

Civil Service Capacity Development: A Case Study of the Regional Civil Service Agency of Banten Province

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Abstract

This study examines strategies for strengthening the capacity of Indonesia's civil servants (Aparatur Sipil Negara, ASN) through a case study of the Regional Civil Service Agency (BKD) of Banten Province, using Skidmore's (1995) Staff Processing Model as an analytical framework. Employing a qualitative case study design, data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observations, and document analysis, and analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive method. Findings show that BKD Banten applies capacity development strategies across Skidmore's seven core components: recruitment, selection, placement and orientation, formal training, continuing professional development, evaluation and performance appraisal, and promotion, transition, and retention. Beyond these, the study identifies complementary strategies, including the digitalization of personnel management (e.g., e-Kinerja and SIMPEG), the adoption of talent management systems, fostering a culture of lifelong learning, providing psychosocial support during career transitions, and implementing recognition and retention programs for innovative staff. The study concludes that ASN capacity development is not merely an administrative procedure but a dynamic, evolving ecosystem that integrates policy, technology, and organizational culture. These findings expand Skidmore's model by incorporating digital governance and psychosocial insights, offering both theoretical contributions and practical recommendations for designing merit-based and sustainable civil service reforms.

Keywords: *Civil Servants; Capacity Development; Merit System; Digital Governance; Staff Processing Model.*



A. INTRODUCTION

Capacity development for civil servants (*Aparatur Sipil Negara, ASN*) is a fundamental issue in strengthening good governance in Indonesia. As the backbone of the national bureaucracy, civil servants play a dual role: not only implementing policies and delivering public services, but also acting as change agents driving the creation of a cleaner, more professional, and citizen-oriented government system, (Pinning, 2024). From a social welfare perspective, improving ASN capacity directly impacts inclusive policymaking and community empowerment programs, making public services more humane and responsive to societal needs, (Rahman & Bakri, 2019).

Nevertheless, the challenges faced by Indonesia's bureaucracy are far from simple. Studies have long shown that entrenched practices of corruption, collusion, and nepotism (commonly referred to as *KKN*) and a weak work ethic in past bureaucratic structures have led to a crisis of public trust, (Rewansyah, 2010). This situation underscores that bureaucratic reform cannot rely solely on structural

changes; it must also be accompanied by comprehensive capacity development for civil servants, encompassing technical, managerial, and integrity-related dimensions, (Notoatmodjo, 1998). In other words, capacity development is a strategic pathway to shape civil servants who are competent, professional, creative, and accountable in carrying out their duties.

The Regional Civil Service Agency of Banten Province (*Badan Kepegawaian Daerah, BKD*) serves as the key institution responsible for ASN management at the provincial level. *BKD* Banten faces multiple challenges, ranging from limited resources and the need to adapt to shifting national regulations to increasing public expectations for high-quality services, (Warsito, 2003; Sukadi & Munanto, 2019). Data from the National Civil Service Agency and Statistics Indonesia highlight the urgency of ongoing training and competency development programs for ASN to support regional economic growth and development.

Theoretically, Skidmore's (1995) Staff Processing Model offers a relevant framework for understanding ASN capacity development processes. This model emphasizes seven interconnected elements: recruitment, selection, placement and orientation, formal training, continuing professional development, evaluation and performance appraisal, and promotion, transition, and retention. This holistic approach highlights that ASN capacity development cannot be implemented in a fragmented manner; it must encompass the entire cycle of civil service management to produce professional and competitive public officials, (Skidmore, 1995).

Based on this background, this study asks a central question: "*How are capacity development strategies for civil servants implemented by BKD Banten Province, and what factors influence their effectiveness?*" This question is crucial because ASN capacity-building efforts at the local level often face a tension between the idealism of national policies and the realities of local implementation.

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze ASN capacity development strategies at *BKD* Banten Province using Skidmore's (1995) framework, and to identify the challenges and opportunities emerging from these processes. The findings are expected to contribute theoretically to public administration and social welfare scholarship, while providing practical recommendations for local and national policymakers seeking to design more responsive and sustainable civil service capacity-building initiatives.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. The Concept of Capacity Development

Capacity development or capacity building is commonly understood as a systematic process aimed at strengthening the abilities of individuals, organizations, and entire systems to achieve development goals more effectively, efficiently, and sustainably, (Grindle & Hilderbrand, 1995; UNDP, 2009). UNDP (2009) emphasizes that capacity development goes beyond technical skill enhancement; it involves strengthening institutional structures, leadership, governance, and organizational

culture. Similarly, the World Bank (2005) has argued that development failures often stem not from a lack of funding, but from weak institutional and human capacity.

In the context of civil servants (*ASN*), capacity development encompasses processes that shape not only technical proficiency but also values, attitudes, and work behaviors oriented toward delivering high-quality public services (Ilato, 2017). Morgan (2008), identify five “core capabilities” essential to capacity development: (1) the capability to act and commit, (2) the capability to generate development results, (3) the capability to relate, (4) the capability to adapt and self-renew, and (5) the capability to balance diversity and coherence. With this framework, *ASN* capacity building is not merely about providing training programs; it is a dynamic process that requires civil servants to continually learn, innovate, and create inclusive public service systems.

Notoatmodjo (1998) underscores that human resource development is a long-term investment aimed at improving knowledge, skills, and attitudes so that individuals can meet evolving professional demands. For the bureaucracy, this means cultivating civil servants who not only understand administrative duties, but also embody integrity, leadership, and a deep commitment to public service.

2. Policies and Regulations on Civil Servants

A strong legal and policy framework forms the foundation of *ASN* capacity development. Law No. 20 of 2023 on Civil Servants (*ASN*) defines *ASN* as planners, implementers, and supervisors of government administration and national development. The law frames *ASN* as a profession that must remain politically neutral, uphold integrity, and be free from corruption, collusion, and nepotism (*KKN*). A key principle embedded in this law is the merit system, whereby decisions on recruitment, promotion, and development are based on qualifications, competence, and performance rather than personal connections or seniority (LAN RI, 2018).

Bintoro & Hendrati (2015) stress that implementing a merit system fosters a more professional and accountable bureaucracy. At the operational level, national policies on *ASN* capacity development are translated into various programs, such as pre-service and in-service training, performance appraisals, and structured career development pathways. Presidential Regulation No. 59 of 2012 on the National Framework for Capacity Development for Regional Governments provides further guidance for local governments to conduct capacity-building initiatives, including training, workshops, internships, and functional position development, (Warsito, 2003). In this context, the Regional Civil Service Agency (*BKD*) plays a pivotal role in adapting and implementing these policies locally, balancing national standards with local resource constraints.

Moreover, the State Administration Agency elaborates on capacity development modules aligned with the merit system, covering competency mapping, career planning, and ongoing professional supervision, (LAN, 2018). Collectively, these policies highlight that capacity development for civil servants is

not merely an option but a structural mandate that must be fulfilled by every government institution, including *BKD* Banten.

3. Skidmore's Theoretical Framework

This study draws on Skidmore's (1995) Staff Processing Model as its primary analytical framework. Skidmore's model presents a holistic view of human resource management in the public sector, emphasizing that civil servant management is an integrated cycle rather than a collection of isolated administrative tasks. The model identifies seven interconnected components:

- a. Recruitment – attracting qualified candidates;
- b. Selection – determining who is best suited for a given position;
- c. Placement and Orientation – assigning staff to roles aligned with their competencies and orienting them to the organization;
- d. Formal Training – structured education to enhance skills;
- e. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) – ongoing learning throughout a civil servant's career;
- f. Evaluation and Performance Appraisal – measuring effectiveness and providing feedback; and
- g. Promotion, Transition, and Retention – managing career progression, role mobility, and talent retention.

This framework is grounded in the broader human resource cycle of Procurement–Development–Utilization–Maintenance, highlighting that every aspect of staff management is interdependent. Campion et al. (1997) stress that competency-based selection methods are crucial to recruiting suitable candidates, while Gatewood et al. (2010) advocate for evidence-based approaches to candidate assessment. Skidmore (1995) further underscores that training and professional development cannot stop after initial appointment; rather, they must be continuous processes enabling civil servants to adapt to policy changes and evolving public needs.

This model provides a robust theoretical foundation for the study, framing ASN capacity development not merely as discrete training programs, but as a comprehensive, cyclical process with direct implications for public service quality and the success of Indonesia's broader bureaucratic reform agenda.

C. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research approach using a case study design to provide an in-depth understanding of how civil servant (*ASN*) capacity development strategies are implemented by the Regional Civil Service Agency (*BKD*) of Banten Province. A qualitative case study was selected because it allows the researcher to explore complex social phenomena within their real-life context and generate rich, contextualized insights, (Creswell, 2016; Stake, 1995; Sugiyono, 2019).

Informants were selected using purposive sampling based on their relevance and involvement in *ASN* capacity development at *BKD*. The sample included key officials such as the Head of *BKD*, the Secretary of *BKD*, the Head of the *ASN* Development Division, as well as groups of Functional Officials at the First and Intermediate levels. These informants provided diverse perspectives from policy formulation to implementation.

Data collection relied on multiple techniques to ensure depth and breadth. Primary data were gathered through in-depth interviews with key informants and participant observations to capture the dynamics of daily activities and interactions at *BKD*, (Moleong, 2017). Complementary data were obtained from document reviews, including regulations, official reports, and archival records relevant to *ASN* management and capacity development. Secondary data were drawn from academic literature, government reports, and statistical documents to contextualize findings.

Data analysis followed Miles and Huberman's (1994) interactive model, which consists of three iterative stages: (1) data reduction (organizing and condensing data to focus on relevant themes), (2) data display (presenting data in narrative and matrix formats to support interpretation), and (3) conclusion drawing and verification (interpreting patterns and confirming findings through triangulation).

To ensure trustworthiness and validity, this study applied source and method triangulation (Denzin, 1978), cross-checking information from interviews, observations, and documentation to identify convergences or discrepancies. This multi-pronged approach not only enhanced the credibility of the findings but also ensured that the study's interpretations are robust, evidence-based, and academically defensible.

D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings reveal that the Regional Civil Service Agency (*BKD*) of Banten Province has adopted a multifaceted approach to developing the capacity of civil servants (*ASN*), largely reflecting the Staff Processing Model proposed by Skidmore (1995). This model frames civil servant management as a cyclical, integrated process encompassing seven core components: recruitment, selection, placement and orientation, formal training, continuing professional development, evaluation and performance appraisal, and promotion, transition, and retention. This section discusses each of these components, connecting field findings to existing literature and highlighting how *BKD*'s practices align with, extend, or deviate from theoretical expectations.

1. Recruitment

Recruitment forms the foundation for building a capable civil service. Skidmore (1995) argues that effective recruitment not only attracts qualified candidates but also aligns them with the organization's culture and mission. At *BKD* Banten, recruitment has been heavily shaped by the national policy to transition "honorary staff" into government contract-based civil servants (*PPPK*) by the end of

2024, in accordance with Law No. 20/2023 on Civil Servants and directives from the Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform (*KemenPAN-RB*).

Data from *BKD* show that 11,737 honorary staff across technical, administrative, health, and education roles have been mapped, verified, and synchronized with the *BKN* database. Recruitment uses the Computer Assisted Test (CAT) system developed by *BKN*, ensuring transparency and eliminating opportunities for intermediaries or illicit payments. This approach reflects a shift toward a merit-based recruitment system, a principle emphasized by Hasenfeld (1990), who warns that public sector hiring is often susceptible to political and personal influence unless transparent safeguards are in place.

While merit-based recruitment has become the norm for *PPPK* intake, the study found that challenges remain in ensuring full objectivity, particularly in balancing local priorities with national quotas. Nevertheless, the introduction of an assessment center in early 2025 to map competencies for managerial and structural positions signals *BKD*'s intent to deepen meritocracy in recruitment practices.

2. Selection

Selection serves as the second stage in Skidmore's (1995) framework, determining which candidates are most suitable for appointment. At *BKD* Banten, selection for *PPPK* positions is conducted through the national CAT system, with multiple stages including online registration via the *SSCASN* portal, administrative verification, appeals, competency tests, and the issuance of *NI-PPPK* (government contract ID numbers) for those who pass.

This study found that *BKD* collaborates closely with *BKN* to ensure selection is standardized and transparent, applying consistent competency benchmarks across roles. For managerial positions, selection has evolved toward competency-based selection, incorporating psychometric tests and structured interviews in line with best practices outlined by Campion, Palmer, and Campion (1997) and Gatewood, Feild, and Barrick (2010).

However, findings indicate that post-selection monitoring and evaluation remain limited. While selection is technically sound, follow-up assessments to track whether selected candidates actually perform as expected are still underdeveloped. This gap reflects the broader challenge of integrating selection outcomes into the longer-term talent management strategy a theme explored further in later sections of this discussion.

3. Placement and Orientation

Placement and orientation are crucial in ensuring that newly hired or reassigned civil servants are aligned with their roles and the agency's expectations. Skidmore (1995) emphasizes that job placement should prioritize job-person fit, as mismatches can undermine performance and motivation.

At *BKD* Banten, placement decisions are increasingly guided by competency and potential assessments. In January 2025, *BKD* evaluated 2,901 *ASN*, revealing that

20% were already well-suited to their current roles, 30% could be developed into more strategic positions, and 50% required either retraining or repositioning. This data-informed approach is part of *BKD's* Talent Management System, which integrates competencies, performance records, and career aspirations into one digital platform to support placement and career planning.

New hires, particularly *PPPK* staff, undergo orientation programs that include both in-person and virtual components. The sessions introduce institutional values, including *Indonesia BerAKHLAK* (Core Values of ASN) initiative, workplace ethics, and operational protocols. Hasenfeld (1990) cautions that orientation programs risk becoming perfunctory rituals; however, *BKD's* blended, interactive approach suggests a genuine effort to cultivate organizational commitment and cultural adaptation.

4. Formal Training

Formal training constitutes the backbone of *ASN* capacity building. According to Skidmore (1995), structured training ensures that civil servants not only understand their roles but also build core competencies.

BKD Banten runs a range of formal training programs, including Basic Training (*Latsar*) for new civil servants, Leadership Training (*PKA, PKP, PKN*) for managerial roles, and Technical and Functional Training for specialized competencies. Content spans from ethics and public service values to procurement, policy analysis, and local governance.

Importantly, *BKD* has shifted from purely face-to-face instruction to blended learning models. Platforms like LAN RI's MOOC and *BKD's* own LMS, Banten Ceria, have made training more accessible, especially for civil servants in remote areas. This aligns with Morgan's (2008) view that capacity development should embrace innovation and adaptability. Nevertheless, the study found persistent challenges, such as digital literacy gaps among senior staff and uneven internet infrastructure, which can hinder participation.

5. Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Skidmore (1995) argues that professional development must extend beyond initial training. *BKD* Banten has operationalized CPD through five main strategies:

- a. Tiered and functional training,
- b. Self-directed e-learning via LMS and MOOC platforms,
- c. Coaching and mentoring programs,
- d. Job rotation and special assignments, and
- e. Support for advanced studies and competency certification.

These initiatives reflect a lifelong learning paradigm, encouraging *ASN* to continuously enhance their skills and adapt to changing bureaucratic demands. Mentoring programs, in particular, connect senior and junior staff, fostering intergenerational knowledge transfer and embedding organizational culture into daily practice.

6. Evaluation and Performance Appraisal

Evaluation mechanisms are critical to maintaining accountability and driving improvement. In line with Skidmore's (1995) framework, *BKD* Banten has implemented E-Kinerja, an integrated performance appraisal system linked to the national civil service database (*SIMPEG and SIKAP*).

The system structures performance goals through *Sasaran Kinerja Pegawai (SKP)* individual performance targets and tracks real-time outputs. However, interviews revealed that *SKP* formulation often remains output-light (focusing on tasks rather than measurable results) and that supervisors struggle to provide constructive feedback beyond numerical scores.

BKD also enforces disciplinary regulations (PP No. 94/2021), which range from warnings to demotions. Yet, in keeping with developmental approaches advocated by Hasenfeld (1990), sanctions are paired with rehabilitative measures, such as remedial training or mentoring, ensuring that evaluation is not purely punitive but also supportive.

7. Promotion, Transition, and Retention

The final stage in Skidmore's model addresses how organizations manage career progression, role mobility, and talent retention. *BKD* Banten has institutionalized talent management for promotion, using assessment centers and merit-based criteria for appointments to senior positions. This shift reduces reliance on seniority or personal ties, aligning with the merit system principles emphasized in Law No. 20/2023.

To broaden experience and leadership capacity, *BKD* encourages job rotation and temporary assignments across departments. Retention strategies include non-financial incentives, such as innovation awards, scholarships for further study, and professional certification opportunities, designed to strengthen loyalty and motivate high-performing staff. Kettner (1995) highlights that formative rewards, which foster intrinsic motivation, are more effective for sustaining engagement in human service organizations than mere symbolic gestures.

Beyond Skidmore's seven components, this study uncovered five broader themes that provide a richer understanding of *ASN* capacity development in Banten Province.

- a. Digitalization and merit-based management. *BKD*'s integration of *e-Kinerja*, *SIMPEG*, and *SIKAP* has transformed personnel management, making performance tracking more transparent and data-driven, (Brewer & Selden, 1998).
- b. Talent management and learning culture. The agency's Talent Management System and LMS-driven learning programs (e.g., *Banten Ceria*) reflect a commitment to lifelong learning and strategic workforce planning, (Morgan, 2008).
- c. Enablers and barriers. Enablers include leadership commitment, national policy support (Law No. 20/2023), and *BKN* recognition, while barriers range

from budget constraints to digital literacy gaps among senior staff and cultural resistance to change.

- d. Psychosocial support in transitions. *BKD* provides dialogue spaces and counseling for staff facing promotion, rotation, or pre-retirement, aligning with Hasenfeld's (1990) argument that public organizations must consider the dignity and emotional well-being of staff, not just administrative outcomes.
- e. Recognition and retention of innovators. Innovation awards, scholarship opportunities, and certification pathways serve as non-financial incentives that reinforce commitment and foster an environment where high performers feel valued, (Kettner, 1995).

In sum, *BKD* Banten's approach largely embodies Skidmore's (1995) framework, while extending it with contemporary innovations such as digital transformation and psychosocial interventions. These findings suggest that *ASN* capacity development is not a static set of HR procedures, but a living ecosystem of policy, practice, and culture one that blends global principles of good governance with locally grounded strategies.

E. CONCLUSIONS

This study demonstrates that the Regional Civil Service Agency (*BKD*) of Banten Province has implemented capacity development strategies that align with Skidmore's (1995) Staff Processing Model while also expanding it in important ways. The seven foundational components such as recruitment, selection, placement and orientation, formal training, continuing professional development, evaluation and performance appraisal, and promotion, transition, and retention, have been integrated into a coherent framework aimed at strengthening the competencies and professionalism of civil servants (*ASN*).

Beyond these seven elements, the research revealed broader strategies that are equally critical: the digitalization of personnel management through systems like *e-Kinerja* and *SIMPEG*; the introduction of talent management and a lifelong learning culture; the identification of key enablers and barriers; the provision of psychosocial support during career transitions; and the use of recognition and non-financial incentives to retain innovative employees.

Collectively, these findings suggest that *ASN* capacity development in Banten Province is not a static or purely administrative process, but rather a dynamic ecosystem that combines policy, technology, and organizational culture. The study contributes to the literature on public administration and human resource development by extending Skidmore's model with insights into digital governance and psychosocial dimensions, while offering practical recommendations for policymakers seeking to design more adaptive, merit-based, and sustainable capacity-building frameworks for civil servants across Indonesia and beyond.

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