

State Civil Service Competency Development and Public Service Quality In Cimahi City

Widuri Wulandari^{1*}, Siti Munawaroh¹, Nia Dwi Yuniawanti¹

¹Government Science Study Program, Jenderal Achmad Yani University, Cimahi, Indonesia

*Corresponding author's email: widuri.wulandari@lecture.unjani.ac.id

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the development of State Civil Apparatus (ASN) competencies and its implications for public service quality in Cimahi City. The research was conducted at the Regional Civil Service and Human Resource Development Agency (BKPSDMD) and the Public Service Mall (MPP) using a descriptive qualitative approach. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation involving 7 informants, consisting of BKPSDMD officials, representatives of service agencies (DPMPTSP and Disdukcapil), and community members. The findings indicate that competency development has been implemented through education and training, technical guidance, workshops, and other capacity-building programs. However, its effectiveness remains constrained by limited institutional capacity, with only three personnel responsible for managing competency development for approximately 5,570 civil servants under a Type C organizational structure. Evaluation also remains focused on administrative outputs rather than learning outcomes, behavioral change, and service improvement. Consequently, competency development has not yet demonstrated a systematic contribution to improving public service quality. Strengthening institutional capacity and integrating competency needs assessment, training implementation, competency evaluation, and behavioral change are therefore essential for enhancing public service quality in Cimahi City.

Keywords: Competency development, state civil apparatus, quality, public service.

INTRODUCTION

The sustainability and performance of public sector organizations depend heavily on the quality of their human resources. The effectiveness of State Civil Apparatus (ASN) competency development is shaped not only by individual capacity but also by managerial support, institutional arrangements, and the organizational environment in which civil servants perform their duties (Nor, 2025). Conceptually, Spencer and Spencer (1993) define competence as an

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underlying characteristic of an individual that is causally related to effective or superior performance, encompassing motives, traits, self-concept, knowledge, and skills. Building upon this concept, competence represents the integration of knowledge, technical skills, and work attitudes that enables employees to perform their responsibilities consistently and effectively (Sari et al., 2023).

From a strategic human resource management perspective, competency development should not be viewed merely as a series of education and training activities but as an integral component of competency-based human resource management (Armstrong & Taylor, 2023). Such an approach integrates competency planning, workforce planning, performance management, career development, and competency evaluation to ensure that human resource management practices support organizational objectives and improve employee performance (Demo et al., 2024).

Similarly, competency-based human resource management emphasizes that competencies should serve as the foundation for recruitment, development, performance appraisal, and career advancement, rather than being treated solely as training activities (Zhang, 2023). Likewise, recent public administration studies argue that civil servants' competencies are dynamic capacities shaped not only by individual learning but also by organizational support, institutional capacity, and workplace contexts (Kruyen & Genugten, 2020). Nevertheless, previous studies have predominantly focused on the implementation of competency development programs, while limited attention has been given to how institutional capacity and competency evaluation influence the extent to which competency development translates into behavioral change and improvements in public service quality.

The Cimahi City Public Service Mall (MPP) provides a highly relevant setting to examine this issue. Officially inaugurated by the Minister of State Apparatus Empowerment and Bureaucratic Reform on November 29, 2022, the Cimahi MPP was designed as a one-stop service center serving as a flagship demonstration of service quality reform in local government. Its establishment aligns with a broader national trend of utilizing digitalization and service integration, such as the SIMANIZ (Sistem Informasi Manajemen Perizinan) application studied by Musta'ana et al. (2025) to bridge the gap between administrative reform policies and the public's actual experience. By placing ASNs in direct and frequent face-to-face

contact with citizens, the MPP offers a significantly sharper and more concrete research locus than examining the bureaucracy in general terms.

As part of the research problem identification stage, the researchers reviewed all nine user reviews available on the Google Maps page of the Cimahi City Public Service Mall (MPP) in February 2025 during the research problem identification and title formulation stage. Two reviews describing concerns related to communication, discipline, and service professionalism issues were purposively selected because they were directly relevant to the focus of this study. These Google reviews were used solely as preliminary evidence to identify potential service issues and were subsequently verified through field observations, document analysis, and semi-structured interviews with BKPSDMD officials, service officers from DPMPTSP and Disdukcapil, and community informants. The selected reviews indicated initial public concerns regarding the professionalism and service behavior of frontline civil servants at the Cimahi City MPP (see Figure 1). These preliminary observations were later confirmed by the empirical findings, which revealed persistent challenges in communication skills, service ethics, competency evaluation, and institutional capacity.

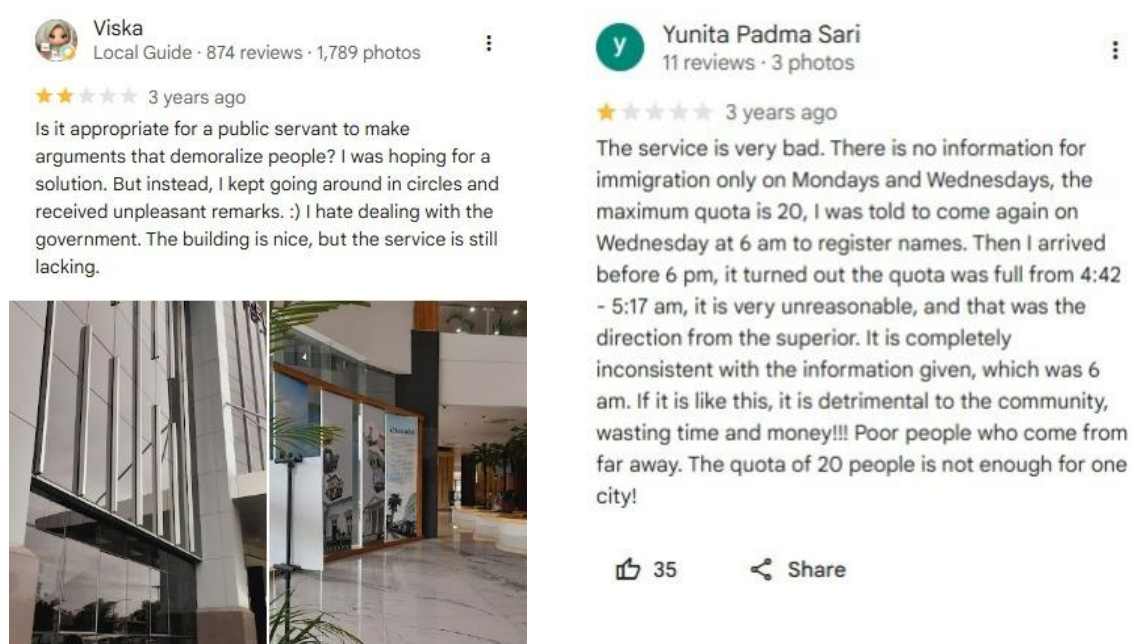


Figure 1. Selected Preliminary Public Reviews of the Cimahi City Public Service Mall (MPP)

Source: Google Maps, accessed February 2025

The selected Google reviews indicated initial public concerns regarding communication, responsiveness, and the professionalism of frontline civil servants at the Cimahi City Public Service Mall. However, these online reviews were not used as the primary basis for drawing conclusions. Instead, they served as preliminary evidence that was subsequently verified through interviews, observations, and documentation during the fieldwork. The consistency between the online reviews and the empirical findings strengthened the credibility of the identified service challenges.

This situation is paradoxical, given that the Regional Civil Service and Human Resource Development Agency (BKPSDMD) of Cimahi City has continuously conducted various training programs, technical guidance, and dissemination activities for ASN personnel assigned to the MPP. This discrepancy reflects the findings of Adekamwa et al (2024), who noted that even high digital literacy among young ASNs is often hindered by structural barriers and a lack of contextual training. Similarly, Fahlevi (2024) emphasizes that conventional training formats need to be transformed, such as through a corporate university approach, to bring about substantive changes in service behavior. The persistent complaints alongside ongoing training activities in Cimahi indicate that this issue is not an isolated local anomaly, but rather reflective of a broader pattern of problems within the bureaucracy.

This situation highlights a fundamental gap that has not been adequately addressed in the literature. A systematic review by Erliani et al. (2024), confirms that strategies for ASN competency development toward a modern bureaucracy remain fragmented, spanning creativity building, employee empowerment, and merit system implementation, without a coherent process connecting them. Although training for ASNs is already conducted extensively, it remains unknown whether a complete process chain moving sequentially from Training Needs Analysis (TNA) and training delivery to evaluation, behavioral change, and ultimate service quality improvement is genuinely interconnected in practice.

Studies by Nor (2023), demonstrate that training does not directly improve service quality; rather, it must first mediate employee performance as a bridge for change. The critical question that remains unanswered, both academically and empirically regarding BKPSDMD Cimahi, is whether this chain of processes is genuinely intact in practice. The underlying concern is that training is merely being conducted as a routine administrative obligation

disconnected from an initial needs analysis, impact evaluation, and tangible behavioral change at the point of service delivery.

On the basis of these issues, this study aims to analyze the ASN competency development strategy implemented by BKPSDMD Cimahi City. Specifically, it examines at which stage this process chain connects or fails to connect in influencing the quality of public service delivered at the Cimahi City MPP. Comparative evidence from bureaucratic leadership development in Bahrain by Elliot et al. (2024) indicates that institutional and leadership support serves as the decisive factor determining whether a competency program can transform services or merely stop at fulfilling formalities.

By empirically tracing this process chain at a high-visibility service unit, this study is expected to make a dual contribution. Theoretically, it offers a more comprehensive process-based evaluation framework rather than simply measuring success through training hours or participant counts. Practically, it provides evidence-based input for BKPSDMD Cimahi City to identify which intervention stage most critically requires improvement, ensuring that training investments translate directly into enhanced service experiences for the public.

In addition to these theoretical and practical contributions, this study provides a distinct empirical contribution by identifying two interrelated barriers that have received limited attention in previous studies. First, the limited institutional capacity of BKPSDMD, reflected in the disproportionate ratio of only three personnel responsible for managing competency development for approximately 5,570 civil servants, constrains competency needs assessment, program implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. Second, competency development participation remains largely driven by administrative requirements, particularly promotion and career advancement, limiting the translation of competency development into sustained behavioral change and measurable improvements in public service quality. These findings demonstrate that the effectiveness of competency development depends not only on the availability of training programs but also on the integration of institutional capacity, competency needs assessment, training implementation, competency evaluation, behavioral change, and public service outcomes within a comprehensive competency development system.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a descriptive qualitative method to analyze strategies for strengthening the competencies of State Civil Apparatus (ASN) and their contribution to improving public service quality in Cimahi City. The research was carried out from February 2025 to December 2025, with field data collection taking place between July and September 2025.

The primary research locations included the Regional Civil Service and Human Resource Development Agency (BKPSDMD) of Cimahi City, as well as the Cimahi City Public Service Mall (MPP), specifically involving the Investment and One-Stop Integrated Service Agency (DPMPTSP) and the Population and Civil Registration Office (Disdukcapil) in West Java Province. These sites were selected intentionally due to public service complaints at the MPP, alongside the strategic mandate of BKPSDMD in planning, executing, and evaluating civil servant competency development policies.

To ensure methodological transparency, the complete operational workflow and timeline ranging from initial proposal preparation to final report submission are detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. Detailed Research Execution Timeline (2025)

No.	Operational Activity	Timeline								
		Feb. 2025	March 2025	April 2025	May 2025	June 2025	July 2025	Aug. 2025	Sept. 2025	Oct. 2025
1.	Research problem identification and title formulation									
2.	Literature review, journal screening, and background formulation									
3.	Research proposal drafting									
4.	Proposal endorsement and submission to LPPM Unjani									
5.	LPPM institutional review, approval, and grant disbursement									

6.	Administrative research permit acquisition									
7.	Data collection: In-depth interviews with public/service recipients									
8.	Data collection: Institutional interviews and observation at DPMPTSP and Disdukcapil									
9.	Data collection: Institutional interviews and documentation at BKPSDMD									
10.	Primary and secondary data processing, transcription, and coding									
11.	Data analysis and writing of research results									

Source: Processed by the researchers, 2025.

Informants were selected using a purposive sampling technique based on their direct involvement in policy formulation, service execution, or experience as service recipients. A total of 7 key informants participated in this study, comprising key stakeholders from regulatory, operational, and recipient levels. The profile and selection criteria of the research informants are detailed in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Research Informants Profile and Selection Criteria

Code	Institution	Position/Role	Relevant Experience	Reason for Selection
I1	BKPSDM	Head of the Subdivision of Education, Training, and Career Development	Involved in ASN competency development	A key official responsible for planning, implementing, and evaluating ASN competency development policies in Cimahi City.
I2	Disdukcapil (Warni)	Disdukcapil Service Officer	Frontline service at the MPP	A key service agency directly responsible for delivering population and civil registration services at the Cimahi City Public Service Mall (MPP).

13	DPMPTSP	Head of the General and Personnel Subdivision	Involved in public service operations at the MPP	A key agency responsible for managing and providing integrated licensing and non-licensing services at the Cimahi City Public Service Mall (MPP).
14	Public/Service User	Service User	Experienced services at MPP	Direct recipients of public services at the Cimahi City MPP who evaluate and experience the actual quality of ASN service delivery.
15	Public/Service User	Service User	Experienced services at MPP	Direct recipients of public services at the Cimahi City MPP who evaluate and experience the actual quality of ASN service delivery.
16	Public/Service User	Service User	Experienced services at MPP	Direct recipients of public services at the Cimahi City MPP who evaluate and experience the actual quality of ASN service delivery.
17	Public/Service User	Service User	Experienced services at MPP	Direct recipients of public services at the Cimahi City MPP who evaluate and experience the actual quality of ASN service delivery.

Source: Processed by the researchers, 2025.

Primary and secondary data collection was carried out systematically through three main techniques: in-depth interviews, direct field observations, and document analysis. In-depth interviews were conducted using a semi-structured approach with interview guides that adapted dynamically to field conditions. A total of seven informants representing four key groups were involved in the study. The informants consisted of one BKPSDMD official, one DPMPTSP service officer, one Disdukcapil service officer, and four public/service users. Seven in-depth interview sessions were conducted with these informants to obtain information regarding competency development, institutional capacity, service practices, and public experiences at the Cimahi City Public Service Mall (MPP) selected via purposive sampling: one key official from the Regional Personnel and Human Resource Development Agency (BKPSDMD) responsible for State Civil Apparatus (ASN) competency policy, one operational manager from the Investment and Integrated One-Stop Services Office (DPMPTSP) managing the Public Service Mall (MPP), one frontline service supervisor from the Population and Civil Registration Office (Disdukcapil), and four public service recipients visiting the MPP. Each interview session lasted between 45 to 90 minutes. With the prior explicit consent of all participants (informed consent), all interview sessions were audio-recorded using digital voice recorders. The audio recordings were subsequently transcribed verbatim into written

transcripts within 24 to 48 hours post-interview to maintain contextual accuracy and capture subtle non-verbal nuances.

Direct field observations were conducted using a passive participation approach, wherein the researcher remained an unobtrusive observer at the MPP Cimahi City without interfering in daily service operations. The observation specifically focused on frontline service counter interactions, waiting times, queue management procedures, officer responsiveness, adherence to Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), and the non-verbal ethics and communication behavior demonstrated by ASN personnel during public transactions.

Secondary data collection was accomplished through meticulous document analysis. The reviewed documents included official ASN demographic profiles, training participation records (*rekapitulasi Diklat*) from DPMPTSP and Disdukcapil, the Human Capital Development Plan (HCDP) of Cimahi City, official reports on the ASN Professionalism Index (IP ASN) scores, organizational structure frameworks (specifically regarding BKPSDMD's Type-C designation), and public feedback logs, including community satisfaction survey results and SP4N-LAPOR! complaint channels.

To establish rigorous data credibility and validity, this qualitative study implemented two forms of triangulation: source triangulation and technique/method triangulation. Source triangulation was systematically executed by cross-checking and comparing narratives across different hierarchical and operational levels. Specifically, statements from policy-making authorities (BKPSDMD) were juxtaposed against operational implementation accounts from service-providing agencies (DPMPTSP and Disdukcapil) and direct user experiences shared by the public at MPP Cimahi City.

Technique triangulation was conducted by cross-referencing findings across multiple data collection methods. Interview claims were directly validated against observational field notes gathered at MPP counters and empirical indicators extracted from official documentation, such as IP ASN scores, training logs, and public complaint records. Any discrepancies between stated policies, observed behaviors, and documentary evidence were flagged and re-verified through follow-up clarification sessions with key informants to ensure data trustworthiness.

Data analysis was executed interactively and continuously using the qualitative framework established by Miles et al. (2014) the analysis followed three concurrent flows: data

condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. During data condensation, raw interview transcripts, observation protocols, and documentary notes were systematically coded and condensed. Key themes were isolated, such as the operational impact of BKPSDMD's Type-C organizational structure, individual motivation for training participation, and frontline ASN performance.

Data display involved organizing the condensed data into structured narrative prose, informant comparison matrices, and summary tables to clearly map relationships between competency development initiatives and service quality outcomes. Finally, conclusion drawing and verification were performed continuously throughout the research. Emerging patterns and theoretical interpretations were rigorously tested against raw field data, ensuring that all final conclusions accurately reflected the empirical reality of ASN competency development in Cimahi City.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Motivation for Competency Development

The development of civil servant competencies is a strategic tool used to continuously boost employee productivity and work quality (Sukirno, 2025). Such development cannot succeed without adequate motivation and support, both from individual civil servants and from the organizations that employ them. Through structured competency development, ASN personnel are able to strengthen their individual skills, which in turn contributes to better public service delivery and the achievement of broader organizational objectives.

Consistent with this view, Robbins and Judge, as cited in Tewal et al. (2017) argue that work motivation is the principal force that mobilizes, directs, and sustains individual behavior toward optimal performance. Motivation shapes the intensity, persistence, and effort an individual invests in carrying out professional duties. Within the ASN context, work motivation plays a strategic role in cultivating productive, high-quality performance. Competency development initiatives are unlikely to be effective if driven purely by administrative obligation such as mandatory training attendance or job requirements. Instead, these initiatives achieve greater impact when reinforced by intrinsic motivation: an internal drive to keep learning, expand personal capacity, and deliver excellent service to the public. Individual awareness of

the importance of competency development is therefore a key factor in shaping a professional, innovative civil apparatus oriented toward high-quality public service.

Despite the strategic significance of competency development, field findings from Cimahi City point to a gap between administrative compliance and genuine intrinsic motivation. Interviews with officials from the Investment and Integrated One-Stop Services Office (DPMPTSP) and the Population and Civil Registration Office (Disdukcapil) of Cimahi City indicate that employee participation in training programs (Diklat) is still largely driven by administrative pressures rather than by a desire to improve service quality:

"Employees' participation in training programs or technical guidance is actually still predominantly driven by the need to fulfill requirements for promotion and grade advancement, rather than out of a pure intrinsic desire to improve public service quality... Although executive support is already there, the main drive for employees still centers on completing their career administrative requirements."

The interview findings reveal that administrative motivation remains one of the dominant drivers of competency development participation among civil servants in Cimahi City. For many participants, training is primarily perceived as a prerequisite for promotion, career advancement, or fulfilling administrative requirements rather than as an opportunity to improve professional competence. This finding suggests that competency development has not been fully internalized as a continuous learning process aimed at enhancing individual capability and public service performance. Consequently, participation in competency development activities tends to be certificate-oriented rather than learning-oriented, potentially reducing participants' commitment to applying newly acquired knowledge and skills in their daily work.

Previous studies indicate that employees' performance is influenced not only by technical competencies but also by behavioral drivers, including work motivation, organizational commitment, and learning orientation (Asif & Rathore, 2021). Consequently, competency development programs are unlikely to improve organizational performance when participation is primarily driven by administrative requirements rather than professional learning objectives.

The predominance of administrative motivation may also explain why competency development has not consistently resulted in observable improvements in public service quality. When training participation is driven primarily by promotion requirements, the transfer of learning into workplace practice becomes less likely. As a result, improvements in technical

knowledge acquired during training may not be accompanied by meaningful behavioral changes, such as more effective communication, greater responsiveness, or higher service professionalism. This finding indicates that the effectiveness of competency development depends not only on the availability of training programs but also on participants' intrinsic motivation to translate learning outcomes into improved service performance.

Research findings by Blegur et al. (2025) support this pattern, showing that the effectiveness of ASN competency development emerges from the interplay between internal policy, organizational resource support, and individual motivation. This reframes competency development from a mere administrative formality into a strategic necessity for producing an adaptive, professional civil apparatus capable of responding to the growing complexity of public service demands.

Indonesia has put in place a range of regulations governing ASN competency development, including Law No. 20 of 2023 on ASN, Government Regulation No. 11 of 2017 on Civil Servant Management, Government Regulation No. 49 of 2018 on the Management of Government Employees under Work Agreements, National Institute of Public Administration Regulation No. 10 of 2018 on Civil Servant Competency Development, and National Institute of Public Administration Regulation No. 15 of 2020 on Competency Development for Government Employees under Work Agreements.

To encourage employee engagement and satisfy these regulatory mandates, Cimahi City's Personnel and Human Resources Development Agency (BKPSDMD) actively organizes a range of competency development activities. A BKPSDMD official described the agency's approach to training and performance monitoring:

"Here at the BKPSDMD, we continuously provide information and facilitate various forms of competency development, ranging from training programs, technical guidance, and workshops to webinars. We also regularly share the ASN Professionalism Index (IP ASN) achievements to motivate employees to boost their scores, particularly in the competency dimension, which is verified by uploading certificates to the MyASN application."

These regulations collectively underscore the urgency of strengthening every civil servant's capabilities. Their existence confirms that competency development is not optional but a formal obligation that requires ASN personnel to take a more proactive stance in building expertise, sharpening capacity, and reinforcing professionalism, ultimately in service of delivering excellent, accountable, and high-quality public services to the community.

Every civil servant needs to internalize a public-service mindset, which in turn requires possessing adequate competence. Competence is thus one of the core elements in managing the State Civil Apparatus.

Interviews conducted at DPMPTSP and Disdukcapil Cimahi City reveal a shared perspective: the success of training programs as a vehicle for competency enhancement depends heavily on tangible leadership support and commitment. Leadership backing is the primary enabler of agreements related to competency development. Even so, ASN motivation to participate in these programs in Cimahi remains largely tied to the need to fulfill requirements for rank and grade promotion, rather than genuine awareness of the importance of improving performance and service quality. In reality, the purpose of ASN competency development extends beyond career advancement; it is also meant to strengthen performance and professionalism in serving the community.

The Cimahi City Government, through BKPSDMD, continues to disseminate information and organize competency-related activities, including training, technical guidance (Bimtek), education and training (Diklat), workshops, outreach sessions, and webinars. The agency also regularly shares updates on the ASN Professionalism Index (IP ASN) to motivate employees to raise their scores, particularly on the competency dimension, which is evidenced through certificates uploaded to the MyASN application.

The ASN Professionalism Index (IP ASN) functions as a quantitative tool for objectively mapping the level of apparatus professionalism. Its results serve as a key parameter both in evaluating current performance and in formulating strategies to enhance employee professionalism. The index integrates four dimensions: qualification, competence, performance, and discipline applied comprehensively across central and regional government levels.

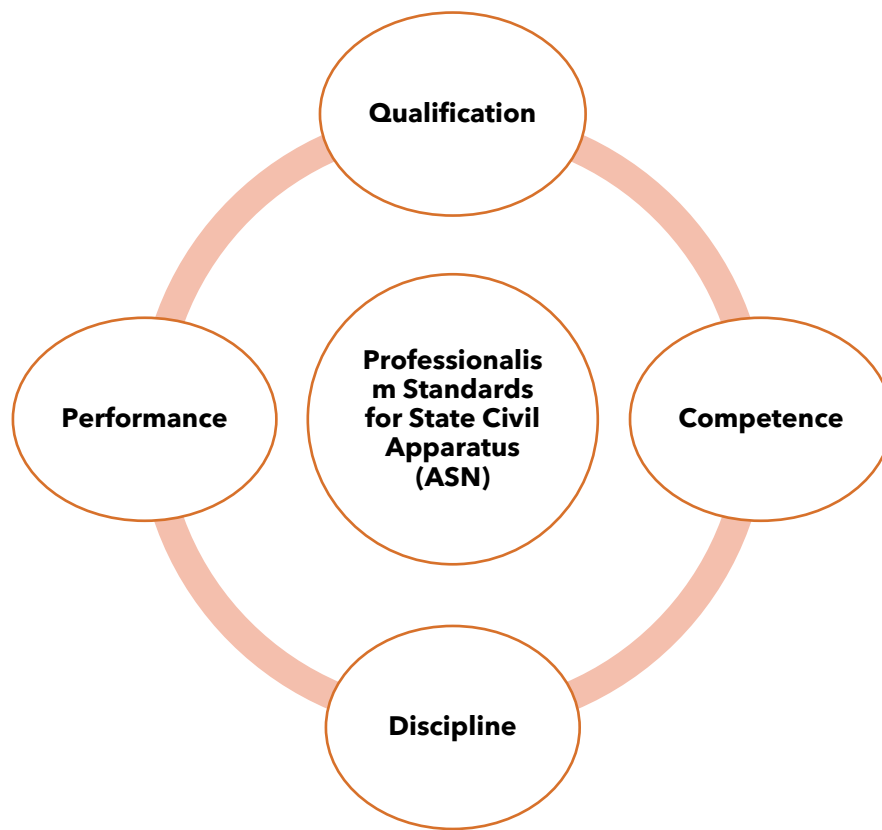


Figure 1. ASN Professional Standards

The IP ASN can also function as a form of social control, giving the community a means of ensuring that civil servants consistently perform their duties in a professional manner. Beyond that, the index provides a basis for assessing and evaluating the ongoing development of ASN professionalism.

Encouragement to participate in competency development already exists on multiple fronts: from agency leadership specifically at DPMPTSP and Disdukcapil, the two entities responsible for delivering public services at the Cimahi City Public Service Mall (MPP) and from BKPSDMD, which oversees apparatus resource management. This is further reinforced by ASN employees' own awareness of the importance of achieving a high Professionalism Index score.

Nevertheless, as noted earlier, ASN participation in training programs is often driven primarily by the need to fulfill obligations and administrative requirements, rather than by a genuine intent to strengthen competence and work ethics. This points to the need for a systematic evaluation of every training program that ASN personnel attend. Ideally, when motivation is present on both the leadership and individual levels, public service quality should

improve, leading to greater community satisfaction. At present, however, the intended objectives of these training programs have not been fully realized.

Competency Development Planning and Coordination

The effectiveness of employee competency development depends heavily on the quality of coordination between operational work units and the central personnel function (Lastiwi et al., 2022). As the central authority mandated to manage human resources and deliver training, Cimahi City's Personnel and Human Resources Development Agency (BKPSDMD) is obligated to maintain continuous cross-sectoral synergy with all Regional Apparatus Organizations (OPDs). This coordination is intended to anchor the Human Capital Development Plan (HCDP) in a rigorous Training Need Analysis (TNA), ensuring that training is tailored to main job duties (*Tupoksi*) under a merit-based ASN management system. However, the existence of an HCDP framework does not automatically guarantee operational success. A critical examination reveals three fundamental vulnerabilities: first, whether all OPDs actively and consistently implement HCDP recommendations; second, whether the underlying TNA reflects a genuine, data-driven competency-gap assessment or merely an administrative routine; and third, who ultimately bears responsibility for evaluating post-training performance, given the current absence of a clear evaluative mechanism.

In practice, the formulation of the HCDP suffers from severe coordination bottlenecks and methodological flaws during the initial needs-assessment phase. Rather than performing objective competency-gap analyses, BKPSDMD relies on passive, bottom-up surveys sent to individual OPDs. This approach leads to significant administrative delays, incomplete data submission, and an inability to establish strategic training priorities. A BKPSDMD official described these field challenges:

"Yesterday, over the past four months, we sent letters to the regional government agencies (SKPD) based on individual needs. We haven't actually had the chance to prioritize these individual needs yet; we've only created a summary for now. This is because some departments have still not submitted their requirements to date, which has also been an obstacle."

This weak needs-analysis framework directly undermines training targeting, resulting in a recurring mismatch (*gap*) between planned competency goals and actual participant profiles. Although in-service training encompassing leadership, functional, and technical tracks—is designed to enhance job-specific capabilities, OPDs frequently deploy inappropriate

personnel simply to satisfy attendance quotas or administrative orders. A BKPSDMD official illustrated this operational breakdown in training alignment:

"Yesterday, we tried to hold a public speaking training in the hope that those providing public services would be able to communicate well with the public... However, sometimes, while we ask for front-line service staff to receive the training, they send their Head of Sub-division instead, which misses the point... Personally, I don't want us to just run these programs to spend the budget, but rather to ensure they are tailored to their intended purpose."

This misorientation highlights a significant divide between normative frameworks and empirical realities within the Cimahi City Government. Normatively, ASN competency development across all training clusters Pre-service (*Diklat Prajabatan*), In-service (*Diklat dalam Jabatan*), and Off-service (*Diklat di Luar Jabatan*) is conceptualized as a strategic, planned process to strengthen intellectual, technical, and managerial capabilities. Ideally, this process embodies five core principles: systematic (aligned with job needs and TNA results), sustainable (fostering continuous learning), adaptive (responsive to technological advances), participatory (engaging employees and leadership actively), and result-oriented (delivering tangible improvements in public service quality). However, without rigorous pre-training screening by OPDs and post-training evaluation by BKPSDMD, competency development in Cimahi City risks degenerating into a ritualistic administrative exercise driven by budget absorption rather than genuine capacity building.

Institutional Capacity and Competency Evaluation

The quality of the State Civil Apparatus is inextricably linked to organizational productivity and public service success, requiring continuous performance monitoring and evaluation (Salam et al., 2023). Beyond technical skills, competency development must instill core values of integrity, professionalism, and ethical conduct. As Suherman et al. (2024) observe, an ASN's professional self-image is shaped by the organizational culture and oversight mechanisms in their work environment. Internalizing a strong code of conduct and service commitment enhances civil servant credibility and fosters public trust. However, translating these normative goals into practice requires robust evaluation systems and adequate institutional capacity.

In Cimahi City, a severe mismatch exists between the scale of the civil service workforce and the institutional capacity to evaluate competency development. The Personnel and

Human Resources Development Agency (BKPSDMD) operates under a Type C organizational structure, governed by Ministry of Home Affairs Regulation (*Permendagri*) No. 56 of 2019 and Ministry of PANRB Regulation No. 35 of 2020, which designates a reduced organizational footprint and restricts competency management to a sub-field unit. With only three personnel dedicated to managing competency development for approximately 5,570 civil servants, the agency faces an overwhelming workload. This structural bottleneck severely limits BKPSDMD's ability to establish sophisticated evaluation frameworks or conduct comprehensive competency gap assessments.

The disproportionate ratio between the number of personnel responsible for competency development and the size of the civil service workforce represents one of the most significant findings of this study. With only three personnel managing competency development for approximately 5,570 civil servants, BKPSDMD faces substantial limitations in carrying out the full competency management cycle, including competency needs assessment, training planning, implementation, post-training monitoring, competency evaluation, and individualized development planning. As a result, competency development tends to be implemented in a reactive and administrative manner rather than as a strategic human resource management process. This finding indicates that institutional capacity is a critical determinant of competency development effectiveness. Regardless of the availability of competency development programs, limited organizational resources significantly constrain BKPSDMD's ability to ensure that training outcomes are translated into behavioral change and improvements in public service quality. A BKPSDMD official highlighted these institutional limitations:

"We still haven't been able to carry it out due to HR limitations... As it turns out, to truly identify the competency gaps and needs, it has to go through an assessment... It must be conducted by an accredited institution... And there is no assessment center in the Cimahi City Government yet."

The interview findings further demonstrate that the absence of an accredited Assessment Center is not merely a technical limitation but reflects broader institutional capacity constraints. Competency gap identification continues to rely on administrative information rather than standardized competency assessments, limiting BKPSDMD's ability to accurately map individual competency needs and formulate evidence-based competency development programs. Consequently, competency development is more likely to follow

organizational routines than strategic competency priorities, reducing its effectiveness in addressing actual competency gaps within the Cimahi City Government.

Due to the absence of an accredited Assessment Center and the constraints of a Type C structure, evaluation in Cimahi City remains largely superficial and administratively driven. Assessment relies primarily on quantitative ASN Professionalism Index (IP ASN) scores, document verification, and basic post-training outputs such as Action Plans (*Rencana Tindak Lanjut* / RTL) or Service SOPs. Direct, on-site behavioral evaluations (*locus* evaluations) to measure whether training actually improves daily service performance are not conducted. A BKPSDMD official described the current evaluation practice:

"One of the evaluations from the BKPSDM itself is to create a follow-up action plan that, once created, must be activated. In addition, there is also the development of Service SOPs... As for direct on-site evaluations, to be honest, we haven't done that yet; however, the documents themselves must be signed by the leadership and submitted to the BKPSDM."

This reliance on paper-based compliance creates a significant gap between administrative metrics and actual operational performance. While BKPSDMD endeavors to leverage public feedback and employee inputs to refine its training programs, the lack of structured, post-training behavioral evaluations prevents the institution from measuring true competency gains. Without expanding institutional capacity and implementing rigorous, field-level evaluation mechanisms, efforts to cultivate a professional self-image and transform bureaucratic work culture will remain constrained by administrative routines.

These findings indicate that competency development evaluation in Cimahi City remains predominantly administrative rather than outcome-oriented. Evaluation is still limited to the verification of documentary outputs, such as the ASN Professionalism Index (IP ASN), Action Plans (*Rencana Tindak Lanjut*/RTL), and Service Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), without comprehensively assessing whether competency development has generated meaningful learning outcomes, behavioral changes, or improvements in workplace performance. Consequently, BKPSDMD has not been able to systematically determine whether the knowledge and skills acquired through training are effectively transferred into daily work practices. This limitation also restricts the institution's ability to evaluate the contribution of competency development to service improvement and citizen satisfaction, thereby weakening the evidence needed to measure the effectiveness of competency

development programs in achieving their intended organizational and public service objectives.

Overall, the findings indicate that the principal challenge of competency development in Cimahi City is not the absence of competency development programs, but the limited institutional capacity of BKPSDMD to manage them effectively. The disproportionate ratio of only three personnel responsible for competency development for approximately 5,570 civil servants constitutes one of the key empirical findings of this study. Such limited institutional capacity constrains BKPSDMD's ability to conduct comprehensive competency needs assessments, coordinate competency development programs, monitor post-training implementation, evaluate competency outcomes, and prepare individualized competency development plans. Consequently, competency development is implemented primarily as an administrative process rather than as a strategic human resource management function capable of driving sustainable improvements in employee performance and public service quality.

The institutional limitations identified in this study also affect the comprehensiveness of competency development evaluation. Referring to Kirkpatrick's Four-Level Training Evaluation Model (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2016), training effectiveness should be assessed through participants' learning outcomes, behavioral changes in the workplace, and organizational results. However, competency development evaluation in Cimahi City remains largely focused on administrative outputs, such as the ASN Professionalism Index (IP ASN), Action Plans (RTL), and Service Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). Evaluations of learning transfer, workplace behavioral change, improvements in service delivery, and citizen satisfaction have not yet been systematically implemented. Consequently, BKPSDMD has limited empirical evidence to determine whether competency development programs generate meaningful changes in employees' performance or contribute to improving the quality of public services.

Recent studies also emphasize that effective training evaluation should not be limited to administrative outputs but should assess whether training generates learning outcomes, behavioral changes, and organizational performance improvements. Training evaluation therefore plays a critical role in determining whether competency development programs achieve their intended objectives and contribute to organizational effectiveness (Urbancová et al., 2021).

These findings indicate that institutional capacity emerges as the central determinant of competency development effectiveness in Cimahi City. The limited number of personnel responsible for managing competency development, combined with the absence of an accredited Assessment Center, constrains the entire competency management cycle, including competency needs assessment, program planning, implementation, monitoring, and post-training evaluation. Consequently, the effectiveness of competency development depends not only on the availability of education and training programs but also on the institutional capacity required to manage competency development in a systematic, evidence-based, and sustainable manner.

Service Skills and Professional Behaviour

High-quality human resources are reflected in the synergy between individual performance and organizational productivity. This performance is heavily influenced by professional behavioral standards that prioritize job responsibilities in daily operations. Consequently, bureaucratic services achieve optimal outcomes when civil servants devote their full attention and concentration to public needs (Mahendra et al., 2021). While the service delivery capabilities of civil servants in Cimahi City are generally considered adequate, performance quality remains uneven across regional apparatuses. Key areas requiring improvement include technical knowledge, service orientation, and socio-cultural skills, particularly communication ethics and active listening among front-line personnel at the Cimahi City Public Service Mall (MPP), which houses service entities such as DPMPSTP and Disdukcapil.

Socio-cultural skills are vital for civil servants who interact directly with citizens. Front-line personnel must communicate clearly, politely, and empathetically, while demonstrating the ability to listen actively and adapt their communication style to diverse social contexts. However, field observations and citizen feedback at the MPP indicate persistent behavioral shortcomings, including instances of poor communication and inconsistent service attitudes. When assessing service quality, public perception is typically captured through formal satisfaction surveys rather than direct awareness of employee training backgrounds. An official from DPMPSTP explained how public evaluation is perceived in practice:

"When it comes to the public, it's more about the SKM (Community Satisfaction Survey)... the public doesn't monitor things from the employee training perspective."

Although Community Satisfaction Surveys (*Survey Kepuasan Masyarakat / SKM*) provide quantitative metrics, formal surveys alone often fail to resolve subtle interpersonal shortcomings or address recurring behavioral complaints. To bridge this gap, BKPSDMD and operational agencies attempt to utilize public complaints and internal feedback to refine competency development programs and rectify operational deficiencies. An official from BKPSDMD described this evaluative routine:

"In that meeting, we evaluated which points were lacking, both internally and externally with the sub-department heads... We tried to evaluate the issues they experienced, whether regarding personnel or services, and where the shortcomings were."

The findings indicate that the primary competency gap identified in public services relates to socio-cultural competencies, particularly communication skills, service ethics, and responsiveness when interacting with citizens. This finding is consistent with recent public-sector literature emphasizing that employees' behavioral competencies, particularly communication, responsiveness, and professional attitudes, constitute important drivers of organizational performance and public service quality (Asif & Rathore, 2021). To address these issues, BKPSDMD has organized various competency development initiatives, including education and training programs, technical guidance, workshops, and socialization activities designed to strengthen employees' service competencies. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of these programs in changing frontline service behavior has not yet been systematically demonstrated. Although competency development activities have been implemented, there is limited empirical evidence showing whether employees consistently apply the knowledge and skills acquired during training in their daily interactions with service users. Consequently, recurring public complaints regarding communication practices suggest that improvements in competency have not yet been fully translated into observable improvements in service delivery.

While evaluative meetings and public feedback mechanisms demonstrate BKPSDMD's commitment to continuously improving public services, a substantial gap remains between competency development activities and measurable improvements in service quality. The findings suggest that competency development has not yet been supported by systematic post-training assessments capable of measuring behavioral change among frontline civil servants. As a result, improvements in communication, responsiveness, and service professionalism cannot yet be empirically linked to the competency development programs

implemented by BKPSDMD. Strengthening post-training monitoring and behavioral evaluation is therefore essential to ensure that competency development contributes not only to increased employee competencies but also to tangible improvements in public service quality and citizen satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that competency development of the State Civil Apparatus (ASN) in Cimahi City has been implemented through various programs organized by the Regional Civil Service and Human Resource Development Agency (BKPSDMD), including education and training, technical guidance, workshops, and other competency development activities. However, the effectiveness of these programs remains constrained by several institutional and managerial challenges. The findings reveal that competency development participation is still partly driven by administrative motives, particularly to fulfill promotion and career advancement requirements, while post-training evaluation remains largely limited to administrative outputs, such as the ASN Professionalism Index (IP ASN), without systematically assessing learning outcomes, behavioral change, workplace application, and improvements in public service quality. Furthermore, the limited institutional capacity of BKPSDMD, with only three personnel responsible for managing competency development for approximately 5,570 civil servants, significantly restricts competency needs assessment, monitoring, evaluation, and individualized competency planning.

The principal finding of this study is that institutional capacity emerges as the central determinant of competency development effectiveness in Cimahi City. The main challenge of competency development does not lie in the absence of competency development programs, but in the lack of integration between competency needs assessment, training implementation, evaluation of learning outcomes, behavioral change, and public service improvement. This challenge is further exacerbated by the limited institutional capacity of BKPSDMD, which constrains competency management throughout the entire development cycle. Consequently, competency development has not yet been able to demonstrate a systematic and measurable contribution to improving public service quality. Strengthening institutional capacity, establishing a comprehensive competency evaluation system, and integrating competency development with organizational performance and public service

outcomes are therefore essential to ensure that competency development functions as a strategic instrument for improving the professionalism of the State Civil Apparatus and the quality of public services.

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting its findings. First, the research was conducted only within the Regional Civil Service and Human Resource Development Agency (BKPSDMD) and the Public Service Mall (MPP) of Cimahi City. Consequently, the findings reflect the institutional context of Cimahi City and may not be directly generalizable to other local governments with different organizational structures and human resource capacities. Second, although community members were included as informants to provide perspectives on public service quality, their representation remained limited and therefore may not fully capture the diversity of citizens' service experiences. Third, this study employed a qualitative approach and did not quantitatively measure public service quality using statistical indicators or comprehensive citizen satisfaction data. Finally, the research did not conduct a longitudinal or before-and-after evaluation of competency development programs. As a result, the study was unable to directly assess the extent to which competency development activities produced sustained learning outcomes, behavioral changes among civil servants, or measurable improvements in public service quality over time. Future research is therefore recommended to adopt mixed-method or longitudinal approaches to evaluate the long-term effectiveness of competency development and its contribution to public service performance.

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