

# Legal and Administrative Analysis of Ombudsman's Role in Resolving Public Service Maladministration in Indonesia

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**Abstract:** Public service maladministration remains a significant challenge in Indonesia because it undermines citizens' rights, weakens administrative justice, and reduces accountability in public service governance. This study aims to analyze the legal and administrative role of the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia in resolving public service maladministration. The research employs a normative juridical approach complemented by qualitative administrative document analysis, using statutory regulations, scholarly literature, and institutional documents related to the Ombudsman's authority, complaint-handling mechanisms, and institutional effectiveness. The findings show that the Ombudsman holds a strategic position as an independent external oversight institution with authority to receive complaints, examine allegations of maladministration, conduct investigations, facilitate corrective actions, and issue recommendations. Administratively, the Ombudsman functions as a complaint-resolution mechanism, an accountability forum, and a preventive institution for improving public service governance. However, its effectiveness is constrained by uneven compliance with recommendations, limited coercive enforcement, incomplete regulatory support for certain remedies, restricted institutional capacity, and variations in bureaucratic responsiveness. This study concludes that the effectiveness of the Ombudsman in resolving maladministration depends on the interaction between legal authority, administrative capacity, institutional compliance, and sustainable follow-up mechanisms.

**Keywords:** Administrative Ombudsman; Public Service Maladministration;

## 1. Introduction

Public service delivery constitutes one of the most fundamental functions of the state because it is through public services that citizens directly experience the presence, capacity, and responsibility of government. The provision of accessible, fair, and high-quality public services is closely related to the realization of welfare, social justice, and the protection of citizens' rights.. Pareek & Sole (2022) emphasize that public services are central to promoting social welfare and justice in society. In contemporary public administration, service quality is not merely evaluated as a managerial outcome, but also as an indicator of good governance and institutional legitimacy. Lee (2021) argues that equitable government performance contributes significantly to public trust. Campbell (2023) further demonstrates that accountability in public decision-making is essential for maintaining citizens' confidence in government. Therefore, poor public service delivery may have consequences beyond technical inefficiency because it can weaken public trust in government institutions. Pratama et al. (2023) show that weak public service delivery may disrupt governmental stability by reducing citizens' confidence in the state.

Based on a review of existing literature, research on the Indonesian Ombudsman remains relatively fragmented. Legal studies predominantly emphasize the institution's statutory authority, recommendations, and sanctioning power, whereas public administration research focuses more on responsiveness, complaint handling, and overall institutional performance. While a few studies have attempted to bridge these dimensions—such as Yasin et al. (2025), which is geographically limited to the East Java Representative Office—there is still limited attention given to an integrated legal-administrative analysis. Specifically, there is a lack of comprehensive research that

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simultaneously examines the Ombudsman's statutory authority, its administrative practices in resolving public service maladministration, and the broader legal-administrative challenges that shape its effectiveness. Addressing this gap is significant because the Ombudsman's success in protecting citizens' rights cannot be solely determined by the existence of its legal authority or the sheer volume of complaints it processes; rather, it depends heavily on how that authority is translated into effective administrative processes, compliance by public bodies, and meaningful remedies for citizens.

Despite the centrality of public services, their implementation is often disrupted by maladministration. In the Indonesian context, maladministration refers to unlawful conduct, abuse of authority, the use of authority for purposes other than those prescribed by law, negligence, or neglect of legal obligations in the delivery of public services that causes material or immaterial harm to individuals or society. Ispriyarso & Badriyah (2021) define maladministration as a form of improper administrative behavior that violates legal obligations and harms the public. In practice, maladministration may take various forms, including protracted delays, procedural deviations, discriminatory treatment, failure to provide services, abuse of authority, and disregard of legal responsibilities. Mahsyar et al. (2022) identify these practices as common manifestations of maladministration in public service delivery. Such practices are not merely administrative irregularities, but constitute a form of administrative injustice because they deprive citizens of timely, fair, and lawful treatment by public institutions. Gorgerino (2021) notes that maladministration may threaten the protection of individual rights. Pratiwi et al. (2024) further position maladministration as a violation of good governance principles in public service administration. The persistence of this problem is evident in the substantial number of public complaints addressed to the Ombudsman in Indonesia. Pratiwi et al. (2024) report that 33,648 allegations of maladministration in public services were registered between 2018 and 2022.

In response to such conditions, the Ombudsman has emerged as a strategic external oversight institution tasked with protecting citizens from maladministration and ensuring accountability in public administration. Ombudsman institutions are generally designed to provide an accessible, non-judicial mechanism through which citizens may challenge improper administrative conduct and seek corrective action. Dahlvik & Pohn-Weidinger (2021) describe the Ombudsman as an important pathway for resolving disputes between citizens and public administration without relying exclusively on courts. The Ombudsman also contributes to the realization of administrative justice through complaint resolution, investigation, and recommendations for remedial action. Msengeti & Kipchumba (2023) explain that Ombudsman institutions improve public administration by resolving complaints and initiating investigations into problematic administrative practices. In Indonesia, the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia occupies a similar role as an independent external supervisory institution over public service delivery. Bakir & Wulandari (2023) describe the Indonesian Ombudsman as an external oversight body responsible for supervising government administration and public services. Its functions include receiving public reports, examining allegations of maladministration, requesting clarification, conducting investigations, facilitating resolution, and issuing corrective measures or recommendations. Ispriyarso & Badriyah (2021) explain that these stages form part of the Ombudsman's operational process in handling public complaints. Thus, the Ombudsman is not merely a complaint-handling body, but also an institutional mechanism for strengthening public accountability and administrative justice.

Recent studies on the Indonesian Ombudsman have developed across several distinct but interconnected strands. First, legal studies have examined the institutional position of the Ombudsman, the legal force of its recommendations, and the compliance of public bodies with such recommendations. Nurdin (2021) focuses on the legal strength of Ombudsman recommendations as an instrument of public service supervision. Second, other legal studies analyze the relationship between the Ombudsman's institutional position and the obligation of public officials to comply with its recommendations. Asgar & Kartianti (2022) examine this issue through the case of the North Maluku Ombudsman

Representative Office. Third, public administration studies have focused on the performance, responsiveness, and complaint-handling capacity of Ombudsman offices in addressing reports of maladministration. Mahsyar et al. (2022) analyze the responsiveness of the Indonesian Ombudsman in handling complaints concerning maladministration in police services. Fourth, several regional and sectoral studies examine the role of Ombudsman representative offices in supervising specific public service sectors. Afrisal et al. (2022) investigate the Ombudsman Representative Office of South Sulawesi in improving local government compliance with public service standards. Kafrawi et al. (2023) discuss the implementation of Ombudsman authority in supervising village public services in West Nusa Tenggara. Fifth, a broader strand of research connects the Ombudsman with human rights protection, unlawful government action, and good governance. Mujib & Muchlas (2023) analyze the Ombudsman within the framework of human rights protection and good governance. Collectively, these studies affirm the importance of the Ombudsman in Indonesia's public service oversight system. However, they also reveal continuing concerns regarding institutional effectiveness.

Nevertheless, the effectiveness of the Ombudsman in resolving public service maladministration remains contested. Several studies point to the limited compliance of public institutions with Ombudsman recommendations. Ispriyarso & Badriyah (2021) find that many Ombudsman recommendations are not followed or implemented by reported agencies. The legal challenge is also related to the character of recommendations that do not always operate with the same coercive force as judicial decisions. Nurdin (2021) highlights that the practical influence of Ombudsman recommendations depends heavily on the willingness of public institutions to comply. The problem extends beyond legal force because certain remedial instruments still face incomplete regulatory support. Cahyana (2023) shows that compensation mechanisms for public service losses remain difficult to implement due to the absence of complete implementing regulations. From an administrative perspective, the performance of the Ombudsman is also affected by limited human resources, insufficient facilities, broad supervision areas, and increasing volumes of complaints. Afrisal et al. (2022) identify personnel and facility constraints as factors that limit the effectiveness of Ombudsman supervision. Cantika et al. (2024) report that rising complaint volumes and wide territorial coverage create additional burdens for Ombudsman complaint resolution. However, other studies indicate that Ombudsman offices may still perform effectively in certain contexts. Kusumadewi et al. (2024) find that on-the-spot report reception and verification services by the Bali Ombudsman Representative Office have been implemented in an accountable manner. Sugiarto et al. (2024) show that Ombudsman intervention contributed to the handling of maladministration complaints in the 2023 student admission process in Central Java. These differing findings indicate that Ombudsman effectiveness cannot be assessed solely from its legal mandate or from isolated administrative performance indicators.

Based on this literature, existing studies on the Indonesian Ombudsman remain relatively fragmented. Legal research tends to emphasize authority, recommendations, and sanctioning power. Maulina & Hidayat (2025) focus on the need to expand Ombudsman authority in imposing sanctions against maladministration. Public administration research more often focuses on responsiveness, complaint handling, and institutional performance. Robbani & Prathama (2022) examine the performance of the East Java Ombudsman in handling community complaints. Although several studies have approached both dimensions, limited attention has been given to an integrated legal-administrative analysis that simultaneously examines the Ombudsman's statutory authority, its administrative practices in resolving public service maladministration, and the legal-administrative challenges that shape its effectiveness. Yasin et al. (2025) provide one of the closest studies by analyzing the implementation of Ombudsman authority in handling maladministration, but their study is limited to the East Java Representative Office. This gap is significant because the success of the Ombudsman in protecting citizens' rights cannot be determined only by the existence of legal authority or by the number of complaints handled. Rather, it depends on how that authority is translated into effective administrative processes, compliance by public bodies, and meaningful

remedies for citizens. Therefore, this study aims to analyze: (1) the legal position and authority of the Indonesian Ombudsman in resolving public service maladministration; (2) the administrative role of the Ombudsman in handling and resolving maladministration complaints; and (3) the legal and administrative challenges that affect its effectiveness. This article argues that the Indonesian Ombudsman is institutionally indispensable for strengthening administrative justice and public service accountability. Its effectiveness, however, depends on the alignment of legal authority, bureaucratic compliance, institutional capacity, and sustainable follow-up mechanisms.

## 2. Materials and Methods

This study employs a normative juridical research design complemented by qualitative administrative document analysis. The normative juridical approach is used to examine the legal position, authority, and institutional mandate of the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia in resolving public service maladministration. Meanwhile, the administrative document analysis is applied to understand how such legal authority is operationalized through complaint handling, examination procedures, corrective actions, recommendations, and institutional follow-up mechanisms. This combined design is considered appropriate because the study does not merely analyze the formal legal basis of the Ombudsman, but also investigates the administrative implications of that authority in the resolution of maladministration.

The study applies three analytical approaches. First, the statute approach is used to examine the legal framework governing public service oversight and maladministration resolution in Indonesia. The primary legal materials include Law Number 37 of 2008 concerning the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia, Law Number 25 of 2009 concerning Public Services, and other relevant implementing regulations related to public service supervision and maladministration assessment. Second, the conceptual approach is employed to analyze key concepts relevant to the study, including maladministration, administrative justice, external oversight, public accountability, legal authority, and institutional effectiveness. Third, the institutional-administrative approach is used to examine the Ombudsman as a public institution that operates through administrative processes, particularly in receiving public complaints, examining maladministration allegations, issuing corrective measures or recommendations, and encouraging compliance from public service providers.

The research materials consist of primary legal materials, secondary legal materials, and supporting institutional documents. Primary legal materials refer to statutes and regulations that define the authority of the Ombudsman and the legal framework of public services in Indonesia. Secondary legal materials include scholarly journal articles, academic books, and previous studies discussing the Ombudsman, maladministration, public service accountability, administrative justice, and the effectiveness of complaint-resolution institutions. To ensure the relevance of the literature to the current state of research, the study primarily uses scholarly publications issued between 2021 and 2026. The literature was identified through a structured search process assisted by Scite.ai, using thematic keywords related to: public service quality and governmental legitimacy; maladministration in public services; Ombudsman oversight and complaint resolution; Indonesian Ombudsman studies; compliance with Ombudsman recommendations; and integrated legal-administrative analysis. Supporting institutional documents include official reports, performance publications, policy documents, and publicly accessible materials issued by the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia that relate to complaint handling, maladministration oversight, and public service supervision.

To ensure the relevance of the literature to the current state of research, the study primarily uses scholarly publications issued between 2021 and 2026. These secondary materials were identified through a structured search process assisted by Scite.ai, utilizing specific thematic keywords related to public service quality and governmental legitimacy, maladministration in public services, Ombudsman oversight and complaint

resolution, Indonesian Ombudsman studies, compliance with Ombudsman recommendations, and integrated legal-administrative analysis.

Data were collected through documentary study. The documentary study was conducted in four stages. First, the study identified and reviewed the statutory provisions defining the Ombudsman's legal authority and its role in supervising public services. Second, the study collected and classified scholarly literature based on six analytical themes: public service governance, maladministration, Ombudsman institutions, Indonesian Ombudsman research, recommendation compliance, and integrated legal-administrative effectiveness. Third, official Ombudsman documents were examined to identify administrative practices, oversight mechanisms, and institutional challenges in resolving public service maladministration. Fourth, all collected materials were organized according to the three research focuses of this article: legal authority, administrative role, and legal-administrative challenges.

The collected materials were analyzed using qualitative legal-administrative analysis. The analysis proceeded through several steps. First, relevant legal norms were interpreted to determine the statutory basis, scope, and limitations of the Ombudsman's authority. Second, the administrative functions of the Ombudsman were mapped to explain how reports of maladministration are received, examined, resolved, and followed up. Third, the study identified legal and administrative constraints affecting the effectiveness of maladministration resolution, including recommendation compliance, enforcement limitations, regulatory gaps, institutional capacity, and public service provider responsiveness. Finally, these findings were synthesized into an integrated analytical framework to explain how the effectiveness of the Indonesian Ombudsman depends on the interaction between legal authority, administrative implementation, and institutional compliance.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1. *Legal Position and Authority of the Indonesian Ombudsman in Resolving Public Service Maladministration*

The Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia occupies a strategic legal position as an independent state institution responsible for supervising the implementation of public services. Its institutional existence is formally established under Law Number 37 of 2008 concerning the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia, which defines the Ombudsman as a state institution that is independent and free from intervention by other powers in carrying out its duties and authority. This legal status distinguishes the Ombudsman from internal supervisory mechanisms within government bureaucracy because it operates as an external accountability institution. Asgar & Kartianti (2022) emphasize that the independence of the Ombudsman is essential to ensure that public service oversight is conducted objectively and without direct subordination to the agencies being supervised.

The legal authority of the Ombudsman is closely related to the protection of citizens from maladministration in the delivery of public services. Under the statutory framework, maladministration includes unlawful behavior, abuse of authority, the use of authority for purposes other than those intended by law, negligence, and neglect of legal obligations that cause material or immaterial losses to individuals or society. Ispriyarso & Badriyah (2021) explain that this definition makes maladministration a legal as well as administrative problem because it involves both the misuse of public authority and the failure to fulfill service obligations. The inclusion of material and immaterial losses within the concept of maladministration also confirms that the legal protection provided by the Ombudsman is directed toward the restoration of citizens' rights, not merely procedural correction.

Integrating the Ombudsman's oversight findings into broader public service governance reforms is essential so that reports, examination results, and recurring patterns of maladministration do not remain confined to individual case files. Instead, these findings should be utilized to inform institutional learning, improve service standards, drive bureaucratic reform, and evaluate public accountability. Furthermore, public service over-

sight must be positioned more strategically within national development priorities. Consequently, integrating these oversight findings implies that they can serve not only as tools for resolving individual complaints but also as vital evidence for systemic improvement in public administration.

The Ombudsman's authority in handling maladministration is supported by its mandate to receive public reports, examine allegations, request clarification, summon relevant parties, conduct field investigations, and issue recommendations. These powers are intended to ensure that maladministration cases are not left solely to internal bureaucratic discretion. Nurdin (2021) states that Ombudsman recommendations function as legal instruments of external supervision over public service delivery. The Ombudsman may also provide corrective measures during the examination process when maladministration can be resolved without requiring a formal recommendation. Kafrawi et al. (2023) note that the Ombudsman's authority extends beyond passive complaint reception because it also includes mediation, conciliation, and special adjudication in specific public service disputes.

The legal position of the Ombudsman is further reinforced by Law Number 25 of 2009 concerning Public Services, which recognizes the right of citizens to submit complaints regarding improper public service delivery. This law situates the Ombudsman within the broader architecture of public service accountability. Krisnadi & Arifin (2023) explain that external oversight of public services in Indonesia is exercised through public complaints and Ombudsman supervision. Consequently, the Ombudsman serves as a bridge between citizens' rights to proper services and the state's obligation to administer public services lawfully, fairly, and responsibly.

However, the existence of legal authority does not automatically guarantee effective resolution of maladministration. The Ombudsman's recommendations may have strong normative legitimacy, yet their implementation depends on the willingness and compliance of the reported institutions. Nurdin (2021) argues that the practical effectiveness of Ombudsman recommendations remains closely linked to administrative obedience rather than direct coercive enforcement. This condition creates a structural tension between the Ombudsman's strong legal mandate and the limited certainty that its findings will be fully implemented. Therefore, the legal position of the Ombudsman should be understood not only in terms of its statutory authority, but also in relation to the compliance environment within which that authority operates.

### ***3.2. Administrative Role of the Ombudsman in Handling and Resolving Maladministration Complaints***

From an administrative perspective, the Ombudsman performs a vital role in transforming public complaints into formal mechanisms of accountability and service correction. Its function begins with receiving reports from citizens who experience or observe maladministration in public service delivery. These reports are subsequently verified to determine whether they fulfill formal and material requirements before entering the examination stage. Mahsyar et al. (2022) explain that the complaint-handling process of the Indonesian Ombudsman generally covers the stages of report reception, examination, and resolution. This administrative sequence is important because it provides a structured pathway for citizens to seek redress from public institutions.

The examination stage is central to the Ombudsman's administrative role. During this stage, the Ombudsman assesses the substance of the complaint, requests clarification from the reported agency, examines supporting evidence, and identifies whether maladministration has occurred. Ispriyarso & Badriyah (2021) describe the Ombudsman's working process as involving administrative review, preparation of case summaries, clarification requests, and the issuance of recommendations when necessary. This process demonstrates that the Ombudsman does not merely record complaints, but undertakes a quasi-investigative administrative assessment aimed at establishing the presence or absence of maladministration.

In addition to examining individual reports, the Ombudsman may resolve cases through corrective actions, mediation, or recommendations directed to the reported in-

stitution. This resolution-oriented function distinguishes the Ombudsman from institutions that only conduct monitoring or evaluation without intervening in the complaint process. Jennifer & Widiyarta (2023) show that the handling of maladministration cases may involve mediation, the issuance of corrective suggestions, and monitoring of follow-up actions. Through these instruments, the Ombudsman operates as an administrative problem-solving institution that seeks to restore citizens' rights while encouraging public service providers to correct deficiencies in their procedures.

The administrative role of the Ombudsman is also evident in its preventive function. Maladministration resolution should not be interpreted narrowly as the settlement of individual complaints, because recurring reports may reveal systemic weaknesses in public service governance. Msengeti & Kipchumba (2023) argue that Ombudsman institutions can initiate investigations into systemic administrative problems and recommend reforms as part of preventive administrative justice. In the Indonesian context, this preventive role is reflected in supervision of service standards, assessment of public service compliance, and institutional recommendations aimed at reducing future maladministration. Afrisal et al. (2022) describe the Ombudsman's involvement in encouraging local governments to improve compliance with public service standards.

The administrative significance of the Ombudsman also lies in its contribution to public accountability. When a citizen submits a complaint, the reported agency is required to provide clarification and justify its administrative conduct. This process creates an accountability relationship between public service providers and service users. Msengeti & Kipchumba (2023) explain that accountability requires public institutions to justify their actions, decisions, and administrative behavior. In this sense, the Ombudsman's complaint-handling mechanism provides an institutional forum through which bureaucratic decisions can be questioned, examined, and corrected.

Nevertheless, the administrative role of the Ombudsman remains dependent on the responsiveness of the institutions being supervised. A complaint may be processed effectively by the Ombudsman, yet the substantive restoration of citizens' rights still requires cooperation from the reported agency. Mahsyar et al. (2022) show that responsiveness in handling maladministration depends not only on the Ombudsman's internal process, but also on the interaction between the Ombudsman, complainants, and reported public institutions. Therefore, the administrative performance of the Ombudsman must be evaluated in relation to the broader public service system within which complaint resolution takes place.

### ***3.3. Legal and Administrative Challenges Affecting the Effectiveness of the Ombudsman***

Although the Ombudsman possesses a strong legal mandate and an increasingly institutionalized administrative process, its effectiveness in resolving maladministration is affected by several legal and administrative challenges. The first major legal challenge concerns the level of compliance with Ombudsman recommendations. Ispriyarso & Badriyah (2021) find that many recommendations issued by the Ombudsman are not followed or implemented by reported agencies. This finding indicates that the resolution of maladministration may become incomplete when public institutions do not act upon the Ombudsman's corrective directives.

The compliance problem is closely related to the nature of Ombudsman recommendations within the Indonesian administrative law system. Recommendations are legally recognized and public institutions are expected to implement them, yet they do not function as judicial decisions that can be executed directly through a court enforcement mechanism. Nurdin (2021) explains that the effectiveness of Ombudsman recommendations depends heavily on the willingness of the reported institutions to comply. This creates a condition in which the Ombudsman has authority to identify maladministration and recommend correction, but its capacity to compel implementation remains limited. As a result, the impact of its work may vary significantly across institutions and cases.

A second legal challenge concerns incomplete regulatory support for certain forms of remedy. The Ombudsman is authorized to recommend compensation or rehabilitation

in cases where citizens suffer losses due to maladministration. However, the effectiveness of such remedies depends on the availability of detailed implementing regulations and operational pathways. Cahyana (2023) shows that public service compensation mechanisms have not been optimally implemented because the regulatory instruments required for their execution remain incomplete. This situation illustrates that legal recognition of citizens' remedies is insufficient when the operational legal infrastructure is not fully developed.

The third challenge is administrative capacity. The effectiveness of complaint resolution requires adequate human resources, investigative capacity, organizational facilities, and the ability to supervise a broad range of public service providers. Afrisal et al. (2022) identify limited personnel and insufficient facilities as obstacles to Ombudsman supervision in South Sulawesi. Cantika et al. (2024) similarly note that increasing complaint volumes and extensive territorial responsibilities place additional burdens on the Ombudsman Representative Office in Bengkulu. These findings indicate that administrative capacity directly affects the speed, depth, and consistency of maladministration resolution.

Another administrative challenge is the variation in public awareness and institutional recognition of the Ombudsman. The availability of a complaint mechanism does not automatically ensure that citizens understand when and how to use it. Pambudi et al. (2023) show that the recognition rate of Ombudsman representative offices remains an important factor in the effectiveness of public service oversight. Limited public knowledge may reduce the number of legitimate complaints submitted, while limited awareness within service institutions may weaken the seriousness of responses to Ombudsman interventions. This condition can hinder both the accessibility and the authority of the Ombudsman in practice.

Despite these challenges, several studies also show that the Ombudsman can be effective when administrative processes, institutional cooperation, and follow-up mechanisms operate properly. Kusumadewi et al. (2024) find that the reception and verification of on-the-spot reports by the Bali Ombudsman Representative Office were conducted in an accountable manner and generated positive impacts. Sugiarto et al. (2024) demonstrate that Ombudsman intervention contributed to the handling of maladministration complaints in the 2023 student admission process in Central Java. These findings suggest that the Ombudsman's effectiveness is not absent, but uneven. It tends to be stronger when complaint handling is supported by institutional cooperation and when reported agencies are responsive to correction.

The tension between these findings confirms that the effectiveness of the Ombudsman cannot be explained through a single-variable approach. Legal authority alone is insufficient when recommendations are not implemented. Administrative procedures alone are also insufficient when institutional capacity and compliance are weak. The resolution of maladministration therefore depends on the interaction between legal enforceability, administrative responsiveness, organizational capacity, and bureaucratic compliance. This interaction constitutes the core analytical point of this study.

### ***3.4. Strengthening the Ombudsman's Role in Resolving Public Service Maladministration***

Strengthening the Ombudsman's role requires a multidimensional approach that addresses both legal and administrative weaknesses. The first priority is improving compliance with Ombudsman recommendations. Compliance should not be treated merely as a voluntary ethical response, but as part of the broader obligation of public institutions to uphold lawful, accountable, and citizen-oriented administration. Asgar & Kartianti (2022) argue that the effectiveness of the Ombudsman is strongly influenced by the willingness of state administrators to implement its recommendations. Strengthening compliance mechanisms may therefore involve clearer follow-up obligations, more systematic monitoring, and stronger institutional consequences for persistent non-compliance.

The second priority is clarifying and strengthening the regulatory framework for remedial actions. Maladministration resolution should not stop at identifying faults or recommending procedural correction. It should also ensure that citizens who suffer losses receive appropriate restoration, compensation, or rehabilitation where legally justified. Cahyana (2023) emphasizes that public service compensation remains difficult to implement because the supporting regulatory framework is not yet sufficiently complete. Strengthening this aspect would increase the substantive value of Ombudsman intervention and align complaint resolution with the principle of administrative justice.

The third priority is improving the administrative capacity of the Ombudsman institution. Effective supervision requires qualified personnel, investigative support, accessible complaint channels, digital case management, and sufficient resources for representative offices across Indonesia. Afrisal et al. (2022) show that limited personnel and facilities weaken supervisory effectiveness. Strengthening organizational capacity is therefore necessary to ensure that the Ombudsman can respond proportionally to the scale and complexity of maladministration reports.

The fourth priority is integrating Ombudsman findings into broader public service governance reforms. Reports, examination results, and recurring patterns of maladministration should not remain confined to individual case files. They should inform institutional learning, service standard improvement, bureaucratic reform, and public accountability evaluation. Pambudi & Hidayat (2022) argue that public service oversight should be positioned more strategically within national development priorities. This perspective suggests that Ombudsman findings can serve not only as complaint-resolution tools, but also as evidence for systemic improvement in public administration.

The fifth priority is strengthening the preventive role of the Ombudsman. Preventive oversight can reduce the recurrence of maladministration by encouraging agencies to identify risks before they become formal complaints. Msengeti & Kipchumba (2023) emphasize that Ombudsman institutions may contribute to administrative justice through proactive investigations into systemic weaknesses. In Indonesia, this role can be operationalized through public service compliance assessments, thematic supervision, institutional recommendations, and the dissemination of maladministration prevention standards. Such preventive measures are crucial to move the Ombudsman beyond a reactive complaint-handling model toward a more strategic governance improvement function.

Overall, the Ombudsman should be understood as a legal-administrative institution whose effectiveness depends on the alignment of statutory authority, institutional capacity, and bureaucratic responsiveness. Its presence is essential for protecting citizens from maladministration, but its impact will remain limited if legal authority is not supported by enforceable follow-up and adequate administrative resources. The central contribution of this analysis is therefore to show that resolving public service maladministration requires an integrated approach in which law provides legitimacy, administration provides operational capacity, and compliance ensures tangible public value.

#### **4. Conclusions**

This study concludes that the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia has a strategic legal and administrative role in resolving public service maladministration as an independent external oversight institution authorized to receive complaints, examine alleged maladministration, conduct investigations, facilitate corrective actions, and issue recommendations to public service providers. Beyond its formal legal authority, the Ombudsman also functions administratively as a complaint-resolution mechanism, an accountability forum, and a preventive institution that contributes to administrative justice and the improvement of public service governance. However, its effectiveness remains constrained by interconnected legal and administrative challenges, particularly uneven compliance with recommendations, limited coercive force in ensuring implementation, incomplete regulatory support for certain remedies, restricted institutional capacity, in-

creasing complaint volumes, and variations in public and bureaucratic responsiveness. Accordingly, the effectiveness of the Ombudsman cannot be assessed merely from the existence of statutory authority or the number of complaints handled, but from the interaction between legal authority, administrative capacity, bureaucratic compliance, and sustainable follow-up mechanisms. Strengthening the Ombudsman's role therefore requires improved recommendation compliance, clearer remedial regulations, greater organizational and investigative capacity, stronger integration of Ombudsman findings into public service reform, and expanded preventive supervision so that the institution can function not only as a resolver of individual complaints, but also as a strategic driver of lawful, accountable, and citizen-centered public service governance in Indonesia. Preventive oversight contributes significantly to reducing maladministration by encouraging public agencies to identify administrative risks before they escalate into formal complaints. Rather than limiting the Ombudsman's role to a narrow, reactive complaint-handling model, this preventive function directly addresses systemic weaknesses in public service governance. In the Indonesian context, this contribution is operationalized through proactive measures, including the supervision of service standards, public service compliance assessments, thematic supervision, institutional recommendations, and the dissemination of maladministration prevention standards. Ultimately, these preventive measures reduce the recurrence of future administrative failures and shift the institution toward a more strategic governance improvement function that promotes lawful, accountable, and citizen-centered public service delivery.

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