

## Implementation of Immigration Policy for Mixed Marriage Couples in Gorontalo Province

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### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article history:

Received 21-05-2025  
Accepted 31-05-2025  
Published 02-06-2025

#### Keywords:

mixed marriage;  
policy implications;  
policy

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#### Competing interest:

The author(s) have declared  
that no competing interests  
exist

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### ABSTRACT

Policy dimension is one of the vital components in public administration that influences the success of government policy implementation. Keban (2014) emphasized that policies must be based on accurate data and through a participatory formulation process, to ensure that the policy is able to answer the problems faced by the community. In this case, policies must always place the community as the main priority, by paying attention to social justice and inclusiveness in the formulation process. This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. This approach was chosen because this study seeks to understand in depth how the Implementation of Immigration Policy for Mixed Marriage Couples in Gorontalo Province is going well. The qualitative approach allows researchers to explore the perspectives of various stakeholders, such as mixed marriage couples and immigration officers. Based on the research results, it can be concluded that although the immigration procedures implemented at the Class I TPI Gorontalo Immigration Office are quite clear and structured, there are still several obstacles faced by mixed marriage couples, both in administrative, legal, and social aspects.

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**Citation:** Piu, L., Sulila, I. ., & Hamim, U. . (2025). Implementation of Immigration Policy for Mixed Marriage Couples in Gorontalo Province. *Abdurrauf Science and Society*, 1(3), 437-450.  
<https://doi.org/10.70742/asoc.v1i3.241>

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## INTRODUCTION

Public Administration consists of two syllables, namely administration and public. Administration comes from Greek which consists of two words, namely ad which means intensive and ministrare which means to serve (to serve). Thus, administration is to help or serve intensively. Administration has two meanings, namely in the narrow sense and the broad sense. Administration in the narrow sense is defined as the activity of recording, writing or activities often referred to as administration, while administration in the broad sense is a process of rational

cooperation carried out by a group of people to achieve predetermined goals. Siagian (2008) defines administration as the entire cooperation between two or more people based on certain rationality to achieve predetermined goals. Public has a general meaning, state and society or many people. Jefkins (2004) defines the public as a group of people or people who communicate with an organization both internally and externally. Furthermore, Ruslan (1997) states that the public has a narrow and specific connotation which is a group of individuals who are bound by a certain bond of solidarity.

Public Administration, according to Chandler and Plano in Keban (2008), states that public administration is a process in which public resources and personnel are organized and coordinated to formulate, implement and manage decisions in public policy.

Based on the opinions of these experts, it can be concluded that the definition of public administration is the science and art carried out by a group of people in a public organization rationally working together to achieve public goals. The broad definition of public administration is the process of cooperation carried out by a group of people who are members of a public organization rationally carrying out planning, organizing, mobilizing, and supervising activities of people and infrastructure to achieve public goals, namely providing the best service to the community.

#### **a. The Role of Public Administration**

Karl Polanyi argued that the economic condition of a country is highly dependent on the dynamics of public administration. William Graham Sumner, a Darwinian pioneer in the United States, showed that public administration can make the existing state system worse. This role can also be seen from Walter Weyl's statement that the government can make people miserable if it implements public administration with a "shadow democracy" style. On the other hand, Frederick A. Cleveland actually showed that the role of public administration is very vital in helping to empower society and create democracy. Cleveland's opinion expressed decades ago seems to be in line with the idea of Janet V. Denhardt and Robert B. Denhardt (2003) who saw that public administration, through its public services, can provide or create democracy. Because public administration is a field where government officials or executives carry out work related to the public sector, especially the provision of services for the public interest, the role of public administration is very important in determining the stability, resilience, and welfare of a country. In addition, public administration can also be seen as an arena where it can be witnessed or proven whether the bureaucratic elites and politicians fulfill their promises or prove their commitment to the public who have elected them. Therefore, public administration also plays a very important role in maintaining public trust.

#### **b. Public Administration Activities**

Public administration activities are activities carried out by structural officials or echelon holders who lead a unit, or by non-structural officials who do not lead a unit. Specifically, public administration activities are focused on the management aspect as the implementation of public policy. This means that public administration has been concerned with the activities of managing public services and providing public goods.

What is done in the world of public administration is what the government does in very large and varied amounts and types, both concerning the provision of

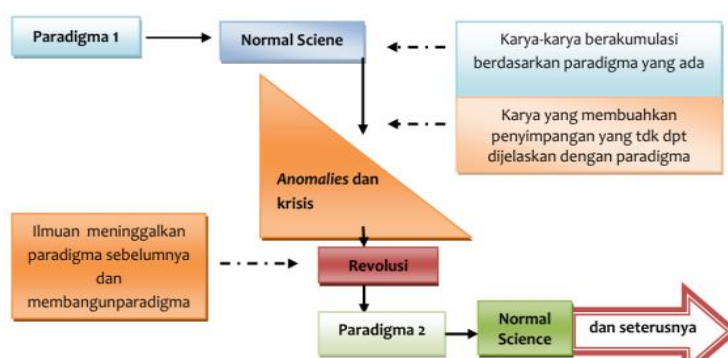
services in various areas of life (public affairs), as well as those related to catching up with the community through development programs. Public service provision activities can be observed from routine services in the fields of health, education, security and order, licensing and so on. Activities related to development can be observed from the provision of public goods such as economic development (physical and social facilities and infrastructure), socio-cultural systems, law, politics, and human quality development, all of which are directed at catching up, poverty alleviation, reducing inequality and unemployment.

These activities can be handled by government officials themselves, or involve the private sector and the community. If these activities are complex in nature and the government is less able to carry them out, these activities can be offered to the private sector and the community to handle them. These activities are handled specifically because they involve rationality and political values. The rationality value in these activities concerns attention to efficiency, effectiveness and economy, while political values concern justice and equality. If the problems, needs and aspirations of the community change rapidly, these activities will also change rapidly and can become even more complex. In particular, public administration activities are focused on the management aspect as the implementation of public policy. This means that public administration is more concerned with the activities of managing public services and providing public goods. There is indeed a general perception of public administration, namely the management of public affairs. Therefore, this activity includes everything that is done by public managers.

In other words, when looking at public administration more comprehensively, namely not only concerning the management aspect, but also other strategic dimensions such as public policy structuring, organizational structure, moral and ethical development, environmental adaptation, and performance accountability development. The most fundamental reason is that the work of government can only be successful if these dimensions are adequately controlled and can be improved.

### **c. Public Administration Paradigm**

The shift from one paradigm to another is not without reason. Every time a new paradigm emerges, there is certainly a problem with the previous paradigm. Thomas Khun<sup>1</sup> explains that throughout the works of 1 Thomas, Khun S.1993. *The Role of Paradigms in the Scientific Revolution*, Publisher PT Remaja Rosdakarya, Bandung. ISSN: 2337-4756 The development of the Administrative Paradigm is produced (including theories) that accumulate in support of the paradigm, then the science is in a normal condition (normal science). However, if at some point works are found that produce deviations that cannot be explained by the existing paradigm, then this condition is called anomalies. This anomalous condition then makes people no longer believe in the existing paradigm and try to build a new paradigm. When people start to not believe in the old paradigm, and try to find/build and switch to a new paradigm, then this condition is what Thomas Khun (1993) calls the "Scientific Revolution". After the revolution, people will find a new paradigm with the support of new theories, then the science in question returns to normal conditions. Khun's paradigm shift can be described as follows:



Source: Modified from John JOI Ihalouw, 1985:22

This model is used to describe conditions *New Public Administration*, *New Public Management*, *New Public Service*, although Frederickson himself emphasized that Kuhn's way of thinking can only apply in the exact sciences, while in the social sciences, especially the science of public administration, this is not the case on the grounds that the values in public administration remain and continue to be competitive, so that in certain periods certain values are dominant and in other periods other values Anggriani Alamsyah are more dominant. The stages of paradigm shift conveyed by Kuhn (normal science - anomalies - science revolution - normal science - anomalies, etc.) apply to all disciplines of science, both exact and social humanities. Meanwhile, what Frederickson put forward regarding values is a separate issue. Frederickson himself explained that the birth of a new public administration was a result of several previous crises (anomalies), as described in the background of the birth of the new public administration perspective. Keban in his book *Six Strategic Dimensions of Public Administration* (2014), in the study of public administration, this involves many elements in public administration, including policy, organization, management, ethics, environment, and performance accountability.

#### d. Dimensions Policy in Public Administration.

Policy dimension is one of the vital components in public administration that influences the success of government policy implementation. Keban (2014) emphasized that policies must be based on accurate data and through a participatory formulation process, to ensure that the policy is able to answer the problems faced by the community. In this case, policies must always place the community as the main priority, by paying attention to social justice and inclusiveness in the formulation process.

The book written by Nicholas Henry (1995) provides several scopes that can be seen from the topics discussed (apart from the development of public administration itself), including:

1. Public organizations, which in principle relate to models of bureaucratic organization and behavior.
2. Public management is concerned with management systems and science, program evaluation and productivity, public budgets and human resource management.
3. Implementation concerns the approach to public policy and its implementation,

privatization, intergovernmental administration and bureaucratic ethics.

The strategic aspects or dimensions discussed in public administration or those that most determine the dynamics of public administration are (1) management of internal and external factors, (2) regulation of organizational structures so that authority and responsibility structures, including behavior, are in accordance with environmental conditions and demands, (3) correct response to the needs, interests and aspirations of the community in making decisions or public policies, (4) regulation of morals and ethics through a code of ethics so that all use of abilities, competencies and professions is not misused for interests outside the public interest, (5) recognition of the characteristics of the environment in which public administration operates, both in the context of relations between state institutions, private institutions, the community and other environments such as the political, economic, social and cultural environment, and (6) performance accountability, namely a promise to the public that must be fulfilled or kept and can be accounted for through various service activities or the provision of public goods.

### **1. Public Policy Concepts and Processes**

Policy can be seen as a philosophical concept, as a product, as a process, and as a framework (see Graycar's opinion, quoted by Donovan and Jackson, 1991). Hogwood and Gun (see Turner & Hulme, 1997) once revealed a series of definitions or understandings of policy that show different meanings. Policy can be interpreted as a label for a field of activity such as economic policy, industrial policy, order and law policy; can be interpreted as an expression of general goals or desired conditions; can also be interpreted as a specific proposal or proposal; can be seen as a government decision; can also be seen as a program; as output; as outcome; can also be interpreted as a theory or model; and can be interpreted as a process such as goal setting. Turner and Hulme see policy as a process that includes the process of policy making and implementation. It may be more popular to say that policy is a decision (see Shafritz and Russell, 1997) and is hierarchical in nature from the highest level (top level) to the lowest level (street level).

The policy dimension concerns decisions about what to do. To process an effective decision, it requires a series of principles such as rationality and politics. The output of the process can be a decision on the best alternative that is ready to be implemented. Because this policy is a public policy, what is emphasized here is the problem, needs and aspirations of the public, namely the aspirations of the community that should be served. The policy dimension plays a very important role in suppressing forms of mistakes or errors. To avoid various mistakes, special training or education is needed, and good morals for key bureaucrats and existing policy analysts.

According to the Public Administration dictionary (Chandler and Plano, 1988) public policy is the strategic use of existing resources to solve public or government problems. While Shafritz and Russell (1997) provide the most memorable and perhaps most practical definition of public policy, namely "whatever a government decides to do or not to do". And Peterson (2003) argues that public policy is generally seen as an action in dealing with problems, by directing attention to "who gets what, when and

how". In general, the form of policy can be distinguished as regulatory, redistributive, distributive, constituent. Meanwhile, according to JQ Wilson as quoted by Peterson (2003) the types of policies consist of "majoritarian", "client", "entrepreneurial", and "interest group".

The principles of public policy discussed This includes policy stages, policy analysis, policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

#### **a. Policy Stages**

In order to solve problems, there are several important stages, including (see Dunn, 1994), setting the policy agenda (agenda setting), policy formulation, policy adoption, policy implementation, and policy assessment.

There is also a "policy making process" model expressed by Shafritz and Russell (1997) which consists of (1) agenda setting where policy issues are identified, (2) decisions to implement or not implement the policy, (3) implementation, (4) program evaluation and impact analysis: and (5) feedback, namely deciding to revise or stop. This process resembles a cycle.

#### **b. Policy Analysis**

In line with the stages that have been determined above, the following will explain the policy analysis process which is divided into structuring the problem or identifying the problem, identifying alternatives, selecting alternatives, and proposing the best alternative to be implemented.

### **RESEARCH METHODS**

This research was conducted at the Class I TPI Gorontalo Immigration Office, with The focus of this research is a study on the Implementation of Immigration Policy for Mixed Marriage Couples. This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. This approach was chosen because this study seeks to understand in depth how the Implementation of Immigration Policy for Mixed Marriage Couples in Gorontalo Province is going well. The qualitative approach allows researchers to explore the perspectives of various stakeholders, such as mixed marriage couples and immigration officers.

Within the framework of policy implementation theory, this study also refers to the Van Meter and Van Horn (1975) model, which emphasizes that policy success is influenced by factors such as policy standards and targets, resources, characteristics of the implementing organization, communication, implementer attitudes, and social, economic, and political conditions.

In this qualitative research, the researcher acts as the main instrument that is directly involved in collecting data in the field. The presence of the researcher at the research location aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of immigration policies for mixed marriage couples through interviews, observations, and document studies.

As a qualitative researcher, direct presence at the research location allows for deeper interaction with informants and a more contextual understanding of the phenomena being studied. In the context of this research, the researcher interacts with various stakeholders, such as:

1. **Immigration Office Officials and Officersto** understand the immigration administration procedures for foreign national couples, the challenges faced in implementing the policy.
2. Direct experiences of mixed marriage couples regarding the residence permit process, bureaucratic obstacles, and the impact of policies on their lives.

#### **A. Presence of Researchers**

In qualitative research, the researcher acts as the main instrument in data collection. The researcher not only plays a role in identifying and digging up information but also in analyzing and interpreting data obtained from various sources.

In addition to the researcher as the main instrument, this study also uses supporting instruments such as interview guidelines, documentation, and voice recorders. However, these instruments only function as aids in supporting the accuracy and validity of the data collected, not as a substitute for the presence of researchers in the field.

The presence of the researcher in this study is explicitly described through direct interaction with mixed marriage couples. I act as a participant observer, namely being involved in ongoing activities but maintaining a position as an observer in order to conduct objective analysis. In addition, in this study, my status as a researcher is known to the subjects or informants.

#### **B. Data and Data Sources**

According to S. Nasution, primary data (1995) is data that can be obtained directly from the field or research location. In this case, the researcher collects data through direct observation, direct interviews with stakeholders in the implementation of immigration policies.

Meanwhile, secondary data is data obtained from reading sources and various other sources consisting of official documents from various government agencies. Secondary data can also be in the form of magazines, bulletins, publications from various organizations, attachments from official bodies such as ministries, study results, survey results, historical studies, and so on.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Researchers used three main techniques in data collection, namely: In-depth interviews, This technique is used to explore informants' perceptions, experiences, and understanding of policy implementation. Interviews were conducted face-to-face using a semi-structured interview guide. Direct observation, Observations were conducted at the Foreign Citizens Service Counter to observe the immigration service process for mixed-marriage couples, including interactions between officers and service users. Documentation study, This technique is used to trace and analyze official documents, policy reports, and laws and regulations related to immigration policies.

The data collection procedure in this study was carried out systematically through several stages, to ensure that the data obtained was accurate, relevant, and in-depth in accordance with the focus of the study. The procedures taken include:

- 1) The researcher first identified key informants who had direct involvement in the implementation of the policy, both as implementers and recipients of the policy. Informants were determined using purposive sampling techniques, with the following criteria: Parties working in agencies related to the implementation of immigration policies, namely immigration. Mixed marriage couples (Indonesian

- citizens and foreign nationals) who are currently or have previously processed residence permits based on marriage.
- 2) Research Permit Application, The researcher took care of the cover letter from the campus and the request letter for permission to the relevant agencies in Gorontalo Province, including the Immigration Office. After getting approval, the researcher scheduled the time for the interview and observation.
  - 3) Conducting Interviews, Interviews were conducted directly (face to face) at the agency office or at a location agreed upon with the informant. The researcher used a semi-structured interview guide to keep the conversation focused yet flexible. Data from the interviews were recorded (with the informant's permission) and recorded in transcript form.
  - 4) Field Observation, Researchers conducted observations on the public service process, especially the immigration service flow for mixed couples at the Immigration Office. Observations were conducted to see the real conditions in the field, including interactions between officers and applicants, as well as the effectiveness of service procedures. Observations were recorded in the form of field journals.
  - 5) Document Collection, The documents collected are from the results of official requests to related agencies and searches through official sources. The documents include policy regulations, SOPs, activity reports, statistical data, and other documents relevant to immigration policies.
  - 6) Data Triangulation, To ensure the validity of the data, a triangulation process was carried out between the results of interviews, observations, and documentation studies. This triangulation is important to ensure that information obtained from various sources is mutually reinforcing and does not contradict each other.

Observations were conducted at the Class II Non TPI Gorontalo Immigration Office and at several locations where mixed marriage couples live. During the observations, researchers recorded administrative service activities, interactions between officers and foreign nationals (WNA), and social dynamics in the residential environment. In field observations:

- 1) There is a queue of foreign nationals who are processing residence permits related to mixed marriage status.
- 2) Immigration officers appear to be checking documents carefully and providing clear explanations to applicants.
- 3) In the residential area, local residents are seen interacting with mixed-race couples harmoniously, despite some language barriers.

Data from Interviews, Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner with several informants and the interview excerpts are as follows:

- 1) Immigration officer, "We always verify marriage documents strictly because it is related to residence permits and citizenship."
- 2) Husband/wife from a mixed marriage "At first it was difficult because I didn't understand Indonesian, but now we are used to the culture here."

Data from the Documents collected includes:

- 1) Copy of immigration laws
- 2) Regulations on residence permits for foreign nationals in mixed marriages

- 3) Immigration Office internal archives on the number and trends of mixed marriages
- 4) Application requirements include a marriage certificate from the Religious Affairs Office/Civil Registry Office.

Important information from the document, There has been an increase in the number of residence permit applications from foreign nationals since 2020, and the latest Regulation simplifies the document verification process for legal couples who have been married for more than two years.

Data from Photos and visual analysis: Visual documentation was obtained during observations and interviews, including photos of interactions between immigration officers and foreign national applicants and visual analysis, body language indicating a professional yet friendly relationship between officers and applicants.

Based on the results of data collection through interviews, field observations, visual documentation, and policy document reviews, several important findings were found related to the Implementation of Immigration Policies for Mixed Indonesian-Foreign Couples in Gorontalo:

#### 1. Limited Access to Information and Socialization

One of the main findings from the interviews with Indonesian-foreign couples is the lack of easy-to-understand information regarding the procedures for obtaining residence permits. Many foreigners do not know that after marrying an Indonesian citizen, they must obtain an Immigration Permit within a certain period of time. The information available is mostly in Indonesian, with no official guidance in a foreign language.

#### 2. Complex Administrative Procedures

Findings from direct observation show that the administrative process of processing Immigration Permits requires a lot of documents and time. Couples must take care of a domicile certificate, guarantee letter, photocopy of marriage certificate, and recommendation letter from RT/RW and sub-district. This is a burden, especially for couples who do not live in the city area.

So that shows that most applicants return two to three times to complete missing documents. This creates dissatisfaction and slows down the legality of residence process. Lack of Special Services for Mixed Couples

#### 3. Findings from visual documentation and observation show that the Immigration Office does not yet have a special service or consultation counter for mixed couples. All applicants are treated the same, even though their needs are different, especially those related to the legality of cross-border marriage and language differences.

In general, the implementation of immigration policies for mixed couples in Gorontalo has not been running optimally. The main factors that influence are:

- Lack of Knowledge about mixed marriage regulations by mixed marriage couples
- Low level of socialization by related agencies
- Lengthy bureaucratic procedures.
- Weak coordination between technical institutions.
- There is no dedicated service that is responsive to the needs of mixed couples.

These findings form the basis for developing more inclusive, adaptive and collaborative policy recommendations at the regional level.

### **Immigration Procedures for Mixed Marriage Couples**

In this section, the procedures faced by mixed marriage couples who want to take care of their immigration status at the Class I TPI Gorontalo Immigration Office are explained. These procedures refer to the regulations set by the Directorate General of Immigration and are based on field experience gained during the research.

### **Administrative Requirements**

Mixed marriage couples in Gorontalo Province must fulfill several administrative requirements to obtain a residence permit for foreign couples. Among them are documents that must be submitted to Immigration, such as:

- Valid marriage certificate.
- Passport of foreign national couple.
- Certificate of good conduct from the police (for foreign nationals).
- Residence permit application form.
- Letter of guarantee from the Indonesian citizen's family, if necessary.

Based on the interview results, mixed marriage couples admitted that they often face difficulties in processing documents from abroad, especially if there are different provisions regarding valid documents in the country of origin of the foreign partner.

### **Submission and Verification Process**

Once the documents are received, the mixed marriage couple will be asked to fill out a residence permit application form and go through the verification process. This verification process involves document checks and interviews to ensure the accuracy of the data. This process can take quite a long time, especially if there are documents that need to be translated or adjusted to the rules in force in Indonesia.

### **Approval and Issuance of Residence Permit**

Once all requirements are met and verification is complete, the immigration officer will process the residence permit application. For couples who meet the requirements, a residence permit will be issued with applicable provisions, such as a limited residence permit or a permanent residence permit (for couples who have been married longer and have families).

### **Obstacles Faced by Mixed Marriage Couples**

Based on interviews and observations conducted, various obstacles were found that mixed marriage couples face in managing their immigration status. These obstacles come from various administrative, regulatory, and social factors.

### **Administrative Barriers**

Administrative obstacles are obstacles often faced by mixed marriage couples, especially in terms of completeness and validity of documents. Foreign couples who come from countries with different legal systems or languages often have difficulty meeting the administrative requirements that apply in Indonesia.

For example, some foreign couples from countries without a formal marriage certificate system face difficulties in providing documents that are recognized by immigration. In this case, the document verification process becomes more complex and takes longer.

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### **Legal and Regulatory Barriers**

Some mixed marriage couples also face obstacles related to unclear or inconsistent regulations governing their immigration status. Although there is a clear Immigration Law, in practice many couples still complain about legal uncertainty related to changes in policy or different interpretations of policy between central and regional immigration agencies.

For example, there are differences in policies regarding residence permits for couples who have been married for more than five years. Some immigration officers believe that such couples should not need to extend their residence permits, while others believe that they should be extended periodically.

### **Social and Cultural Barriers**

In addition to administrative and legal barriers, mixed marriage couples also often face social and cultural barriers related to perceptions of the surrounding community. Some couples reported experiencing discrimination or stigma related to cultural and nationality differences.

In addition, some couples also face challenges in terms of social adjustment, especially when one partner comes from a country with a very different culture. This has the potential to add to the difficulties in the process of adaptation and integration of foreign couples in Indonesian society, which ultimately affects the immigration administration process.

### **Analysis of Immigration Procedures in Public Administration Perspective**

From the perspective of Public Administration, the immigration procedures implemented by the Class I TPI Gorontalo Immigration Office reflect the government's efforts to provide efficient, transparent, and accountable public services. However, there are several aspects that need to be evaluated to improve the quality of these services.

#### **Effectiveness of Procedure**

The existing procedures are already quite clearly structured, but in practice, their effectiveness is still hampered by several factors, such as the lack of socialization regarding the applicable procedures, as well as the existence of administrative obstacles that often cause delays in the process of managing the immigration status of mixed marriage couples.

For example, mixed marriage couples who are applying for a residence permit for the first time often feel confused about the requirements that must be met. In addition, the length of time required to verify documents is also a major obstacle that can affect the couple's perception of the quality of immigration services.

### **Responsiveness and Accountability**

In terms of responsiveness, the Class I TPI Gorontalo Immigration Office is quite responsive in handling complaints from mixed marriage couples. The immigration officers interviewed showed a professional attitude in assisting couples who applied for residence permits, although there were several complaints regarding the length of the process.

However, in terms of accountability, there are still some couples who feel that the decision-making process is not fully transparent. For example, the lack of clarity regarding the reasons why certain documents are accepted or rejected is often a complaint from foreign couples, which ultimately prolongs the uncertainty in the administrative process.

### **Simplification of Procedures**

In order to improve public services, there is a need to simplify procedures. Several mixed marriage couples have suggested that some stages of document verification can be done more efficiently by utilizing technology, such as through an online system that allows for electronic submission of documents.

It is hoped that this procedural simplification will speed up the immigration status processing process, reduce administrative obstacles, and increase the satisfaction of mixed-marriage couples with immigration services.

### **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that although the immigration procedures implemented at the Class I TPI Gorontalo Immigration Office are quite clear and structured, there are still several obstacles faced by mixed-marriage couples, both in administrative, legal, and social aspects. Existing procedures require improvements in terms of transparency, responsiveness, and simplification to reduce existing obstacles. In addition, further evaluation of immigration policies related to mixed-marriage couples is needed to improve the effectiveness of immigration services in Gorontalo Province.

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