

Strategies to Improve the Performance of District Employees in Achieving Good Governance

Dian Wahyu Danial^{1*}, Jaka Permana,¹ Rapiudin¹

¹Department of Public Administration, Banten Raya College of Social and Political Sciences (STISIP), Indonesia

*Correspondence Email: diandaniel.akademik@gmail.com

Abstract

Employee performance at the sub-district level serves as the spearhead of public service and determines the successful implementation of good governance. This study aims to analyze strategies for improving employee performance at the Cikeusik Sub-district Office, Pandeglang Regency, and to identify obstacles to achieving good governance. A descriptive qualitative research method was employed. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with key informants including the Sub-district Head, Sub-district Secretary, Section Heads, and operational staff and supplemented by direct observation and document analysis. Data analysis utilized the interactive model developed by Miles and Huberman, comprising data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The results indicate that performance improvement strategies were implemented through close supervision of employee discipline, monthly performance evaluations, the restructuring of job assignments (job placement), peer-to-peer technical guidance, and the digitalization of population administration services. However, the implementation of these strategies remains hindered by structural factors, such as limitations in the quantity and quality of human resources, low digital literacy among senior staff, constrained operational budgets, and unstable internet network infrastructure in outlying areas. Therefore, support from the regency government is required specifically increasing the quota of competent personnel and upgrading information technology equipment—to uphold the principles of accountability, transparency, and service responsiveness in Cikeusik Sub-district.

Keywords: *Strategy, Employee Performance, Good Governance.*

Introduction

Good governance has become a primary demand in the current era of modern bureaucratic reform. Governments are expected not merely to perform administrative functions but also to establish governance that is clean, transparent, accountable, and responsive to the public's needs (Sudrajat, 2009). Realizing these principles is no easy task, as it requires a comprehensive transformation at the bureaucratic level. Consequently, strengthening public institutions is a crucial agenda to ensure that every policy and service provided is morally and legally accountable to the public (Indriastuti, 2020).

A key determinant in the successful implementation of good governance in the public sector is the quality of human resources specifically, the civil service personnel. Government employees are the driving force behind organizational operations, directly involved in the on-the-ground implementation of policies and services (Sumantri, 2022). No matter how well-designed the systems or infrastructure may be, success ultimately hinges on the competence, integrity, and commitment of the employees. Thus, the management and capacity building of employees constitute a vital investment that no government agency can afford to overlook (Supratman, 2018).

Optimal employee performance reflects a public organization's effectiveness in achieving its vision and mission. In the government sector, performance is measured not merely by budget absorption or the volume of documents completed, but by the extent to which work outputs positively impact public service delivery (Nugraha, 2020). Poor performance by civil servants inevitably undermines the essence of social justice and erodes public trust in the government's legitimacy. Conversely, high performance accelerates the achievement of inclusive national development targets (Safitri & Nasution, 2021).

Although the importance of employee performance is widely recognized, the reality on the ground often reveals a significant gap. Many government agencies remain trapped in outdated bureaucratic work patterns characterized by rigidity, monotony, and a lack of innovation (Basri & Arsal, 2022). Issues such as poor work discipline, personnel placement mismatches, and low work motivation continue to be recurring points of concern. The gap between regulations demanding professionalism and the reality of employee competencies highlights the need to formulate concrete and applicable strategies for performance improvement (Mocodompis, 2015).

Within Indonesia's local government structure, the kecamatan (district) plays a highly strategic role as the frontline of public service delivery. It serves as a bridge connecting central and local government policies directly to the community at the grassroots level (Aprianty, 2016). Given its crucial function in bringing services closer to the public, bureaucratic performance at the district level serves as a direct indicator for citizens in assessing the overall success of local government performance. If services at the district level are paralyzed or suboptimal, the government's public image suffers an immediate decline (Sujani, 2019).

This study focuses on the Cikeusik District Office in Pandeglang Regency, which—based on preliminary observations—faces serious challenges regarding employee performance. Field findings indicate obstacles related to both the quantity and quality of personnel, exacerbated by staff placements that are not fully based on job analysis. Furthermore, fluctuating levels of work discipline and uneven utilization of information technology within administrative systems hinder daily operational efficiency. Consequently, the fulfillment of minimum service standards for the people of Cikeusik has not yet been fully optimal, accountable, or responsive.

Given the complexity of these performance issues at the district level, they can no longer be addressed through conventional approaches or mere routine operations. A performance improvement strategy is required one that is comprehensive, measurable, and adaptive to the region's specific characteristics and existing resource limitations.

Such a strategy must address aspects ranging from fostering discipline and enhancing competence through training to managing workloads and providing adequate supporting facilities. Through a targeted strategy, the potential of each employee can be optimized to boost the productivity of the public organization.

Research regarding employee performance and good governance has certainly been conducted extensively by previous researchers. However, the majority of prior studies have tended to focus on central government agencies, sectoral departments, or urban areas characterized by comprehensive supporting facilities and high accessibility. In-depth qualitative studies capturing the dynamics of bureaucratic performance strategies in secondary or peripheral districts characterized by various geographical and infrastructural limitations remain scarce. This research addresses that gap by offering a qualitative perspective on performance strategies contextualized to suburban or rural districts.

Against this backdrop, the study aims to conduct an in-depth analysis of strategies to enhance employee performance at the Cikeusik District Office, Pandeglang Regency, in the pursuit of good governance. From a practical standpoint, the findings are expected to provide valuable insights, policy recommendations, and a basis for evaluation for the Cikeusik District Head and the Pandeglang Regency Government as they seek to improve grassroots-level bureaucratic management. From an academic perspective, this descriptive qualitative study aims to enrich the body of knowledge in public administration, particularly regarding public sector performance management in developing area.

Method

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of employee performance improvement strategies at the Cikeusik District Office, Pandeglang Regency. The qualitative method was selected as it allows for the exploration of social realities and bureaucratic dynamics in the field without manipulating actual conditions (Sugiyono, 2018). Research data were categorized into two types: primary data, obtained directly from key informants through in-depth interviews and passive participatory observation; and secondary data, collected through a review of documents such as the district's Government Agency Performance Accountability Report (LAKIP), employee attendance records, and local regulations regarding public service standards (Muhadjir, 1996).

To ensure the authenticity and validity of the data, the researcher applied triangulation techniques, encompassing source triangulation (comparing interview results across informants) and technique triangulation (cross-referencing interview findings with field observations and official documents). Once the data were validated, the analysis was conducted using the interactive model proposed by Miles et al. (1996), which involves three main stages occurring simultaneously. The first stage is data reduction, wherein the researcher filters, summarizes, and focuses field data on aspects related to performance problem-solving and good governance. The second stage is data display, presented through narrative text, matrices, or flowcharts illustrating variable relationships to enhance clarity. The final stage is conclusion drawing and verification, in

which the researcher formulates final propositions that address the research problem regarding the effectiveness of the performance strategies implemented at the study site.

Result and Discussion

Analysis of Employee Performance at the Cikeusik District Office

Employee performance at the district level plays a crucial role in the local government bureaucracy, as it directly addresses the dynamic needs of the community. Field research at the Cikeusik District Office, Pandeglang Regency, reveals that the general state of staff performance is fluctuating and fraught with sectoral challenges. Administratively, employees have endeavored to carry out their core duties and functions in accordance with the specific responsibilities attached to their respective positions. However, when their work effectiveness is measured against indicators of good governance, a significant gap remains between ideal regulations and the service reality experienced by the public.

Information gathered from in-depth interviews with key informants indicates that a fundamental root cause of issues in Cikeusik District is the limited quantity of human resources. The current staffing level is considered highly disproportionate given the district's vast geographical area and the number of villages under its jurisdiction. This staffing shortage compels some employees to hold concurrent positions or manage multiple administrative tasks simultaneously – tasks that often fall outside their primary areas of expertise. Consequently, the staff's focus becomes fragmented, and targets for completing work programs frequently face delays beyond established schedules.

Beyond the issue of quantity, the dimension of employee quality – or competence – is also a focal point of this qualitative performance evaluation. The majority of employees at the Cikeusik District Office possess educational backgrounds that lack alignment with public administration or governance, compounded by limited proficiency in modern information technology. In the current era of bureaucratic digitalization, the staff's inability to skillfully operate public service software presents a major obstacle. This digital competence gap creates daily operational hurdles, particularly when the district is required to integrate its reporting systems with sector-specific applications developed by the Pandeglang Regency Government. A direct consequence of this disparity in the quantity and quality of human resources is an accumulation of workload on the few employees perceived to possess superior capabilities. This concentration of tasks among specific individuals disrupts the internal work climate of the Cikeusik District Office. Staff members burdened with excessive workloads are prone to burnout and a decline in work accuracy, while those lacking competence become less productive. A division of labor that is disproportionate and not fully grounded in job analysis ultimately undermines the organization's overall cohesion in achieving its performance targets.

Regarding public service responsiveness, these limitations in staff capability directly impact the speed at which important community-related documents are processed. Procedures ranging from civil registration and land certification to the issuance of permit recommendations often take longer than the timeframes stipulated in Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). Service user the public complain of bureaucratic

processes that remain convoluted and a lack of agility in responding to grievances. Such delays indicate that the principles of speed and timeliness—cornerstones of excellent service—have not yet been fully internalized by the entire workforce at the Cikeusik District Office.

Furthermore, observations regarding work discipline reveal a paradox between administratively recorded physical presence and actual productivity in the field. Daily attendance records indeed show relatively high attendance rates and adherence to office start times; however, effective working hours are often not optimally utilized to fulfill service obligations. Instances still occur where employees leave their desks during duty hours without a clear official reason, or delay front-desk services due to internal matters that lack urgency from the public's perspective.

Work motivation is also identified as a factor influencing fluctuations in employee performance at the research site. A lack of recognition or rewards for high-performing employees, combined with inconsistent enforcement of sanctions for negligence, causes staff motivation to stagnate within the comfort zone of routine. Without competitive incentives or a clear system of organizational fairness, employees lack the drive to innovate or elevate their work quality beyond the status quo, resulting in performance that merely meets the minimum requirements for task completion.

The physical work environment at the Cikeusik District Office also impacts staff comfort and productivity. Poorly ergonomic workspace layouts, limited adequate archive space, and uncomfortable room temperatures at certain times hinder employees' concentration when performing administrative tasks that require high precision. This disorganized work environment also projects a lack of professionalism to visiting members of the public, thereby psychologically diminishing the comfort of service interactions between staff and citizens.

When these qualitative findings are viewed through the lens of good governance principles, it is evident that the dimensions of accountability and transparency at the Cikeusik District Office require significant improvement. The mechanisms for reporting performance accountability appear to be limited to fulfilling formal reporting obligations to higher-level authorities, failing to address the substance of continuous service quality improvement. Information regarding procedures, estimated processing times, and the certainty of case resolution at public service counters has not been clearly communicated, leaving room for uncertainty among the public seeking services.

Theoretically, the performance profile of Cikeusik District Office staff outlined above underscores that improving public sector performance in developing areas cannot be achieved by relying solely on the individual awareness of employees. A systemic intervention is required to transform the conventional work culture into one oriented toward high performance. If these structural weaknesses in personnel management persist without a comprehensive improvement strategy, the goal of establishing good governance at the grassroots level in Pandeglang Regency will be difficult to realize in practice.

Strategies for Enhancing Employee Performance to Realize Good Governance

Given the complex structural and cultural obstacles facing the Cikeusik District Office, management—under the leadership of the District Head—has formulated and implemented several systematic strategies to improve performance. These strategies aim not merely to boost the daily productivity of the staff but are qualitatively designed to align with the pillars of good governance. Through an interactive field-based approach, these strategies have been crystallized into concrete work programs addressing aspects such as discipline, human resource capacity building, information technology utilization, and the strengthening of internal oversight functions within the district.

The first strategy, serving as the foundation for transforming bureaucratic behavior at the Cikeusik District Office, involves enforcing employee discipline through periodic, direct supervisory oversight. Agency leadership has reinstated mandatory morning and afternoon roll calls; these serve as a means to verify physical attendance while directly instilling values of integrity and service commitment. Additionally, the attendance tracking system has been overhauled, with records now undergoing rigorous monthly evaluation by the District Secretary. This consistent disciplinary strategy is gradually breaking the cycle of poor habits among employees who previously frequently left the office during working hours without a clear official assignment.

The second strategic step involves conducting monthly performance evaluations that engage all section heads and operational staff. This internal coordination forum serves as a platform to analyze technical obstacles faced by individual work units—such as the Public Services Section, the Governance Section, and the Community Empowerment Section. During these evaluation meetings, the team collectively identifies short-term solutions for any obstacles causing service delays, thereby enabling the rapid clearing of administrative backlogs. The existence of this periodic forum fosters a sense of shared responsibility and drives improvements in the organization's internal performance accountability. The third strategy focuses on reorganizing task allocation (job placement) to align with each employee's core competencies and areas of expertise. Recognizing workload imbalances, the Head of Cikeusik District adjusted job descriptions to be more flexible while remaining within applicable regulatory frameworks. Younger employees with greater technical agility were positioned as driving forces at the service front office, while senior employees were directed to strengthen facilitation and sectoral coordination functions. This reorganization aims to reduce administrative errors caused by mismatches between employee competencies and assigned job responsibilities.

The fourth strategy—equally crucial—involves accelerating staff competency development by proposing structured technical education and training programs. Given the district's limited independent budget, the Cikeusik District Office proactively maintains close communication with the Pandeglang Regency Personnel and Human Resources Development Agency (BKPSDM) to secure priority training quotas for its staff. Training proposals focus on public service management, agency financial reporting, and village government administration procedures, thereby supporting the supervisory and guidance functions inherent to the district office.

In addition to relying on external training provided by the regency government, a fifth strategy is implemented through internal peer-to-peer technical guidance. This research is considered highly effective and cost-efficient for overcoming training budget constraints, as it leverages the expertise of proficient employees to mentor their colleagues. Staff members with superior knowledge of office software and online reporting systems regularly dedicate time to guide senior staff or others who struggle with technology. This persuasive, collegial approach helps lower employee resistance to changes in traditional work systems.

The sixth strategy focuses on leveraging information technology to digitize public administrative services in Cikeusik District. A phased transition from manual to digital systems is being implemented, particularly at service counters handling civil registration documents such as resident identity cards and family cards which are integrated with the regency's Population and Civil Registration Agency. This digitization is designed to reduce waiting times for the public, minimize the risk of illicit levies, and provide legal certainty regarding document processing times. This strategy serves as a vital instrument for upholding the principles of transparency and responsiveness in grassroots bureaucratic services.

As a seventh strategy, the district management initiated the creation of visual aids illustrating public service workflows, which are prominently displayed in the office's main waiting area. These physical information materials comprising banners and infographics – outline the required documents residents must bring, estimate processing times, and clearly state that all services at the Cikeusik District Office are free of charge. This tactical move promotes public information transparency, empowering citizens to critically evaluate and monitor the performance of counter staff, thereby reducing opportunities for maladministration.

The eighth strategy involves upgrading the physical comfort of the service area to project a professional image to visiting members of the public. The waiting area has been reorganized to include adequate seating and ensure cleanliness, alongside the installation of proper suggestion and complaint boxes. These spatial improvements aim not only to satisfy the public as service users but also to create a more conducive and ergonomic work environment for employees, enabling them to maintain focus for longer periods.

The ninth strategy addresses the organization's psychological dimension by enhancing non-financial motivation systems through schemes involving verbal recognition and moral sanctions administered within formal forums. Given the absence of a specific budget for material bonuses, the Cikeusik District Head employs a strategy of publicly commending – during morning assemblies employees or work units that achieve the fastest service targets and remain free of public complaints. Conversely, employees found committing minor disciplinary infractions first receive a private verbal reprimand, followed by a written warning if there is no behavioral improvement; this approach fosters a sense of fairness and a healthy competitive atmosphere within the workplace.

Finally, the tenth strategy is realized by strengthening cross-sectoral coordination among the district administration, village heads in the Cikeusik area, and the District Leadership Coordination Forum (Forkopimcam). This harmonious and intensive

communication facilitates data synchronization and the streamlined, rapid dissemination of policies from the regency level down to the village level. This partnership strategy ensures that district employees do not work in isolation but instead function as part of a public service network that is responsive, adaptive, and capable of comprehensively addressing the real needs of the Cikeusik community, thereby upholding the principles of good governance.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis and discussion presented, it can be concluded that the strategy to enhance employee performance at the Cikeusik District Office, Pandeglang Regency – aimed at achieving good governance – has involved several tactical steps but still requires continuous optimization. Concrete efforts undertaken include enforcing work discipline through direct supervision, conducting accountable monthly evaluation meetings, reorganizing task distribution based on core competencies, and accelerating digital literacy through peer-to-peer technical guidance programs. Although these strategies have successfully improved physical employee attendance and clarified service workflow transparency in public-facing areas, their overall effectiveness remains hindered by complex structural factors. Limitations regarding the quantity and quality of human resources, low information technology proficiency among senior staff, constrained operational budgets, and unstable internet network infrastructure in this outlying area constitute the primary challenges limiting public service responsiveness in Cikeusik District. Therefore, long-term success in realizing good governance principles in this location hinges heavily on the Pandeglang Regency Government's commitment to increasing the number of competent personnel, upgrading information technology equipment, and providing more adequate work facilities for the district-level bureaucracy.

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