

Management of Civil Servant Development at the Department of Cooperatives, Small and Medium Enterprises of Central Sulawesi Province

Original Article

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Abstract

The background of this research is the critical need for continuous development of the State Civil Apparatus (ASN) to meet public demands for accountability and good governance, a challenge faced by the Department of Small and Medium Enterprise Cooperatives of Central Sulawesi Province. Despite existing efforts, optimal results have not been fully achieved due to issues such as limited budget for training and a perceived disconnect between training materials and job requirements. The objectives of this study are to examine and analyze the competence development of the State Civil Apparatus in the Department of Small and Medium Enterprise Cooperatives of Central Sulawesi Province, to identify and assess the factors that hinder this development, and to explore the factors that support it. This research is a qualitative study with four selected informants. The study employed observation, interviews, and documentation as data collection methods. Analysis followed an interactive model comprising data collection, reduction, presentation, verification, and conclusion formulation. Based on the analysis, it was concluded that the development of State Civil Apparatus competencies at the department has been going well, particularly in the areas of employee training and education. The main inhibiting factors identified were a lack of self-confidence, undisciplined behavior, insufficient information on competency development, and an inability to communicate effectively. The key supporting factors were the positive personality of the State Civil Apparatus, access to education and training, strong work performance, and the nature of the job performed.

Keywords: Cooperatives, Development, Management, State Civil Apparatus.

1. Introduction

The development of civil service management across all sectors has emerged as a significant topic of discourse within both public and private domains. This heightened attention is driven by advancements in technology, knowledge, and culture. Within the governmental sphere, efforts to enhance the quality of the civil service must be undertaken to address public scrutiny and criticism concerning the accountability of state institutions and the pursuit of good governance. Such improvements are essential to ensure that the corporate sector and civil society are adequately served, ultimately contributing to enhanced societal welfare (Rudin et al., 2025).

The concept of a learning organization involves empowering individuals and teams to produce knowledge, goods, and services via innovative networks that operate both inside and outside institutional boundaries. For the civil service, this framework is designed to promote continuous capacity building and facilitate organizational excellence. Despite its potential, implementation is often hindered by the significant costs of accredited and non-accredited



training programs, alongside persistent doubts about their quality and their actual contribution to institutional goals or professional development.

Recent studies have consistently highlighted a significant gap between the implementation of competency development programs and their actual impact on employee performance and career progression in the public sector. For instance, Ruhana et al. (2023) found that while education and training programs for local government officials have a positive impact on bureaucratic performance, challenges such as financial constraints and resistance from officials must be overcome for programs to achieve optimal results. The researchers emphasized that training programs must remain relevant to national policies and ensure close cooperation between institutions. Similarly, evidence from a study on training initiatives in Indonesian government agencies indicates that the quality of trainers significantly shapes both learning motivation and transfer motivation, though it does not directly determine training effectiveness. Rather, its effect operates indirectly through these motivational mechanisms, emphasizing the critical function of program design in enhancing the efficacy of training interventions (Hariyanto et al., 2013).

Furthermore, Belisca et al. (2024) identified human resource competence as a factor that partially influences organizational performance, demonstrating that competency development is directly linked to institutional effectiveness. A study by Sudewo & Amini (2025) on work-integrated learning for civil servants noted that given the large number of civil servants and the limitations of traditional classroom training capacity and budget, a more flexible approach to learning innovation is needed. This research found that integrative and collaborative learning, when designed with proper support, can be an effective alternative to traditional classroom training. These findings point to a critical need for empirical research that examines these issues within the context of specific government agencies to understand how these general challenges manifest in practice.

Recognizing this, the Central Sulawesi Provincial Office of Cooperatives, Small and Medium Enterprises has implemented measures to develop the State Civil Apparatus in accordance with their respective fields of duty. Although efforts to develop the competence of the State Civil Apparatus have been carried out, this has not yet yielded the maximum results as expected, because many consider that after participating in training, it does not always have an impact on the positions they hold. This is due to the lack of equal access to education and training, one of the obstacles being a lack of budget, and the training material provided not being in line with their field of work, thus hindering them from carrying out their work.

Based on this background, the objectives of this study are: (1) To know and analyze the Competence Development of the State Civil Apparatus in the Department of Small and Medium Enterprise Cooperatives of Central Sulawesi Province; (2) To identify and analyze the factors hindering this development; and (3) To know and analyze the factors supporting this development.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Human Resource Development

Human resource development management is an absolute necessity for an organization in facing current demands and future challenges (Siagian, 2014). This *'conditio sine qua non'* condition can be categorized as a form of investment, namely human investment. As a distinct branch of management studies, human resource management focuses on the systematic coordination of personnel functions and contributions within institutional activities. According to Rivai (2009), the development management of the State Civil Apparatus can be

carried out through steps such as (1) education, to increase insight and knowledge, (2) training, to improve technical abilities in carrying out work, and (3) transfers, to increase experience and open up career opportunities. Human resource development is not only focused on newly recruited employees, but also on employees who have been working for a long time. The concept of development comprises two distinct elements. First, training which focused on improving competencies and expertise for particular tasks and second, education, concerned with the expansion of foundational and cross-disciplinary understanding.

Development refers to the process of equipping employees with the competencies required by an organization in the future. Synthesizing the perspectives of various experts, it can be inferred that the development function constitutes a managerial endeavor aimed at enhancing employee skills, knowledge, and abilities through training, education, and career progression initiatives. This enables personnel to contribute optimally to the organization. Ultimately, human resource development seeks to establish a logical and coherent framework that fosters an environment conducive to continuous learning and personal growth among employees (Putrapandowo & Meilani, 2025). While human resource development includes traditional training programs, its core emphasis is placed on enhancing intellectual capital and facilitating learning across organizational, collective, and personal dimensions (Sedarmayanti, 2018).

2.2. Civil Servants

According to Law No. 20 of 2023 on the State Civil Apparatus, the State Civil Apparatus (ASN) refers to a professional body comprising civil servants and government employees with employment agreements working within government agencies. The Civil Service consists of these two categories, appointed by personnel management officials to carry out duties in government posts or other state assignments, and entitled to remuneration as prescribed by legal statutes. Civil servants are Indonesian nationals meeting specified requirements who are appointed as permanent employees by civil service authorities to fill government positions. The State Civil Service Agency (BKN) serves as a non-ministerial government body authorized to oversee and implement national employee management in accordance with the provisions of the State Civil Service Law. Before discussing Civil Servants further, it is necessary to understand what is meant by Civil Servants. The definition of Civil Servants is contained in Article 1(1) of Law No. 20 of 2023, which states that Civil Servants are professionals who work in government agencies.

Law Number 20 of 2023 concerning the State Civil Apparatus defines the State Civil Apparatus (hereinafter referred to as ASN) as a professional designation encompassing civil servants and government employees with employment agreements serving within government institutions. The Civil Service comprises both civil servants and government employees under contractual arrangements, appointed by personnel management officials to undertake duties in governmental positions or other state assignments, and compensated in accordance with prevailing legal provisions. Civil servants are Indonesian citizens who fulfill specified criteria and are appointed as permanent employees by authorized civil service officials to occupy government posts. The State Civil Service Agency (hereinafter referred to as BKN) operates as a non-ministerial government institution vested with the authority to provide guidance and execute national employee management as mandated by the State Civil Service Law.

Regarding the types and status of employees, Article 6 of Law No. 20 of 2023 stipulates that the State Civil Apparatus comprises two categories: Civil Servants (PNS) and Government Employees with Employment Agreements (PPPK). Their respective statuses are further elaborated in Article 7 of the same law, which states that Civil Servants are appointed as permanent employees by the civil service supervisory official and are granted a national

employee identification number. In contrast, PPPK are appointed under a work agreement by the civil service supervisory official, based on the specific needs of the Government Agency and in accordance with the provisions of the law.

Furthermore, the obligations of the State Civil Apparatus encompass all actions that must be performed based on laws and regulations. According to Djatmika (1995), these obligations can be broadly categorized into three types: obligations related to their position as civil servants in general, obligations based on their rank and position, and other obligations as defined by law. The foundational obligations of the State Civil Apparatus are enshrined in Article 23 of Law No. 20 of 2023, which requires allegiance and adherence to Pancasila, the 1945 Constitution, and the lawful government; upholding national cohesion; executing policies established by competent authorities; observing all applicable laws and regulations; performing official tasks with commitment, probity, and responsibility; consistently exhibiting integrity and model behavior; maintaining confidentiality of state secrets; and accepting assignments anywhere within the territory of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.

2.3. Civil Service Development Management

Human resource development for the State Civil Apparatus is directed toward achieving results consistent with organizational goals and performance benchmarks. Accordingly, such development is competency-based, recognizing that it involves the authority of each individual to perform functions or make decisions appropriate to their position within the organization, drawing upon their specialized knowledge, skills, and capabilities. It is essential that the competencies of individual civil servants contribute to the execution of organizational strategies and facilitate adaptation to organizational changes. The development of the Civil Service is carried out as an effort to improve the quality of employees, such as their skills, knowledge, expertise and character. The development of the Civil Service is carried out through formal education as well as education and training (*Diklat*). The training provided to employees must be in accordance with the required specifications so that the improvement in employee quality is truly achieved.

In detail, the areas of Civil Service development activities are divided into four (4) parts which are employee training, employee education, employee development, non-employee development (Nadler, 2017). The third activity in the first area (training, education, employee development) is a key activity for human resource development (employees) in an institution or department in its activities for the development of the organization of the institution or department concerned. Meanwhile, the fourth area (non-employee development) is essentially the implementation of the social function of the institution. According to Nadler, an institution or department also has an obligation to provide education and training for members of the community who are not employees of the institution.

3. Methods

The present investigation adopts a qualitative methodology, intended to comprehensively describe and elucidate the development of the Civil Service at the Cooperative, Small and Medium Enterprises Agency of Central Sulawesi Province. A descriptive framework is employed to generate conceptual insights and compile empirical data, with no objective of hypothesis verification (Arikunto, 2010).

3.1. Types and Sources of Data

Data employed in this investigation encompass both qualitative and quantitative forms. Qualitative information was derived from interviews with key informants, and quantitative data include numerical values, for instance, the population of civil servants and the total number of cooperatives operating in Central Sulawesi Province. Regarding data sources, this study utilizes both primary and secondary data. Primary data is the main data analyzed in this study, consisting of the informants' responses during interviews with research informants. Secondary data, on the other hand, serves as supporting data for the research, obtained from the research subjects and from various literature. This data includes the organizational structure and the number of civil servants in the Cooperative, Small and Medium Enterprises Agency of Central Sulawesi Province.

3.2. Informant Selection

The study employed purposive sampling to identify informants, wherein participants were intentionally chosen according to specific characteristics relevant to the research objectives. The informants were selected based on the following criteria: (1) they must hold structural positions within the agency, ensuring they have decision-making authority and a broad overview of human resource management policies and practices; (2) they must have direct responsibility for or involvement in the planning, implementation, or evaluation of employee competency development programs, including training, education, and staff development; (3) they must represent different hierarchical levels and functional units within the agency to capture diverse perspectives on competency development; and (4) they must be willing to participate in in-depth interviews and provide accurate information regarding the research topic. Based on these criteria, four informants were selected from various structural positions within the agency. The informants consisted of the Secretary of the Agency, who oversees administrative and personnel matters; the Head of the Training Centre, responsible for designing and implementing training programs; the Head of the Empowerment and Development of Small Enterprises Division, who manages staff within a key technical division; and the Head of the Training Implementation Section, who handles the operational aspects of training delivery.

3.3. Data Collection Techniques

The data collection process for this research incorporated various approaches, one of which was observation. This technique involves the methodical observation and notation of features or events associated with the research focus (Kumar & Sharma, 2023). Interviews were also conducted as a data collection technique through direct question and answer sessions with informants or respondents (Sinha & Hassan, 2014). Furthermore, documentation served as a data collection method, capturing visual materials such as photographs of civil servants performing tasks at the Sulawesi Province Cooperative, Small and Medium Enterprises Office, images documenting the researcher's interviews with participants, and depictions of the office's organizational hierarchy. The analytical process prioritized data obtained through interviews and other documentary evidence. The data analysis techniques used in this study are based on Sugiyono (2013) as follows:

3.3.1. Data Editing

The process of data editing involves the selection, formulation, abstraction, and conversion of field-acquired data. It is an ongoing procedure that extends from the initial stages to the final phase of the research.

3.3.2. Data Grouping

Data grouping involves the systematic organization of information, facilitating the derivation of conclusions and subsequent action. This organized information may be presented in various forms, including narrative text, matrices, and charts. The presentation of data constitutes an integral component of the analytical process and itself encompasses elements of data reduction. Through this procedure, researchers systematically classify data to enhance comprehension.

3.3.3. Interpretation of Data Meaning

In this research, the process of interpreting data meaning was undertaken after the completion of data grouping. At this stage, the interview data pertaining to the Development of the State Civil Apparatus at the Central Sulawesi Province Cooperative, Small and Medium Enterprises Office were subjected to interpretive analysis.

3.3.4. Drawing Conclusions

Conclusion drawing represents an integrative process that yields a coherent overall picture. The interpretations emerging from the data require continuous verification of their precision and relevance to safeguard validity. During this stage, the researcher develops propositions aligned with logical reasoning, designates them as study findings, and then engages in repeated scrutiny of the original data, the categorized data sets, and the formulated propositions. Thereafter, the comprehensive research outcomes are reported, featuring new discoveries generated from the previously established evidence.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Research Results

4.1.1. History of the Central Sulawesi Province Cooperative, Small and Medium Enterprises Agency

The brief history of the establishment of the Central Sulawesi Province Cooperative, Small and Medium Enterprises Agency began with the Regional Office of the Ministry of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises of the Republic of Indonesia. Following the enactment of Regional Autonomy Law No. 99 of 1999, the Central Sulawesi Province Cooperative Industry and Trade Agency were formed from the regional autonomy agency. With the deregulation changes, the nomenclature changed from Industry, Trade and Cooperatives to the Cooperative, Industry and Trade Agency. Then in 2015, the Agency was split into two agencies, namely the Cooperative, Small and Medium Enterprises Agency of Central Sulawesi Province and the Industry and Trade Agency of Central Sulawesi Province.

The amendment to Law No. 23 of 2014 on Regional Government resulted in a change in the nomenclature of the Agency to the Central Sulawesi Provincial Cooperative, Small and Medium Enterprises Agency, from type A to type B, so that the four divisions became three divisions, in terms of institutional structure and workload to date. The Palu City Government is currently implementing a program for regional development and capacity building. In its implementation, adjustments have been made to strategic planning. The following is a photo of the office of the Cooperative, Small and Medium Enterprises Agency of Central Sulawesi Province.



Figure 1. Office of the Cooperative, Small and Medium Enterprises Agency of Central Sulawesi Province

4.1.2. Central Sulawesi Provincial Cooperative, Small and Medium Enterprises Agency

Central Sulawesi Provincial Cooperative, Small and Medium Enterprises Agency at a broader level, sectoral development planning is a strategic issue that attracts the attention of various elements and community groups, thus requiring analysis and a government perspective as a process of observing the needs and efforts of various issues in the community, to strengthen and improve the capacity to carry out tasks and authorities in the context of guidance and control in the Cooperative, SME, and Palu City sectors, based on the dynamics of the situation and conditions of the community as a strategic environmental potential, the Cooperative, Small and Medium Enterprises Agency of Central Sulawesi Province strives to assist in achieving these objectives.

4.2. Discussion

The development of civil servant competencies at the Central Sulawesi Provincial Cooperative, Small and Medium Enterprises Agency in this study focused on competency development indicators consisting of: employee training, employee education, employee career development, and honorary staff development (Nadler, 2017). The details of the interviews with informants in this study are described as follows:

4.2.1. Employee Training

Regarding employee training in competency development at the Central Sulawesi Province Cooperative and Small and Medium Enterprises Office, it is already functioning well, as acknowledged by Mr. Drs. Imran, MM, Secretary of the Central Sulawesi Province Cooperative and Small and Medium Enterprises Office, who was interviewed on Monday, January 6, 2025, from 10:30 to 11:25 WITA, as follows:

“The Central Sulawesi Province Cooperative and SME Agency always conduct training. Yes, routine training, namely leadership/managerial training. This training is mandatory for echelon 3 and 4 officials who have not yet participated. As for other training, there has been none in the last 3 years. For example, training to obtain goods and services certificates. The mechanism for leadership/managerial training is as follows: the Civil Service Agency (BKD) sends a letter to the department proposing or recommending officials at the 3rd and 4th echelons who have not yet attended the training. The department then writes to the BKD with the names of those who have not yet attended leadership training. After that, the BKD announces the training schedule along with the training requirements. Leadership training is conducted at the BPSDM, and those who pass the training receive a certificate. The training is expected to improve employee performance” (Interview in the office of the Secretary of the Department of Cooperatives, Small and Medium Enterprises).

In relation to the development of the competence of the State Civil Apparatus, Thoha (2010) argues that employee development in providing services is carried out in order to produce results that are in line with the organization's objectives and targets with established work standards. It is essential that the competencies of each employee align with and facilitate the implementation of institutional strategies, as well as adapt to managerial changes. Accordingly, developing employee competencies strengthens operational processes within the departments of the Central Sulawesi Provincial Cooperative, Small and Medium Enterprises Office.

4.2.2. Employee training

Regarding the education of civil servants at the Central Sulawesi Provincial Cooperative and Small and Medium Enterprises Agency, it is already functioning well, as acknowledged by Mr. Obin, S.Sos, Head of the Training Centre of the Provincial Cooperative and Small and Medium Enterprises Office, who was interviewed on Tuesday, January 7, 2025, from 9:00 to 10:15 WITA, as follows:

“The educational level of civil servants at the Central Sulawesi Provincial Cooperative, Small and Medium Enterprises Agency includes high school, bachelor's and master's degree graduates. There are 11 high school graduates, 13 diploma graduates, 41 bachelor's degree graduates and 18 master's degree graduates. Furthermore, there is 1 graduate from the Cooperative Management Academy, which has now been renamed STIEKOP. Among civil servants at the Cooperative, Small and Medium Enterprises Agency of Central Sulawesi Province, 18 have graduated, and some are currently pursuing master's degrees” (Interview conducted in the office of the Head of the Cooperative Training Centre).

Regarding employee career development, Thoha (2010) argues that employee development within an institution should be carried out in order to produce results that are in line with the organization's objectives and targets and with the established work standards. It is essential that the work performance of each employee contributes to the realization of the organization's strategic objectives and remains responsive to organizational changes at the Central Sulawesi Provincial Cooperative, Small and Medium Enterprises Office.

4.2.3. Permanent Employee Development

Regarding the development of permanent civil servants at the Central Sulawesi Province Cooperative and Small and Medium Enterprises Agency, it is already functioning well, based on the results of the author's interview with Mr. Irfan, SH, M.Si, who serves as the Head of the Empowerment and Development of Small Enterprises Division, conducted on Tuesday, January 7, 2025, from 10:30 to 11:16 WITA, as follows:

“The development of permanent employees of the Central Sulawesi Province Cooperative, Small and Medium Enterprises Agency has so far only been given to employees who are considered capable in terms of human resources and based on their rank and class. Of course, there will always be those who agree and disagree with employee development policies. Regarding civil servant development, every civil servant in the Central Sulawesi Provincial Cooperative, Small and Medium Enterprises Office has the same rights in terms of employee development. Developing civil servant competencies can improve performance.” (Interview with the Head of Small Business Empowerment and Development).

The informant's opinion above is in line with that of Spencer and Spencer in Massiki (2007), who state that not all personal aspects of an employee constitute competence; only personal motives that drive them to achieve superior work results constitute their competence.

Employee competencies are one of the criteria for promotion, along with the employee's relatively calm and stable personality, which can be measured from the employee's personal characteristics at work.

4.2.4. Development of Temporary Employees

Regarding non-permanent employees of the Central Sulawesi Province Cooperative and Small and Medium Enterprises Office, the situation is functioning well, as acknowledged by Ms. Irmayanti, SH, MM, Head of the Training Implementation Section, who was interviewed on Monday, December 30, 2024, from 9:30 to 10:50 WITA, as follows:

“The Central Sulawesi Province Cooperative, Small and Medium Enterprises Agency has non-permanent employees. According to personnel data, there are 86 non-permanent employees, with the following details: 68 contract workers, 11 PPKL (Local Government Employees), and 7 PLUT (Local Government Technical Assistance) consultants. The mechanism for recruiting non-permanent or honorary employees is based on the needs of each field. For example, PLUT consultants are recruited based on the needs of the SME sector. In my opinion, the existence of honorary/non-permanent employees can improve the performance of Regional Apparatus Organizations, especially PPKL, which is the spearhead of the Cooperative, Small and Medium Enterprises Agency in the regency.” (Interview in the Head of Training Implementation Section's office).

Based on the results of interviews with the four informants above, researchers believe that the development of non-permanent employees of the Central Sulawesi Province Cooperative, Small and Medium Enterprises Agency has been good. It can therefore be understood that in terms of employee capabilities, the agency has met the expectations of the nation and the state. This is in line with the opinion of experts (Ningsih et al., 2021) that every time a policy is implemented, Standard Operating Procedures need to be established as guidelines, instructions, requirements and references for policy makers so that employees know what to do in developing Temporary Employees at the Central Sulawesi Province Cooperative, Small and Medium Enterprises Office.

5. Conclusion

Based on the results of research and analysis conducted on the Development of Competence of Civil Servants at the Cooperative, Small and Medium Enterprises Agency of Central Sulawesi Province, it can be concluded that the development of the competence of the State Civil Apparatus at the agency has been running well, as evidenced by interview findings indicating that competency development efforts are generally aligned with established career development mechanisms. However, this study reveals a unique contribution to the existing body of knowledge on public sector human resource management in Indonesia by demonstrating that even when formal competency development programs are in place and functioning adequately, their effectiveness is significantly mediated by individual-level psychological and behavioral factors that are often overlooked in policy design.

Specifically, while the agency provides necessary training and education opportunities, the realization of optimal competency development is hindered by four key factors: a lack of self-confidence among employees, undisciplined behavior, insufficient access to information regarding available competency development programs, and an inability to communicate effectively. Conversely, the study identifies four supporting factors that facilitate competency development: the inherent personality traits of civil servants, access to formal education and training programs, strong work performance, and the nature of the position held. These

findings contribute to a more nuanced understanding of competency development by highlighting the interplay between organizational provisions and individual characteristics, suggesting that human resource policies must address not only structural and programmatic elements but also the psychological and behavioral dimensions of employee development.

Based on these conclusions, the study offers several recommendations. The agency should develop targeted interventions to address the identified hindering factors, such as implementing confidence-building workshops, communication skills training, and a more transparent and accessible information system regarding competency development opportunities. Additionally, regular performance evaluations should be conducted to identify employees with strong work performance and personality traits conducive to development, and these employees should be given priority access to advanced training and career advancement opportunities. Future research should expand the scope of inquiry to include comparative studies across multiple agencies and regions, as well as quantitative investigations to measure the relative impact of each hindering and supporting factor on actual competency outcomes.

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