



## **The Role of the Sub-district Head in Improving the Performance of the State Civil Apparatus in Hinai District, Langkat Regency**

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### **Abstrak**

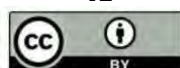
This study will analyze the sub-district head's role in improving the State Civil Apparatus (ASN) performance in Hinai District, Lalat Regency, and identify the inhibiting factors. Using a descriptive qualitative approach through observation, interviews, and documentation. The respondents interviewed included the Sub-district Head, the Sub-district Secretary, the head of the section, and the local community to get a comprehensive picture of the role of the Sub-district Head in improving the performance of ASN. This research shows that sub-districts have a strategic role as policymakers, leaders, motivators, supervisors, and ASN coaches. The sub-district head also encourages the improvement of ASN competencies through training, optimization of the use of technology, and strengthening accountability and transparency of public services. However, the effectiveness of the role of the sub-district head faces internal obstacles, such as low technological competence of ASN, resistance to change, and limited human resources. External barriers include limited technological infrastructure, minimal budgets, and increasing societal demands. To overcome this challenge, the sub-district needs to develop strategies such as continuous training, socialization of the importance of innovation, optimization of task division, and cooperation with local governments and external parties to improve the performance of civil servants and the quality of public services.

**Keywords:** Role of the Sub-district Head; ASN performance; Hinai District; Performance Improvement; State Civil Apparatus.

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## INTRODUCTION

Development and improvement of public welfare are two closely interrelated concepts. Development is expected to be a means to improve people's living standards, create economic progress, strengthen infrastructure, and promote social welfare (Nindatu, 2019; Sumaryadi, 2005; Syawie, 2014). However, in practice, the implementation of development often faces challenges, especially related to the performance of government apparatus as policy implementers. Effective and efficient apparatus performance is highly dependent on the leadership role that can direct, supervise, and motivate employees to achieve organizational goals (Hutabarat et al., 2025; Kadarisman, 2019; Manik et al., 2023). In this case, the sub-district head has a strategic position as a leader at the sub-district level responsible for managing and improving the performance of the State Civil Apparatus (ASN) (Sarumaha et al., 2017, 2019).

As government apparatus and public servants, civil servants are essential assets spearheading and implementing various government programs (Ridho et al., 2017; Tohopi Rustam, 2017). ASNs are expected to be able to carry out their duties professionally, effectively, and efficiently to support the achievement of public organizational goals. By Law Number 5 of 2014 concerning the State Civil Apparatus, ASN is tasked with implementing public policies, providing services to the community professionally, and strengthening the unity and unity of the nation (Anggraini et al., 2022; Solla Taufiq, 2021). Thus, the performance of civil servants greatly determines the quality of public services, which ultimately contributes to the level of public trust in the government.

The performance of an ASN is influenced not only by individual competence but also by factors such as the work environment, motivation, and leadership. The Sub-district Head, as a

leader at the sub-district level, has a vital role in creating a conducive work environment, building a productive work culture, and ensuring that every ASN understands their duties and responsibilities (Anastacia et al., 2021; Luahambowo et al., 2022). The sub-district head's role includes coordination, supervision, coaching, and empowering ASNs to improve their performance. A sub-district head must be visionary, communicative, and able to set an example for his subordinates (Buulolo, 2023; Rahmawati et al., 2022; Sazwani, 2023).

In the context of Hinai District, Lalat Regency, the role of the sub-district head is crucial, considering that this region has its challenges in government administration. Hinai District has an area of 10,526 hectares with a population of 56,759 people, spread across 12 villages and one sub-district. With the number of ASN as many as 24 people, the effectiveness of public services is highly dependent on their performance. However, based on initial observations, various problems still affect the performance of ASNs in the Hinai District. Some of them are low work discipline, lack of effective communication between sub-district heads and ASN, and weak coordination in implementing daily tasks.

These problems directly impact the quality of public services received by the community. Public complaints related to slow, unresponsive, and non-standard services indicate problems in the management of ASN performance in Hinai District. For example, delays in issuing domicile certificates, document legalization, and business license management indicate inefficiencies in the work process. This causes dissatisfaction among the public and reflects the need to improve the performance of civil servants as a whole.

To improve ASN's performance, the sub-district head's role as a leader is very decisive. The sub-district head is not only

responsible for the administrative aspect but must also be able to be a motivator, facilitator, and coach for ASNs in their work area. Effective sub-district leadership can encourage civil servants to work more productively, improve discipline, and improve the quality of public services. Therefore, it is essential to examine how the role of the sub-district head in enhancing the performance of ASN in the Hinai District, including the factors that support and hinder the effectiveness of this role.

The importance of the role of the sub-district head in improving the performance of ASN is also related to the concept of good governance, which emphasizes the principles of transparency, accountability, participation, and effectiveness in government administration. As the spearhead of government at the sub-district level, the sub-district head must be able to apply these principles in organizational governance. This will not only improve the performance of civil servants but also strengthen public trust in local governments. In addition, the sub-district must also be able to adapt to changes in the strategic environment, including technological developments and increasingly complex societal demands.

However, in carrying out their duties, the sub-district also faces various challenges that can hinder the effectiveness of their roles. Factors such as limited resources, lack of support from local governments, resistance to change among ASNs, and the problem of a work culture that does not support innovation are often obstacles in efforts to improve the performance of ASNs. In addition, challenges in terms of human resource management, such as low work motivation, lack of training and competency development, and work discipline issues, also need to be considered.

This research refers to several previous studies that enrich the analysis of the sub-district head's role in improving the

State Civil Apparatus (ASN) performance. Mondong and Mantiri (2017) found that the lack of continuous guidance hindered the effectiveness of sub-district leadership in East Amurang. Mamalu (2017) emphasized that the leadership spirit of the sub-district encourages ASN to optimize its potential, while Aziz and Putra (2022) show that the democratic leadership style effectively increases civil servants' participation and work discipline in Sumberjaya. Syari et al. (2019) emphasized the importance of leadership based on laws and regulations, such as Government Regulation No. 53 of 2010, in improving ASN discipline. These findings are the basis for analyzing the role of sub-district heads in Hinai District, Lalat Regency, as well as the factors that affect the effectiveness of ASN performance in the region.

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the role of sub-district heads in improving the performance of ASN in Hinai District, Lalat Regency. In particular, the purpose of this study is to find out the role of the sub-district head in improving the performance of ASN in the Hinai District Office and to identify the factors that hinder the role of the sub-district head in enhancing the performance of ASN in the Hinai District Office.

## RESEARCH METHOD)

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method to analyze the Sub-district Head's role in improving the State Civil Apparatus (ASN) performance in Hinai District, Lalat Regency. This qualitative research aims to understand the phenomenon in depth based on objective conditions in the field. The subjects of the study include key informants such as the Secretary of the Sub-district, key informants such as the head of the government section, and additional informants from the community relevant to the research topic. The sampling technique was carried out in a purposive and snowball manner, taking into account the



knowledge and involvement of the informant in the problem being studied.

Data collection was carried out through participatory observation to observe ASN activities in the work environment, in-depth interviews to explore informants' perceptions and experiences related to the role of the sub-district head, and documentation to complete data from archives, official documents, and administrative records. The variables measured in this study include the role of sub-district heads (active, participatory, passive), ASN performance, and factors inhibiting ASN performance in sub-district offices.

The data analysis uses the Miles and Huberman interactive model, which consists of three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction is done by sorting out relevant data, grouping by theme, and simplifying information for further analysis. Data presentation is carried out in the form of a descriptive narrative to facilitate interpretation and pattern identification. Conclusions are drawn inductively, based on patterns that emerge from the data, and verified through source triangulation and member checking to ensure the validity of the data.

This method allows researchers to understand the role of sub-district heads in improving ASN performance, identify supporting and inhibiting factors, and evaluate the effectiveness of policies and strategies implemented. With this approach, a comprehensive picture of the work dynamics at the Hinai Sub-district Office and strategic recommendations to improve ASN performance at the sub-district level can be obtained.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### **The Role of the Sub-district Head in Improving the Performance of the State Civil Apparatus in Hinai District, Langkat Regency**

As a leader at the sub-district level, the sub-district head has a very strategic role in ensuring the smooth administration and improving the performance of the State Civil Apparatus (ASN). In Hinai District, Lalat Regency, the role of the sub-district head is not only limited to administrative functions but also as a driver and motivator to encourage ASNs to work optimally. The sub-district head acts as a policy maker, leader, supervisor, ASN coach, and facilitator in building relationships with the community. This role includes various interrelated aspects to ensure that ASN can provide quality public services.

#### **1. Sub-district Head as a Local Policy Maker**

As a leader at the sub-district level, the sub-district head has the authority to formulate and implement policies at the direction of the district government. In this context, the sub-district head is responsible for developing work programs relevant to the local community's needs. These programs are then implemented through effective coordination with ASN. The Sub-district Head directs ASN to work according to the established policies, ensuring that each program runs efficiently and positively impacts the community.

The interview results with the Secretary of the Hinai Sub-district, Sudianto S, show that the sub-district actively coordinates work programs, provides clear directions, and conducts regular evaluations. This step aims to ensure that ASNs understand their roles and responsibilities so that the policies that have been set can be implemented optimally.

#### **2. Sub-district Head as a Leader and Motivator**

As a sub-district leader, the sub-district head must be an example and a source of inspiration for ASN. The Sub-district Head is responsible for motivating ASNs to work enthusiastically and dedicatedly. This effort can be made by providing clear directions, fostering

harmonious working relationships, and awarding outstanding ASNs.

In an interview, Rusli, SE, the Government Section, emphasized that the sub-district regularly holds coordination meetings to provide directions, discuss work achievements, and evaluate ASN's performance. In addition, the sub-district head also awarded civil servants who showed superior performance as a form of appreciation that could increase their work motivation. A conducive and supportive work environment is vital in encouraging ASN productivity.

### **3. Sub-district Head as Supervisor and Supervisor of ASN**

The role of the sub-district head as a supervisor and supervisor of ASN is vital to ensuring that duties are implemented according to the rules and standards that have been set. The Sub-district Head monitors ASN's performance, enforces work discipline, and provides guidance if obstacles are found in implementing duties.

Firiani, S. Sos, Peace and Public Order Section, explained that the sub-district head regularly monitors and evaluates ASN's performance. The Sub-district Head ensures that ASN carries out its duties responsibly, maintains work ethics, and provides fast and appropriate services to the community. In the event of a discipline violation, the sub-district head provides constructive guidance to improve ASN's performance.

### **4. Improving the Competence of ASN**

One important factor in improving ASN's performance is competency development. The Sub-district Head has a role in encouraging ASN to continue improving their abilities through training and human resource development. Training needs are identified based on performance evaluation results so that the programs are relevant to ASN's needs.

According to Sudianto, the sub-district head encourages ASNs to participate in training at the district and sub-district levels. This training program

covers various aspects, from improving technical skills to developing soft skills such as leadership and communication. In addition, the sub-district also creates a learning culture in the work environment, encouraging ASNs to continue to establish themselves.

### **5. Optimizing Technology and Innovation**

In the digital era, information technology is the key to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of ASN's work. The Sub-district Head in Hinai District encourages ASN to adopt technology in the implementation of daily tasks. This includes using digital systems for administration, data management, and public services.

The sub-district head also initiates innovations that aim to improve the quality of services. By utilizing technology, the service process to the community becomes faster, transparent, and accountable. Civil servants are encouraged to master various relevant digital applications and platforms so that they can provide better services to the community.

### **6. Building Cooperation with the Community**

ASN's performance in providing public services is inseparable from the community's support and participation. Therefore, the sub-district plays a role in building a harmonious relationship with the community. The Sub-district Head encourages the community to supervise public services, provide input, and submit complaints or suggestions for improvement.

Tika, a resident of Hinai District, said that the sub-district often holds dialogue forums with the community to listen to their aspirations. The Sub-district Head also encourages ASNs to be oriented toward community satisfaction in every service provided. With good communication between the government and the community, public services can be more responsive to real needs in the field.

## 7. Increase Accountability and Transparency

Accountability and transparency are principles that must be upheld in government administration. The Sub-district Head is responsible for ensuring that ASN works with high accountability. This is realized through the determination of clear performance targets, supervision of budget management, and publication of performance achievements to the public.

The sub-district head also ensures that every activity carried out by ASN can be accounted for administratively and morally. By accessing public information, the public can objectively assess ASN's performance. This not only increases public trust in the government but also encourages civil servants to work more professionally.

### Factors Hindering the Role of the Sub-district Head in Improving the Performance of State Civil Apparatus in Hinai District, Langkat Regency

To improve the performance of the State Civil Apparatus (ASN) in Hinai District, Lalat Regency, the sub-district head plays a vital role as a leader and coach. However, as with the change process involving human resources and the government system, various inhibiting factors affect the effectiveness of the role of the sub-district head. This chapter discusses the factors that hinder the role of the sub-district head in improving the performance of ASNs based on the results of interviews and observations.

#### 1. Internal Factors

##### a. Lack of Technological Competence of ASN

One of the main challenges faced by sub-district heads in improving ASN's performance is its low competence in using technology. In the current era of digitalization, technology is an important element in public services, but most civil servants in Hinai District are not used to using digital applications and systems in their daily tasks.

- Civil servants used to manual systems often find it challenging to adapt to digital devices.
- The lack of continuous technology training slows civil servants' adoption of technology-based service systems.

Impact: This limitation hinders the sub-district head from encouraging the implementation of a more efficient digital service system, which makes the administrative process slower and less optimal.

##### b. Resistance to Change

Resistance to change among civil servants is one of the significant obstacles to improving performance. Civil servants who have worked for many years with conventional methods find it difficult to accept changes in the work system, especially related to the transition to modern technology and higher service standards.

- Experienced civil servants sometimes feel that the old method is quite effective, so they are not enthusiastic about innovation or changes in the work system.
- ASNs who resist often show a passive attitude or even refuse training or coaching directed by the sub-district head.

Impact: This reduces the efficiency of task implementation and hinders the bureaucratic reform process desired by the sub-district, especially in improving the quality of public services.

##### c. Limited Human Resource Capacity

The number of civil servants serving in the Hinai District is insufficient to offset the workload. Some ASNs have overlapping tasks or have to handle multiple fields at once, which impacts the quality and speed of service.

- The limited number of ASNs leads to a disproportionate division of duties.
- Civil servants who handle more than one field of duty are often unable to focus on their work, which reduces their performance.



Impact: This limitation of human resources makes it difficult for sub-district heads to distribute responsibilities effectively and ensure that each field of work runs smoothly.

## 2. External Factors

### a. Limitations of Technological Infrastructure

One of the main external factors hindering efforts to improve ASN's performance in Hinai District is the limitation of technological infrastructure, especially in rural areas. Inadequate internet infrastructure impedes the implementation of digital services desired by the sub-district.

- Many villages in Hinai District still have limited internet access, making it challenging to implement an optimal digital administration system.
- The hardware infrastructure in the sub-district office is still inadequate to support the full use of technology.

Impact: This limited infrastructure causes pre-designed digital services to not function properly, leaving there is still a heavy reliance on slow manual systems.

### b. Budget Limitations

Improving civil servants' performance often requires additional budgets for training, development of technology systems, and improvements to supporting facilities. However, the limited budget in the Hinai District is an obstacle to implementing various planned programs.

- The limited budget reduces the opportunity for ASN to hold technology training.
- The small budget limits procuring more modern technological devices to speed up public services.

Impact: This budget limitation forces the sub-district head to prioritize certain programs, often at the expense of efforts that should directly improve the efficiency and quality of ASN's work.

### c. Increasing Community Expectations and Needs

The increasing community needs and expectations for public services are a challenge for the sub-district head and civil servants in Hinai District. The community demands faster and more efficient services, but with the available resources, ASN often finds it challenging to meet these demands.

- Some residents expect more responsive services, especially concerning population administration and licensing.
- Slow service sometimes makes people feel dissatisfied, which has an impact on their perception of ASN performance.

Impact: The gap between public expectations and ASN's capacity to provide services affects the reputation of the sub-district government, even though the sub-district has made efforts to improve ASN's performance internally.

### d. Analysis and Efforts to Overcome Barriers

In dealing with these inhibiting factors, the sub-district must formulate several strategies to overcome them. Some steps that can be taken include:

- Continuous training for civil servants, especially in digital technology, to improve competence and accelerate adaptation to technology-based service systems.
- Intensive socialization on the importance of change to reduce resistance among civil servants by providing an understanding that innovation will bring long-term benefits.
- Cooperation with external parties such as district governments or other institutions to overcome budget limitations and technological infrastructure.
- Prioritize a more precise division of tasks so civil servants can work more focused and increase their productivity in key tasks.

The Sub-district Head must continue to develop strategies to reduce these

obstacles internally and externally so that ASN can work more optimally and provide quality services to the community.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion results, the sub-district head's role in improving the State Civil Apparatus (ASN) performance in Hinai District, Lalat Regency, is strategic and multifunctional. The sub-district head acts as a local policy maker and a leader, motivator, supervisor, coach, and facilitator who encourages ASN to work optimally. Through this role, the sub-district head seeks to ensure that ASN has adequate competence, can adopt technology, and maintains accountability and transparency in public services. In addition, the sub-district also plays a role in building harmonious relationships with the community to increase public participation and improve service quality.

However, various inhibiting factors affect the effectiveness of the role of the sub-district head in improving the performance of ASN, both from internal and external factors. Internal factors include low ASN technological competence, resistance to change, and limited human resource capacity, which causes a disproportionate workload. Meanwhile, external factors such as limited technological infrastructure, minimal budgets, and increasing public demands for public services are also significant challenges. To overcome these obstacles, the sub-district needs to formulate the right strategies, such as continuous training, socialization about the importance of innovation, optimizing the division of tasks, and building cooperation with external parties to create public services that are more efficient and responsive to the community's needs.

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