# Disparities in Village Apparatus Human Resources in Public Service Delivery in Bone Subdistrict, Bone Bolango Regency

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**ABSTRACT:** This study aims to analyze disparities in the human resources (HR) of village apparatus in public service delivery in Bone Subdistrict, Bone Bolango Regency, using the Human Capital Resources (HCR) framework with indicators of Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, and Experience (KSAE). A qualitative approach was employed, with data collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. Data analysis was conducted using the interactive model by Miles and Huberman, comprising data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal: First, in terms of knowledge, officials in Monano and Ilohuuwa Villages generally understand public service regulations and basic administrative procedures. However, in Waluhu Village, understanding of regulations is limited and not supported by an adequate internal training system. Second, regarding skills, operational competencies in using digital tools and village administration systems remain challenging, especially in Waluhu. Training has been unevenly distributed and not all relevant personnel have participated. Meanwhile, Monano Village is more adaptive to digital systems and efficient in financial reporting. Third, in the abilities aspect, village officials' capacity to respond to emergencies and adapt to policy changes remains ad hoc and lacks standardized operating procedures (SOPs). Officials also tend to react rather than proactively address policy directives. Fourth, in terms of experience, most officials have served for over five years and have prior work experience outside the village (e.g., as surveyors or entrepreneurs). However, there is no structured system for transferring experience to new personnel, and learning remains informal and unstructured.

**KEYWORDS:** HR disparities, public service, human capital resources, village governance, KSAE.

## INTRODUCTION

Public administration is a branch of applied social science that examines how state policies are implemented effectively and efficiently through government institutions, including at the village level. In the era of decentralization and regional autonomy, public administration emphasizes the importance of service delivery based on community needs. As part of the governmental system, village governments play a strategic role in delivering direct public services, particularly in managing village finances, developing development programs, and providing essential services such as healthcare, education, and infrastructure.

The effectiveness of public administration at the village level is heavily influenced by the institutional capacity of the village, particularly the quality of its human resources (HR). Public service management at the village level includes planning, implementation, evaluation, and control of services provided. This process requires a clear work system, integrity of officials, utilization of information technology, and sensitivity to citizen needs.

Unfortunately, many villages in Indonesia still face serious challenges, such as those in Bone Subdistrict, Bone Bolango Regency, where service quality is hampered by weak work systems and misalignment between the performance of officials and good governance principles.

In this context, HR quality becomes a key variable. HR should not only be viewed from the lens of quantity or formal education level but also from technical competencies, professional attitudes, institutional loyalty, and the ability to adapt to digital systems and policy changes. Disparities in HR quality between villages directly affect the inequality in public services received by communities.

Therefore, contemporary public administration studies require conceptual approaches that can comprehensively explain HR performance dynamics. One relevant approach is Human Capital Resources (HCR), as proposed by Ployhart & Moliterno [1]. This approach offers a multilevel framework to understand HR from the micro (individual attributes), meso (team social interaction), to macro (organizational structure and policy strategies) levels. HCR views HR as collective capital formed through the accumulation

and integration of individual attributes—knowledge, skills, abilities, and experience (KSAE). This model emphasizes transforming individual attributes into collective organizational strength.

The four KSAE components, as elaborated by Ployhart & Moliterno [1], are: (1) Knowledge—understanding data, processes, and facts through formal education; (2) Skills—competencies honed through training; (3) Abilities—the individual's comprehensive capacity to learn and develop; and (4) Experience—the ability to apply and transfer prior work experience into institutional contexts. Several prior studies affirm the importance of HR quality in village public services. Mahyudin et al. [1] identified weak apparatus capacity as a barrier in managing village funds. Rahayu et al. [2] highlighted limited technical capacity as an obstacle to service provision. Irawaty et al. [3] emphasized the importance of strengthening HR capacity to improve public service effectiveness.

Nevertheless, a research gap remains in the literature, particularly concerning the disparities in HR quality between villages within the same administrative area (e.g., subdistrict), especially from the theoretical perspective of HCR. This study addresses that gap by analyzing disparities in village apparatus HR in delivering public services based on the KSAE framework. Most previous research focuses more on general capacity building or digitalization, without dissecting the specific individual HR dimensions that cause structural disparities at the village level.

Preliminary findings in Bone Subdistrict, Bone Bolango Regency, reveal significant gaps between self-sufficient villages, developing villages, and underdeveloped ones. Various administrative issues found by the Inspectorate and the Audit Board of Indonesia (BPK) in 2024 reflect weak professionalism and role misalignment among village officials. Inaccuracies in financial reporting, verification delays, and bureaucratic practices influenced by personal relationships are evidence of serious HR quality disparities.

Although training and technical guidance have been implemented, the outcomes have not been optimal. Delays in responding to data requests, low levels of digitalization, and poor governance of Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes) and public facilities signal such disparities. Performance differences in Monano, Ilohuuwa, and Waluhu Villages further highlight the urgency of this study. By adopting the HCR approach and using these villages as case studies, this research seeks to reveal how variations in HR quality create disparities in public service effectiveness. Furthermore, it offers theoretical and empirical contributions to formulating KSAE-based intervention strategies that support inclusive, responsive, and sustainable village development.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Public Administration

Public administration is understood as a management process within government organizations to achieve state objectives [4]. Henry [5] adds that public administration is a combination of theory and practice that bridges the relationship between the government and the public and fosters responsive policymaking. Nigro & Nigro [6] emphasize the importance of cooperation among branches of government in the administration of governance. Based on these three views, public administration in this study is defined as a collaborative and normative activity involving theory, law, and management to optimize the government's service function to society.

### B. Public Service Management

Osborne & Gaebler [7] introduced the concept of entrepreneurial government, which emphasizes innovation and efficiency. Denhardt & Denhardt [6] proposed the New Public Service approach, placing citizen participation at the core of public service. Kettl [8] sees public service management as a strategic process rooted in governance and accountability. From these three perspectives, public service management is understood as a strategic process combining efficiency, public participation, and accountable governance to produce quality services.

### C. Public Service

Hood [9] defines public service as the government's effort to provide services efficiently and effectively. Frederickson [10] stresses equity and fairness in service delivery. Lipsky [11] focuses on the role of street-level bureaucrats in ensuring the quality of direct services to the public. These perspectives show that public service is not only about efficiency but also about social justice and the quality of interactions between the government and citizens in service delivery.

### D. Conceptualization of Human Resources (HR)

Dessler [12] emphasizes managerial functions such as recruitment, training, and performance evaluation in HR management. Armstrong [13] views HR as a strategic approach to achieving organizational goals. Storey [14] states that HR strategies must align

with organizational strategies to create competitive advantage. Based on these views, HR in this study is positioned as a strategic asset that must be systematically and sustainably managed to enhance organizational effectiveness and excellence.

### E. Conceptualizing Human Capital Resources (HCR) in a Multilevel Approach

The Human Capital Resources (HCR) approach, as proposed by Ployhart & Moliterno [1], presents a new paradigm in HR management. HCR views human resources not merely as individual entities but as collective capital formed from the accumulation and integration of individual attributes: knowledge, skills, abilities, and experience (KSAE).

The HCR model adopts a multilevel approach that links individual attributes (micro-level), social interactions within work units (meso-level), and organizational structures and public policy strategies (macro-level). This approach not only measures personal capacity but also assesses the extent to which individual attributes contribute to collective unit performance.

This concept also emphasizes the importance of creating a work environment that fosters knowledge sharing and exchange [15]. Cabrales et al. [16] even include non-cognitive dimensions such as values and motivation as part of the strength of HCR in the public sector.

Thus, HCR provides a conceptual framework capable of explaining disparities in organizational performance based on the distribution and integration of HR attributes. This model is highly relevant for examining disparities in HR quality among villages in public service delivery, as studied in this research.

## METHOD

This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach to explore in depth the disparities in human resources (HR) of village apparatus in public service delivery in Bone Subdistrict, Bone Bolango Regency, focusing on three villages with varying development statuses: Monano (self-reliant), Ilohuuwa (developing), and Waluhu (underdeveloped).

Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation studies involving village heads, officials, and local residents as key informants. The data were explored based on the dimensions of Human Capital Resources (HCR), namely knowledge, skills, abilities, and experience (KSAE), to map differences in HR capacities contextually.

Data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, involving data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, validated through triangulation, member checking, and peer debriefing. This method enables the researcher to understand not only the outcomes of public service but also the work processes, social interactions, and the influence of HR attributes on variations in service effectiveness at the village level.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

This study was conducted in three villages within Bone Subdistrict, Bone Bolango Regency, Gorontalo Province, selected based on the Village Development Index (IDM) classification. Monano is designated as a self-reliant village with relatively complete infrastructure and public services, as well as more competent apparatus HR. Ilohuuwa is categorized as a developing village with moderate public service quality, but still faces several limitations in HR management. Waluhu is considered underdeveloped, characterized by limited infrastructure and less qualified HR in terms of education, skills, and work experience. These three villages represent contrasting variations that illustrate disparities in HR capacity for public service in rural areas.

### A. Knowledge Aspect

There are significant knowledge gaps among village officials. In Monano, most personnel have at least a senior high school education, with some holding university degrees. They possess adequate understanding of village regulations, financial systems, and governance. In Ilohuuwa, knowledge among personnel is inconsistent; some understand basic service principles, but most lack mastery of technical rules or village administrative information systems. In Waluhu, most personnel have only completed junior high school, with some not finishing basic education, resulting in poor understanding of regulations and technology-based service systems.

### B. Skills Aspect

Village officials' skills also vary greatly. Officials in Monano are accustomed to using digital tools and administrative applications such as *Siskeudes* and electronic correspondence systems. In Ilohuuwa, some officials can operate computers and basic applications, but others still rely on manual systems. In Waluhu, digital skills are virtually nonexistent, and services are handled conventionally

and slowly. This condition reflects the unequal distribution of skills training and lack of technological infrastructure support in underdeveloped villages.

### C. Abilities Aspect

Individual capacity for problem-solving and initiative also differs. In Monano, officials exhibit high adaptability to public service dynamics and act independently. In Ilohuuwa, such abilities depend heavily on the village head's leadership, with limited initiative from other staff. In Waluhu, personnel are passive and show reluctance to act or respond to community needs without direct instruction, indicating weak personal and structural abilities in supporting service effectiveness.

### D. Experience Aspect

In terms of work experience, Monano officials have served for many years and have participated in various training programs across different government levels, contributing to their professionalism. In Ilohuuwa, some personnel are new and lack extensive experience in village administration, resulting in trial-and-error approaches. In Waluhu, most officials have short tenures and have not participated in any training or technical assistance, leading to limited work experience and negatively affecting the quality and continuity of public services.

## DISCUSSION

### A. Knowledge Aspect and Cognitive Disparities of Village Apparatus HR

The findings reveal significant disparities in knowledge among village officials. This supports Ployhart & Moliterno's [1] view that Human Capital Resources (HCR) are formed through individual knowledge as part of the KSAE (Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, Experience) framework. In Monano Village, officials' sound understanding of regulations and governance reflects an accumulation of cognitive capital, as theorized by Dessler [12] and Noe et al. [17], who assert that education and training are vital components in developing strategic HR competencies. Conversely, in Waluhu Village, poorly educated officials who lack regulatory understanding reflect disparities that undermine the village's institutional capacity. This highlights that knowledge inequality has a direct impact on the quality of public services.

The discussion on the knowledge dimension emphasizes the uneven distribution of cognitive capital across regions. Monano and Ilohuuwa Villages show strong tendencies to internalize regulations and formal procedures as a form of knowledge-based governance. According to Ployhart & Moliterno [1], knowledge in HCR has transformed from a personal attribute into a systemic collective asset. This is corroborated by Mahyudin et al. [1], who stress the importance of regulatory comprehension in building service accountability. In contrast, Waluhu Village exhibits weak regulatory knowledge accumulation, where service delivery relies on undocumented informal practices, as also described by Rahayu et al. [2] and Irawaty et al. [3].

The HCR approach further implies that knowledge capital alone is insufficient without institutional facilitation. Therefore, proper documentation systems, formal SOPs, and internal service manuals are prerequisites for establishing knowledge capital. This aligns with NCES [18] principles of professional public administration, where documentation is key to bureaucratic continuity and transparency. Wantu [19] adds that the lack of knowledge among village officials often stems from politically motivated recruitment, which disregards competence standards and undermines cognitive capital from the outset.

Mozin & Nggilu [20] highlight that institutional transformation requires mastery of fundamental institutional knowledge. Their research in higher education reveals that understanding regulations and structural responsibilities is equally crucial in village public service. Kamuli, Mozin, & Dotutinggi [21] also emphasize the importance of regulatory understanding among village staff to strengthen institutional autonomy. Inadequate regulatory literacy often leads to dependence on external actors and inhibits service independence. Hamim et al. [22] find that low regulatory literacy is a major barrier to village service delivery, with many procedures not adhering to formal standards—strengthening the evidence for knowledge disparities among villages.

### B. Skills Aspect and Technical Competency Gaps

Differences in technical skills, particularly in information technology usage, reaffirm Hood's [9] argument about the necessity of efficiency and bureaucratic competence under the New Public Management framework. In Monano, officials proficient in operating public service applications demonstrate capacity for faster and more structured service delivery. In contrast, limited skills in Waluhu signify basic service capability deficits, in line with Dwiyanto [23] and Thoha [24], who argue that quality service depends on measurable and systematic work skills.

This situation indicates the urgent need for standardized and sustainable training programs. Armstrong [13] emphasizes that work skills are outcomes of strategic HR approaches aimed at cultivating a workforce capable of advancing public organizational goals. The lack of training in underdeveloped villages illustrates a weak HR policy orientation toward empowering village officials comprehensively.

Gaps in digital and administrative skills are a primary indicator differentiating advanced from lagging villages. Monano and Ilohuuwa demonstrate high technical competence in applications like *Siskeudes* and digital archiving systems, which enhance service processes. In the HCR framework, this represents high functional capital that can be institutionalized. Conversely, Waluhu still relies on manual methods, consistent with findings by Rahayu et al. [2] and Irawaty et al. [3] on skill limitations as barriers to digital service transformation.

Standardized skills, as discussed by Bovaird & Löffler [25] and Sedarmayanti [26], are essential to avoid dependence on individual personnel. Ongoing training systems and skill-sharing cultures are pathways to capability-based development. In this context, skills are not just technical tools but bridges between individual capacity and institutional output. Wantu [19] also emphasizes that poor investment in technical training results in inconsistent service skills, as training tends to be sporadic and detached from long-term HR strategies.

Mozin & Nggilu [20] observe that tech-based transformation in higher education is viable only with strong digital literacy—an equally relevant principle for digital public service in villages. Kamuli et al. [21] recommend practical and continuous training to ensure village officials understand and apply service technologies. Hamim et al. [22] find that poor technical skills often lead to manual, inefficient services that frequently draw public complaints.

## C. Abilities Aspect and Adaptive-Anticipative Capacity

Findings show that officials' adaptive capacity is strongly influenced by work environment and personal competence. Monano officials exhibit strong initiative, aligning with Grant & Verona's [27] HR-as-change-agent framework. This also supports Denhardt & Denhardt's [6] New Public Service approach, which underscores proactive, citizen-oriented service.

In contrast, Waluhu's passive officials indicate a failure to internalize public service values, echoing Frederickson's view (in Bryson et al. [28]) that quality public service must be grounded in social justice and ethical awareness. The inability to adapt also reflects shortcomings in organizational learning [29] and the failure to integrate HR as a collective force in public institutions [30].

The abilities dimension reflects adaptive capacity and service flexibility. Monano and Ilohuuwa have implemented work rotation and delegation, accelerating service response. This aligns with the HCR concept of shared capacity by Ployhart & Moliterno [1], in which decision-making and situational judgment thrive under enabling systems. Mahyudin et al. [1] similarly link structural flexibility to sustainable service delivery.

In Waluhu, low responsiveness stems from overdependence on the village head. The absence of queuing systems, task delegation, and adaptive SOPs reflects organizational failure to create an enabling environment that fosters individual initiative. Rahayu et al. [2] find that village officials' poor adaptability is a serious issue in complex service settings. Wantu [19] criticizes centralized bureaucracies for limiting staff initiative, where adaptive capacity is hindered by rigid, innovation-averse cultures.

Mozin & Nggilu [20] stress that adaptive capacity is essential to navigate institutional change. Without it, structural reforms remain only on paper. Kamuli et al. [21] observe that officials develop adaptability only after work rotations and simulation-based training. Without such training, they remain passive and reactive. Hamim et al. [22] find that the absence of decision-making capacity and emergency response mechanisms causes service interruptions when the village head is absent.

## D. Experience Aspect and Professional Service Disparities

Work experience has a direct impact on service continuity and quality. According to Ployhart & Moliterno [1], experience enhances the ability to apply knowledge and skills in practical service contexts. Monano officials with long tenures and formal training exhibit greater institutional capacity than Waluhu's untrained officials.

Torrington et al. [31] emphasize long-term HR development, where accumulated experience becomes social and professional capital. This disparity affects public service responsiveness, aligning with Kettl's [32] assertion that accountable, high-impact service requires practical experience and strategic governance.

Experience in public service forms a vital capital that fosters responsiveness, efficiency, and institutional resilience. Monano and Ilohuuwa demonstrate informal mentoring, case documentation, and routine evaluation, indicating strong experiential capital.

Mahyudin et al. [1], Rahayu et al. [2], and Irawaty et al. [3] also stress that work experience underpins adaptive bureaucratic practices, especially in digital governance.

In contrast, Waluhu fails to institutionalize experience. The lack of service logs or case archives hampers knowledge transfer and learning. This leads to stagnant service and repeated avoidable errors. From the HCR perspective, strengthening the experience dimension is a strategic investment in service continuity. Wantu [19] warns that village institutions' failure to document and leverage experience reflects a weak system of succession and organizational learning, which should be the basis for regeneration in public service.

Mozin & Nggilu [20] explain that accumulated work experience is foundational to institutional learning. Institutions that capture and apply past best practices are more resilient. Kamuli et al. [21] emphasize documenting officials' experiences to prevent stagnation during personnel changes, recommending institutional memory mechanisms. Hamim et al. [22] reveal that the absence of case documentation and mentoring systems makes it difficult for new officials to adapt, leading to inconsistent service delivery over time.

### E. Implications for Public Service and Administrative Reform

Disparities in village apparatus HR across the four HCR dimensions systematically affect public service delivery. In line with Rosenbloom [33] and Lipsky [34], quality public service requires a combination of bureaucratic competence, democratic values, and hands-on community experience. These disparities highlight the need to reform HR management systems at the village level, prioritizing collective capacity-building approaches as recommended by Bovaird & Löffler in Peters & Pierre [25].

Moreover, effective public service demands HR management based on public values and equitable access, as theorized by Selznick in Hill & Lynn [35]. Without systemic policy interventions, disparities in HR quality will perpetuate service inequality and undermine inclusive village development.

Wantu [19] suggests that village recruitment and career development systems must be detached from local political interests, promoting merit-based rather than loyalty-based service. Mozin & Nggilu [20] argue that institutional reform requires synergy between personal capacity, organizational structure, and experiential sustainability—stating that transformation without qualified HR is mere rhetoric. Kamuli et al. [21] advocate for empowerment-based reform policies, involving officials in service system formulation and evaluation. Hamim et al. [22] recommend village reform through strengthened service regulations, performance audits, and direct mentoring by relevant agencies as part of public service restructuring.

### CONCLUSION

1. Knowledge Dimension: Village officials in Bone Subdistrict, particularly in Monano and Ilohuuwa, possess a sound understanding of public service regulations and procedures, as reflected in the routine use of written documents and SOPs. This is evidenced by existing SOPs, dispatch books, and standardized letters. Waluhu Village, however, still relies on undocumented informal practices, indicating weak formal knowledge in service delivery.

2. Skills Dimension: There is a regional gap in officials' technical skills, with Monano and Ilohuuwa excelling in the use of computerized systems, *Siskeudes* applications, and well-organized digital archiving. Conversely, Waluhu lags with fully manual service processes, unclear SOPs, and weak documentation and workflow systems.

3. Abilities Dimension: Monano and Ilohuuwa officials demonstrate strong adaptive capabilities through institutional practices like job rotation, queueing systems, and delegated authority that enhance service flexibility. These are evidenced by readiness to serve and rapid task distribution. Waluhu still struggles, with unstructured workflows and full reliance on leadership for decision-making.

4. Experience Dimension: Work experience in Monano and Ilohuuwa contributes to organized workflows and quality responses, supported by informal mentoring and case documentation. These include role-sharing between senior and junior staff and documented service evaluations. Waluhu, however, lacks systems for documenting and transferring experience, resulting in unsystematic learning and service improvement.

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