



Developing a Model to Enhance Civil Servants' Professionalism in Indonesia

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Abstract

The Indonesian Civil Service Professionalism Index (IP ASN) is viewed mainly as a compliance tool. This study develops a tailored IP ASN improvement model for the Secretariat General of the House of Representatives, integrating its dimensions into a measurable capability system. Using a mixed-methods sequential explanatory design, the study incorporates document and performance reviews, multi-stakeholder Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) involving KemenPANRB, BKN, and LAN, as well as in-depth interviews with senior officials from Setjen DPR and member checking. Findings highlight broken value chains stemming from degree-level focus over relevance, insufficient adoption of the 70:20:10 learning model, a lack of structured performance dialogues linked to compensation, and enforced discipline without ethics pathways. Proposed architecture encompasses standardized requirements, mandatory training assessments, performance indicators, ethics panels, robust governance, and data integration for implementability. The model is policy-fit and tech-ready, repositioning IP ASN from a compliance checklist to an auditable, sustainable performance enabler.

Keywords: Resource-Based View, Dynamic Capabilities, Human Resource Management, Bureaucracy, Civil servants

1. Introduction

Recent global governance emphasizes value-driven bureaucracies, with OECD countries showcasing how professional civil services enhance policy capacity through meritocracy and performance evaluations (Evans and Rauch, 1999; OECD, 2021; Brewer, Kellough and Rainey, 2022; Bednar, 2024). ASEAN public sector HRM demonstrates similar trends, with civil service reforms focusing on competency and performance alignment distinguishing national advancements (Utama Cholidah, 2020). Indonesia, however, struggles in these areas, as evidenced by its low score on the Civil Servant Professionalism Index (IP ASN) regarding competence, according to the Asian Development Bank (ADB) (2021). Despite slight improvements in the Corruption Perceptions Index from 2019 to 2023, a systematic approach to HRM is essential (Transparency International, 2023). Implementing the ASN IP as a strategic reform tool, beyond mere compliance, is crucial for enhancing civil servant quality and public services to meet global competitive standards (Banmairuoy et al., 2022; Dongil et al., 2021; Haniandaresta et al., 2023; Huque & Jongruck, 2020; Lavee, 2022; Siregar & Jannah, 2023; Wati et al., 2023). Indonesia has developed a regulatory framework for civil service through Law Number 5 of 2014, updated by Law Number 20 of 2023, promoting a merit system and ongoing competency development. However, significant gaps exist in implementing these regulations, with the IP ASN often treated as a compliance metric rather than being integrated into key decisions (Asian Development Bank, 2021; Rizqyanto *et al.*, 2022; Sasmito, 2022). Alignment of HRM policies with organizational strategies is vital for effective development and measurement of professionalism in state apparatus (Armstrong, 2020).

Improving professionalism in the General Secretariat of the Indonesian House of Representatives (Setjend DPR) is essential due to its unique challenges in ASN management linked to its legislative role (Iskandar, 2020; Setjen DPR RI, 2021). Civil servants must possess technical skills, adaptability, and integrity. Despite improvements in ASN IP scores from 2020 to 2023, they remain below national targets. Challenges include aligning qualifications with positions, enhancing development methods beyond traditional education, and effectively integrating the 70:20:10 learning model. Performance management is lacking, marked by few performance dialogues and poor linkage of organizational to employee performance (Utama, 2020; Utama *et al.*, 2022). Additionally, a focus on disciplinary measures without ethical guidelines undermines employee integrity, necessitating qualification and competence improvements (Setjen DPR RI, 2021).

Theoretical frameworks underscore the necessity for enhanced civil servant management, prioritizing professionalism. Development Administration Theory links job standards to institutional performance (Mustopadidjaja, 1998). The Resource-Based View (RBV) skilled civil servants as valuable assets requiring suitable qualifications. Dynamic Capabilities (DC) theory stresses adaptive performance assessment (Barney, 1991). Modern HRM theory promotes role gap-based learning and a 70:20:10 training model (Armstrong, 2020). Public Administration Ethics highlight due process, separating mentoring from discipline (Lawton, Rayner and Lasthuizen, 2013). Ultimately, ASN capabilities must align with globalization and modern parliamentary demands, utilizing information technology for transparency (Iskandar, 2020).

Comparative studies emphasize aligning HRM policies with organizational legislation (Huque and Jongruck, 2020; Dongil, Erawan and Mardika, 2021; Lavee, 2022; Haniandaresta, Wulandari and Sobariyah, 2023; Siregar and Jannah, 2023; Wati, Wati and Hanifa, 2023). Challenges include mismatches between educational qualifications and job relevance, and uncoordinated L&D straying from the 70:20:10 model. Performance management lacks comprehensive feedback and focus, while ethical disciplinary measures are poorly defined (Rizqyanto *et al.*, 2022; Sasmito, 2022). Research on civil servant professionalism largely targets local

government applications without addressing legislative contexts (Rizqyanto et al., 2022). Existing literature discusses professionalism's effects on performance and competency strategies, yet strategies for enhancing ASN's intellectual property in legislative bodies remain unexplored. This study aims to address this gap by integrating RBV and DC within Development Administration's framework.

2. Methods

2.1 Research design and participants

The study employs a mixed methods sequential explanatory design, starting with quantitative findings supplemented by qualitative insights to create an actionable model (Ivankova, Creswell and Stick, 2006; Venkatesh, Brown and Bala, 2013). This approach is necessary due to the complexity of improving the IP of ASN at the DPR RI Secretariat General, involving various systems such as HR policy, training, performance management, and integrity governance, thus requiring detailed contextual explanations from decision-makers (Fetters, Curry and Creswell, 2013). The design follows the GRAMMS principles to ensure that readers can trace the integration process of the quantitative and qualitative data (O'cathain, Murphy and Nicholl, 2008). The research is situated within the General Secretariat of the Indonesian House of Representatives, influenced by legislative cycles and political priorities (Palinkas *et al.*, 2015). Participants were purposefully selected for their strategic roles related to ASN's IP dimensions, including heads of relevant bureaus for HR policies, development, planning, and oversight functions, along with external policymakers from the Ministry of PANRB, BKN, and LAN to provide insights into national policies and best practices.

2.2 Data collection procedure

Stage 1 of the research involved a desk review and quantitative scan of various internal policy documents and performance records, alongside a summary of discipline and ethics data. Stage 2 utilized qualitative methods, including thematic focus group discussions (FGDs) and semi-structured interviews, with member checking for validation of the findings (Birt *et al.*, 2016). Instruments for FGDs and interviews were shaped by Phase 1 results and a theoretical framework encompassing resource-based view, dynamic capabilities, and public administration ethics. The grids featured four thematic clusters addressing qualifications, competencies, performance, and discipline-ethics. Data collection included developing a gap matrix from indicators, guided FGDs, and transcriptions for analysis, which effectively examined implementation feasibility and diverse perceptions (O.Nyumba *et al.*, 2018). In-depth interviews of 60-90 minutes focused on design decisions and system integration. Findings were subsequently presented to key informants for member checking, ensuring accuracy and necessary adjustments. The protocol adhered to qualitative reporting principles to enhance process traceability, reflecting a comprehensive evaluation of internal competencies and performance management strategies within the organization (Birt *et al.*, 2016).

2.3 Data analysis

The first-stage analysis is descriptive-comparative to assess consistency between documents (e.g., Job Analysis/SKJ ↔ job indicators ↔ performance plans), map the connection of L&D data with unit indicators (line of sight), and identify patterns in ASN IP 2021–2023. The second-stage analysis used thematic coding, combining a deductive template from the theoretical framework and inductive open coding of field findings, to identify key themes and mechanisms (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Nowell *et al.*, 2017). To strengthen traceability and integration of evidence, a synthesis matrix was created that links empirical findings, regulatory obligations, theoretical levers, model design decisions, as well as indicators and evidence. Source and method triangulation techniques were used to increase the strength of inference (Carter *et al.*, 2014).

2.4 Integration of findings

Quantitative-qualitative integration occurred during interpretation and model design through joint displays and integration matrices, tracing contributions to design decisions. Results were incorporated into a model architecture featuring three pillars and two levers, ensuring each intervention has a clear evidence path linking behavioral change to organizational performance.

2.5 Rigor and ethics

Rigor is ensured through triangulation, audit trails, peer debriefing, and member checking. Credibility is reinforced via diverse sources and direct quotes, with dependability from documented decisions, confirmability through memos, and transferability by detailed contextual descriptions (Carter *et al.*, 2014; Nowell *et al.*, 2017). Ethical principles include informed consent, anonymity, data protection, and academic-only usage.

2.6 Methodological limitations

The research's generalizability is limited to the organization studied; findings' transferability relies on context and HR system configuration. Some system integrations remain in development, with design feasibility validated through triangulation and key informant confirmation, rather than complete quantitative testing.

3. Results

3.1 Empirical findings for each dimension

Qualifications show an emphasis on educational levels (S1/S2/S3) but a lack of relevance to position-specific fields of study. Key positions like law designers and budget analysts have inconsistently applied the "field of study" requirement in HR decisions regarding recruitment, promotion, and study assignments. Study leave is unpopular due to income loss during absence, leading employees to seek education outside work hours, which offers limited options and varying quality. Rank limitations hinder career progression in certain units, indicating a mismatch between job competencies and qualifications.

Competency issues stem from a narrow understanding of training limited to classroom learning, neglecting non-traditional forms such as coaching and mentoring. Corporate University initiatives exist, but the 70:20:10 learning model remains poorly implemented. TNA and IDP are not mandatory or linked to SKP, resulting in fragmented training data and unclear connections between learning outcomes and performance. Evaluation often stops at initial levels, lacking thorough assessment of work behavior and overall impact.

Performance alignment among organizational, unit, and individual goals is inadequate, with inconsistent use of job performance indicators. Performance dialogues are rare, hampering feedback and talent decisions. Attendance often drives performance allowances rather than actual contributions, and impacts of performance declines are unevenly distributed. The Spectro project aims to enhance integration with e-Kinerja.

Discipline and Ethics focus is primarily punitive, lacking proactive ethical governance. Data on ethics is not utilized in talent decisions, and promotion panels often lack relevant ethical records. A code of ethics exists, but its application and leadership modeling are inconsistent, and the helpline and BIP are not standard practices.

3.2 Model architecture (three pillars + two levers)

The synthesis of findings, theories, and policies resulted in the interconnected three-pillar + two-lever model architecture for improving ASN IP:

1. Qualification Pillar (KARISMA-Qualification). Standardizes job levels and fields of study in the SKJ, essential for recruitment, promotions, and study assignments. The gatekeeping process includes problem-based pre-proposals and re-entry programs in the benefit units, prioritizing relevance for DPR Secretariat General's competencies.
2. Competency Pillars (SPECTACULAR/Corpu). Links TNA and IDP to SKP, focusing on core positions with a 70:20:10 learning portfolio and evaluations at levels 3 and 4. Pusbangkom coordinates efforts, while the Corpu Council prioritizes competencies and learning programs, ensuring learning translates to behavioral change reflected in unit indicators.
3. Performance Pillar (performance-synergistic). Involves cascading organizational goals, job indicators, quarterly performance dialogues, and event reviews, allowing adjustment of targets aligned with DPR's agenda. This pillar connects performance evidence to variable income and talent decisions, rewarding high performance.
4. Pillar of Discipline and Ethics (KARISMA – Discipline/Ethics). Separates ethics prevention and enforcement, featuring an Ethics and Discipline Registry to uphold procedural justice and merit system integrity.

Two cross-pillar levers:

1. Governance: The Secretary-General's regulations as the regulatory umbrella with SOPs as the basis for operationalizing the model; Steering Committee/PMO; Corpu Council; quarterly Management Review Meeting calendar; sample process audits (training, performance dialogs, ethics).
2. Data and Technology (SSOT): integration of Spectro, e-Kinerja, LMS/Corpu, Talenta, and Ethics/Discipline Registry information systems; centralized certificate numbering (auto-posting to ASN profiles); leadership dashboards; and audit trails for all HR decisions.

This architecture bridges the empirical gap with a traceable causal path: qualification relevance, gap-based L&D, work behavior change, and the impact of training on organizational performance, improved unit/organizational performance indicators, and fair reward-consequence and talent decisions.

3.4 Operational design: qualification dimension

Education level and study area standards in SKJ are crucial for recruitment and study assignments. The SSOT system identifies suitability and mismatch risks during recruitment, rotation, and promotions. The SDMA Bureau manages gatekeeping and tubel affirmation, while a re-entry program aids competency transfer after education. Class pathways outside working hours combat financial disincentives. A talent pipeline and an ethics registry ensure qualification prerequisites for promotions, with a dashboard tracking qualifications per position.

3.5 Operational design of the competency dimension

The TNA and IDP are compulsory for all employees, linked to performance targets (SKP). The IDP identifies role gaps and SKP items for competency application post-training, acting as a training selection tool. A job cluster-based curriculum follows the 70:20:10 learning method, with 10% classroom, 20% coaching, and 70% action projects. A digital logbook tracks integrated learning evidence. Training evaluation assesses behavioral change and organizational impact, using a work behavior checklist after 3-9 months, informing performance indicators and accountability in Management Review Meetings.

3.6 Operational design performance dimension

Cascading aligns organizational goals with individual performance indicators. Each performance indicator is broken down into unit and job-specific metrics, supported by evidence artifacts like documents and analytical products. Quarterly performance dialogs utilize a standardized minutes format, covering indicator realization, obstacles, L&D support plans linked to IDPs, and follow-up decisions, with electronic records maintained for auditing. Event-driven reviews allow for adjustments to performance target when necessary, documented with clear minutes and timestamps. Employee performance impacts performance allowances (tukin), with a percentage based on evidence-based assessments, rewarding high performers and addressing underperformance accordingly. Testing for rubric refinement commenced in the core.

3.7 Operational design: dimensions of discipline and ethics

A separation of paths and due process is established between disciplinary and ethical management. The ethics panel addresses alleged value violations, while the disciplinary path manages rule infractions. An ethics helpline offers consultations, and an ethics huddle reviews case studies. Ethical violations may involve BIP (behavioral coaching, ethical learning) tracked in SSOT during performance dialogs. An ethics and discipline registry, linked

to talent management, governs employee promotions with a cooling-off policy based on violation severity, monitored by the Inspectorate for compliance.

3.8 Model validation

The model validation process involved cross-agency FGDs, in-depth interviews, and member checking, revealing strong support and essential implementation prerequisites. Key needs include an internal regulatory framework via the Secretary-General's Regulation and a cross-process SOP to link the four dimensions of IP ASN. Establishing a Corpu Council will prioritize competencies and training program development, with employees required to attach TNA and IDP to SKP for training selection. Integration into a centralized SSOT is necessary for data management efficiency. Evaluation processes incorporate work behavior checklists and performance samples, with performance dialogues to ensure fairness in reviews. Training participant selection should be based on SKP for objective level 3 evaluations. Pre-proposals addressing organizational issues and re-entry programs are required for capability transfer. Mandatory ethics reading during promotion/rotation meetings aims to reduce merit risks. Management Review Meetings encompass budget absorption, indicator reviews, and ethical signals. An expert panel proposed a 6–12 months implementation package with a focus on training evaluations, success metrics, and necessary elements for piloting, including performance allowances and external dependencies involving data standardization.

4. Discussion

The research establishes that ASN IP will enhance institutional value if regarded as a capability system, rather than just an administrative compliance tool. Public sector performance literature suggests that when indicators are seen merely as reporting obligations, their utility for improvement and HR decisions diminishes. However, linking indicators to objectives, managerial discussions, and credible outcomes fosters meaningful use of performance data. The study combines empirical data and theory to elucidate the "three pillars + two levers" framework's dynamics, contributions, implementation requirements, limitations, and research opportunities.

Field findings indicate disruptions in the IP ASN "value chain" related to qualifications, competencies, performance, and ethical behavior. Emphasis on educational qualifications overshadows field relevance. L&D prioritizes classroom training, and performance evaluations lack robust evidence, while ethics lacks an independent framework. The proposed model includes relevant qualifications for promotions, mandatory TNA and development plans linked to SKP, a 70:20:10 curriculum focusing on workplace learning, behavior transfer evaluations, regular performance dialogues, and ethics panels. This approach aligns with training transfer and evaluation best practices and ensures ethical compliance in public administration (Baldwin and Ford, 1988; Kraiger, Ford and Salas, 1993; Blume *et al.*, 2010; Harding, 2022).

The ASN IP Improvement Model enhances literature by integrating various theories into operational design levers. It emphasizes RBV, highlighting unique legislative competencies as strategic assets needing protection through qualification standards. Additionally, DC underscores the need for structured adaptation through documented reviews, ensuring fairness in performance evaluation while maintaining accountability amidst shifting political agendas (Teece, Pisano and Shuen, 1997; Teece, 2007).

Practical contributions are achieved through policy packages and digital designs ready for implementation. Recommended policies include the ASN IP Improvement Model, TNA-IDP SOPs, and various SOPs focusing on workplace learning, performance dialogue, ethics, and review processes. Digital integration of Spectro/e-Kinerja, LMS/Corpu, and registry systems establishes a SSOT for evidence-based HR management decisions. This synergy of policies and technology enhances the utilization of performance information for managerial decisions and human resource development in the public sector.

The implications for managerial, governance, and work culture change highlight the importance of governance and data/technology as foundational for implementation. A Steering Committee/PMO must coordinate efforts, while the Corporate Board prioritizes competencies and evaluates L&D impacts. Culturally, superiors should serve as learning coaches, shifting performance meetings to focus on evidence and learning, and framing the ethics line as dignified coaching. Supervisor support and work climate are crucial for applying learning outcomes, and consistent interventions shape behaviors in ethics programs (Kaptein, 2015).

The Secretary-General of the House of Representatives operates in a politically sensitive environment, affected by the session calendar and legislative dynamics. Complex goals and bureaucracy can hinder performance management, necessitating supportive mechanisms like performance dialog and evidence-based adjustments (Hill and Plimmer, 2024). Risk-tagging and event-driven reviews help ensure fairness and motivation at work. While core model principles such as qualification relevance and evidence-based dialog are applicable across contexts, specific implementation parameters, including performance bonus weight and review frequency, must align with the agency's mandate and operational cycles.

Model implementation faces three key risks: Regulatory and governance risk, which could lead to fragmented integration without proper governance structures; System and data risks, where interoperability and data quality are crucial for effective performance dialog and training evaluation; and Capacity and culture risks, necessitating time, training, and tools for supervisors, alongside incentives for employees to engage in non-classical learning. Training transfer literature highlights the importance of practice opportunities and workplace support, while performance information utilization underscores the need for robust leadership and governance.

Impact evidence and accountability focus on designing indicators to test the impact chain. The competency dimension includes a work behavior checklist and a work sample to map learning implementation to organizational indicators, differentiating between learning and performance outcomes. In the performance dimension, dialog minutes and reviews support target changes and L&D needs. The discipline-ethics dimension

provides a registry as a record for talent decisions, promoting an ethics infrastructure that supports integrity systems rather than solely relying on case enforcement.

The ASN IP improvement model aligns with national policies on sustainable competency development and diverse learning formats, emphasizing performance dialogs and fair procedures in discipline policies. To ensure adaptability to regulatory changes, an adaptation clause is included in the SOP for continuous compliance. The model addresses biases in implementing professionalism indices: input bias is corrected through mandatory TNA-IDP linked to SKP, alongside 70:20:10 learning portfolios and training evaluations; process bias is tackled by documenting performance dialogs and integrating performance data into managerial decisions; biased sanctions are mitigated by establishing an ethics pathway focused on prevention and coaching, along with a registry for proportional career decisions, thus enhancing ethics infrastructure and program effectiveness.

The study highlights limitations including restricted generalizability from a single-site focus at the DPR Secretariat General, operational claims lacking data-driven evidence due to ongoing digital development, and potential measurement errors from new evaluation practices. Response bias from social desirability in FGDs/interviews is noted, though triangulation may help. Additionally, reliance on national policy changes and implementation risks linked to performance-based pay necessitate effective change management. Proposed future research includes quasi-experimental evaluations of the 70:20:10 learning model, longitudinal assessments of behavioral changes, cross-agency studies for performance parameters, creation of standardized competency taxonomies, development of learning analytics for training optimization, organizational ethnography to explore compliance dynamics, cost-effectiveness analyses of policy packages, and establishing secure data sharing protocols for enhanced inter-agency collaboration

5. Conclusion

This research indicates that enhancing the IP of ASN in the DPR General Secretariat is effective only when seen as a capability system that integrates four critical dimensions: qualifications, competencies, performance, and discipline/ethics. Empirical evidence highlights disruptions within the value chain regarding qualification relevance, L&D orchestration, performance discussions, and ethical pathways. The theoretical synthesis provides frameworks to address these issues. The proposed "three pillars + two levers" model emphasizes education standards, job study areas, mandatory TNA-IDP for employees tied to SKP, and a 70:20:10 learning curriculum. It incorporates performance indicators, performance dialogues, and an ethics panel, backed by governance structures. Validation through FGDs and interviews with leaders confirms the model's feasibility, contingent upon policy prerequisites and strengthened supervisory roles. Managerial recommendations include restructured incentives and institutionalizing quarterly performance reviews. Ultimately, the article presents a policy-fit, tech-ready IP ASN model, transitioning it from compliance to an auditable performance enabler that promotes fairness and sustained ASN professionalism.

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