



Work Culture and Bureaucratic Ethics in Public Administration: An Educational Management Perspective on Human Resource Development

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ABSTRACT

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This study aims to examine work culture and bureaucratic ethics in public sector organizations from an educational management perspective. A qualitative approach was employed using a case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of ethical practices, organizational values, and professional behavior among civil servants. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and document analysis, and analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings indicate that work culture and bureaucratic ethics have been generally implemented effectively, reflected in employees' awareness of moral values such as professionalism, integrity, responsibility, public courtesy, and neutrality. Nevertheless, several challenges persist, particularly the limited internal supervision and insufficient socialization of the bureaucratic code of ethics. As a result, the implementation of ethical work culture remains inconsistent across organizational units and has not been fully internalized as individual professional behavior, instead relying heavily on hierarchical supervision. The study implies that strengthening educational management practices—such as ethical leadership, continuous professional development, and organizational learning—is essential to internalize work culture and bureaucratic ethics sustainably. These findings contribute to discussions on human resource development and ethical governance in public administration.

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INTRODUCTION

Human resources are widely recognized as a strategic asset that determines the sustainability, effectiveness, and competitiveness of public sector organizations. In an era characterized by administrative reform, digital transformation, and increasing public expectations, government institutions are required not only to deliver efficient services but also to uphold ethical values

and professionalism. The quality of work culture and bureaucratic ethics plays a decisive role in shaping employee behavior, organizational performance, and public trust (Hefniy Hefniy & Alwahedi, 2025; Syafiih, 2025). From an educational management perspective, organizations are viewed as learning systems in which values, norms, and ethical standards must be continuously internalized through leadership, training, and professional development. Studies in public administration emphasize that strategic human resource management significantly influences public sector performance when supported by appropriate organizational contexts and learning-oriented practices (Knies et al., 2024; Pattanayak, 2025). Moreover, ethical governance has become a global concern, as weak bureaucratic ethics often lead to inefficiency, corruption, and declining service quality (Mendy, 2023; Rojak, 2024). Therefore, examining work culture and bureaucratic ethics is essential to strengthening sustainable governance and human resource development in public organizations.

Despite growing awareness of the importance of professionalism and ethics, many public sector organizations continue to face persistent challenges related to employee discipline, accountability, and commitment to organizational values (Hamdanah et al., 2025; Prayoga et al., 2025). These problems manifest in declining work discipline, limited responsibility for service quality, and weak adherence to ethical standards, which ultimately undermine organizational performance. Inadequate human resource development strategies and insufficient internal control systems often exacerbate these issues. Previous research highlights that ineffective management control and weak governance mechanisms hinder the realization of ethical and performance-oriented public administration (El Kezazy & Hilmi, 2023). Furthermore, studies indicate that low work discipline among civil servants remains a recurring issue in various administrative contexts, affecting service effectiveness and public satisfaction (Lao et al., 2024; Vradiesta et al., 2024). From a management education standpoint, these problems reflect failures in organizational learning processes, where ethical norms and professional standards are not consistently reinforced through training, supervision, and leadership practices. Consequently, addressing these systemic challenges is crucial for improving both individual and organizational performance in the public sector.

Empirical phenomena in public organizations demonstrate that formal regulations and ethical codes alone are insufficient to ensure consistent ethical behavior among employees (Fauzi et al., 2025; Maulidy & Zaini, 2025). While civil servants often possess normative knowledge of professionalism and ethics, their application in daily work practices remains uneven across organizational units. This inconsistency is frequently associated with limited internal supervision, weak role modeling by leaders, and inadequate socialization of ethical standards. Research on public service delivery transformation indicates that organizational effectiveness depends heavily on how values are translated into everyday

practices rather than merely documented in formal policies (Latupeirissa et al., 2024). Additionally, evidence suggests that leadership commitment, work culture, and human capital quality significantly influence bureaucratic performance and governance outcomes (Tahirs et al., 2023). From an educational management lens, such phenomena reveal gaps in continuous professional learning and reflective practice within public institutions (Khoiroh et al., 2025; Yakin et al., 2025). Without systematic learning mechanisms and ethical leadership, work culture tends to remain procedural and compliance-based rather than internalized as a shared organizational value.

Previous studies have extensively examined the relationship between work culture, leadership, and organizational performance in both public and private sectors (Sholehah & Ichsan, 2025; Zibyan, 2025). Research consistently demonstrates that professionalism and work discipline positively affect employee performance and service quality (Asgaruddin, 2023; Sulaiman, 2024). Ethical leadership has also been shown to foster organizational citizenship behavior, trust, and accountability, particularly when supported by empowering management practices (Sarwar et al., 2023; Phetsombat & Na-Nan, 2023). Furthermore, talent management and strategic human resource development are critical for enhancing public sector performance, especially when line managers actively support employee learning and development (Kravariti et al., 2023). These studies provide strong evidence that ethics, culture, and HR practices are interconnected drivers of organizational outcomes (Hadi & Masuwd, 2025; Wahyudi & Manshur, 2025). However, most existing research focuses on performance metrics without sufficiently addressing how ethical values are internalized through organizational learning processes, particularly in administrative support units within public institutions.

Although prior research has contributed valuable insights, several gaps remain. First, many studies examine work culture, ethics, or leadership as separate constructs, rather than as integrated components of an organizational learning system. Second, empirical research often emphasizes policy outcomes or service delivery, with limited attention to internal bureaucratic units that play a crucial coordinating role. Studies on digital leadership and organizational learning highlight that sustainable performance requires continuous learning and value transformation, not merely technological or structural change (Mollah et al., 2023; Dominguez-Escrig & Mallen-Broch, 2023). Similarly, supportive work environments and learning cultures have been found to enhance organizational innovation and adaptability (Tripathi & Kalia, 2024). Nevertheless, the internalization of bureaucratic ethics through educational management mechanisms—such as ethical training, reflective supervision, and leadership-based learning—remains underexplored. Addressing this gap is important to understand why ethical work culture often remains normative and supervision-dependent in public organizations.

This study positions itself at the intersection of work culture, bureaucratic ethics, and educational management by conceptualizing public organizations as learning systems. The novelty lies in integrating ethical governance with organizational learning and human resource development frameworks to analyze how values are internalized in daily bureaucratic practices. Rather than assessing ethics merely as compliance with rules, this research emphasizes the role of ethical leadership, continuous professional development, and learning-oriented supervision in shaping sustainable work culture. By focusing on internal administrative units, the study provides a nuanced understanding of how ethical norms are transmitted, practiced, and reinforced within organizational routines. This approach advances the state of the art by shifting the analysis from outcome-based performance evaluation to process-oriented value internalization, offering a more holistic perspective on ethical governance in public administration.

Based on the identified gaps, this study addresses the following research problem: how are work culture and bureaucratic ethics implemented and internalized within public organizations from an educational management perspective? The study argues that while ethical awareness among employees may be relatively high, the absence of systematic organizational learning mechanisms leads to inconsistent implementation and reliance on hierarchical supervision. The proposed argument suggests that strengthening ethical leadership, continuous learning, and human resource development is essential for transforming normative ethics into embedded professional behavior. By providing empirical insights into these dynamics, the study contributes theoretically to the integration of educational management and public administration, and practically to the development of more effective strategies for ethical governance and human resource capacity building.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a constructivist paradigm using a qualitative case study design to explore work culture and bureaucratic ethics within a public sector organization. The qualitative case study approach was selected because it allows an in-depth examination of complex social and organizational phenomena within their real-life context, particularly how ethical values and work culture are constructed, interpreted, and practiced by civil servants. From an educational management perspective, the organization is viewed as a learning environment in which professional values, ethical norms, and behavioral standards are developed through continuous interaction, leadership practices, and human resource development processes. The research was conducted in an internal administrative unit of a regional government institution, selected due to its strategic role in coordinating public services, administrative functions, and personnel management, making it a relevant setting for examining organizational learning and ethical governance in public administration.

Data were collected using multiple qualitative techniques to ensure depth and richness of information. These techniques included in-depth semi-structured interviews, non-participant observation, and document analysis. Informants were selected through purposive sampling, involving fifteen civil servants who were directly engaged in administrative and public service functions and had firsthand experience with the organizational work culture and ethical practices. Interviews focused on perceptions of professionalism, ethical behavior, leadership, work discipline, and learning opportunities within the organization. Observations were conducted to capture daily work interactions, service processes, and manifestations of ethical conduct, while documents such as internal regulations, codes of ethics, and performance reports were analyzed to understand formal expectations and organizational learning mechanisms.

Data analysis followed an interactive qualitative process involving data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Data condensation involved selecting, focusing, simplifying, and transforming raw data from interviews, observations, and documents into meaningful themes related to work culture, bureaucratic ethics, and educational management practices. The data were then organized and displayed using matrices, coding structures, and thematic models to facilitate interpretation and pattern identification. Verification was conducted through iterative comparison of data sources and time-based checks to ensure consistency and credibility of findings. This analytical process supports a rigorous interpretation of how ethical values and professional behaviors are internalized through organizational learning, leadership, and human resource development within the public sector.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study provides empirical evidence on the relationship between work culture, bureaucratic ethics, and civil servants' performance. The findings indicate that key dimensions of work culture—such as professionalism in the workplace, inter-employee collaboration, service excellence, innovation, and leadership role modeling—are recognized and practiced by employees, although not yet in a fully consistent manner. Similarly, the implementation of bureaucratic ethics, including adherence to civil servant obligations, awareness of prohibitions, and compliance with disciplinary sanctions, is evident but remains largely normative. These findings highlight the need for strengthening governance mechanisms to enhance institutional performance and improve the quality of public service delivery within the organization.

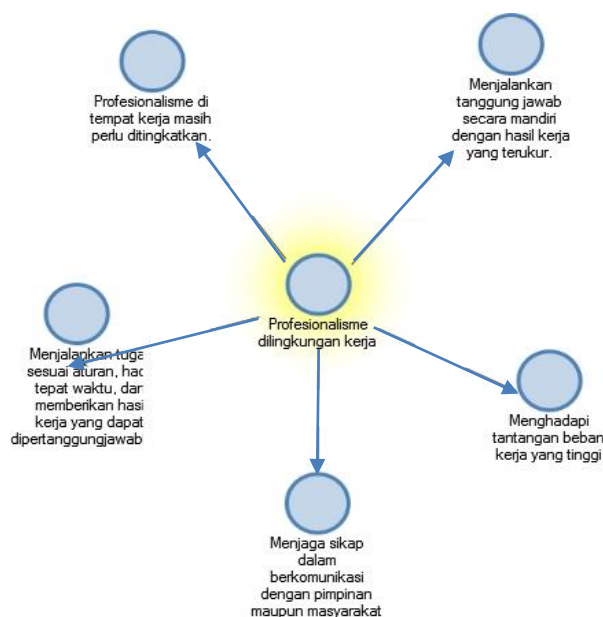
To support the qualitative analysis, NVivo's Word Frequency Query was employed to visualize dominant terms across the data set. As illustrated in Figure 4.2, the word "employee" emerged as the most frequently mentioned term,

Innovation, Obligations of Civil Servants in the Workplace, Prohibitions for Civil Servants, Role Modeling, Cooperation Between Employees, Professionalism in the Workplace, Excellent Service, and Implementation of Work Ethics and Culture in the Bureaucracy.

Professionalism in the Workplace

The qualitative analysis indicates that professionalism serves as a core value that integrates various elements within the bureaucratic system. Strong professionalism encourages work discipline, innovation, and moral responsibility in public service delivery. Triangulation across informants confirms that these values are not only understood normatively but are also reflected in daily work behavior. Professional work culture is therefore formed through leadership role modeling, the application of bureaucratic ethics, and a shared commitment to service excellence.

Figure 3. Project Map Professionalism in the work environment



Interview findings further reveal that discipline is perceived as essential to maintaining public trust. One informant stated:

"We are required to arrive on time and complete daily reports according to the schedule. This has become part of our moral responsibility as civil servants."
(Informant 2)

This statement reflects an internalized awareness of professional roles and responsibilities, indicating that professionalism emerges not merely from formal regulations but from ethical self-consciousness.

Challenges and Expectations for Professionalism

Despite its importance, professionalism faces several challenges, including uncondusive working conditions, environmental disturbances, and high workloads. As one informant noted:

"Sometimes the work environment is not supportive, especially when systems encounter problems or service queues accumulate." (Informant 4)

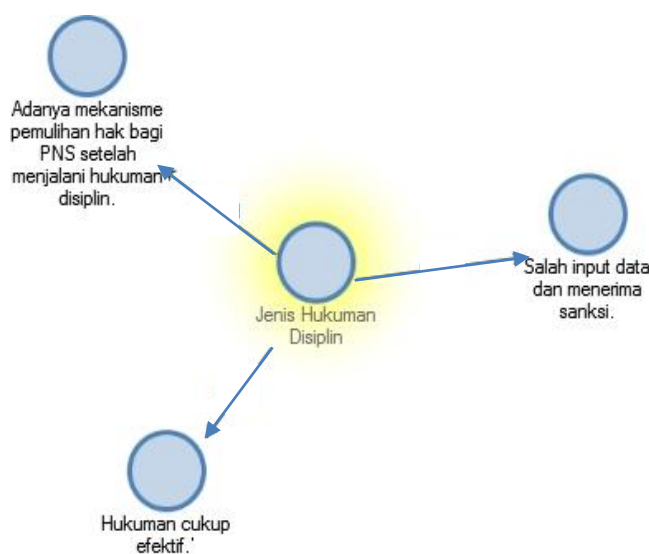
These challenges suggest that inadequate facilities and organizational conditions may hinder employee performance if not balanced by motivating leadership. At the same time, informants expressed strong expectations for improving professionalism through continuous training, supervision, and exemplary leadership. One informant emphasized:

"We hope there will be regular training and guidance so our competencies can continue to develop and our work becomes more effective." (Informant 3)

These findings align with previous research highlighting that professionalism is developed through the internalization of bureaucratic ethics, discipline, and moral awareness as key indicators of a professional work culture.

Discipline and Disciplinary Punishment

Figure 4 Project Map of Disciplinary Punishment



Based on the interview results, it was found that the implementation of disciplinary sanctions was deemed fair because it provided employees with an opportunity to improve themselves. Informants reported that employees who had been reprimanded typically showed positive changes in their work behavior.

As expressed by one informant:

"After being reprimanded, employees usually become more careful and don't make the same mistake again." (Informant 1)

Furthermore, the process of restoring rights after serving a sentence is considered fair because it provides employees with the opportunity to improve their performance without discrimination. This demonstrates that the punishment system is not only punitive but also educational.

Another quote illustrates this view:

"Yes, after the prison term is over, the employee's rights are restored. I think that's fair enough." (Informant 2)

Beyond the aspect of fairness, the effectiveness of disciplinary punishment is also evident in increased employee compliance with regulations after the punishment is imposed. Some employees become more cautious in their work to avoid repeating the same violation.

One informant said:

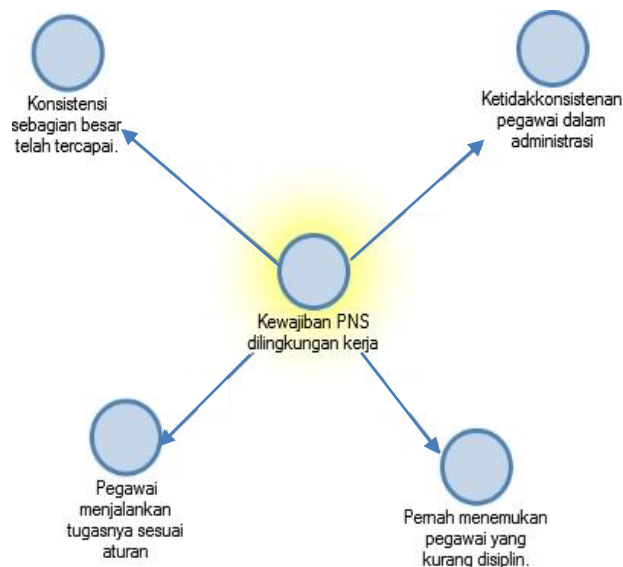
"There was once an employee who was often late, and finally received a written warning, and now he is diligent about coming in early." (Informant 3)

From these findings, it can be concluded that disciplinary sanctions play a significant role in shaping employee work behavior. However, it is also important to ensure that their implementation still takes into account fairness and opportunities for employees to improve.

This research is in accordance with the findings of (Ayunengsih et al., 2025) confirms that corrective and educational disciplinary sanctions have been shown to foster more disciplined work behavior. Through data triangulation, this study shows that employees who have received disciplinary sanctions tend to exhibit positive changes, such as increased punctuality and adherence to work procedures.

Obligations of civil servants in the work environment

Figure 5. Project Map of Civil Servant Obligations in the Work Environment



During the interviews, the author attempted to create a comfortable atmosphere so that informants could express their opinions openly. Some informants appeared enthusiastic when explaining their efforts to maintain discipline, while others were more cautious about mentioning existing obstacles. These interactions demonstrated a shared desire to improve the work system so that civil servant obligations can be carried out more effectively and consistently.

Discipline

Most informants described civil servants' obligations as being carried out quite well, particularly in terms of time management and job responsibility. Several informants also emphasized that discipline reflects professionalism.

"Employees are quite aware of their disciplinary obligations, especially regarding punctuality and attendance." (Informant 1)

Consistency

Consistency is a crucial factor in fulfilling obligations. However, some employees are still not entirely consistent, particularly when it comes to completing administrative reports.

"There are still employees who are not consistent in their administration, sometimes forgetting to submit reports on time." (Informant 2)

Responsibility

Informants assessed that the sense of responsibility was quite good. Most employees tried to carry out their duties according to regulations despite administrative constraints.

"Most of them have carried out their duties with a sense of responsibility, even though they are sometimes hampered by bureaucracy." (Informant 3)

Procedure Compliance

Employees also demonstrated compliance with work procedures. However, in some cases, lengthy administrative processes made their implementation less efficient.

"Sometimes it's a bit slow because it has to go through quite a long administrative procedure." (Informant 4)

Supervision

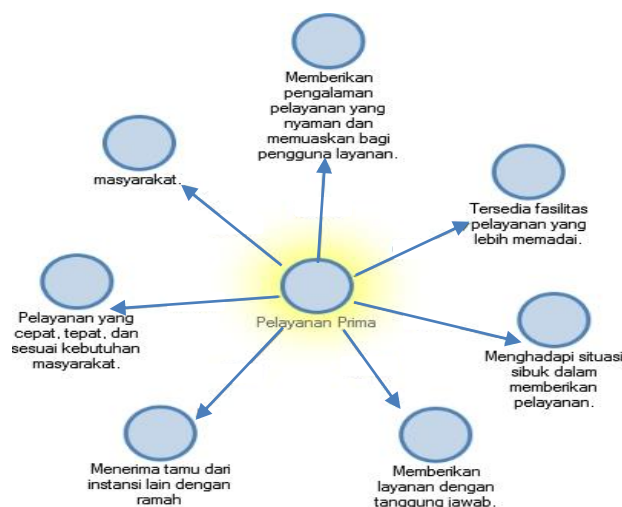
Several informants stated that supervision is key to ensuring consistent implementation of obligations. When supervision is lacking, discipline tends to decline.

"If supervision is stricter, employees are usually more disciplined and consistent." (Informant 5)

This research aligns with the findings of Ayunengsih et al. (2025), who concluded through a qualitative approach that civil servant compliance with work procedures is significantly influenced by leadership supervision and organizational culture. Consistent supervision encourages employees to be more disciplined, responsible, and compliant with applicable regulations, while weak supervision tends to decrease consistency in fulfilling obligations.

Excellent service

Figure 6. Excellent Service Project Map



This shows that ASN places responsibility for work as the core of excellent service, which is also closely related to work morality and professionalism .

"In my opinion, excellent service requires a quick response, Sis. Sometimes people come with urgent matters, so we have to be ready to serve them without delay. But yes, sometimes the problem lies in the system, such as a slow network or waiting for a superior's signature." Informant 1

Researchers noted that Informant 1 emphasized the importance of speedy service as a form of civil servant moral responsibility. During the interview, the informant appeared enthusiastic and provided concrete examples from personal experiences helping residents in need of prompt service.

"We've started using an online system now, so it's actually faster. It's just that some of my friends are still having a bit of a hard time adapting, not yet used to using the service app." Informant 3

From Informant 3's explanation, it appears that digital innovation is beginning to be implemented, although not yet optimally. The researcher believes that the shift to technology-based services still requires further guidance and training to ensure all employees adapt effectively.

"We're always reminded to be on time, especially when we're providing direct services to the public. Even a slight delay can impact the work of other departments. So, punctuality is crucial." Informant 4

Informant 4 demonstrated a strong commitment to punctuality. During the interview, the researcher observed the informant speaking while holding up a work schedule notebook, indicating that punctuality had become a work habit in the department.

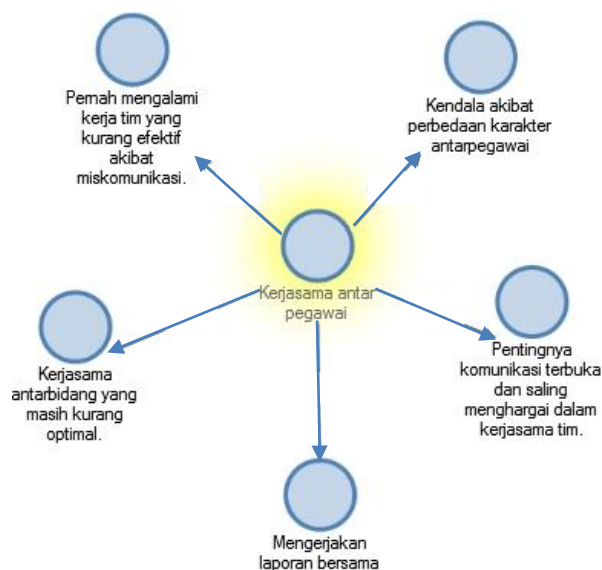
"I think responsibility is the most important thing. If you've been given a task, you have to complete it thoroughly. Because we serve the public, so we can't just do whatever we want." Informant 5

Researchers observed that Informant 5 spoke in a firm tone. This attitude reflects a high moral awareness of the civil servant's role as a public servant. The value of responsibility appears to be a primary foundation in carrying out their duties.

This research aligns with findings from Sedarmayanti (2020) , who explained that excellent service in the public bureaucracy is significantly influenced by the punctuality and commitment of civil servants (ASN) in carrying out their duties. This research shows that even the slightest delay in service can impact the effectiveness of other units and undermine public trust in government institutions.

Cooperation Between Employees

Gambar 7. Project Map Collaboration Between Employees



This shows that ASN understand the importance of a collective role in completing office work and maintaining harmony in the work environment.

"In our department, the collaboration is pretty good. Usually, when there's a big event, like a government event or an annual report, we all pitch in to help. No one sits back; everyone takes part." Informant 1:

Researchers noted that Informant 1 emphasized the values of togetherness and mutual cooperation. The interview was relaxed, with the informant smiling as he recalled moments of teamwork at office events. This indicates that the collective work culture remains strong within the agency.

"The most important thing is communication. Sometimes we work hard, but if we don't coordinate with other departments, the results can overlap. So usually, before we start working, we have a briefing together." Informant 2

Researchers believe that regular coordination is a crucial mechanism for maintaining team effectiveness. The informant spoke confidently while displaying a list of weekly meetings. This indicates a fairly robust internal communication system.

"If a friend is really busy, we help them. For example, if someone is working on a report, another friend can help with printing or preparing the data. After all, the work here is interconnected." Informant 3

The researchers' interactions with the informants were relaxed, with occasional chuckles when the informants shared examples of office situations. This reinforced the impression that mutual assistance is an unwritten culture within their work environment.

"It's not always smooth sailing; sometimes communication isn't working. There are misunderstandings, but they're usually resolved quickly. We don't want the work environment to become tense." Informant 4

Researchers noted that communication barriers still arose, despite being resolved through open dialogue. This demonstrates the maturity of employees in maintaining team harmony.

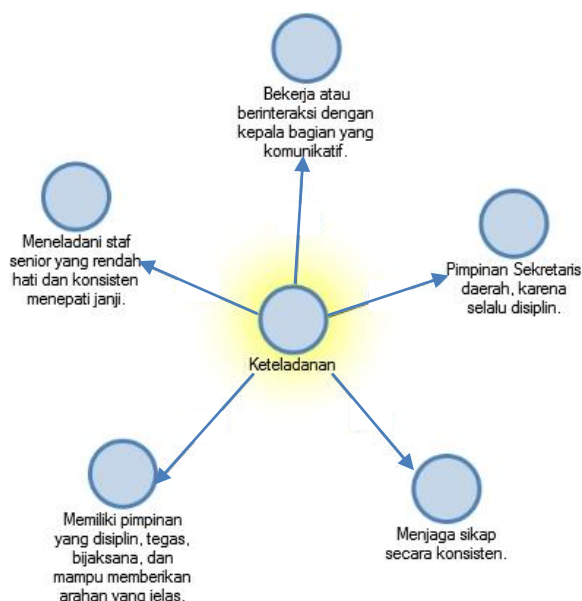
"Attendance is also a form of cooperation. If there's an office activity, everyone is encouraged to attend. Because if they're not present, the work becomes biased." Informant 5

During the interview, the informant appeared to seriously emphasize the importance of attendance at activities. This illustrates the employee's moral responsibility for the team's workload.

This research aligns with the findings of Ayunengsih et al. (2025), who concluded through a qualitative approach that employee presence and active participation in organizational activities are a tangible form of teamwork. Employees who demonstrate collective responsibility tend to be more concerned with shared workloads and strive to maintain work-life balance among team members.

Exemplary behavior

Figure 8. Exemplary Project Map



This indicates that employees assess role models primarily from how someone carries out their duties consistently, not just from the position they hold.

"I saw that our leader was disciplined. He came in early and left last. So we felt embarrassed if we were late. From that, I learned that being an example doesn't require a lot of talk, but through action." Informant 1

Researchers noted that leadership's exemplary behavior served as a source of motivation for other employees. During interviews, informants smiled admiringly and described the leader's presence as a "moral alarm" for employees. This demonstrates the social impact of disciplined behavior.

"For me, I try not only to manage my subordinates, but also to help them when they have difficult tasks. After all, I think being a role model means being willing to get involved, not just giving orders." Informant 2

Researchers observed the serious expressions of informants explaining the importance of solidarity. Exemplary leadership, in this context, means participatory leadership, leadership that sets an example through direct involvement, not simply through structural commands.

"The hard part is controlling your emotions. Sometimes there's a lot of work, but we still have to be friendly. If I get angry, my subordinates might misunderstand. So it's better to keep quiet and calm down." Informant 3

Researchers noted a reflective atmosphere in the interviews. Informants emphasized the role of emotional intelligence in exemplary behavior. In bureaucracy, self-control is a reflection of professional maturity.

"I try to be a role model in terms of dress, speech, and how I serve guests. Because if we're polite, guests will feel comfortable. I believe that small things can have a big impact." Informant 4

Researchers observed the informant speaking with a proud yet humble tone. This politeness is part of the ASN's soft skills, strengthening the agency's positive image in the public eye.

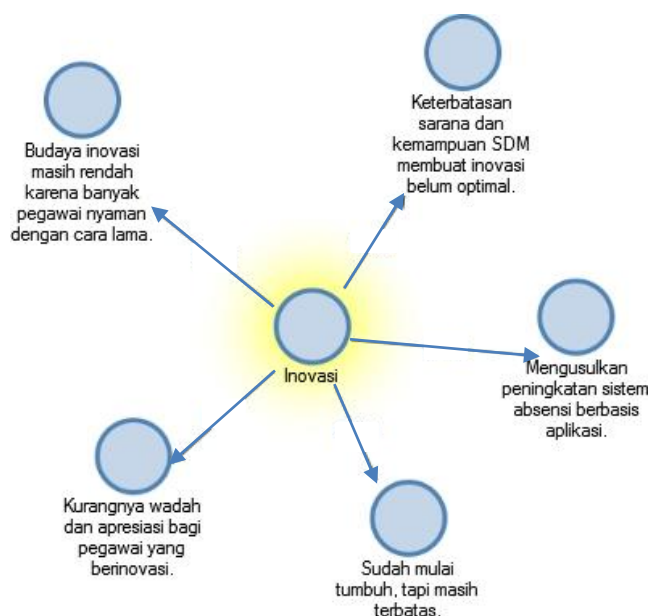
"In my opinion, being a role model isn't about position, but about consistency. There are ordinary employees who are more exemplary because they work neatly and never complain." Informant 5

Researchers found a common view that role models are not hierarchical. This indicates a shift in bureaucratic culture toward a more collective, behavior-oriented, rather than status-oriented, approach.

This research aligns with Sedarmayanti's (2020) findings, which reveal that exemplary behavior is not only related to the structural aspects of leadership but also to the leader's ability to build good interpersonal relationships, such as a willingness to help subordinates and maintain emotional stability when facing work pressure. Participative leadership, which sets an example through direct involvement, has been shown to increase trust and workplace solidarity.

Innovation

Gambar 9. Innovation in Work Project Map



From the researcher's observations, the work environment in this section requires employees to be able to adapt to the dynamics of public services and innovate so that organizational performance remains efficient and responsive to community needs.

Leadership Support for Innovation

Most informants believe that innovation can succeed thanks to support from leadership. This support takes the form of not only instructions, but also trust and space for employees to try new ideas.

"If our superiors give us space and trust us, we feel more motivated to find new ways to get the job done quickly." Informant 1

"Usually the leaders also help find solutions, not just give orders." Informant 2

From the researchers' interactions with employees, it was clear that leaders often offer simple forms of appreciation, such as direct praise, when new ideas are implemented. This reinforces a positive workplace culture and fosters employee confidence in innovation.

Utilization of Technology and Digital Tools

Technology has become a vital part of the work process. Employees are becoming accustomed to using computers, office applications, and digital-based reporting systems.

"Now reports are starting to be typed directly, sent via email, not using paper like before." Informant 3

"I help friends who don't understand computers, so everyone can use the digital system." Informant 4

Researchers noted that the atmosphere of mutual assistance in adapting to technology created a sense of community and increased work efficiency. However, not all departments had adequate facilities, particularly in terms of network access and equipment.

New Employee Ideas

Some employees actively contribute suggestions or new ideas to improve work systems. These ideas usually arise from everyday experiences.

"I once suggested creating a more concise report format, but it's still being used today." Informant 2

"If you have an idea, just share it, who knows, it might help you get the job done faster." Informant 5

Researchers observed that this culture of sharing ideas thrived on open relationships between employees. During several observations, researchers witnessed relaxed discussions among staff as they discussed how to create more efficient financial reports.

Limited human resources and facilities

Limited number of employees and work facilities are still the main obstacles in developing innovation.

"Sometimes we want to create something new but we don't have enough human resources, so the work piles up." Informant 3

"There is a good idea, but it can't be implemented because the tools are not available." Informant 1

Researchers found that some departments still rely on manual systems due to limited computer resources. This suggests that the commitment to innovation is not fully supported by adequate infrastructure.

Collaboration and Participation Between Employees

Innovation doesn't just come from individuals, but also from teamwork. Informants mentioned that discussions and collaborative activities among employees are crucial for generating new ideas.

"Usually, if there is a new assignment, we gather first and discuss it together so that the results are good." Informant 4 "

We help each other, so if one person has an idea, the others will help make it happen." Informant 2

Researchers noted that this collaborative work environment was also influenced by the leadership's open approach. During interviews, researchers participated in weekly staff meetings where new ideas were informally shared.

Bureaucratic and Procedural Barriers

Several informants complained about the long bureaucratic process, making it difficult to implement new ideas quickly.

"Just wanting to change the way we work requires a lot of approval, so sometimes I'm too lazy to try." Informant 3

"The rules are still rigid, even though the intention is only to make things more efficient." Informant 5

Researchers believe that a strict bureaucratic system remains a classic obstacle to public service. However, some employees are starting to adapt by finding creative ways to comply with regulations while remaining efficient.

Adapting to Work Changes

The process of adapting to new systems or innovative ways of working often takes time.

"At first I was confused, but after a while I got used to it." Informant 1

"If there are changes, the important thing is to help each other so that no one gets left behind." Informant 2

Researchers found that adaptation was quicker among younger employees. However, with a positive social approach, even older employees began to adapt to the new work patterns.

Expectations for Innovation Development

Almost all informants hope that innovation will continue to be developed and that creative employees will be rewarded.

"If possible, there should be innovation training, so we can upgrade our skills." Informant 5

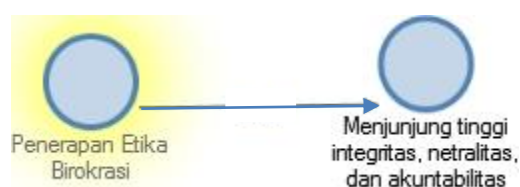
"I also want the ideas I implement to be appreciated." Informant 3

Researchers see great potential if this innovation is directed systematically, for example through internal training, idea competitions, or a reward system for creative employees.

This research aligns with the findings of Ayunengsih et al. (2025), who concluded through a qualitative approach that innovation in public bureaucracy is collaborative. Team discussions, mutual cooperation, and participation among employees are important tools for generating and realizing new ideas. Innovations developed collectively tend to be more easily accepted and sustainable.

Implementation of Bureaucratic Ethics

Figure 10. Project Map for the Implementation of Bureaucratic Ethics



Based on the results of interviews with five informants analyzed using *NVivo 12 Plus*, the main theme that emerged was "Implementation of Bureaucratic Ethics" which describes how State Civil Apparatus (ASN) maintains integrity, neutrality, and accountability in carrying out public service duties.

Integrity and Work Morality of ASN

Most informants emphasized that bureaucratic ethics are the basis of behavior at work.

"We're always reminded here to protect the agency's good name. For example, if we have personal matters, don't let them interfere with our work." (Informant 1)

The author observes that this statement demonstrates civil servants' moral awareness of their public responsibilities. The researcher notes how the value of integrity has become part of the work culture, instilled through leadership directives at every staff meeting.

Neutrality in Public Services

"Even though there's sometimes external pressure, we must remain neutral. We can't take sides, especially in the run-up to the election." (Informant 3)

From the results of the researcher's observations, it appears that neutrality is maintained through a multi-layered supervision system so that ASN are not involved in practical political activities.

Accountability and Responsibility

"Every activity report must be accountable, so we must be careful and honest in making it." (Informant 2)

Bureaucratic ethics are implemented through tiered reporting and document transparency, so that each employee is responsible for their work.

Compliance with Norms and Rules

"If there are new regulations from the regent, they are immediately disseminated. All employees are required to know and comply." (Informant 4)

The author views this compliance as indicating the existence of a strong organizational control system and strengthening the image of ASN professionalism.

Exemplary Behavior and Professionalism

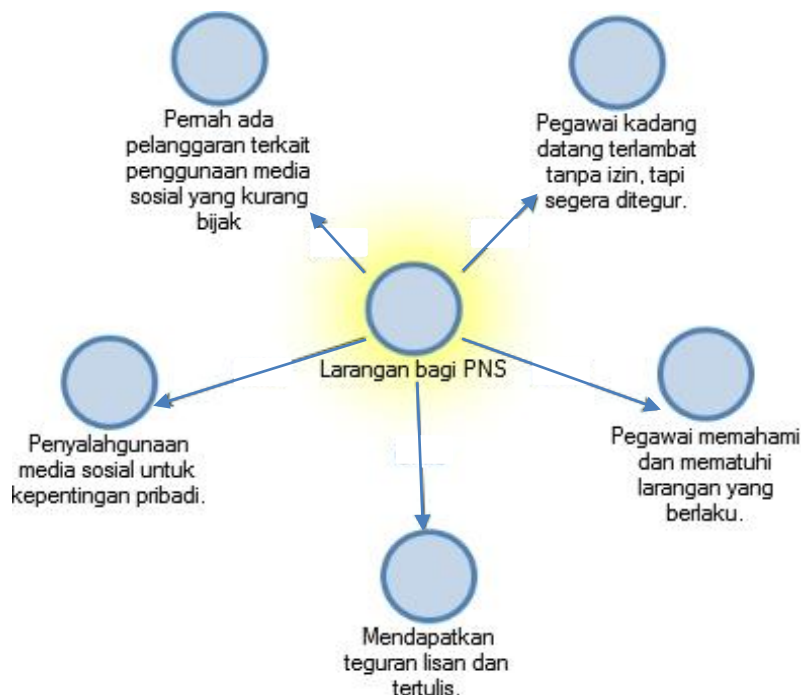
"Leaders usually set an example first, and then we follow. So if a leader is disciplined, we're also reluctant to relax." (Informant 5)

Direct interaction between researchers shows that a culture of exemplary behavior is a driving force for collective morals in implementing bureaucratic ethics.

This research aligns with Sedarmayanti's (2020) findings, which assert that the integrity and morality of civil servants' work are at the core of bureaucratic ethics. Her research shows that civil servants' awareness of upholding the agency's reputation and separating personal matters from official duties reflects the internalization of ethical values within the organization's work culture.

Prohibition for civil servants

Figure 11. Project Map of Prohibitions for Civil Servants



The prohibition on civil servants is a crucial part of implementing bureaucratic ethics to ensure state officials remain neutral, uphold integrity, and professional. Interviews with five informants, analyzed using NVivo 12 Plus, revealed various understandings and implementations of the prohibition on civil servants, divided into several main subthemes.

Understanding and Compliance with Civil Servant Prohibitions

Most informants indicated that they understood the rules regarding prohibitions for civil servants, such as prohibitions on practical politics, abuse of office, and use of social media for personal gain.

"We know we're not supposed to get involved in politics, especially posting things that could be considered support. So we're careful about selecting information."
(Informant 2)

Researchers observed firsthand how cautious employees were when speaking in public spaces and on social media. They tended to maintain their demeanor and the institution's image.

Minor Violations and How They Are Handled

Several informants acknowledged that minor violations still occur, such as being late for work or using social media for personal purposes. However, these violations are usually immediately followed up with verbal or written warnings.

"Sometimes people are late because of household matters, but usually they're just reminded or reprimanded. It's not serious." (Informant 1)

"There was also someone who updated their status with a bit of a slur, but was immediately called in by their superior." (Informant 4)

Researchers noted that the handling of violations was carried out in stages and humanely, starting with warnings, coaching, and then administrative action if they were repeated.

Employee Reprimands and Coaching

Reprimands are the most frequently used method to maintain discipline.

"Usually, if someone violates the rules, we give them a verbal warning first, and if they repeat the violation, we issue a written warning." (Informant 3)

Researchers observed that during office interactions, reprimands were delivered informally, often through light conversation, rather than harsh punishment. This suggests a familial approach to maintaining bureaucratic ethics.

The Role of Agencies in Enforcing Discipline and Ethics

Several informants considered that the role of leaders and agencies was very decisive.

"If there's a violation, the agency immediately issues a reprimand. Usually, this is done via an official letter from the management or personnel department."
(Informant 5)

The author observed how the warning reporting and documentation system is structured. Each violation is recorded for employee disciplinary evaluation purposes.

Expectations regarding the Supervision System

Informants hope that in the future there will be wiser and more systematic supervision so that employees do not easily slip into unintentional violations.

"Sometimes we don't know when the regulations change. So, monitoring must be accompanied by outreach so everyone understands." (Informant 2)

From the results of direct interactions, the author noted that this expectation indicates the desire of ASN to obey the rules as long as information and guidance are delivered in a clear and humane manner.

This research is in accordance with the findings (Sedermayanti, 2020) confirms that civil servants' understanding of prohibitions, such as political neutrality and social media use, directly impacts work behavior and the image of government institutions. This research shows that disseminating regulations and ongoing coaching can improve civil servants' compliance with applicable prohibitions.

Implementation of Work Culture

Figure 4.14. Project Map for Implementing Work Culture



Work culture is a key factor in shaping the performance of State Civil Apparatus (ASN) employees. Based on the analysis of interview data processed using NVivo 12 Plus software, it was found that the implementation of work culture within the Tojo Una-Una Regency Regional Secretariat reflects positive employee habits in carrying out their duties in a disciplined, professional, and responsible manner.

Discipline and Responsibility at Work

Interview results showed that employees have a strong understanding of the importance of discipline. They recognize that a good work culture cannot be formed instantly, but rather through consistent, nurturing habits.

"Here, we usually arrive on time, because we've been accustomed to discipline from the start. If we're late, it's embarrassing in front of our friends." (Informant 1)

"The task must be completed according to the target, so I try not to procrastinate."
(Informant 3)

During the researchers' observations, it was apparent that most employees arrived on time and immediately adapted to their daily work routine. This discipline wasn't simply a matter of rules, but had become a positive habit among them.

Professionalism in Carrying Out Duties

Professionalism is another hallmark of the work culture at the Regional Secretariat. Informants emphasized that working according to regulations and responsibilities demonstrates a moral commitment to public service.

"We always strive to complete work according to SOP. If there are any obstacles, we discuss them together so they can be resolved quickly." (Informant 4)

"Professionalism isn't just about ability, but also about attitude. If you make a promise, you keep it." (Informant 5)

From direct observation, researchers saw that employees tried to maintain open work communication and help each other so that work results remained efficient.

Coordination and Cooperation between Employees

Good cooperation between employees is evident, especially when facing heavy workloads. They support each other to ensure work runs smoothly.

"Working alone is definitely hard. So we usually divide up the tasks and help each other, especially when there's a big event." (Informant 2)

The interactions the author observed in the office showed a compact work dynamic, where informal coordination through light conversation actually strengthened teamwork.

Leadership Support for Work Culture

Informants also mentioned that leaders play a crucial role in maintaining a positive work culture. Moral support and leadership role models motivate employees to maintain their work ethic.

"The leader often sets a direct example. For example, if he arrives early, we automatically feel embarrassed if we're late." (Informant 3)

"If there is a work problem, the leader doesn't immediately get angry, but invites a discussion first." (Informant 5)

Researchers see that this participatory leadership pattern strengthens a positive work culture and creates a comfortable work atmosphere.

Expectations for Improving Work Culture

Although the work culture is already good, several informants hope that in the future there will be innovations in the work system, such as digitalizing attendance and performance monitoring.

*"If possible, we will use an online attendance system to make it more efficient."
(Informant 4)*

"The hope is that training activities can be held more frequently, so that employees can develop further." (Informant 2)

This hope shows that employees are aware of the importance of improving their quality and modern work systems.

This research aligns with Sedarmayanti's (2020) findings, which explain that discipline and responsibility are key indicators of successful work culture implementation in government agencies. Her research findings indicate that employees who are accustomed to working on time and completing tasks on target tend to have more stable and professional performance. Discipline, once habitual, fosters a positive work ethic without the need for constant, close supervision.

CONCLUSION

The key finding of this study reveals that work culture and bureaucratic ethics in public sector organizations are generally understood at a normative level but have not yet been fully internalized as consistent professional behavior. The main lesson drawn from this research is that ethical awareness alone is insufficient to sustain professional conduct without systematic reinforcement through leadership role modeling, continuous supervision, and structured organizational learning. Professionalism emerges not as an individual attribute in isolation, but as a collective outcome shaped by ethical discipline, collaborative work practices, and innovation-oriented environments. This study contributes to scholarly discourse by integrating perspectives from public administration and educational management, emphasizing organizations as learning systems where ethical values are cultivated through ongoing human resource development, ethical leadership, and reflective practice rather than mere regulatory compliance.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that open avenues for future research. The findings are based on a single case study and rely primarily on qualitative data, which may limit broader generalization across different public sector contexts. Future studies are encouraged to employ comparative or mixed-methods approaches to examine how work culture and bureaucratic ethics are internalized across diverse organizational settings. Further research may also explore the role of digital governance, performance-based incentives, and formal ethics education programs in strengthening sustainable ethical cultures within public institutions.

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