

Analyzing the Factors Influencing the Implementation of Talent Management at *BKPP* of Semarang City

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ABSTRAK

Adanya kesenjangan antara talenta yang dimiliki dengan penempatan *ASN* dalam Badan Kepegawaian Pendidikan dan Pelatihan (*BKPP*) Kota Semarang menjadi kendala utama yang dihadapi. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui bagaimana implementasi manajemen talenta pada Badan Kepegawaian Pendidikan dan Pelatihan (*BKPP*) Kota Semarang, mengidentifikasi hambatan-hambatan yang dihadapi, serta menggambarkan upaya-upaya yang dilakukan dalam mengatasi hambatan tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif dengan pendekatan induktif. Adapun pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui observasi wawancara dan dokumentasi. Data yang telah terkumpul diolah dalam empat tahap, yakni pengumpulan data, reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa implementasi manajemen talenta belum optimal karena keterlambatan pelaksanaan, kurangnya infrastruktur pendukung, dan kurangnya komitmen pimpinan. Namun demikian, *BKPP* Kota Semarang telah melakukan berbagai upaya seperti penyempurnaan sistem penilaian dan terus berkomunikasi dan menyelenggarakan sosialisasi kepada pimpinan dan kepala organisasi perangkat daerah (*OPD*). Kesimpulan penelitian ini yaitu bahwa Implementasi manajemen talenta di *BKPP* Kota Semarang memiliki potensi untuk meningkatkan profesionalisme *ASN* dan mendukung sistem merit yang lebih transparan. Keberhasilan pelaksanaan kebijakan ini memerlukan dukungan infrastruktur yang memadai, peningkatan kapasitas sumber daya manusia, serta komitmen kuat dari seluruh pemangku kepentingan.

Kata kunci: Manajemen Talenta; Aparatur Sipil Negara (*ASN*); Implementasi Kebijakan; Sistem Merit.

ABSTRACT

This study examines the implementation of talent management at the Semarang City Personnel Education and Training Agency (BKPP), focusing on the gap between the talent pool and the placement of civil servants (ASN). Using a descriptive qualitative approach, data were collected through observations, interviews, and documentation and analyzed through data reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing. The findings show that talent management has not been fully optimized due to implementation delays, limited supporting infrastructure, and insufficient leadership commitment. Nevertheless, BKPP has undertaken efforts such as improving assessment systems and increasing communication and outreach to organizational leaders. Overall, the implementation of talent management has the potential to enhance ASN professionalism and promote a transparent merit system, but requires strengthened infrastructure, improved human resource capacity, and sustained commitment from all stakeholders.

Keywords: Talent Management; Civil Servants; Policy Implementation; Merit

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Introduction

The National Civil Service Agency (*BKN*) is a non-ministerial government institution that formulates technical policies and oversee the management of State Civil Apparatus (*ASN*), including merit system (*Peraturan Presiden Republik Indonesia Nomor 94 Tahun 2024*). Regional Civil Service, Education, and Training Agencies (*BKPP*) are formed at the local government level to carry out similar tasks as *BKN* at the regional level to ensure the delivery of quality public services.

The professionalism of State Civil Apparatus (*ASN*) is measured in *ASN* Professionalism Index (IP *ASN*) survey. IP *ASN* index consists of four main dimensions with different weightings. The discipline dimension (5%) evaluates the disciplinary sanctions received by civil servants. The qualification dimension (25%) assesses formal educational attainment. The competency dimension (40%) measures the history of competency development activities attended by civil servants and their relevance to job duties and positions. Lastly, the performance dimension is weighted at (30%) evaluates performance based on individual and organizational work plans, considering achievement targets, results, benefits, and overall employee behavior. Data from the IP-*ASN* survey conducted by *BKN* in 2022 showed a slight improvement from 44.60 in 2021 to 59.52 (poor) (Badan Kepegawaian Negara, 2023). The score shows that *ASN* professionalism requires improvement.

The sub-optimal implementation of talent management can be one the factors that affects the suboptimal achievement. Talent management supports transparent and objective employee selection and placement based on meritocracy (Collings & Mellahi, 2009). Optimal management of employee potential can significantly enhance organizational performance and employee engagement (Sinisterra et al., 2024). Organizations are also expected to provide certainty for employees' career growth (Wolor et al., 2020). Inclusive talent management allows fair and equal development opportunity for all employees rather than focusing only on top talent (Kaliannan et al., 2023).

Although Semarang City issued Peraturan Wali Kota Semarang Nomor 1 Tahun 2022 on Talent Management, its implementation only began in June 2024 following extensive preparation and system adjustments. Data from *BKPP* Semarang show that several employees remain assigned to positions misaligned with their educational backgrounds and competencies, such as a finance sub-section head holding a degree in English Language and Literature (see Table 1).

Table 1. Structural composition of officials and educational background at the Semarang City BKPP

Source: BKPP Kota Semarang, 2025

Ambarawati & Wijoyo (2023) emphasize that effective talent management requires regulatory readiness, institutional commitment and leadership support at the regional level. Dhita & Amalia (2023) also highlight that talent mobility can accelerate *ASN* career development when supported by cross-agency coordination and transparent evaluation mechanisms. Sidabutar (2024) also points out that challenges in sustainable talent management system often stem from weak data integration and the absence of a structured national succession planning framework. *Peraturan Menteri PAN-RB Nomor 3 Tahun 2020* affirms that talent management is integral to *ASN* career development. The Central Java Provincial Government has implemented talent management since 2016 and was rated "excellent" by *KASN* since 2021 (*KASN Republik Indonesia*, 2024). However, this implementation has not been fully adopted across all regencies, including Semarang City.

Position	Education	Group
Head of Agency	Master of Science in HR Management	IV/b
Secretary	Master of Management	IV/b
Head of Employee Development Division	Master of Management	IV/a
Head of Welfare and Discipline Division	Bachelor of Law	IV/a
Head of Education and Training Division	Bachelor of Communication Science	III/d
Head of Finance and State-Owned Assets Subdivision	Bachelor of English Language and Literature	III/c
Head of PGA Subdivision	Bachelor of Law	III/d

As shown in Table 2, many high-ranking leadership positions in Semarang City are still vacant due to retirement and are currently held by acting officials (Plt) who are not allowed to make strategic decisions (*Undang-Undang Nomor 30 Tahun 2014, Undang-Undang Nomor 6 Tahun 2023*). Most of the acting officials are appointed from among other agency heads, where they handle multiple positions simultaneously. Therefore, robust talent pool and succession planning mechanism should be applied to guarantee continuity and sustainability of public service (Oliveira et al., 2024).

Table 2. Vacant Senior Leadership Positions in Semarang City

No	Name Positions
1.	Inspector of Semarang City
2.	Expert Staff to the Mayor for Government, Law, and Politics at the Semarang City Secretariat
3.	Expert Staff to the Mayor for Community Affairs and Human Resources
4.	Head of the Semarang City Transportation Agency
5.	Head of the Semarang City Trade Agency
6.	Head of the Semarang City Cooperative and Microenterprise Agency
7.	Head of the Semarang City Agriculture Agency
8.	Head of the Semarang City Fire and Rescue Agency
9.	Head of the Semarang City Civil Service Police Unit
10.	Head of the Semarang City National Unity and Political Agency
11.	Head of the Semarang City Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Agency
12.	Head of the Semarang City Research and Innovation Agency
13.	Head of the Semarang City Environmental Agency

Source: BKPP Kota Semarang, 2025

Effective talent management allows organizations to identify and optimally utilize *ASN* potential. Several tools, including the nine-talent box, can facilitate accurate and strategic job placement through talent management (Dwiputrianti et al., 2023). Talent management establishes high-performing bureaucracy through fair and transparent selection process and providing growth opportunities for *ASNs* with the best potential. Driatama (2024) shows that collaborative governance in Yogyakarta's stunting eradication program became effective due to talent mapping and inter-agency synergy.

On the other hand, Shodikin et al. (2024) emphasize that leadership style and village officials' competence significantly affect performance, thereby the linearity between employees' competence and their roles is important. As Maley et al. (2024) points out, performance management systems must be agile and aligned with rapidly changing organizational contexts, which further underlines the importance of data-driven talent management and continuous skill development. Johannes (2024) also underscores the importance of digital transformation in supporting Smart *ASN*. Therefore, while various previous studies have highlighted the importance of talent management in the context of job selection, cross-sectoral collaboration, and digital

transformation, none have specifically examined the comprehensive implementation of talent management within local government, particularly at *BKPP*.

This research addresses this gap by focusing on how talent management is practically implemented and its impact on career development and strategic *ASN* position occupation. The results of this research add up to the literature and provide new insights to strengthening local bureaucratic capacity through a talent management approach. This research also comprehensively describes and analyzes the implementation of talent management at the Semarang City *BKPP*.

Research Methods

This descriptive qualitative research was performed using an inductive method to comprehensively describe the implementation of talent management at the Semarang City Civil Service, Education, and Training Agency (*BKPP*). The approach generates an in-depth understanding of the actual conditions on the ground, including the challenges faced and the efforts undertaken to overcome them. The research was performed through several steps: data collection through interviews, observations, and focus group discussions (FGDs). Primary data were obtained from key informants such as the head of the agency, secretary, heads of divisions, *BKPP* staff, and *ASN* who had participated in assessment tests. Additionally, secondary data were collected from relevant sources, including official agency documents, journal articles, books, and relevant government websites.

This study involved ten informants selected for their direct relevance to the implementation of talent management in the Semarang City *BKPP*. They consisted of the Head and Secretary of *BKPP*, three Division Heads (Employee Development; Employee Welfare and Discipline; Education and Training), two administrative staff, and three *ASN* who had undergone talent management assessments. This selection ensured representation from policymakers, implementers, and assessed employees.

The researcher acted as the main instrument who conducted and analyzed all research data. Supporting instruments included interview and observation guides, field notes, and electronic devices (voice recorder and laptop) for documentation.

Open interviews, direct observation of activities at the *BKPP*, and documentation of relevant archives or written records were performed to collect research data. The data were then analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model through four stages: data collection, data reduction,

data display, and conclusion drawing. The research was conducted from January 6 to January 25, 2025 at Semarang City *BKPP*.

Results and Discussion

This section describes the implementation of Talent Management at *BKPP* of Semarang City, including the challenges and strategies taken by the organization. Mazmanian and Sabatier's policy implementation theory was applied as the reference. According to Mazmanian & Sabatier (1983), the success of policy implementation is determined by three major variables:

1. The tractability of the problem (problem characteristics), how clearly the problem is defined and how controllable it is.
2. The ability of the statute (policy characteristics), how clear, consistent, and well-structured the policy content and instruments are.
3. Non-statutory variables (environ-mental conditions), which include political support, institutional culture, and external socio-economic factors.

This framework is widely used in analyzing bureaucratic reform and public sector human resource management (Dwiputrianti et al., 2023; Pramono, 2020). In this study, the framework is used to analyze how internal (policy design, resources, organizational structure) and external (political and social environment) factors that influence the effectiveness of talent management implementation at *BKPP* Semarang City.

Talent management refers to a systematic process of identifying, developing, and utilizing employees with high potential to occupy strategic that includes three main components:

- Talent acquisition (identifying and assessing potential employees),
- Talent development (providing opportunities for training, mentoring, and career growth), and
- Talent retention (creating an environment that supports motivation and long-term engagement)

In the bureaucratic context, effective talent management is closely linked to the merit system, where recruitment, rotation, and promotion are based on competence and performance, instead of seniority or personal connections (Badan Kepegawaian Negara, 2023). Mazmanian and Sabatier's framework measures institutional capacity, policy clarity, and the surrounding environment in relation to the merit-based talent management implementation.

1. Talent Management Implementation

Mazmanian and Sabatier's theory in Pramono (2020) proposes three variables influencing implementation performance: Problem Characteristics, Policy Characteristics, and Environmental Conditions.

A. Problem Characteristics

Problem characteristic dimension concerns how manageable the issue is, particularly regarding the diversity of civil servant talents and the behavioral changes expected after the policy's implementation based on two main indicators: the diversity of *ASN* talent and the expected behavioral changes after policy execution. As shown from the data, the talent of *ASN* varies, while the talent mapping is still limited. Only about 22% of *ASN* have voluntarily participated in the assessments. Data from *BKPP* indicates that most participants belong to groups III and IV, with very low involvement from other groups. This low participation is attributed to a lack of understanding among employees regarding the importance of talent management, minimal policy socialization, and limited supporting facilities such as assessment rooms and digital devices. At Semarang City *BKPP*, 1,481 Civil Servants have participated in talent mapping tests since the Mayoral Regulation on talent management was enacted in 2022 (see Table 3).

Table 3. Number of Employees by Group Who Have Participated in Talent Mapping Tests

NO	GROUP	NUMBER
1.	II/c	10
2.	II/d	1
3.	III/a	68
4.	III/b	209
5.	III/c	374
6.	III/d	569
7.	IV/a	191
8.	IV/b	51
9.	IV/c	7
10.	IX	1
TOTAL		1.481

Source: BKPP Kota Semarang, 2025

This condition reflects what Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983) describe as a “problem tractability” issue where the complexity and diversity of target groups reduce controllability, thus

weakening implementation outcomes. In this research, the main problem lies in the readiness and awareness of civil servants as policy targets. According to Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation theory (2003), the low level of participation indicates that the reform has not yet reached the "early majority" stage of adoption. Hence, stronger communication and voluntary engagement should be enhanced.

ASN who have taken the tests show increased self-confidence and a willingness to learn, and they shared positive experiences with colleagues. This behavioral shift aligns with Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1986), which emphasizes the role of self-efficacy in driving behavioral transformation. Although quantitative participation remains low, the qualitative behavioral outcome suggests that the reform is beginning to internalize among key actors. *BKPP*'s performance achievements also show an upward trend, such as the civil service satisfaction index surging to an "excellent" category, and the merit system score. However, challenges persist, particularly the uneven understanding among *ASN* regarding the linkage between the merit system, talent mapping, and transfer or promotion policies. The Head of *BKPP* highlighted the need for stronger support in implementing the program, especially in using the succession pool (talent pool) as the basis for rotation and promotion decisions. Overall, behavioral changes among *ASN* in Semarang City are emerging, but further reinforcement through intensive communication and policy support remains necessary.

B. Policy Characteristics

The policy characteristics dimension is the policy's ability to structure the implementation process, consisting of various indicators: clarity of Talent Management regulations, appropriate allocation of financial resources for talent management, and the relevance and support of implementing institutions. The indicator of Regulatory Clarity is stipulated in Semarang Mayor Regulation Number 1 Year 2022, which systematically regulates the implementation of talent management. Although specific standard operating procedures are not yet available, a dedicated team handles talent management at *BKPP*. MATA SI INTEL program promotion also strengthens the implementation of this policy.

Seen from Mazmanian and Sabatier's second variable, a clear legal basis reflects a "structural control mechanism" that ensures policy consistency. However, the absence of SOPs indicates limited operational clarity. Similar to Lipsky's (1980) concept of "street-level bureaucracy," the success relies heavily on the discretion and initiative of frontline actors when formal rules are incomplete.

Table 4. Budget for Talent Management Implementation

[#] FOOD AND BEVERAGE EXPENSES FOR TALENT MANAGEMENT/COMPETENCY TEST ACTIVITIES		
Sources of funds:		
Local Revenue (PAD) Rp. 102,500,000		
Coffee Break	0	Rp. 0
Meal - Buffet	0	Rp. 0
Meal - Individual	Rp.35.000/person	Rp. 71.750.000
Drinks and Snacks/Fruits	Rp.15.000/person	Rp. 30.750.000

Source: BKPP Kota Semarang, 2025

Table 4 illustrates the financial resource allocation indicator. The budget used originates from the Semarang City Regional Budget (APBD) that is used to finance consumption. The efficiency principle in New Public Management (NPM) suggests that resource sufficiency should be evaluated based on outcome achievement rather than input volume. In this case, the use of digital systems (MATA SI INTEL) represents an adaptive innovation strategy that maintains cost-efficiency while improving accessibility. Support from the implementing institutions is very strong, marked by the commitment of regional leaders, especially the Mayor of Semarang, who supports the implementation of talent management as part of bureaucratic reform and improved public service quality. *BKPP* also actively conducts collaboration and coordination with various parties, including heads of regional apparatus organizations (*OPD*) and test implementing institutions, to support smooth implementation.

This finding aligns with Sabatier's Advocacy Coalition Framework, which emphasizes sustained leadership commitment as a key stabilizing factor for policy continuity. In this context, the policy characteristics in Semarang demonstrate sufficient legal clarity, institutional commitment, and pragmatic resource management to support ongoing implementation.

C. Environmental Conditions

Environmental conditions are external factors outside of policy that influence the policy implementation process, particularly regarding the influence of political variables on support for established policies. In the context of this research, there are two main indicators reflecting these

environmental conditions: the social and cultural conditions of the program's implementing institution and the support from the program's subjects, namely Civil Servants (PNS).

1. The social and cultural conditions

The social and cultural conditions within the Semarang City *BKPP* are highly supportive of policy implementation. This is shown by the readiness of human resources, adequate facilities and infrastructure, and the smooth and timely conduct of talent mapping tests. The use of the MATA SI INTEL digital application reflects advanced technological support, while the *ASN* work culture demonstrates a conducive and professional environment. According to Schein's Organizational Culture Model (2010), these features indicate a mature organizational culture in which values such as innovation and professionalism are already embedded in daily practice. Such conditions strengthen the internal environment and minimize resistance to reform.

2. The support from the program's subjects

Participants of this program also show strong participation and support, with significant increase in participation since mid-2024 following the launch of the MATA SI INTEL application. Interviews and observations indicate that participants arrived on time, took the tests seriously, and were assisted by the officials. Although the tests were voluntary, the participants showed strong interest and they are encouraged to keep up with the test and to reach optimal career development.

Table 5. Number of *ASN* Talent Mapping Test Participants, Semarang City Government

Implementation Time	Number of Potential Test Participants	Number of MMPI Test Participants	Number of Competency Test Participants	Number of Interest Test Participants
<26/01/2024		10	40	11
2024	1249	1247	1247	1193
Januari-Juni	22	21	22	2
Juli-Agustus	755	755	753	719
Desember	472	471	472	472
Januari 2025	186	186	186	186
Total	1435	1443	1473	1390

Source: *BKPP Kota Semarang*, 2025

It can be concluded that the implementation of talent management in Semarang City has currently entered the talent assessment and evaluation stage, which aims to ensure the right individual is placed in the right position based on their skills and competencies.

2. The Challenges in Implementing Talent Management

A. Absence of a Fully Developed System

Although talent mapping has been carried out, the results have not yet been formalized into an official talent pool due to a leadership transition. Agency officials stated that approval and utilization of the talent pool are awaiting the inauguration of the new mayor (February 20, 2025), delaying the use of the nine-box matrix for succession planning and placement. No official succession list has been released, and strategic talent management activities have slowed, indicating that political commitment remains crucial for policy continuity.

Semarang City's Merit System Index is 312, still below the 325 threshold required by *BKN* to fully implement a talent pool-based system. Strengthening the talent pool is therefore necessary to raise the merit score and move toward talent development. Similar institutional gaps have been observed globally when policy design is not matched with organizational capacity (Pereira et al., 2022).

A further challenge is differing understandings of “talent” among stakeholders. Some units resist standardized criteria, preferring internal definitions, which complicates the formation of a cohesive talent pool (Walker, 2020).

B. Limited Participation in Talent Mapping Tests

As of January 2025, only 1,481 *ASN* employees (22%) have participated in the MATA SI INTEL talent mapping assessment. The low participation rate limits the comprehensiveness of available talent data and hinders evidence-based decision-making for rotation, promotion, and succession planning.

In many public sector settings, the voluntary nature of participation creates selection bias: only those already motivated or with higher metacognitive readiness opt in, leaving out potential high performers who are less informed or less confident (Akbar et al., 2025). In addition, limited communication lowers the awareness and motivation to participate. Many employees might find the process too bureaucratic or irrelevant to their personal career goals. Without clear value messaging and stakeholder engagement, participation remains superficial (Kaliannan et al., 2023).

C. Technical and Institutional Challenges

The implementation is further constrained by (1) the need to align performance appraisals with competency indicators, (2) difficulties in systematically collecting and integrating *ASN* talent data, and (3) limited synchronization between talent management outputs and employee development programs. These institutional and technical issues illustrate a common challenge in public sector talent systems: assessment tools may be available, but their connection to actionable HR processes remains weak, reducing overall impact (Graham, 2024).

3. Efforts Made to Overcome Challenges

A. Strengthening Communication and Education

BKPP continues to coordinate with city leadership and relevant agencies to finalize the talent pool system, ensuring it is ready for implementation once approved. *BKPP* is also intensifying socialization efforts to encourage broader *ASN* participation in talent mapping, aiming for full inclusion in the future database. This approach reflects change management best practices, where early stakeholder involvement and transparent communication enhance policy legitimacy and reduce resistance (Pereira et al., 2022; Walker, 2020). To increase participation among lower-engagement groups, *BKPP* is conducting internal campaigns, workshops, and briefing sessions to clarify the purpose and benefits of talent mapping.

B. Improving the Talent Mapping Test System

BKPP is improving the design and implementation of talent mapping assessments to ensure more accurate and fair competency measurement by refining test calibration, minimizing bias, and aligning instruments with actual job demands. To strengthen institutional credibility, *BKPP* is also coordinating with *BKN* and other central agencies to raise the city's Merit System Index score and ensure alignment with national standards, which will enable the use of talent pool results for rotation, promotion, and placement. In addition, *BKPP* is exploring digital platforms to streamline assessment administration, data management, and result processing, reflecting global trends in digitizing public sector talent systems (Schinnenburg & Böhmer, 2025). The agency is also piloting mechanisms to link assessment outcomes with learning and development programs through targeted training, mentorship, and succession coaching—to ensure identified talent is actively developed.

Conclusion

The implementation of talent management at the Civil Service, Education, and Training Agency (*BKPP*) of Semarang City still focuses on talent acquisition through talent mapping tests. Using Mazmanian and Sabatier's framework, this implementation can be understood through the interaction of problem characteristics, policy characteristics, and environmental conditions. From the perspective of problem characteristics, the main obstacles include the limited participation rate (only 22% of *ASN*) and the absence of a fully developed and utilized talent pool system.

In terms of policy characteristics, Mayoral Regulation Number 1 of 2022 and the establishment of an independent assessment center provide a strong regulatory foundation. However, administrative and political challenges such as the delay in policy authorization by the newly appointed mayor have slowed the policy's operationalization. Regarding environmental conditions, internal support from *BKPP* leaders and the enthusiasm of *ASN* participants represent positive social and cultural contexts that promote successful implementation. However, ongoing communication, leadership commitment, and resource allocation are necessary to support the implementation. *BKPP* has strengthened communication and coordination with city leadership to secure approval for the talent pool, intensified education to increase participation, and improved the assessment system to ensure accuracy and fairness. Collaboration with the National Civil Service Agency (*BKN*) also aims to enhance the Merit System Index score to comply with the national standards.

In conclusion, despite the suboptimal implementation, the proactive measures taken by *BKPP* demonstrate a growing institutional capacity and a commitment toward a merit-based, transparent, and competency-oriented talent management system. Strengthening the alignment among problem characteristics, policy structure, and environmental support will be key to achieving sustainable bureaucratic excellence in Semarang City.

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