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Optimizing Performance Excellence: Revealing the Relationship Between SOP Implementation and ASN Performance

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Abstract

In today's quest for efficiency and accountability, governments worldwide focus on optimizing their State Civil Service's (ASN) performance, vital for delivering satisfactory public services. Many adopt Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to regulate and enhance ASN performance. This research employs qualitative methods, including questionnaires filled out by government employees, to explore how SOP implementation affects ASN. Effective use of SOPs improves clarity and efficiency but must strike a balance to avoid overregulation. SOPs play a crucial role in fostering ASN performance through understanding and recognition, requiring consistency, training, leadership, rewards, and evaluation for success. Overall, implementing SOPs significantly impacts ASN's performance, enhancing public services and governance.

Keywords: Public Sector, Government Performance, Civil Service, Regulation.

Introduction

In an era of increasing demands for efficiency and accountability, the public sector in various countries is increasingly focused on optimizing the performance of the State Civil Service (ASN). Kadarisman in Nugraha (2020) stated that the effectiveness of ASN performance will determine the success of the organization in achieving the final goal of public satisfaction with the services received. In this case, the performance of ASN will have a direct impact on the government's ability to provide effective and efficient public services to the community. One approach that has been adopted by many government organizations is the implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) as a tool to regulate, measure, and improve ASN performance.

Kilis (2015) explains that Standard Operational Processes (SOP) are a series of standardized written instructions regarding various processes for carrying out organizational activities, how and when they must be carried out, and where and by whom they are carried out. In the context of ASNs, implementing SOPs can help direct ASNs' daily activities, minimize the risk of errors, and increase transparency in the implementation of their duties. According to Sanoto (2020), the preparation and implementation of SOPs is an activity that requires full participation from all elements of staff in government institutions. The reason behind the demand to involve all elements in this institution is that only employees who have a deep understanding of the situation in their workplace and who feel the direct impact of such changes justify their full participation. However, the question that arises is to what extent the implementation of this SOP influences ASN performance and whether there is a significant relationship between the two.

93

Yoki Tulus Sabtian, Catherine Eugene Natasha
Optimizing Performance Excellence: Revealing the Relationship Between SOP Implementation and ASN Performance

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This research was conducted with a very relevant aim amidst the complex dynamics of public services today. ASN performance not only reflects individual competence but also the integrity and effectiveness of the government organization as a whole. Because in an era where people are increasingly aware of their right to receive quality public services, increasing efficiency is one of the most necessary things. The implementation of SOPs is expected to help reduce wasted time and resources, which in turn can increase community satisfaction. In addition, reducing error rates is also important in this context. With the right SOP, ASN will be better able to avoid mistakes that could result in inadequate service.

In addition to the direct benefits that implementing SOPs can provide, this research will also focus on evaluating the obstacles and challenges that government organizations may face in implementing SOPs. Understanding these obstacles will help in identifying solutions that can increase the effectiveness of SOP implementation in the public sector. This research also has a wider impact than just improving ASN performance. Improvement in the provision of public services is one of the ultimate goals of this research. With the results obtained, we hope to provide practical guidance for government organizations to design, implement, and monitor their SOPs effectively. This will help create an environment where ASN can provide better services to the community, build trust, and increase accountability in government.

By exploring the relationship between SOP implementation and ASN performance, this research seeks to provide better insight into the extent to which SOPs can contribute to increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of ASN in providing quality public services. Apart from that, this research may also provide recommendations on how government organizations can maximize the benefits of implementing SOPs in improving ASN performance.

According to Souhaka (2021), Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) is a system prepared to make work easier, tidy and orderly. Meanwhile, Laksmi and Budiantoro in Ruhana (2017) emphasized that SOP is a document relating to procedures carried out chronologically to complete a job which aims to obtain the most effective work results from workers at the lowest possible cost. Tanjung and Subagjo in Kilis (2015) explain that there are several general understandings of SOP, namely simple written instructions, to complete routine tasks in a manner that is most effective in meeting operational requirements; a documented set of written instructions of routine and repetitive activities performed by an organization; and a written determination of what must be done, when, where, and by whom.

Hudayana (2021) states that in general, SOPs have characteristics, firstly, there are many staff holding various positions, and they are not organized in an integrated manner. Second, the procedures for implementing activities, both macro and micro, do not provide detailed enough guidance regarding how these tasks should be carried out. SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures) have a more dominant focus on macro-level activities that reflect the actual implementation of ongoing activities, rather than providing a detailed description of the steps that must be followed in carrying out more detailed micro-level activities. This condition causes ambiguity in the organization and implementation of tasks, as well as hampering efficiency and effectiveness in public services and administrative tasks carried out by ASN. Therefore, implementing SOPs is important to ensure better coordination, more detailed explanations, and effectiveness in implementing ASN performance both macro and micro. SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) implementation refers to the stage where the guidelines and procedures set out in the SOP are implemented in the daily operations of an organization or entity.

Wulandari (2013) explains that in its implementation, SOP performance is projected in the form of time duration, in hours, days, or weeks, and in the form of the applicable organizational structure hierarchy. This is considered a logical action for the government to

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implement and will have an impact on ASN performance for several reasons. First, based on the capabilities of each region, public service offices are formed to optimize the implementation of authority and service functions. Financial constraints, human resources, equipment, and other factors force the government to determine the types of services that must be available to the community at a minimum. Second, through the use of SOPs, the implementation of activities becomes more structured, and this becomes part of the positive achievements and reputation of local government. Third, the presence of SOPs that accompany rational and real indicators of performance achievement will make it easier for the public to monitor the performance of service employees, which is one of the elements of creating efficient government governance.

In more detail, Sanoto (2020) explains the benefits of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) as follows: as a standardization of the methods used by employees to complete the work they are assigned; increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of carrying out duties and responsibilities officers and the organization as a whole; reducing the level of errors and negligence that may be made by an employee or executor in carrying out their duties; helping employees become more independent and less dependent on management intervention, thereby reducing leadership involvement in implementing daily processes; creating performance standard measures that will give employees concrete ways to improve performance and help evaluate the efforts that have been made; increasing accountability in carrying out tasks; ensuring that the implementation of government administration duties can take place in various situations; provide information regarding competency qualifications that must be mastered by officers in the performance of their duties; ensuring consistency of service to the community, both in terms of quality, time, and procedures; providing information for efforts to increase employee competency; providing information regarding the workload carried by an employee in carrying out their duties; as an instrument that can protect employees from possible lawsuits due to accusations of irregularities; assisting in tracking procedural errors in providing services; avoiding overlapping implementation of tasks, and help provide the information needed in preparing service standards, so that at the same time it can provide information for service performance.

Performance according to Rivai in Bleskadit (2020) is a result or level of overall success of a person during a certain period in carrying out tasks compared to various possibilities, such as standard performance results, targets or objectives, or criteria that have been determined in advance and mutually agreed upon. The performance dimensions themselves, according to Shaleh (2018), include 1) Achievement of targets; 2) Initiative; 3) Cooperation; 4) Contribution to employee progress; and 5) Other behavior. Meanwhile, factors that influence performance according to Hasibuan in Marjaya (2019) include a worker's ability and interest, ability and acceptance of explanations of task delegation and roles as well as the worker's level of motivation.

Performance refers to an individual's results or achievements over a certain period while carrying out their duties or responsibilities. This performance assessment can be done using performance indicators. Performance indicators are concrete measures used to measure the achievement of certain goals or standards. In performance appraisal, these performance indicators play a role in creating an objective framework for evaluating achievements and making decisions regarding rewards, development, or performance improvement. Thus, performance assessments and performance indicators support each other in efforts to measure and understand the achievements of a person or organization. The performance indicators according to Mangkunegara in Arianty (2014) include job quality, which indicates an increase in the quality of work and fulfillment of previously established standards, is often accompanied by an increase in individual abilities and a positive impact on economic value; work quantity,

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which describes an increase in the number or volume of production in a unit of activity, reflects growth in the number of goods produced. Apart from that, measuring the quantity of work can also include the addition of physical value and goods from previous production results; reliability in performance can be seen in how individuals complete entrusted tasks with a high level of accuracy, motivation, and enthusiasm; cooperative attitude reflects the level of cooperation between individuals towards each other as well as towards superiors and co-workers from other organizations.

Arianty (2014) revealed that to achieve optimal performance, the most significant element is human resources. This means that even though the planning has been carefully designed and structured, the results will be ineffective if the people or personnel who implement it are less qualified and do not have high work motivation. So in implementing performance, employees become the central component that influences the success or failure of an organization or entity. They are the main motor behind achieving organizational goals. So, it is important to understand that employee quality does not only include technical competence but also aspects of motivation and enthusiasm in carrying out their duties. Qualified and enthusiastic employees are more likely to make greater contributions, bring innovation, and play an active role in improving overall organizational performance.

According to Nugraha (2020), employees are people who do work and receive compensation for their services in the form of salaries and allowances from the government or private bodies. This definition covers various types of work that can be carried out by individuals in various sectors, both in government and in the business sector or non-profit organizations. Employees can play a role at various levels in an organization, from executive level to top-level management. The importance of this understanding lies in the recognition of the important role of employees in carrying out organizational functions and operations. Financial rewards in the form of salaries and allowances given to employees reflect appreciation for their contribution in carrying out the duties and responsibilities that have been assigned to them. However, more than just financial compensation, employees also have an important role in influencing organizational culture, productivity, innovation, and the long-term success of an organization.
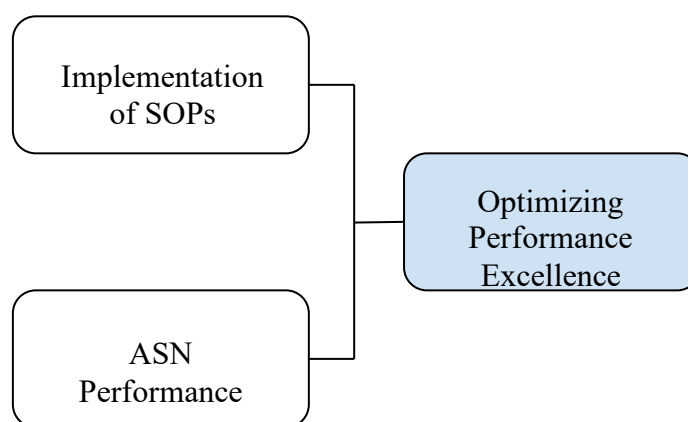
In the context of State Civil Apparatus, employees are the backbone of providing public services and implementing government policies. They play a role in various government sectors, from public administration to the health sector, education, and many others. The quality and commitment of employees greatly influence the government's efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability in providing services and achieving development goals. Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of the roles and contributions of employees is very important in the context of human resource management in various government organizations. However, ASNs as employees can be differentiated based on their function and contribution to an institution. Sunda in Nugraha (2020) explains that the types of apparatus can be divided into three, namely: 1) State Apparatus. State apparatus is a term that refers to all bodies and individuals operating in the context of the state and government. This includes entities acting in executive, legislative, and judicial capacities, as well as various institutions involved in the implementation of state duties and services to the community. The main task of state officials is to carry out state functions and support development, while still adhering to the principles, values , and goals of the national struggle inspired by Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution. In carrying out their responsibilities, they are expected to maintain integrity and professionalism, as well as dedication to the public interest and community welfare;

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2) Government Apparatus. The Government Apparatus is an entity that includes various organizations and bodies under the leadership of the President, including departments, government agencies, departmental secretariats, and high state institutions. Membership in the Government Apparatus includes a hierarchical structure that includes various levels and organizational units that work together in carrying out government functions and carrying out state tasks. So, it can be said that the Government Apparatus is a complex and broad framework consisting of various institutions that play an important role in running government and administering the state; 3) State Economic Apparatus. The State Economic Apparatus is an entity that includes several important elements in a country's economy. These components include banks that operate under the auspices of the government, credit institutions that have a role in providing financial resources, financial entities involved in the money and capital markets, as well as companies owned by both the central and regional governments. Holistically, the country's economic apparatus is the main element that forms the national economic structure, plays a key role in economic growth, and creates jobs that are vital for the welfare of society.

State Civil Apparatus is a type of government apparatus. Bleskadit (2020) explains that State Civil Apparatus are civil servants and government employees with work agreements who are appointed by civil service development officials and given responsibility for a government position or given responsibility for other state duties and are paid by statutory regulations. Furthermore, Hutajulu (2020) explained that ASN regulation is an integral part of state personnel regulation which has experienced development throughout the history of government. Currently, improving the performance of the State Civil Apparatus (ASN) is very important, especially due to changes in the direction of government policy which leads to a spirit of bureaucratic reform to provide greater space for movement and more active participation for the community in the process of government activities and development. The government and its officials are expected to act as effective facilitators in providing public services and supporting policy implementation that is oriented toward the interests of the people. Therefore, the role and performance of ASN a key factor in achieving policy goals, making the government more responsive to community needs, and playing a role in encouraging the nation's progress and prosperity.

Based on the description above, this research was structured with a conceptual framework which is described as follows:

Diagram 1

Conceptual Framework

Source: Processed by Authors, 2023

Yoki Tulus Sabtian, Catherine Eugene Natasha
Optimizing Performance Excellence: Revealing the Relationship Between SOP Implementation and ASN Performance

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This research aims to achieve aspects that include to identify how employees understand and interpret the implementation of SOPs in carrying out their duties; to explore employee experiences in following the procedures set out in the SOP; to investigate employee views regarding the impact of SOP implementation on ASN performance; to evaluate the effectiveness of SOPs and provide a basis for improvement for government organizations or related agencies to understand how SOPs are received by employees who will use them.

Methods

The research method used in this research is qualitative research with an exploratory approach. This exploratory approach was carried out by filling out an open questionnaire by respondents consisting of State Civil Apparatus (ASN) from various work units in government organizations. The questionnaire has been carefully designed to explore ASN's perceptions and experiences regarding the implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) in carrying out their duties and its impact on their performance. Data collected from the questionnaire will be analyzed qualitatively, taking into account various contextual factors that influence ASN perceptions and experiences of SOP implementation. This exploratory approach will help in understanding in depth the dynamics of the relationship between SOP implementation and ASN performance, as well as identifying findings that may not be revealed through a quantitative approach.

Next, the qualitative data obtained from the questionnaire responses will be analyzed using a qualitative data analysis approach, including thematic grouping, pattern identification, and interpretation of the meaning of the respondent's responses. This approach will allow us to understand in more depth the relationship between SOP implementation and ASN performance and reveal aspects that may not be detected through quantitative approaches alone.

Results and Discussion

The existence of standards will have an impact on employee performance in achieving their goals and simplify the work process, as explained by Wahongan (2021). In line with this view, based on the results of data from the open questionnaire that we conducted, the implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) is considered very important by the State Civil Apparatus (ASN) as a guide in carrying out their duties. For ASNs, SOPs function as guidelines that provide clear instructions on how to carry out their duties, including the steps that must be taken and the quality standards that must be achieved. By implementing SOPs well, ASN can ensure order, accountability, and consistency in carrying out their duties. This will ultimately support the achievement of government organizational goals and provide better public services to the community.

The research results show that SOPs have been implemented comprehensively from the Secretariat level to the District and Village levels. SOP implementation has also proven successful with high service results and work quality. Successful implementation of this SOP indicates that the organization has succeeded in managing, coordinating, and implementing the processes described in the SOP with consistency and efficiency. This good implementation reflects the ability of government organizations to provide services to the community by completing tasks accurately, on time, and effectively. This also increases public satisfaction with the services provided. Additionally, data analysis shows that another factor that supports the successful implementation of SOPs is the commitment of the leadership and related staff to carry out technical tasks and carrying out regular evaluations when there are policy changes.

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In implementing Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), there are often several obstacles that can hinder the smooth implementation and have an impact on employee performance. The results of the analysis of the data obtained show several obstacles that may be experienced in implementing SOPs including employee competency in understanding the SOP flow; employee motivation and commitment in carrying out work according to SOP; insufficient facilities and infrastructure to support the implementation of SOPs; disposition or approval from leadership that postpones the implementation of the SOP; lack of evaluation and updating of SOPs

In overcoming these obstacles, government organizations need to take appropriate steps, such as providing adequate training, creating effective communication in evaluating and updating SOPs, and listening to input from employees. In this way, implementing SOPs can avoid unwanted obstacles and support improving overall employee performance.

Based on data obtained from research, the implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) has a significant impact on employee performance. One of the main impacts is increasing efficiency in carrying out daily tasks. Data shows that when SOPs are strictly followed, work processes become more structured and measurable. Employees have clear guidelines on how to carry out their duties, so SOPs can be seen as the first step in creating professional personnel services. Apart from that, implementing SOPs also has an impact on increasing accuracy and increasing employee accountability. Employees tend to be more thorough in carrying out their duties because they follow established procedures. For example, budgeting will begin with collecting field data, analyzing field budget plan data, and arriving at the finalization stage according to the specified time standards. So the results of this research indicate that the error rate in carrying out routine tasks has decreased significantly after effective implementation of SOPs and employees can work according to their respective duties and functions.

However, when viewed as a whole and based on how each employee implements it, SOP implementation can have both positive and negative impacts. Based on the data, the positive impact of SOP implementation is as follows:

a. Clarify the direction of service work

With established SOPs, employees have clear guidance on the steps they must take in carrying out their duties. This creates order in the implementation of service tasks, which in turn increases consistency in the services provided to the public or customers. Employees can be more confident and precise in following established procedures, resulting in a better and more predictable service experience for service recipients.

b. Forming disciplined and professional employee character

SOPs that are carried out consistently will make employees accustomed to the high standards and responsibilities inherent in their work. This results in employees who are trained to behave in an orderly manner, respect time, and follow established procedures, which are important aspects of professionalism in the work environment. Apart from that, experience in following SOPs can also form a thorough work mentality, which increases accuracy and thoroughness in carrying out their duties.

c. Increase efficiency and accountability

Employees have proper guidance on how to carry out their duties, reducing confusion and unnecessary loss of time through SOP implementation. In addition, SOPs also contribute to increased accountability, because employees are responsible for following established procedures. Thus, creating an environment where performance can be measured objectively and errors can be identified and corrected more effectively, leading to improvements in the quality

of service or results produced. Meanwhile, the negative impacts of SOP implementation include:

a. Conflicts with existing regulations or regulations from the center

Implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) can sometimes encounter conflicts or clashes with existing rules or rules set by the central government. This happens when the SOPs created at the local or work unit level are not in line with the guidelines and policies that apply nationally or centrally. In situations like this, employees may face a dilemma because they must comply with local SOPs to carry out their daily tasks, but are also expected to comply with rules set more broadly by central authorities. These discrepancies can create confusion, uncertainty, or even a higher potential for rule violations, which can impact employee performance and compliance.

b. Requires a lot of customization

One of the negative impacts of implementing SOPs is that the process often requires many adjustments when there are changes in the operational environment or policies of government organizations. Existing SOPs may need to be revised or updated periodically to remain relevant, which requires additional time and resources. Then, employees must learn and adapt to these changes, which can sometimes take time and create obstacles to rapid decision-making and operational flexibility because the organization must consider aspects of the SOP in each change step.

c. Bureaucracy that slows down service

When SOPs become too complicated or excessively procedural, the decision-making process and task execution become slow and time-consuming. Excessive bureaucracy can hinder an organization's ability to respond to urgent needs and requests, which in turn can affect customer satisfaction or the community receiving services. Therefore, government organizations need to find the right balance between following the required SOPs to ensure quality and consistency, while maintaining flexibility in the performance of tasks to respond to changing circumstances.

Overall, the results of this research reveal that good SOP implementation can have a positive impact on employee performance. In its implementation, SOPs help clarify the direction of service work, shape the character of employees who are disciplined and professional, and increase the efficiency and accountability of government organizational performance. Thus, effective implementation of SOPs is an important factor in achieving better performance in the organizational environment. However, on the other hand, excessive or too complex implementation of SOPs can result in bureaucracy that slows down services, limits innovation, causes employee dissatisfaction, requires significant implementation costs, and can even lead to non-compliance. Therefore, wise planning and management in designing and managing SOPs is essential to achieve positive benefits while minimizing negative impacts. In SOP implementation, a balance between quality and flexibility remains key to the success of government organizations.

In the context of the relationship between SOP implementation and ASN individual performance, data shows that SOP implementation has a positive impact on individual and team performance through understanding the SOP as a working guide. Implementation of this SOP is closely related to ASN performance. This can be seen in the employee awards given based on service efficiency and increased levels of community satisfaction due to the implementation of SOPs. This award also encourages employee motivation to carry out work according to the established SOPs.

100

Yoki Tulus Sabtian, Catherine Eugene Natasha
Optimizing Performance Excellence: Revealing the Relationship Between SOP Implementation and ASN Performance

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Consistency plays a key role in encouraging employees to comply with SOP implementation. In this context, government organizations can take several steps. First, they can hold outreach to increase understanding of SOPs by involving training and workshops addressed to ASNs. This training aims to improve efficiency and quality of service, as well as ensure correct implementation of SOPs. Second, the role of leadership is also important, both in monitoring employee compliance with SOPs and in preparing SOPs that are in line with the goals of government organizations. Third, system implementation reward and punishment can strengthen compliance with SOP implementation. This system can increase employee awareness to minimize errors in work and service. Finally, ongoing evaluation is needed to measure the extent to which SOPs have been followed correctly and achieved the desired performance targets. The evaluation results are used to improve SOPs and solutions to obstacles that may arise during implementation.

Conclusions

Implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) influences the level of performance of the State Civil Apparatus (ASN). First, SOP implementation has a very crucial role in improving the performance of ASNs in carrying out their duties. SOP functions as a guide that provides clear direction to ASNs on how they should carry out their duties, ensuring compliance and order, accountability, and consistency in carrying out their duties. The function of implementing this SOP can ultimately support the achievement of government organizational goals and provide better public services.

The research results show that the implementation of SOPs has been carried out well at various levels of government organizations, from the Secretariat to the District and Village. Successful results in SOP implementation reflect efficiency, consistency, and effectiveness in carrying out government tasks, which in turn will increase public satisfaction with the services provided. Therefore, investing in the socialization and monitoring of SOP implementation is an important step in supporting bureaucratic reform and creating a more responsive and efficient government. By understanding the strong relationship between SOP implementation and ASN performance and implementing best practices in managing SOPs, government organizations can achieve sustainable performance excellence and provide greater benefits to society.

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