

# Enhancing Indonesian civil servants' professionalism through integrated frameworks

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## ABSTRACT

The Indonesian Civil Service Professionalism Index (IP ASN) is frequently regarded as a compliance tool for personnel administration rather than a catalyst for organizational development. This study develops and validates an IP ASN enhancement model specifically for the Secretariat General of the House of Representatives (Setjen DPR), a high-level political bureaucracy, by incorporating the four dimensions of the index into a quantifiable, equitable, and adaptable capability framework. We use a mixed-methods sequential explanatory design that includes member checking, in-depth interviews with senior officials at Setjen DPR, document/performance reviews, and multi-stakeholder focus groups with major internal units. The results underscore the existence of value chains that are fundamentally flawed due to the degree-level emphasis on relevance, the inadequate implementation of the 70:20:10 learning model, the absence of structured performance dialogues associated with compensation, and the enforcement of discipline without ethical pathways. The proposed architecture is designed to be implementable by incorporating standardized requirements, mandatory training assessments, performance indicators, ethics committees, robust governance, and data integration. The model is policy-fit and technology-ready, transforming IP ASN from a compliance checklist to a sustainable, auditable performance enabler.

**Keywords:** Human resource capabilities, civil servants, public Ethics, dynamic capabilities, Resource-Based View

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## INTRODUCTION

Global governance prioritizes bureaucracies rooted in values, competence, and performance, with OECD countries exemplifying the benefits of professional civil services and meritocracy in enhancing policy capacity (Bednar, 2024; Brewer, Kellough, & Rainey, 2022; Evans & Rauch, 1999; OECD, 2021). ASEAN public sector HRM reflects similar trends, but Indonesia struggles, evidenced by low Civil Servant Professionalism Index scores. The incremental improvement in the Corruption Perceptions Index between 2019 and 2023 underscores the need for a systematic approach to civil servant HRM in Indonesia (Transparency International, 2023). Utilizing the ASN IP strategically for comprehensive reform, rather than just for compliance, is vital for elevating civil servant quality and improving public services in line with global standards (Banmairuroy, Kritjaroen, & Homsombat, 2022) (Siregar & Jannah, 2023). Despite the regulatory framework established under Law Number 5 of 2014, significant gaps remain in implementation across agencies, with the ASN IP often underutilized (Asian Development Bank, 2021; Rizqyanto, Santoso, Hanani, & Maesaroh, 2022; Sasmito, 2022). Literature emphasizes aligning HRM policies with organizational strategy and employing a data-driven approach to enhance the state apparatus's professionalism (Armstrong, 2020).

Improving professionalism in the General Secretariat of the Indonesian House of Representatives (Setjend DPR) is vital due to the unique challenges in ASN management stemming from its legislative role. Civil servants must possess technical skills, adaptability, and integrity (Iskandar, 2020). Despite improvements in ASN IP scores from 2020–2023, they still fall short of national targets. Challenges include aligning qualifications with job roles, moving beyond traditional learning methods, and effectively integrating the 70:20:10 learning model. Inadequate performance management and an overemphasis on disciplinary actions without clear ethical guidelines hinder employee integrity

(Lawton, Rayner, & Lasthuizen, 2013). The 2022–2023 performance report shows ongoing administrative issues, pointing to the need for greater qualifications and competence (Setjen DPR RI, 2021). Theoretical frameworks stress the significance of professionalism and adaptive performance, advocating for training approaches that align with globalization and parliamentary demands while utilizing technology for transparency (Iskandar, 2020).

Comparative studies emphasize the necessity of aligning HRM policies with organizational legislation (Dongil, Erawan, & Mardika, 2021; Haniandaresta, Wulandari, & Sobariyah, 2023; Huque & Jongruck, 2020; Lavee, 2022; Siregar & Jannah, 2023; Wati, Wati, & Hanifa, 2023). Challenges identified include mismatched qualifications between educational levels and job relevance, deviating from the 70:20:10 learning model in L&D, and limited performance management focused on administrative functions. Disciplinary measures lack definition and a proper registry. Research has largely overlooked legislative contexts in Indonesian civil servant professionalism, focusing instead on local government applications. Existing literature discusses professionalism's influence on organizational performance but lacks strategies for enhancing ASN's intellectual property within legislative bodies. This study seeks to address this gap using RBV and DC frameworks.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **Development to HR capability systems**

Strengthening civil servants' professionalism enhances bureaucratic capacity and public service quality via a systematic framework. Professionalism is viewed as institutional capacity based on merit principles, with weakening merit leading to poor governance (Brewer et al., 2022; Oliveira et al., 2024). A capable bureaucracy improves institutional performance, linking IP ASN qualifications to public value. The RBV views civil servants as strategic assets, while DC emphasizes adaptability. Integrating these informs a model for enhancing ASN IP through effective human resource use. Modern HRM focuses on L&D, performance management, and ethical training to ensure procedural justice and transparency (Lawton et al., 2013).

#### **Development administration, resource-based, strategic capabilities**

Development Administration as a macro framework links job standards and learning to individual and organizational performance, emphasizing interconnected accountability among IP ASN dimensions. Relevant qualifications foster educational improvements, altering work behavior and contributing to organizational outcomes while guided by ethics (Pasolong, 2019). At the meso level, the RBV regards human resources as a strategic asset for competitive advantage, while the DC framework highlights the need for adaptive capabilities to align with environmental changes, positioning the ASN IP model as a tool for enhancing human resource adaptability (Teece, 2007).

#### **Competency development, performance management, assessment fairness**

Competency development effectiveness hinges on workplace application of learning outcomes, influenced by training design, individual traits, and the work environment (Armstrong, 2020). Key factors affecting transfer include supervisor support and application opportunities. Evaluation must assess cognitive, skill, and affective outcomes beyond satisfaction. In performance management, challenges arise in using data effectively for decision-making, impacted by leadership support and a goal-oriented culture. Operational practices face tensions between accountability and development, complicated by contextual factors (Harding, 2022; Hill & Plimmer, 2024)

#### **Ethics infrastructure reinforces merit system dynamics**

Public Administration Ethics outlines moral principles for officials, emphasizing integrity, justice, accountability, and due process. The research differentiates between prevention and enforcement in ethics (Demir, Reddick, & Perlman, 2023). An ethics and discipline registry promotes HR consistency. An effective ethics infrastructure merges reactive measures with preventive ones, such as codes of ethics and training. It finds that program effectiveness depends on component scope and adoption (Kaptein, 2015). A model for ASN improvement connects governance, adaptive capabilities, and measurable HRM mechanisms for consistent implementation at the DPR RI Secretariat General.

### METHODS

#### Design and participants

This study employs a mixed methods sequential explanatory design, starting with quantitative findings that are clarified and validated by qualitative insights, aiming to develop an implementable model for improving the IP of ASN at the DPR RI Secretariat General. The approach addresses cross-system issues necessitating contextual understanding from key decision-makers. Reporting follows GRAMMS principles for tracing integration. Informants include strategic personnel related to HR, learning, and governance, alongside representatives from national policymaking bodies to enhance data integration and best practices (O'cathain, Murphy, & Nicholl, 2008).

#### Data source and protocol

Stage 1 involves a desk review of internal policy documents, organizational performance records, and a recap of ASN IP and L&D activities. Stage 2 includes qualitative research with thematic FGDs and in-depth interviews, employing results from Phase 1 and established theoretical frameworks. The grid identifies themes in qualifications, competencies, performance, and discipline-ethics, adhering to qualitative reporting principles for transparency and traceability (Tong, Sainsbury, & Craig, 2007).

#### Procedure and analysis

A desk review and quantitative scan formed a gap matrix from indicators, aiding thematic analysis of FGDs. In-depth interviews evaluated design decisions and SOP needs. First-stage analysis compared documents for consistency and identified ASN IP patterns. Second-stage thematic coding revealed key themes. A synthesis matrix linked findings to regulatory and theoretical frameworks, enhancing evidence traceability, supported by source and method triangulation for inference strength.

### RESULTS

#### Empirical Findings for Each Dimension

Qualifications reveal a strong focus on educational levels (S1/S2/S3) with insufficient consideration of the relevance of the field of study for core positions. Core roles often overlook the "field of study" in HR decisions, leading to limited study leave due to financial trade-offs. Employees prefer off-hours study despite limited quality options. Operationally, rank limitations hinder career progression. Competency development mainly relies on classroom training, neglecting coaching and mentoring, with poor implementation of the 70:20:10 learning model. Training evaluations are superficial, lacking a connection to performance outcomes. Performance alignment across goals is inadequate, with inconsistent job performance indicators and feedback disruptions. Disciplinary practices overshadow ethical considerations, lacking preventive measures and uniformity in leadership role modeling.

#### Model Architecture (Three Pillars + Two Levers)

The interconnected three-pillar + two-lever model architecture enhances ASN IP through:

1. Qualification Pillar (KARISMA) standardizes job levels and fields for recruitment and promotions, prioritizing DPR competencies.
2. Competency Pillars (SPECTACULAR/Corpu) align TNA and IDP to SKP, ensuring learning translates to behavioral change via a 70:20:10 learning model.
3. Performance Pillar cascades goals and performance dialogues, linking evidence to income and talent decisions.

The Discipline and Ethics pillar maintains procedural justice. Governance and Data/Technology levers support the model, facilitating traceable paths to improved performance and fair talent decisions.

#### Operational Design encompasses Qualification, Competency, Performance, and Ethics

Operational Design focuses on the Qualification Dimension, emphasizing education standards for recruitment and assignments. The SSOT system mitigates mismatch risks during recruitment and promotions. The SDMA Bureau oversees gatekeeping processes, while a re-entry program aids competency transfer post-education. Financial

disincentives are addressed through external class pathways without job loss. A talent pipeline aligns qualification profiles with strategic role promotions, supported by an ethics registry and qualification dashboards.

The Competency Dimension mandates TNA and IDP linked to performance targets, identifying role gaps. A cluster-based curriculum adopts the 70:20:10 learning approach, documented via a digital logbook. Training effectiveness is evaluated up to level 4. The Performance Dimension involves cascading organizational goals to individual indicators, with regular performance dialogues. Records maintain an audit trail, and event-driven reviews enable adjustments to targets. Performance allowances (tukin) are linked to evidence-based assessments, rewarding high performers and addressing underperformance.

The Ethics and Discipline Dimension distinguishes between ethical violations and rule infractions, providing helplines and ethical huddles for consultations. The ethics panel manages violations, while findings impact promotion decisions, monitored by the Inspectorate.

### DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that ASN IP can leverage institutional value when approached as a capability system rather than just a compliance tool. Public sector performance management literature reveals that indicators used merely for reporting lead to limited improvement and HR decisions. However, when tied to goals and managerial discussions, their utility increases. The study illustrates the "three pillars + two levers" framework within the DPR Secretariat General, identifying knowledge contributions, implementation needs, and areas for future research (Brewer et al., 2022). Field research unveils issues in the qualifications, competencies, performance, and ethics value chain, with educational focus not reflecting field relevance. The proposed model advocates for relevant promotions, training linked to SKP, workplace-based learning, robust evaluations, and the establishment of ethics panels, thereby adhering to best practices in training and public administration ethics (Kaptein, 2015).

The ASN IP Improvement Model enhances academic discourse by consolidating insights from Development Administration, HRM, Public Ethics, RBV, and DC into actionable operational strategies. RBV underlines the significance of unique legislative competencies as strategic assets, necessitating protection via qualification standards and job-based curricula (Barney, 1991). DC underscores the importance of structured adaptation through event-driven reviews, promoting fair performance evaluations alongside accountability. Practically, the model facilitates policy-ready packages and tech-ready systems, including SOPs for various processes and integrated information systems like Spectro/e-Kinerja and LMS/Corpu. This integration fosters evidence-based HR decisions and strengthens performance information utilization in public sector management (Moynihan & Pandey, 2010).

The implications of managerial, governance, and work culture change emphasize that governance and technology are essential for successful implementation. A cultural shift is necessary, with superiors becoming learning coaches and performance reviews focusing on evidence and learning outcomes. Supervisor support and work climate significantly impact learning application. The Secretary-General's environment, marked by political salience, requires adaptive performance management amid complexity and red tape. Mechanisms like risk-tagging ensure fairness. While model principles are broadly applicable, implementation variables must align with the agency's specific context and readiness.

Model implementation involves managing three risk areas: regulatory and governance risk, where a lack of a structured framework may hinder integration; system and data risks, requiring interoperable and consistent data quality for effective training evaluation; and capacity and culture risks, necessitating supervisor support and employee incentives for non-traditional learning. Literature emphasizes the importance of practice opportunities and leadership support in training transfer (Blume, Ford, Baldwin, & Huang, 2010). This research contributes by designing impact indicators, aligning learning and performance outcomes, and establishing a registry for ethical talent and career decisions (Hill & Plimmer, 2024).

The ASN IP improvement model supports national policies on sustainable competency development, promoting diverse learning formats and emphasizing performance dialogues and results. It includes an adaptation clause for regulatory changes to ensure compliance does not disrupt learning and performance. The model addresses biases in implementing professionalism indices: input bias is tackled through mandatory TNA-IDP linked to SKP and

evaluations, correcting the misconception of the 70:20:10 ratio; process bias is resolved by documented performance dialogs for managerial decisions (Harding, 2022). Biased sanctions are corrected through a prevention-focused ethics pathway and a registry for proportional career decisions, enhancing ethics infrastructure (Kaptein, 2015).

This study reveals several limitations: restricted generalizability due to a single-site context, data limitations from ongoing digital development, challenges in measuring impact from new evaluation practices, potential response bias in FGDs/interviews, regulatory dependence on national policies, and implementation risks needing robust change management. Future research will include evaluations of the learning model, longitudinal studies, cross-agency comparisons, standardized assessments, learning analytics, organizational ethnography, cost-effectiveness analysis, and improved data sharing protocols.

### CONCLUSION

This research highlights that enhancing the IP of ASN in the DPR General Secretariat requires a capability system integrating qualifications, competencies, performance, and discipline/ethics. Empirical findings reveal disruptions in the value chain, while synthesizing theories offers design leverage. The proposed "three pillars + two levers" model incorporates education standards, job studies, TNA-IDP linked to SKP, a 70:20:10 learning curriculum, and performance reviews, bolstered by governance and application integrations. Validation through FGDs and interviews confirms implementability, emphasizing internal policies and enhanced supervisors' roles. Managerial implications suggest redefining incentives and institutionalizing performance review meetings. Overall, the article introduces an IP ASN model that is policy-aligned and tech-equipped, ensuring fairness and advancing ASN professionalism.

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