2.2 Influence of New Public Management on Change-Oriented Leadership

The significance value of $p = 0.000$ indicates that New Public Management has a significant positive effect on COL. Reform principles that emphasize innovation and adaptation encourage leaders to become more responsive to policy dynamics, technological development, and societal demands. Empirical evidence suggests that performance-based reforms promote innovative and adaptive leadership behavior in public organizations ([Knies & Leisink, 2017](#)). Change-oriented leadership is also considered a key characteristic of modern public leaders who can drive cultural and institutional transformation ([Van der Voet, 2016](#); [Van Wart, 2016](#)).

In Jambi Province, the application of efficiency and innovation principles has fostered leadership styles that are increasingly open to modernization, particularly through the development of digital-based services and personnel information systems. Although innovation remains gradual, this adaptive leadership pattern reflects the early success of NPM's implementation. Therefore, H_{1b} is accepted.

4.2.3 Influence of New Public Management on Relationship-Oriented Leadership

The results also show that New Public Management has a significant positive effect on relationship-oriented leadership ($p = 0.000$). This suggests that accountability and responsiveness in public service delivery encourage leaders to strengthen communication, empathy and employee support. Relationship-oriented leadership contributes to harmonious work environments and enhances employee motivation ([Hogan et al., 2018](#); [Uhl-Bien & Arena, 2018](#)). NPM reforms require leaders to build cooperation and trust to ensure that public organizations achieve optimal performance. In Jambi Province, performance-based assessment systems encourage leaders to provide more frequent coaching, guidance, and open discussions with their staff. This interaction pattern improves morale and strengthens responsibilities. Therefore, H_{1c} is accepted, indicating that NPM reinforces participatory and humane leadership behavior.

4.2.4 Influence of New Public Management on Service Performance

The significance value of $p = 0.001$ confirms that New Public Management positively affects service performance. These findings indicate that results-based management systems, transparency, and performance monitoring enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of public services in the Jambi Province. Prior research has demonstrated that NPM principles directly improve service quality by

clarifying responsibilities and fostering a performance-driven culture ([Christensen & Læg Reid, 2022](#); [Ferlie, 2017](#)). The use of outcome indicators also encourages local governments to improve service processes, making them faster and more transparent. The empirical conditions in Jambi's OPDs show improvements in licensing speed, population data accuracy, and simplified administrative procedures. These developments confirm that NPM reforms have successfully driven the bureaucratic efficiency. Therefore, H_2 is accepted.

4.2.5 Influence of Task-Oriented Leadership on Service Performance

The statistical results show a t-value of 0.495 and a p-value of 0.621, indicating that task-oriented leadership has no statistically significant effect on service performance. Although task-oriented leadership may contribute to improving work coordination and administrative control, its direct influence on service performance was not statistically supported in this study. Leaders with strong task orientation can create order, efficiency, and compliance with service targets ([Makhmut et al., 2025](#)).

This finding aligns with leadership theory, which suggests that task-oriented behavior enhances organizational efficiency through close monitoring and goal clarity ([Hogan et al., 2018](#); [Uhl-Bien & Arena, 2018](#)). Task orientation also strengthens employee performance by improving work standards and accountability ([Van Wart, 2016](#)). In Jambi Province, OPD heads who emphasize punctuality, discipline, and responsibility may contribute to improved work coordination within public service units. However, the statistical results indicate that this influence is not significant in explaining the variations in service performance. Therefore, H_{3a} is not supported.

4.2.6 Influence of Change-Oriented Leadership on Service Performance

The statistical results show a t-value of 0.084 and a p-value of 0.933, indicating that change-oriented leadership does not have a statistically significant direct effect on service performance. Although leaders exhibit innovative tendencies, their impact on service outcomes remains limited. Adaptive leadership is often constrained by rigid bureaucratic structures, limited resources, and resistance to change ([Fernández et al., 2023](#)).

Innovation produces measurable results only when it is supported by sufficient infrastructure and an open organizational culture ([Knies & Leisink, 2017](#)). In Jambi Province, digital modernization programs are still gradually developing. Although change-oriented leadership reflects adaptive managerial efforts, the statistical results indicate that its direct influence on service performance is insignificant. Therefore, H_{3b} is not supported.

4.2.7 Influence of Relationship-Oriented Leadership on Service Performance

The statistical results show a t-value of 0.306 and a p-value of 0.760, indicating that relationship-oriented leadership has no statistically significant influence on service performance. This suggests that positive interpersonal relationships alone do not necessarily translate into measurable improvements in the quality of public services. Relationship-oriented behavior has stronger effects when combined with collaborative systems and a participatory organizational culture ([Glennon et al., 2019](#); [Pradikto et al., 2025](#)). In hierarchical bureaucracies such as Indonesia's, harmonious relationships often maintain stability but may not directly drive results-based performances.

In Jambi Province, leaders have strengthened interpersonal communication; however, performance indicators remain focused on administrative compliance. Although the statistical results show no significant effect, relationship-oriented leadership is important for maintaining trust and motivation within public organizations. Therefore, H_{3c} is not supported.

4.2.8 Mediating Role of Leadership Behavior

The mediation analysis indicates that leadership behavior does not significantly mediate the relationship between New Public Management and service performance. The indirect effects of task-oriented, change-oriented, and relationship-oriented leadership behaviors showed p-values greater than 0.05, indicating that the mediating effects were not statistically significant. This indicates that NPM

influences service outcomes not only directly but also through leaders who internalize reform values into employee work practices.

Leadership behavior is often considered a bridge between managerial systems and organizational outcomes. However, the results of this study suggest that although leadership behavior reflects managerial practices within public organizations, its mediating role in translating NPM reforms into service performance improvements is not supported.

In the Jambi Provincial Government, bureaucratic reform initiatives have introduced performance-based systems and administrative improvements to improve public services. However, the statistical results suggest that leadership behavior has not yet functioned as a significant mechanism linking managerial reform to measurable service performance outcomes. Without leadership engagement, NPM reforms risk becoming procedural rather than outcome driven. Therefore, H_4 is not supported.

5. Conclusions

5.1 Conclusion

This study examined the relationship between New Public Management (NPM), leadership behavior, and public service performance within the Jambi Provincial Government. The findings show that New Public Management significantly influences all three dimensions of leadership behavior: task-oriented, change-oriented, and relationship-oriented leadership. This indicates that managerial reform initiatives that emphasize accountability, performance measurement, and results-oriented management contribute to shaping leadership practices within public sector organizations.

The results also demonstrate that New Public Management has a significant direct effect on public service performance. This finding suggests that implementing performance-based management systems and administrative reforms can directly improve public service delivery effectiveness within local government institutions. However, the direct effect of leadership behavior on service performance was not statistically significant. Likewise, leadership behavior did not significantly mediate the relationship between New Public Management and service performance. These findings indicate that although leadership behavior reflects managerial practices within public organizations, it has not yet functioned as a statistically supported mechanism linking managerial reform to measurable service-performance outcomes in the context of this study.

From a practical perspective, the findings highlight the importance of strengthening the implementation of performance-based management systems in regional government institutions. Local governments should prioritize the development of clear performance indicators, strengthen monitoring and evaluation systems, and improve administrative accountability mechanisms to ensure that bureaucratic reforms produce measurable improvements in public-service delivery. Leadership development programs should focus on enhancing managerial competencies related to performance management, coordination, and accountability. Strengthening leadership capacity through structured training, mentoring systems, and performance-based leadership evaluation may help public leaders to more effectively translate reform initiatives into improved service outcomes.

5.2 Research Limitations

This study had several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. The respondents were limited to civil servants from several regional apparatus organizations within the Jambi Provincial Government, which may restrict the generalizability of the results to other local government contexts with different institutional and cultural characteristics.

In addition, the study relied on perception-based questionnaire data, which may involve subjective bias influenced by respondents' experiences and relationships with supervisors. Service performance measurement was also based on employee perceptions rather than objective performance indicators, suggesting the need for future research to include more quantitative service outcome data to address this limitation. Finally, this study focused only on the relationship between NPM, leadership behavior, and service performance, without incorporating other potential influencing factors such as

organizational culture, employee motivation, or digital capacity. Future studies should expand the model and conduct broader cross-regional or cross-country comparisons for a deeper understanding.

5.3 Suggestions and Directions for Future Research

Based on the findings and limitations of this study, several directions are suggested for future studies. Future studies should expand the sample coverage to include broader regional governments or different administrative levels to improve the generalizability of the results. Researchers are also encouraged to adopt longitudinal designs to examine how NPM principles and leadership behavior develop over time during bureaucratic reform processes. Future research may integrate moderating or contextual variables, such as organizational culture, digital governance capacity, employee motivation, and institutional support, to better explain the dynamics between managerial reform and service performance. Finally, combining perception-based surveys with objective service performance indicators and qualitative approaches will provide a more comprehensive understanding of how leadership behavior translates reform initiatives into tangible improvements in public service delivery.

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Author Contributions

HH as the first author, was responsible for data collection, analysis, and drafting the initial manuscript. SA served as the corresponding author and contributed to the conceptual development, methodological refinement, data interpretation, and manuscript revision. SI and SR contributed to strengthening the research concept, improving the methodological framework, and providing critical reviews and recommendations for the analysis and manuscript. All the authors have reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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