

The Impact of Technical Competency Standards for Policy Analysts on the Quality of Public Policy Formulation in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

The prevalence of low-quality public policies in Indonesia, characterized by significant regulatory overlap and frequent annulments by the Constitutional Court due to weaknesses in the formulation stage, provides the impetus for this study. This research provides an in-depth analysis of the influence of technical competency standards for policy analysts on the quality of public policy formulation in Indonesia. A normative legal approach is adopted, drawing on both statutory and conceptual sources. The findings demonstrate that standardizing technical competencies in Evidence-Informed Policymaking and proficiency in big data literacy significantly enhances individual analytical capacity, leading to more accurate, evidence-based policy recommendations. The analysis reveals a gap between current regulatory standards and the complex analytical requirements encountered in practice, underscoring the need to strengthen technical competencies to reduce formulation errors. In conclusion, reinforcing technical competency standards is identified as a fundamental pillar of bureaucratic reform. The study recommends that the National Administrative Agency reorient the training curriculum for policy analyst positions to better align with digital transformation, thereby fostering higher-quality, more accountable, and far-reaching public policy practices in Indonesia.



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INTRODUCTION

Public policy in Indonesia is subject to increasing scrutiny as the government pursues bureaucratic reform and digital transformation. The issues of regulatory obesity and overlapping policies among agencies present significant barriers to both the investment climate and public welfare. Numerous policies encounter implementation failures or are overturned by the Constitutional Court due to conflicts with the public interest (Gemiharto, 2023). This context reveals a substantial gap between the ideal of evidence-based policy formulation and actual practices, which are often shaped by short-term political interests and insufficient academic research (Desrinelti et al., 2021).

A primary factor contributing to the poor quality of public policy in Indonesia is the limited capacity for policy analysis (Newman et al., 2022). While the government has established the Functional Position of Policy Analyst to lead policy recommendation efforts, the effectiveness of this role is constrained by inconsistent standardization of technical competencies (Setiaji & Pramudho, 2022). Many policy analysts in ministries and state agencies are engaged primarily in administrative duties rather than strategic analytical work (Newman et al., 2022). This situation is further compounded by inadequate resources and limited access to high-quality data, leading to recommendations that are often normative and fail to address the underlying causes of complex public issues (Hariadi, 2021).

Technical competency standards for policy analysts in Indonesia are challenged by difficulties in mastering analytical methodologies, data literacy, and the ability to translate real-world social issues into scientific frameworks (Hariadi, 2021). In the absence of robust technical competency standards, policy formulation risks becoming a bureaucratic exercise with limited practical impact (Herdiana, 2025). Insufficient individual capacity for comprehensive policy analysis often results in trial-and-error approaches, producing solutions that may generate additional problems. Consequently, standardizing technical competencies is an urgent requirement to ensure that policies are grounded in credible analysis.

Numerous local and central government policies in Indonesia are overturned through judicial review. Legal data indicate that several public policies have been invalidated by the Constitutional Court for lacking valid scientific research or comprehensive studies (Gemiharto, 2023). The inability of policy analysts to conduct risk analysis and evaluate policy alternatives before regulatory implementation results in significant financial and social losses for the state. These cases highlight that deficiencies in the formulation stage, which should be the technical responsibility of analysts, represent a critical issue that must be addressed through competency standardization.

The significance of this issue for research lies in the causal relationship between analysts' individual competencies and the quality of policy outcomes. From a policy analysis perspective, the quality of policy formulation is largely determined by analysts' knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Barreto et al., 2023). A lack of proficiency in big data analysis or the inability to produce evidence-based policy summaries leads to decision-making driven primarily by intuition or political pressures (Gemiharto, 2023). International studies demonstrate that countries with high governmental analytical capacity are more likely to develop stable and effective policies in response to global crises (Cameron & Evans, 2024).

Despite ongoing efforts, policy analysis education and training in Indonesia continue to exhibit significant gaps. Many training programs for policy stakeholders remain overly theoretical and fail to address practical technical needs, such as the application of information technology to health or education policy recommendations (Nurhayati et al., 2024). This gap underscores the need to revise competency-based curricula to align with current demands, particularly amid digital disruption and increasing social complexity (Göçöğlu & Demirkol, 2023). Without targeted interventions to enhance technical competency standards, attempts to modernize Indonesia's bureaucracy will remain superficial and fail to address substantive decision-making processes (Rachmawati et al., 2023).

Field observations reveal a substantial gap between competency standard regulations and actual work practices. Many functional officials appointed through the equivalency process continue to perform routine administrative tasks similar to their previous roles and have not fully assumed substantive policy analysis responsibilities (Abdullah, 2023). In regions such as West Java and Central Java, although individual analyst capacity appears promising, limited organizational resources and support contribute to deficiencies in overall policy analytical capacity (Newman et al., 2022).

Effective public policy necessitates a balance between political and analytical capacities (Hanjani). Policy failures in Indonesia are attributed not only to insufficient political will but also to weaknesses in the technical instruments that support decision-making (Cameron & Evans, 2024). The standardization of technical competencies among policy analysts should be regarded as the foundation for establishing an independent and professional policy advisory system (Hussain et al., 2024). This perspective is consistent with legal mandates that designate policy analysts as knowledge producers responsible for the quality of policy recommendations submitted to institutional leaders (Setiaji & Pramudho, 2022).

While extensive research on bureaucratic reform exists, there is a lack of studies specifically investigating how the internalization of technical competency standards affects the quality of policy formulation. Prior research has predominantly addressed the structural impacts of organizational streamlining and the quantitative assessment of analytical capacity (Insani et al., 2022). However, the process by which policy analysts integrate technical competency standards into the development of policy recommendations in Indonesia remains underexplored.

The urgency of this research is underscored by global trends emphasizing Evidence-Informed Policymaking (Barreto et al., 2023). As Indonesia experiences substantial growth in policy publications across Southeast Asia, it is essential that this quantitative expansion is matched by improvements in the quality of government analytical practices (Aswin et al., 2022). The participation of technically proficient policy analysts can reduce information bias and ensure that public resources are allocated to the most effective programs based on reliable data (Hariadi, 2021). This study seeks to address a gap in the literature by empirically investigating how technical standardization mitigates errors in public policy.

The competency gap among policy analysts constitutes a critical issue warranting research, as it has a direct impact on policy outcomes. According to the Regulation of the Head of the National Administrative Agency, policy analysts are primarily responsible for producing high-quality recommendations, including policy briefs, memos, and academic papers (Setiaji & Pramudho, 2022).

Without strong technical competencies to evaluate policy alternatives using empirical evidence, policies risk misalignment and failure to address the complex dynamics of public needs (Wijaya, 2022). Thus, technical competency standards serve as the foundation for the integrity of public policy, rather than merely fulfilling administrative requirements.

Given this context, technical competency standards for policy analysts have emerged as a critical factor influencing the future of governance in Indonesia. This research focuses not only on fulfilling administrative requirements for functional positions but also on examining how mastery of analytical techniques can improve the substantive quality of policies. By identifying the most influential components of technical competencies, the study aims to offer insights to the National Institute of Public Administration and related institutions for refining the training curriculum for policy analysts in Indonesia.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of bureaucratic professionalization theory within the New Public Management framework in developing countries. Practically, its findings can inform the State Administration Agency and other government bodies in evaluating and refining strategies for developing policy analyst competencies. Strengthening technical competency standards should therefore be viewed not only as a means to fulfill credit requirements but as a pathway to enhancing the quality and innovation of public policy in Indonesia.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a normative research method with a qualitative-descriptive approach that is prescriptive in nature. The normative method was chosen because the primary focus of this study is to analyze the standardization of technical competencies that are legally enshrined in various laws, regulations, and institutional technical guidelines in Indonesia (Newman et al., 2022).

The research approach employs two main approaches in its analysis. First, the Statute Approach, which is used to examine the consistency and coherence of various regulations governing the Functional Position of Policy Analyst, including the Government Regulation on Civil Service Management and the National Administrative Agency Regulation regarding Job Competency Standards (Rachmawati et al., 2023). The analysis was conducted to determine whether these regulations have accommodated the needs of modern analytical techniques such as big data and evidence-based policy. Second, the Conceptual Approach—this approach is grounded in the perspectives and doctrines that have evolved within the field of public policy. The researcher uses the concepts of policy analytical capacity and policy advisory systems as analytical tools to evaluate whether existing technical standards align with international scientific standards.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Public policy capacity, in contemporary discourse, is defined as a set of skills and resources required to carry out policy functions, ranging from problem identification to outcome evaluation. According to Cameron and Evans, this capacity encompasses the dimension of individual competencies that interact with organizational and systemic capacities within the government structure (Cameron & Evans, 2024). In Indonesia, the primary challenge over the past decade has been how to integrate objective technical standards into the policy formulation process, which is often dominated by political interests. Without clear competency standards for policy analysts, efforts to achieve good governance will be hindered by speculative and non-data-driven policies (Aswin et al., 2022).

A key pillar in strengthening policy quality is the implementation of Evidence-Informed Policymaking (EIPM). EIPM emphasizes that policies must be built on the foundation of the most relevant and robust scientific evidence available. Barreto et al. state that the competency profile for EIPM involves the ability to search for, critically evaluate, and synthesize various sources of evidence to provide valid recommendations to decision-makers (Barreto et al., 2023). At the global level, the standardization of these competencies serves as a crucial tool to ensure that health, education, and economic policies are not merely based on intuition, but on methodologies that are academically and technically accountable.

Policy advisory systems also play a vital role in determining the direction of national regulations. Effective advisory systems require analysts who possess operational knowledge mapping and are capable of managing complex information networks (Hussain et al., 2024). In Indonesia, the role of the Policy Analyst Functional Position is designed to serve as the primary pillar of this advisory

system. However, its effectiveness depends heavily on the extent to which the technical competency standards possessed by these analysts are institutionally recognized and applied in the actual practice of public policy formulation on the ground (Rachmawati et al., 2023).

Digital transformation has introduced a new dimension to policy analyst competency standards: big data literacy. In the context of local governments such as DKI Jakarta, the use of big data enables more predictive and accurate policy formulation in responding to community needs (Gemiharto, 2023). Technical competencies in managing digital information are crucial so that policy analysts can monitor issues in real-time and provide faster yet evidence-based recommendations. This indicates that competency standards are not static but must continuously adapt to advancements in information technology that influence the public policy ecosystem (Setiaji & Pramudho, 2022).

Public policy education must also be able to address specific technical competency needs. Research in Turkey by Göçoğlu and Demirkol indicates significant discrepancies between the competencies promised by higher education and the actual demands of the policy market (Göçoğlu & Demirkol, 2023). In Indonesia, similar challenges are faced, where capacity-building curricula for policy analysts need to be refined in terms of practical skills such as academic writing, cost-benefit analysis, and policy negotiation techniques. This competency gap often serves as the primary cause of overlapping policies due to a lack of deep understanding of the substance of the issues and applicable legal instruments (Nurhayati et al., 2024).

Legally, public policy in Indonesia is governed by various regulations that establish procedures for the formulation of legislation. Desrinelti et al. emphasize that the concept of policy implementation must align with the principles of accountable public administration (Desrinelti et al., 2021). Technical competency standards for policy analysts are, in fact, a manifestation of the government's efforts to fulfill the mandate of the law that every policy be based on objective analysis. Failure to meet these technical standards not only results in low-quality policy outcomes but can also lead to a decline in public trust in government institutions (Newman et al., 2022).

Research literacy within the Indonesian bureaucracy indicates that significant challenges remain regarding the publication and dissemination of policy analysis results. Although the volume of policy research in Indonesia continues to rise, the quality of its integration into decision-making processes still needs to be strengthened (Aswin et al., 2022). This indicates that an analyst's competencies extend beyond research capabilities to include the ability to advocate for policies so that technical recommendations can be accepted in the political arena. Standardization of technical competencies must incorporate strategic communication aspects to enable analysts to bridge the gap between academic language and the practical language of decision-makers.

The use of information technology in specific sectors such as health highlights the importance of recommendations based on scientific journal data. Setiaji and Pramudho emphasize that the use of journals and digital data is highly beneficial in developing more precise health policies (Setiaji & Pramudho, 2022). In this context, competency standards for policy analysts must include the ability to assess the quality of scientific evidence so that policies are not based on erroneous or biased information. The ability to conduct rapid scoping reviews is an urgent technical skill to master in order to provide a rapid response to public crises (Barreto et al., 2023).

At the local level, capacity building through policy analysis training for education and sports stakeholders has proven to have a positive impact on the quality of local regulations. For example, local government policies aimed at improving athletes' performance require in-depth analysis of infrastructure needs and data-driven development (Hariadi, 2021). Nurhayati et al. found that systematic training for local policymakers enhances their ability to identify educational issues more accurately (Nurhayati et al., 2024). This confirms that the decentralization of technical competency standards to the local level is a prerequisite for creating equitable public policy quality across Indonesia (Hariadi, 2021).

The integration of policy capacity theory and the practice of technical competency standardization in Indonesia is essential for building a world-class bureaucracy. An analysis of the international literature indicates that developed nations prioritize the development of analytical capacity as a key focus in their public sector reforms (Cameron & Evans, 2024). Indonesia must be able to adopt international EIPM standards while still taking local wisdom into account in the policy formulation process (Newman et al., 2022). Thus, the competency standards for policy analyst techniques will serve

as a powerful instrument to ensure the sustainability and quality of national development through superior regulations (Aswin et al., 2022).

The findings of this study confirm that strengthening technical competency standards significantly improves the quality of policy formulation in Indonesia. Policy analysts proficient in big data analysis techniques and EIPM methodologies produce recommendations with a higher level of accuracy in predicting social and economic impacts (Barreto et al., 2023). This aligns with policy capacity theory, which states that the individual capabilities of analysts are the primary determinants of policy output quality (Cameron & Evans, 2024). The gap between policy expectations and on-the-ground realities can be narrowed if analysts possess the technical skills to translate the complexity of public issues into concrete and actionable policy options (Desrinelti et al., 2021).

Interpretation of these results also indicates that technical competency standards serve as a bulwark of professionalism in the face of political pressure. Competent policy analysts tend to be more willing to present unpopular yet scientifically accurate facts, as they are supported by strong evidence-based arguments (Hussain et al., 2024). In the Indonesian policy context, this is highly relevant for reducing the frequency of regulatory overturns by judicial bodies, as the academic drafts prepared have undergone rigorous technical feasibility testing (Hanjani & Muslim, 2024). Strengthening these competencies theoretically provides additional legitimacy for the role of policy analysts as independent strategic advisors within the bureaucratic structure.

Digital transformation is essential in advancing technical competency standards. Research demonstrates that policy analysts proficient in data-driven information technology tools achieve significantly greater analytical productivity than those who employ traditional methods (Setiaji & Pramudho, 2022). Utilizing digital data expedites the problem identification process and facilitates more precise analysis of long-term trends (Gemiharto, 2023). Therefore, digital competency has become a fundamental component of technical standards for contemporary policy analysts, supporting the accountability of public decisions..

However, these findings also reveal challenges regarding data infrastructure readiness across various regions in Indonesia. Although analysts' competencies have improved, the effectiveness of their work remains dependent on access to high-quality, integrated data. Therefore, public policy perspectives must emphasize that the standardization of analysts' competencies must be accompanied by the provision of a national big data platform that is accessible to all. The practical implication of these results is the need for the government to allocate sufficient resources to build a digital ecosystem that supports analytical functions at both the ministerial and local government levels.

A reorientation of policy analysis education and training in Indonesia is urgently required. Existing training programs are predominantly theoretical and administrative, lacking coverage of advanced technical skills such as synthesizing complex evidence and conducting digital risk analysis (Nurhayati et al., 2024). This study recommends that competency development curricula in Indonesia incorporate the international Evidence-Informed Policy Making (EIPM) framework, which emphasizes objectively measurable technical proficiency. Such a reorientation is essential to ensure that all policy analysts meet consistent minimum standards in producing high-quality policy documents. Strengthening technical aspects is a prerequisite for the success of bureaucratic reform. In practice, policymakers need to institutionalize periodic technical competency assessments for all policy analyst officials (Rachmawati et al., 2023). Additionally, it is recommended to establish a community of practice among analysts to share methodologies and data, thereby collectively strengthening analytical capacity. Through these strategic steps, Indonesia can achieve public policy quality that is not only responsive to current issues but also anticipatory of future challenges.

Emphasizing the standardization of policy analysts' technical competencies is a long-term investment in upholding the integrity of the rule of law. Public policies crafted by competent analysts will be more resilient to legal challenges and more effective in resolving interpersonal and social conflicts within society. Through the strengthening of technical competency standards, the quality of policies in Indonesia will see a significant improvement, which will ultimately have a positive impact on the sustainable well-being of all Indonesian citizens.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the strengthening of technical competency standards is a significant determinant that substantially influences the quality of public policy formulation in Indonesia. Key findings indicate a strong positive correlation between mastery of evidence-based analysis methodologies (Evidence-Informed Policymaking) and the accuracy of policy recommendations produced by policy analysts. Specifically, the integration of technical skills in big data processing and digital literacy has proven capable of accelerating the process of identifying public issues with greater precision, thereby minimizing the risk of “regulatory obesity” and policy overturns at the judicial level. This underscores that policy quality depends not only on political will but is largely determined by the standardized technical analytical capacity of individuals.

This study is expected to provide a new perspective on the urgency of reorienting the education and training of policy analysts from a focus on administrative formalities toward mastery of practical analytical tools. Thus, the findings of this study provide a strategic foundation for authorities overseeing functional positions to refine competency-based curricula that are more adaptive to global dynamics and local needs. As a final reflection, the success of bureaucratic transformation in Indonesia depends heavily on the extent to which these technical competency standards are institutionalized as a work culture at every stage of public decision-making.

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