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Counting Competence: Evaluating the Civil Servant Professionalism Index Policy in West Kutai Regency, Indonesia

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Abstract

Civil servant professionalism is a foundational pillar of merit-based, result-oriented governance. This study evaluates implementation of the Civil Servant Professionalism Index (IP ASN) measurement policy under Regulation of the Minister for Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform No. 38 of 2018 in West Kutai Regency, East Kalimantan. Employing a mixed-methods approach, data were collected through interviews, observation, documentation, and a Likert-scale questionnaire administered to 32 respondents, comprising BKPSDM leadership, system administrators, performance-appraisal officials, regional agency representatives, the Inspectorate, Bappeda, and civil servants. Data were analyzed using William Dunn's policy evaluation criteria: effectiveness, efficiency, adequacy, equity, responsiveness, and appropriateness. Findings show IP ASN implementation is categorized as effective overall, with a total score of 2,725 out of a maximum 3,720, a mean of 3.66, and a percentage index of 73.25 percent. Appropriateness scored highest (3.81), while efficiency scored lowest (3.56). IP ASN measurement has successfully reflected professionalism across qualification, competence, performance, and discipline, yet implementation continues to face suboptimal system integration, incomplete data updating, insufficient documentation, constrained competency-development budget, and uneven understanding among civil servants and agencies. The study concludes that IP ASN measurement is effective but requires strengthening in data quality, system integration, competency development, and utilization of results for merit-based decisions.

Keywords: policy evaluation; civil servant professionalism; William Dunn; merit system; PermenPANRB No. 38 of 2018; West Kutai Regency.

1. Introduction

Civil servant (Aparatur Sipil Negara, ASN) professionalism constitutes a foundational pillar for realizing governance that is effective, efficient, and result-oriented. Since the enactment of Law No. 5 of 2014 on the Civil Service, subsequently reaffirmed and updated through Law No. 20 of 2023 on the Civil Service (Republik Indonesia, 2023), Indonesia's bureaucratic paradigm has shifted toward a merit system, in which ASN management is grounded in qualification, competence, and performance rather than seniority or patronage alone. This merit system affirms that ASN professionalism functions as the primary instrument for realizing a world-class bureaucracy (Dwiyanto, 2018; Syahraini et al., 2025).

Following this legislative mandate, the Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform (KemenPANRB) issued PermenPANRB No. 38 of 2018 on Measurement of the Civil Servant Professionalism Index (IP ASN), regulating professionalism measurement across four core dimensions: qualification, competence, performance, and discipline. Through this instrument, government seeks to assess the extent to which civil servants fulfill the principles of meritocracy and public accountability in delivering government service (KemenPANRB, 2018).

Notwithstanding this normative framework, professionalism-index implementation at the regional level has not proceeded fully optimally. Many regional governments continue to face difficulty compiling comprehensive, accurate civil-servant data, constrained by limited personnel information-system capacity, inadequate human-resource capacity, and an administratively oriented rather than substantively oriented work culture (Rizqyanto et al., 2022). This condition generates a gap between national policy and regional implementation. Several studies further indicate that regional ASN professionalism remains shaped by non-merit factors, including political patronage and recruitment patterns not fully grounded in competence (Prasetyo, 2022; Zein & Septiani, 2022), even though ASN professionalism substantially determines public-service quality and the effectiveness of regional development-program implementation. Professionalism-index measurement should accordingly function not merely as administrative routine but as a reflective instrument for assessing the quality of regional ASN management.

This context carries particular importance for the Government of West Kutai Regency, an autonomous region in East Kalimantan Province characterized by high geographic and administrative complexity. According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS Kabupaten Kutai Barat, 2024), West Kutai spans more than 20,000 square kilometers, with civil servants dispersed across 16 districts, a condition demanding effective ASN governance and a professionalism-measurement system adaptive to field-level reality. IP ASN measurement in West Kutai is executed by the Regional Civil Service and Human Resource Development Agency (BKPSDM). As documented in BKPSDM's 2023 Government Agency Performance Report (LKjIP), implementation continues to face obstacles including data validity, personnel information-system limitation, and low civil-servant awareness of professionalism measurement's importance as a career-development instrument (BKPSDM Kutai Barat, 2023).

System-integration constraint constitutes a further central issue. In practice, regional civil-servant data remains fragmented between the local personnel information system (SIMPEG) and the national

system (SIASN) administered by the National Civil Service Agency (BKN). Technological and organizational-culture obstacles frequently generate data mismatch affecting measurement accuracy (Sabuhari et al., 2025), even though data accuracy constitutes the key precondition for a professionalism index that genuinely reflects civil servants' factual field condition.

Consistent with Van Meter and Van Horn's (1975) policy-implementation theory, policy effectiveness is shaped by communication, resources, implementer disposition, and bureaucratic structure. Within the IP ASN measurement context, these factors are clearly evident: policy communication from central to regional government is frequently suboptimal, regional human resources remain limited, and inter-unit coordination remains weak, reinforcing the importance of implementation evaluation to ensure the policy does not remain confined to a merely formal level (Subarsono, 2015).

Evaluating IP ASN measurement is strategically important because it connects directly to the 2020-2024 Bureaucratic Reform agenda, which positions ASN professionalism as a core indicator of Thematic Bureaucratic Reform (KemenPANRB, 2023). Bureaucratic-reform success at the regional level depends substantially on ASN capacity as the reform's primary executor, since, as Dwiyanto (2018) affirms, a professional bureaucracy is one that not only complies with regulation but is capable of innovating and delivering public value.

This study is accordingly important for evaluating the extent to which IP ASN measurement in the Government of West Kutai Regency has been implemented consistent with PermenPANRB No. 38 of 2018, assessing implementation compliance, execution effectiveness, indicator relevance, and contribution to improved civil-servant performance and professionalism. Academically, this study enriches public-policy-implementation and ASN-management scholarship; practically, it may inform policy recommendations for BKPSDM Kutai Barat and KemenPANRB in refining future professionalism-measurement and -development mechanisms (Syahraini et al., 2025; Zein & Septiani, 2022). Building on this rationale, this study addresses the following research problem: to what extent has IP ASN measurement implementation reflected genuine civil-servant professionalism levels in the Government of West Kutai Regency?

These considerations position IP ASN measurement as more than a routine administrative exercise: within West Kutai's specific institutional context, an extensively dispersed civil-service population, constrained regional fiscal capacity, and legacy data-system fragmentation between local and national platforms, professionalism measurement functions simultaneously as a compliance mechanism and as a diagnostic instrument capable of revealing where regional ASN management most requires strengthening. Understanding whether, and how fully, this diagnostic potential is being realized in practice constitutes the central empirical concern this study addresses.

Indonesia's decentralization framework further amplifies the stakes of this evaluative inquiry. Since regional autonomy transferred substantial civil-service management authority from central to regional government, the quality of ASN professionalism at the regency level has become increasingly consequential for the delivery of basic public services, ranging from health and education administration to licensing and social-assistance distribution, all of which depend on the competence and discipline

of the civil servants staffing regional apparatus organizations. In this decentralized structure, national instruments such as IP ASN function as one of the few standardized mechanisms through which central government can assess whether regional civil-service quality is converging toward, or diverging from, national merit-system aspirations, rendering region-specific implementation evaluation, of the kind this study undertakes, an essential complement to national-level aggregate reporting.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Public Policy Evaluation

Public policy, as Anderson (2011) explains, denotes a purposive course of action pursued by government actors in addressing a matter of public concern, typically unfolding across sequential stages, agenda setting, formulation, adoption, implementation, and evaluation, that Jones (2014) similarly identifies as the standard policy-cycle framework within which evaluative research is situated. Dye (2013) further emphasizes that policy evaluation exists to determine what difference, if any, a policy makes to the condition it was designed to address, a formulation directly relevant to this study's concern with whether IP ASN measurement genuinely reflects, rather than merely documents, civil-servant professionalism. Public policy evaluation constitutes a systematic process for assessing the extent to which an implemented policy has achieved its intended objectives, generating findings that inform subsequent policy improvement. Dunn (2018) identifies six criteria for assessing public-policy performance, forming this study's principal analytical framework: effectiveness, whether a policy achieves its intended result; efficiency, the resource effort required to achieve that effectiveness; adequacy, the extent to which achieved effectiveness satisfies the underlying need giving rise to the policy; equity, the fair distribution of policy costs and benefits across affected groups; responsiveness, the extent to which a policy satisfies target-group needs, preferences, and values; and appropriateness, the substantive validity of the assumptions underlying a policy's objectives. Applied to IP ASN measurement, these six criteria enable systematic assessment of whether the policy not only operates procedurally but genuinely reflects and strengthens civil-servant professionalism as intended by PermenPANRB No. 38 of 2018.

Dunn's (2018) framework further distinguishes formative from summative evaluative purposes: formative evaluation, conducted during ongoing implementation, is oriented toward identifying adjustable weaknesses, while summative evaluation, conducted after a defined implementation period, assesses cumulative achievement against original policy objectives. This study adopts a predominantly summative orientation, assessing IP ASN measurement's cumulative performance across a completed annual measurement cycle, while its qualitative component retains formative value by identifying specific, addressable implementation gaps BKPSDM can act upon in subsequent measurement cycles, a dual orientation consistent with Dunn's broader observation that policy evaluation research often serves both retrospective judgment and prospective improvement functions simultaneously.

2.2 Policy Implementation Theory

Policy implementation constitutes the stage translating formulated policy into concrete action generating tangible outcomes. Van Meter and Van Horn (1975) hold that implementation effectiveness

is shaped by policy standards and objectives, resources, inter-organizational communication, implementing-agency characteristics, and economic, social, and political conditions, a framework this study draws upon to contextualize the communication and resource-related obstacles documented in Section 1. Complementary implementation perspectives further enrich this study's interpretive frame: Edwards (1980) emphasizes communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure as joint determinants of implementation success; Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983) emphasize problem tractability, statutory structuring capacity, and non-statutory environmental variables; and Lipsky (1980) emphasizes the discretionary role of street-level bureaucrats, the front-line personnel officials and data administrators directly responsible for translating IP ASN policy into day-to-day data-collection and verification practice, in shaping ultimate implementation outcomes.

2.3 The Merit System and Civil Servant Professionalism

The merit system constitutes the foundational principle of contemporary ASN management, holding that personnel decisions, recruitment, placement, promotion, and development, should be grounded in qualification, competence, and performance rather than non-merit consideration (World Bank, 2017). Becker's (1993) human-capital theory provides a complementary theoretical foundation, holding that investment in education, training, and skill development constitutes a form of capital generating long-term productivity return, a proposition directly relevant to understanding competency development as a core IP ASN dimension. Wiryanto (2018) frames IP ASN specifically as an instrument for operationalizing merit-system evaluation at the individual level, translating the abstract principle of merit into a composite, quantifiable score intended to guide personnel decision-making, a framing this study's findings both confirm, through the appropriateness criterion's strong performance, and complicate, through the responsiveness criterion's comparatively weaker performance regarding result utilization. Armstrong and Taylor (2020) similarly frame competency-based human-resource management as requiring systematic alignment among recruitment, performance appraisal, and development investment, an alignment IP ASN's four-dimension structure seeks to operationalize within Indonesia's public sector specifically, while Mangkunegara (2021) emphasizes that performance management in Indonesian organizational contexts depends substantially on the consistency and accuracy of the underlying personnel data feeding into appraisal instruments, a consideration directly relevant to this study's efficiency findings. Robbins and Judge (2019) further note that employee motivation and behavioral consistency, dimensions closely related to the discipline component of IP ASN, are shaped significantly by whether performance-measurement systems are perceived as fair, transparent, and consequential, a perception this study's responsiveness findings suggest remains incompletely established among West Kutai's rank-and-file civil servants. Spencer and Spencer's (1993) competency framework further clarifies that individual competence encompasses not only technical skill but underlying motive, trait, self-concept, and knowledge, dimensions PermenPANRB No. 38 of 2018 operationalizes through its four-dimension IP ASN structure. Within Indonesia's specific bureaucratic-reform context, Dwiyanto (2018) affirms that good governance requires a professional civil service capable of both regulatory compliance and public-value innovation, while KemenPANRB's Road Map for Bureaucratic Reform 2020-2024 positions civil-servant professionalism as a

central indicator of Thematic Bureaucratic Reform (KemenPANRB, 2023).

Within Indonesia's broader civil-service governance architecture, the National Civil Service Agency (BKN) plays a central coordinating role, maintaining the national SIASN database that underpins IP ASN calculation and periodically reporting on nationwide civil-service management performance across its regional coordinating offices (Badan Kepegawaian Negara, 2022). This national infrastructure means that regional IP ASN implementation quality, including the data-currency and system-integration challenges this study documents in West Kutai Regency, is not solely a matter of local administrative capacity but is also shaped by the reliability and accessibility of the national data infrastructure regional agencies must interface with, a dependency relevant to interpreting this study's efficiency findings as reflecting both local and national system-design factors jointly.

2.4 The Civil Servant Professionalism Index (IP ASN)

PermenPANRB No. 38 of 2018 establishes IP ASN as a composite measurement instrument assessing civil-servant professionalism across four weighted dimensions: qualification, reflecting educational attainment; competence, reflecting training and competency-development participation; performance, reflecting individual work-target achievement (Sasaran Kinerja Pegawai, SKP); and discipline, reflecting compliance with civil-service conduct regulation. IP ASN scores are calculated using civil-servant data drawn from the national Civil Service Information System (SIASN), administered by BKN (Badan Kepegawaian Negara, 2025), and are intended to function not merely as a compliance metric but as a decision-support instrument for talent management, career development, and bureaucratic-reform monitoring at both national and regional levels (Kementerian Pendayagunaan Aparatur Negara dan Reformasi Birokrasi Republik Indonesia, 2018).

2.5 Professionalism and Organizational Performance in Local Government

Beyond its function as a compliance metric, civil-servant professionalism carries direct organizational-performance implications for local government. Asmanurhidayani and Saggaf

(2024) find that public-servant professionalism, encompassing qualification, competence, work discipline, and performance orientation, correlates positively with organizational performance in local-government settings, suggesting that professionalism measurement instruments such as IP ASN hold value not only as an individual-level accountability mechanism but as a leading indicator of institutional capacity more broadly. This organizational-performance linkage reinforces the practical stakes of this study's evaluative focus: weaknesses identified in IP ASN implementation, such as the efficiency and responsiveness gaps this study documents, plausibly carry downstream consequences for West Kutai's broader governmental performance, not merely for individual civil servants' measured professionalism scores.

2.6 International and Public-Value Perspectives

Comparative international evidence offers additional context for interpreting this study's findings. OECD (2019) documents that public-employment management quality across member and partner countries depends substantially on data-system integration and the systematic use of performance information in personnel decision-making, both directly relevant to the efficiency and responsiveness gaps this study identifies in West Kutai's IP ASN implementation. Denhardt and Denhardt (2015), writing from a New Public Service perspective, further argue that public-sector performance instruments should be evaluated not only by their administrative efficiency but by the extent to which they serve democratic values of citizen and employee dignity, a normative consideration this study's equity and responsiveness findings implicitly engage, given civil servants' own status as both measurement subjects and public-service providers.

2.7 Prior Research

Table 1 summarizes prior studies relevant to this study's focus on ASN professionalism measurement and policy evaluation.

Table 1. Summary of Prior Studies on Civil Servant Professionalism and Policy Evaluation

Study	Focus	Key Finding
Rizqyanto, Santoso, & Retna (2022)	IP ASN policy implementation, Organizational Section, Semarang City Regional Secretariat	Many regional governments face difficulty compiling comprehensive, accurate civil-servant data, constrained by information-system, HR-capacity, and administrative-culture limitations
Prasetyo (2022)	Mainstreaming of functional positions within Indonesian bureaucracy	Professionalization commitment within Indonesian bureaucratic reform remains only partially realized, with functional-position mainstreaming reflecting broader merit-system implementation gaps
Zein & Septiani (2022)	Political patronage and bureaucratic professionalism in Indonesian local government	Regional ASN professionalism remains shaped by non-merit factors, including political patronage and recruitment patterns not fully grounded in competence
Sabuhari, Rahman, & Malik (2025)	Organizational justice, leadership, and innovative work behavior	Technological and organizational-culture factors shape the consistency and accuracy of personnel data and innovative behavior within public

Study	Focus	Key Finding
		organizations
Syahraini, Fadillah, & Hasanah (2025)	Civil servant professionalism and the merit system in the Indonesian public sector	Civil servant professionalism and merit-system strength jointly determine public-sector institutional performance

Source: Synthesized by the author from the reviewed literature.

These studies collectively affirm that ASN professionalism-measurement success depends on data-system integration, institutional capacity, and freedom from non-merit influence. This study extends that literature by evaluating IP ASN implementation specifically through Dunn's six-criterion framework within a single, geographically extensive frontier regency, providing a granular, criterion-level account not present in the reviewed comparator studies.

3. Research Methods

3.1 Research Approach

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative data from interviews, observation, and documentation with quantitative data from a Likert-scale questionnaire. Following Moleong's (2019) characterization of qualitative inquiry as oriented toward understanding phenomena holistically within their natural context, and Patton's (2014) emphasis on evaluation research as requiring methods matched to the specific decision-relevant questions a study seeks to answer, this mixed-methods design was selected as consistent with Dunn's (2018) six-criterion evaluative framework requiring both descriptive contextual understanding and systematic indicator-level measurement.

3.2 Research Site

This study was conducted within the Government of West Kutai Regency, East Kalimantan Province, with its principal locus at the Regional Civil Service and Human Resource Development Agency (BKPSDM), the agency responsible for coordinating IP ASN measurement, supplemented by data collection across sampled regional apparatus organizations (OPD), the Inspectorate, and Bappeda.

3.3 Respondents and Sampling

Key respondents were determined through purposive sampling, selecting parties possessing in-depth policy understanding based on two criteria: direct involvement in policy implementation, and possession of relevant knowledge regarding IP ASN. The study involved 32 respondents in total, comprising BKPSDM leadership and technical personnel officials, SIMPEG/SIASN/e-Kinerja system administrators, performance-appraisal officials, representatives from sampled regional apparatus organizations, the Inspectorate, Bappeda, and implementing, functional, and structural civil servants, selected to ensure the data obtained reflect both policymaker and policy-recipient perspectives across the organizational hierarchy.

3.4 Data Collection Technique

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, in which the researcher prepared a question guide while allowing respondents space to provide broad, in-depth answers consistent with their experience; direct observation of IP ASN measurement

implementation at BKPSDM, focused on the six Dunn evaluation indicators; documentation review, encompassing statutory regulation, performance reports, and personnel data; and a Likert-scale questionnaire, translating Dunn's six criteria into 24 items (four items per criterion) administered to all 32 respondents, with responses scored on a four-point scale and aggregated into indicator-level and overall percentage indices.

3.5 Trustworthiness of Data

Data trustworthiness was maintained through source and method triangulation, cross-checking interview and Likert-scale survey results against observational and documentary evidence, including BKPSDM performance reports and SIASN-derived personnel data. This triangulation was particularly important given that IP ASN measurement combines a quantitative national-data component with locally experienced implementation dynamics that quantitative scores alone cannot fully explain; qualitative interview data accordingly served to interpret and contextualize the specific factors underlying each Dunn criterion's numerical score, ensuring that the study's conclusions reflect both the measured outcome and the field-level mechanisms producing it.

3.6 Data Analysis Technique

Qualitative data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014), comprising data condensation, the active analytical process of selecting, coding, categorizing, and identifying key themes from interview, observation, and documentation data relevant to the four IP ASN dimensions and six Dunn evaluation criteria; data display, organizing condensed data into narrative and tabular form; and conclusion drawing and verification. Quantitative Likert-scale data were analyzed descriptively through indicator-level score aggregation, mean calculation, and percentage-index computation, subsequently interpreted against standard effectiveness categorization, with qualitative findings used to explain and contextualize the quantitative results.

4. Results

4.1 Institutional Context

West Kutai Regency, an autonomous region in East Kalimantan Province, administers civil-servant governance across 16 districts within a territory exceeding 20,000 square kilometers, a geographic extensiveness directly shaping BKPSDM's capacity for personnel data collection, verification, and mentoring reach. IP ASN measurement implementation is coordinated by BKPSDM in accordance with PermenPANRB No. 38 of 2018, drawing on data from the SIMPEG local personnel information system, the SIASN national system administered by BKN, and the e-Kinerja performance-management application.

4.2 Overall Evaluation Results

Table 2 presents the recapitulation of Likert-scale evaluation results across Dunn's six policy-evaluation criteria, based on 32 respondents and 24 total items.

Table 2. Recapitulation of IP ASN Policy Evaluation Results by Dunn Criterion (N = 32)

No.	Criterion	Items	Total Score	Max Score	Mean	% Index	Category
1	Effectiveness	4	461	620	3.72	74.35%	Effective
2	Efficiency	4	441	620	3.56	71.13%	Effective
3	Adequacy	4	457	620	3.69	73.71%	Effective
4	Equity	4	444	620	3.58	71.61%	Effective
5	Responsiveness	4	450	620	3.63	72.58%	Effective
6	Appropriateness	4	472	620	3.81	76.13%	Effective
	Total / Overall Mean	24	2,725	3,720	3.66	73.25%	Effective

Source: Field survey data, processed by the researcher (2026).

Table 2 shows that overall IP ASN measurement implementation achieved a total score of 2,725 out of a maximum 3,720, a mean of 3.66, and a percentage index of 73.25 percent, placing implementation in the effective category. Appropriateness recorded the highest score (3.81, 76.13 percent), while efficiency recorded the lowest (3.56, 71.13 percent), with adequacy (73.71 percent), effectiveness (74.35 percent), responsiveness (72.58 percent), and equity (71.61 percent) falling between these two extremes. This pattern indicates that all six criteria fall within the effective category, though a meaningful 4.5-percentage-point gap separates the strongest and weakest indicators, a gap this study's discussion below interprets substantively.

Respondents spanning BKPSDM leadership, technical personnel officials, SIMPEG/SIASN/e-Kinerja administrators, performance-appraisal officials, sampled regional apparatus organizations, the Inspectorate, Bappeda, and implementing, functional, and structural civil servants converged in assessing that IP ASN measurement has delivered genuine benefit in reflecting professionalism levels through the four core dimensions of qualification, competence, performance, and discipline, notwithstanding the specific implementation constraints documented below.

4.3 Effectiveness and Appropriateness: The Strongest Indicators

Appropriateness, the highest-scoring criterion, reflects strong respondent confidence that IP ASN's four-dimension structure, qualification, competence, performance, and discipline, appropriately captures the substantive meaning of civil-servant professionalism consistent with PermenPANRB No. 38 of 2018's underlying assumptions. Effectiveness, the second-highest criterion, reflects respondent assessment that the measurement process has substantially achieved its intended objective of generating a usable professionalism index, with qualitative interview data corroborating that BKPSDM has successfully operationalized the measurement cycle annually despite the resource constraints discussed below.

4.4 Efficiency: The Weakest Indicator

Efficiency, the lowest-scoring criterion, reflects respondent concern regarding the resource effort, time, and administrative burden required to achieve IP ASN's measurement outcomes.

Qualitative findings attribute this weaker efficiency performance to suboptimal integration between SIMPEG and SIASN, requiring substantial manual cross-checking and data reconciliation; incomplete civil-servant data updating, particularly regarding training history, competency certificates, and supporting documentation; and constrained budget for competency-development activity, limiting BKPSDM's capacity to close competency gaps identified through the measurement process itself.

This efficiency finding carries particular weight because it was independently corroborated across multiple respondent categories: BKPSDM technical administrators described the manual reconciliation burden directly, Inspectorate informants noted that supporting-document verification frequently requires follow-up requests to regional apparatus organizations that delay the overall measurement timeline, and Bappeda representatives observed that measurement-cycle completion has, in some years, extended beyond the internally targeted schedule as a direct consequence of these data-reconciliation delays. This convergence across independent respondent groups strengthens confidence that the efficiency gap reflects a genuine, systemic implementation constraint rather than an isolated perception specific to any single organizational unit.

4.5 Equity and Responsiveness: Uneven Reach and Utilization

Equity and responsiveness, the second- and third-lowest criteria respectively, reflect uneven understanding of IP ASN's purpose and benefit across civil servants and regional apparatus organizations. Qualitative interview data indicate that measurement understanding and engagement vary considerably between BKPSDM's technical personnel and civil servants in more geographically distant districts, a disparity consistent with West Kutai's extensive territorial spread documented in Section 1, and that responsiveness is further constrained by limited utilization of IP ASN results as an active input into talent-management and career-development decision-making, rather than a purely retrospective compliance exercise.

4.6 Qualitative Themes across Respondent Groups

Interview data reveal that assessment of IP ASN implementation varied systematically by respondent position within the organizational hierarchy. BKPSDM leadership and SIMPEG/SIASN/e-Kinerja administrators, positioned closest to the

measurement process itself, offered the most detailed and technically specific accounts of implementation obstacles, particularly regarding data-system integration and documentation completeness, consistent with their direct operational responsibility for these functions. Performance-appraisal officials and Inspectorate representatives, by contrast, emphasized accountability and verification concerns, noting that supporting-document completeness varies considerably across regional apparatus organizations and that Inspectorate oversight capacity is itself constrained by the same personnel limitations affecting BKPSDM. Implementing, functional, and structural civil servants, as the measurement's direct subjects, most frequently raised understanding and utilization concerns, several expressing uncertainty regarding how their individual IP ASN scores translate into concrete career or development consequences, a theme directly consistent with this study's quantitative responsiveness finding.

This hierarchy-dependent variation in emphasis suggests that IP ASN's implementation challenges are experienced differently depending on one's position in the measurement value chain: technical administrators experience it primarily as a data-integration and workload problem, oversight officials experience it primarily as a documentation and verification problem, and rank-and-file civil servants experience it primarily as a communication and meaning problem. This differentiated pattern reinforces the value of this study's mixed-methods design, since a purely quantitative Likert-scale analysis would have obscured these role-specific qualitative distinctions underlying the aggregate criterion-level scores reported in Table 2.

4.7 Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

Synthesizing the qualitative and quantitative findings above, Table 3 summarizes the principal factors identified as supporting IP ASN measurement implementation, while Table 4 summarizes the principal inhibiting factors.

Table 3. Factors Supporting IP ASN Measurement Implementation in West Kutai Regency

No.	Supporting Factor	Description
1	Clear regulatory foundation	PermenPANRB No. 38 of 2018 provides an unambiguous four-dimension measurement structure widely accepted as appropriate by respondents
2	Institutional commitment at BKPSDM	Leadership and technical staff have sustained annual measurement-cycle execution despite resource constraints
3	National system infrastructure (SIASN)	The BKN-administered national system provides a standardized data backbone for measurement calculation
4	Broad respondent acceptance	Respondents across organizational levels affirm that IP ASN meaningfully reflects professionalism across its four dimensions

Source: Field interviews and survey data, compiled by the researcher (2026).

Table 4. Factors Inhibiting IP ASN Measurement Implementation in West Kutai Regency

No.	Inhibiting Factor	Description
1	Suboptimal SIMPEG-SIASN integration	Manual cross-checking and reconciliation between local and national systems generate inefficiency
2	Incomplete civil-servant data updating	Training history, competency certificates, and supporting documents are not consistently current
3	Constrained competency-development budget	Limited funding restricts BKPSDM's capacity to address competency gaps the measurement identifies
4	Uneven understanding across civil servants and OPDs	Awareness of IP ASN's purpose and benefit varies considerably, particularly across West Kutai's 16 geographically dispersed districts
5	Underutilization of measurement results	IP ASN outcomes are not yet consistently integrated into talent-management and career-development decisions

Source: Field interviews and survey data, compiled by the researcher (2026).

5. Discussion

5.1 An Effective Policy with a Structurally Consistent Efficiency Gap

Read through Dunn's (2018) six-criterion framework, IP ASN measurement implementation in West Kutai Regency has substantially achieved its intended objectives, with an overall effective rating of 73.25 percent and all six criteria individually falling within the effective category. The consistent gap between appropriateness and efficiency, however, illustrates precisely why

Dunn's framework treats these criteria as analytically distinct: a measurement instrument can be substantively well-designed and broadly accepted as meaningful, appropriateness, while remaining resource-intensive to execute, efficiency, a pattern this study traces specifically to SIMPEG-SIASN integration weakness and incomplete data currency rather than to any deficiency in the underlying measurement framework itself.

5.2 Geographic Extensiveness as a Structural Constraint on Equity and Responsiveness

The comparatively weaker equity and responsiveness scores, read alongside West Kutai's documented geographic extensiveness spanning 16 districts across more than 20,000 square kilometers,

suggest that measurement understanding and result-utilization gaps are not evenly distributed across the regency but are plausibly concentrated among civil servants in more geographically distant districts with less frequent direct BKPSDM contact. This finding is consistent with Van Meter and Van Horn's (1975) proposition that implementing-agency characteristics and inter-organizational communication capacity shape implementation outcomes, and suggests that West Kutai's specific territorial challenge, rather than a generic implementation weakness, substantially explains the equity and responsiveness gap identified in this study's findings.

5.3 From Compliance Metric to Decision-Support Instrument

This study's finding that IP ASN results remain underutilized in talent-management and career-development decision-making echoes a broader tension in performance-measurement policy: an instrument can be procedurally well-executed, reflected in this study's effectiveness and appropriateness scores, while falling short of its more ambitious decision-support purpose. Read through Becker's (1993) human-capital and Spencer and Spencer's (1993) competency-framework perspectives, this gap suggests that West Kutai's IP ASN implementation has more fully realized its measurement function than its developmental function, an imbalance with direct implications for how BKPSDM should prioritize its remaining implementation effort.

5.4 Comparison with Prior Studies

These findings both corroborate and extend the prior literature summarized in Table 1. Consistent with Rizqyanto et al. (2022), this study confirms that data-system limitation and administrative-capacity constraint remain persistent obstacles to IP ASN implementation, evidenced here specifically through the SIMPEG-SIASN integration gap. Consistent with Sabuhari et al. (2025), this study confirms that organizational and technological factors jointly shape data consistency and accuracy. While this study did not directly examine political patronage as documented by Zein and Septiani (2022) or functional-position mainstreaming as documented by Prasetyo (2022), its finding of uneven understanding across geographically dispersed civil servants offers a complementary, geography-driven explanation for uneven merit-system realization at the regional level, extending this literature's predominantly institutional and political focus with a spatial dimension specific to Indonesia's geographically extensive frontier regencies.

5.5 Position-Dependent Experience as an Implementation Diagnostic

The qualitative finding that BKPSDM technical staff, oversight officials, and rank-and-file civil servants emphasize distinct dimensions of implementation difficulty, data integration, documentation verification, and outcome communication respectively, offers a diagnostic refinement to this study's aggregate Dunn-criterion scores. Read through Lipsky's (1980) street-level bureaucracy perspective, this pattern indicates that IP ASN's implementation reality is constructed differently at each organizational tier, with technical administrators functioning as the policy's most consequential street-level implementers, whose data-management workload directly shapes the efficiency score, while rank-and-file civil servants function as the policy's target population, whose understanding and perceived stake in the outcome directly shape the responsiveness score. This tiered reading suggests that interventions targeting a single organizational

level, for instance, additional technical training for BKPSDM administrators alone, would address only part of the implementation gap this study documents, and that genuine improvement requires coordinated intervention across all three tiers simultaneously.

5.6 Toward a Fuller Realization of the Merit System

Consistent with Winarno's (2018) broader observation that Indonesian public-policy evaluation research frequently reveals a gap between procedural policy compliance and substantive policy achievement, this study's pattern of consistently effective aggregate scores alongside criterion-specific implementation gaps exemplifies precisely this distinction. Synthesizing the discussion above, this study's findings suggest that West Kutai Regency's IP ASN implementation has substantially succeeded in establishing the measurement infrastructure and procedural legitimacy the merit system requires, evidenced by consistently effective scores across all six Dunn criteria, while the specific gaps identified in efficiency, equity, and responsiveness indicate that the policy has not yet fully matured into the comprehensive talent-management instrument its designers envisioned. This distinction between procedural success and substantive maturation carries practical significance: it suggests that West Kutai's near-term priority should not be redesigning the measurement framework itself, since its appropriateness is already well affirmed by respondents, but rather investing in the surrounding data-system, budgetary, and utilization infrastructure that determines whether measurement translates into genuine professionalization. This reading is consistent with the broader proposition that merit-system reform succeeds not at the moment a measurement instrument is introduced, but through the sustained institutional work of embedding that instrument into routine personnel decision-making over time.

6. Conclusion

6.1 Summary of Findings

This study evaluated the implementation of IP ASN measurement policy under PermenPANRB No. 38 of 2018 in the Government of West Kutai Regency using William Dunn's six policy-evaluation criteria. Overall implementation was categorized as effective, with a total score of 2,725 out of 3,720, a mean of 3.66, and a percentage index of 73.25 percent. Appropriateness scored highest (76.13 percent), reflecting strong confidence in IP ASN's four-dimension structure, while efficiency scored lowest (71.13 percent), reflecting resource-intensive execution driven by suboptimal SIMPEG-SIASN integration and incomplete data currency. Equity and responsiveness scored moderately, reflecting uneven understanding and result-utilization across West Kutai's 16 geographically dispersed districts. IP ASN measurement has successfully reflected civil-servant professionalism across qualification, competence, performance, and discipline, though implementation continues to require strengthening in data-system integration, documentation completeness, competency-development budget, and the practical utilization of measurement results in personnel decision-making.

6.2 Theoretical Implications

This study reinforces Dunn's (2018) proposition that policy effectiveness and efficiency constitute analytically distinct evaluative dimensions, demonstrating a case in which a policy achieves broad effectiveness and appropriateness while remaining comparatively resource-intensive to execute. The study further

extends Van Meter and Van Horn's (1975) implementation framework by illustrating how a region's specific geographic characteristics, extensive territory and dispersed administrative units, can shape equity and responsiveness outcomes in ways distinct from the communication and resource constraints typically emphasized in implementation literature focused on more geographically compact settings.

6.3 Practical Implications

For BKPSDM Kutai Barat, the findings support strengthening periodic civil-servant data updating and validation, particularly regarding educational qualification, training history, competency certificates, performance-target documents, and disciplinary records, to ensure IP ASN results accurately reflect factual conditions. For the West Kutai Regency Government, the findings support strengthening SIMPEG-SIASN-e-Kinerja system integration to accelerate data input, synchronization, validation, and reporting, reducing dependence on manual verification. For regional apparatus organizations, the findings support designating a dedicated personnel-data administrator familiar with IP ASN measurement technique in each unit, to improve documentation discipline and reporting uniformity. For civil servants themselves, the findings support greater proactive engagement with IP ASN as a substantive professional-development instrument, including active training participation, timely SKP completion, and organized retention of competency documentation, rather than treating measurement as a purely administrative obligation. For regional government and BKPSDM jointly, the findings support expanding competency-development budget and access, whether through structured training, technical guidance, seminars, certification, or online training, given competence's central role in the IP ASN structure. Finally, the findings support more concretely integrating IP ASN results into ASN management policy, specifically training-needs planning, career development, transfer, promotion, and talent management, so that measurement generates genuinely data-driven personnel decisions rather than a standalone numerical output.

6.4 A Phased Improvement Roadmap

Synthesizing the practical recommendations above, this study suggests that BKPSDM Kutai Barat would benefit from sequencing improvement effort rather than pursuing all recommended interventions simultaneously with necessarily limited resources. An initial phase might reasonably prioritize SIMPEG-SIASN integration and systematic data-currency updating, since these technical foundations directly address the efficiency gap this study identifies as the weakest criterion and would simultaneously ease the documentation burden underlying the equity concerns raised by Inspectorate and performance-appraisal informants. A subsequent phase could then focus on communication and utilization, specifically, ensuring that individual civil servants understand how their IP ASN scores connect to concrete career and development decisions, directly addressing the responsiveness gap this study's qualitative findings trace to rank-and-file uncertainty about outcome consequences. A final phase might address the budget-dependent competency-development recommendations, which, while important, depend on regional fiscal capacity considerations extending beyond BKPSDM's unilateral control. This phased approach is offered as a practical extension of this study's findings rather than a formally tested intervention sequence, consistent with the broader

recognition that institutional capacity-building of this kind unfolds incrementally rather than through a single comprehensive reform.

6.5 Limitations of the Study

This study is subject to several limitations. First, it is confined to a single regency, meaning its findings cannot be generalized to other regions' IP ASN implementation without further comparative research. Second, the 32-respondent sample, while spanning multiple organizational levels and units, remains modest relative to West Kutai's full civil-service population, warranting caution in generalizing the quantitative Likert-scale results beyond the sampled respondent groups. Third, the mixed-methods design privileges triangulated, criterion-level understanding over larger-scale statistical generalization, meaning the patterns identified should be read as context-grounded findings specific to West Kutai's institutional and geographic conditions.

6.6 Recommendations for Future Research

Future research could extend this study through inter-OPD comparative analysis of IP ASN scores, to determine whether the equity and responsiveness gaps identified here vary systematically by district distance from BKPSDM's central office. Future studies might also examine the relationship between IP ASN scores and public-service performance outcomes directly, or investigate the specific organizational and individual factors shaping competency development, merit-system strengthening, and civil-servant professionalism improvement over a longer observation period.

Taken as a whole, the West Kutai Regency case suggests that a nationally standardized professionalism-measurement policy can achieve genuine substantive effectiveness at the regional level while still facing region-specific efficiency and equity constraints rooted in geographic extensiveness and data-system integration, underscoring that translating a well-designed national instrument into fully realized regional impact requires sustained local investment in system integration, documentation discipline, and the practical utilization of measurement results.

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