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Human Resource Capacity of The Indonesian National Police in Law Enforcement: A Case Study at The Criminal Investigation Unit of Polrestabes Semarang

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Abstract: This study examines the human resource (HR) capacity of the Criminal Investigation Unit (Satreskrim) of Polrestabes Semarang in law enforcement, encompassing four analytical dimensions: technical competence, integrity, professionalism, and adaptability. Using an empirical juridical qualitative approach with semi structured interviews conducted with four active Satreskrim personnel, the findings reveal an asymmetric capacity condition. HR capacity is relatively adequate for handling conventional crimes but faces serious gaps in dealing with contemporary criminal challenges, particularly digital based crimes. The study identifies structural factors contributing to integrity vulnerabilities, including budget shortfalls, supervisory weaknesses, and workload imbalances, that frame ethics violations not merely as individual failures but as systemic issues. Professionalism is demonstrated through procedural adherence, though constrained by excessive caseloads and training that does not fully address field realities. Adaptability is the most critically deficient dimension, with informal learning mechanisms insufficient to address rapidly evolving crime patterns. This study proposes a three layer HR capacity improvement strategy: reformed competency based recruitment, customized structured training (prioritizing digital forensics), and a strengthened integrity and accountability system including whistleblowing mechanisms and investigator welfare improvements.

Keyword: HR Capacity, Law Enforcement, Criminal Investigation, Integrity, Digital Forensics.

INTRODUCTION

Law enforcement in Indonesia constitutes the primary foundation for guaranteeing social order, justice, and legal certainty for the public (Waluyo, 2022). Although the national legal system has been constructed upon a comprehensive constitution and statutory framework, its implementation continues to face multiple constraints, including complex

procedures, limited resources, high caseloads, and procedural violations that erode public trust.

The Indonesian National Police (Polri) occupies a strategic position as the frontline of law enforcement and the intermediary between legal norms and social reality, making the quality of officer performance directly influential upon the effectiveness of the criminal justice system (Cahyani, 2025). This reality is concretely reflected in Semarang, where two members of Polrestabes Semarang were designated as suspects for alleged extortion of a young couple in West Semarang, an incident that went viral on social media and exposed profound weaknesses in officer integrity, internal oversight, and institutional capacity (Kompas, 2025).

Polrestabes Semarang operates as a major city police precinct covering 16 sub districts within Semarang City. As a metropolitan center and economic hub in Central Java, Semarang is characterized by high population density, social mobility, and complex criminality dynamics. The Criminal Investigation Unit (Satreskrim) handles an average of over 4,000 police reports annually, encompassing crimes ranging from conventional offenses to rapidly growing digital crimes, particularly following the COVID-19 pandemic (Polda Jawa Tengah, 2024).

Prior academic research has examined various dimensions of Polri's HR capacity. Dewi (2025) analyzed digital leadership in HR management at Polresta Magelang; Azis et al. (2024) measured the public trust index across Polri's five operational functions nationally; and Rustandi and Suriani (2022) studied bureaucratic reform in the South Sulawesi Regional Police. However, these studies remain limited in their failure to integrate the four dimensions of investigator HR capacity, technical competence, integrity, professionalism, and adaptability, as an interconnected analytical framework within a specific metropolitan operational context. This research addresses that gap by providing a comprehensive, empirically grounded analysis specific to the Satreskrim unit of Polrestabes Semarang.

This study is guided by three research questions: (1) What are the actual conditions and challenges of HR capacity at the Satreskrim Polrestabes Semarang in law enforcement? (2) How do technical competence, professionalism, integrity, and adaptive capacity contribute to responsive, accountable, and innovation based law enforcement? (3) What HR capacity improvement strategy model can be formulated that is implementable, measurable, and sustainable?

METHOD

This study employs an empirical juridical qualitative research approach, combining legal normative analysis of relevant statutes and doctrines with empirical field data. The research design is descriptive analytical, systematically describing and evaluating the alignment between legal theory, regulatory frameworks, and field realities (Zainuddin & Karina, 2023).

Data was collected from two complementary sources. Primary data was obtained through semi structured interviews with four active Satreskrim Polrestabes Semarang personnel representing varied ranks, experience levels, and educational backgrounds. Secondary data was gathered from official police documents, statutory regulations, and relevant academic literature.

The four informants were: (1) IPDA Taufan Prabowo, A.Md., S.H., Sub-Unit Head 2 of Unit II Satreskrim, 21 years of service; (2) Aiptu Yubaidi, S.H., unit member, 10 years of service; (3) Brigpol Wendi Setyawan, unit member, 5 years of service; and (4) Briptu Danang Aji Massaid, S.Psi., Administrative Officer of Satreskrim, 8 years of service. This diversity of informants enabled a multidimensional perspective on actual HR capacity conditions.

Data analysis employed a juridical qualitative approach, integrating interpretation of legal regulations, legal doctrines, and field data to identify relationships between HR capacity and law enforcement effectiveness. Data were categorized, comparatively analyzed, and synthesized to produce conclusions and implementable strategic recommendations.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Technical Competence Conditions

The research findings reveal a dualistic condition in investigator HR capacity at Polrestabes Semarang. Personnel with longer service records tend to possess adequate competence for handling conventional cases, while junior investigators exhibit significant technical competency gaps, particularly in digital forensics. A critical structural finding concerns workload imbalance: one investigator assistant may handle 3 to 5 complaints per month while simultaneously performing administrative functions, external coordination, and examinations, a condition that structurally weakens the quality of individual investigations (Danang Aji Massaid, interview 2026).

IPDA Taufan Prabowo noted that some investigators and investigator assistants have not yet obtained formal investigation competency certificates. This indicates that competence held by many personnel is empirical informal rather than formally standardized, potentially creating significant quality variation across investigators. The root causes identified include individual factors, particularly reluctance among junior personnel to continuously study applicable laws, and systemic factors related to unequal access to formal training and development programs (Yubaidi, interview 2026).

Digital Crime Readiness

All informants consistently identified readiness to handle digital based crimes as the most critical gap requiring immediate attention. IPDA Taufan Prabowo explicitly stated that investigator preparedness for digital based crimes has been inadequate due to insufficient specialized training and equipment. This is particularly serious given data indicating significant increases in digital crime in the Semarang region during 2020 to 2024, including online fraud, account hacking, and illegal financial transactions through digital platforms.

The gap between digital competence requirements and actual personnel capacity creates potential case backlogs and weakened law enforcement effectiveness in the cyber domain. Briptu Danang identified insufficient infrastructure as the primary constraint, not merely personal competency deficits, indicating a systemic problem requiring investment at both human and infrastructural levels simultaneously.

Integrity and Ethics Compliance

The integrity dimension constitutes a central focus of this research, given the extortion case involving Polrestabes Semarang officers that prompted this investigation. All informants framed ethics violations normatively as individual problems rather than systemic failures. However, their substantive responses identified structural factors contributing to vulnerability: budget shortfalls, pressure from superiors, excessive workloads, and weak active supervision (Danang Aji Massaid, interview 2026).

This finding reveals a cognitive contradiction: informants narratively frame violations as individual failures, likely reflecting institutional messaging that emphasizes personal accountability to protect organizational reputation, while substantively identifying structural conditions that make violations more probable. Newburn's (1999) framework, which identifies occupational pressure and opportunity structure as key contextual factors in integrity violations, aligns closely with these findings.

A significant systemic gap identified concerns the absence of a structured, protected whistleblowing mechanism. Brigpol Wendi Setyawan candidly acknowledged that a formal reporting mechanism does not currently exist and must be cultivated from individual officer initiative, a highly unreliable variable under conditions of institutional pressure. The absence of such mechanisms drives personnel to depend on individual moral awareness rather than structural safeguards.

Professionalism in Investigation Practice

Professionalism was analyzed through four indicators identified by Skogan and Frydl (2004): lawfulness, effectiveness, equity, and efficiency. All informants indicated commitment to SOP compliance as the foundation of professionalism. IPDA Taufan Prabowo emphasized conducting investigation functions according to SOP, providing periodic case development reports, and maintaining communicative wisdom toward victims, witnesses, and suspects.

However, the most frequently encountered bottlenecks in case handling involve fraud and embezzlement cases intersecting with civil disputes, and falsification cases involving land ownership disputes requiring coordination with external agencies (BPN, Distaru, Kejaksaan). These coordination demands extend investigation duration and require cross institutional competencies not uniformly possessed by all investigators.

Training quality gaps were also identified: Briptu Danang explicitly noted that technical investigation training currently fails to adequately address field realities, as training and field practice encounter many varied and complex factors. This indicates a mismatch between standardized generic training curricula and Semarang's specific operational environment.

Organizational Adaptability

Adaptability, the capacity of investigators and the organization to adjust to evolving crime dynamics, exhibits the largest gap based on research findings. Existing organizational learning mechanisms remain informal and reactive, without proactive structured systems to anticipate emerging crime patterns.

Three complementary layers of adaptability problems were identified: infrastructure constraints (equipment and facilities), competence gaps (technical training), and motivational factors (willingness to learn and adapt). These three layers are interdependent: infrastructure investment without accompanying training is ineffective, while training without supporting infrastructure cannot be optimally applied. Bayley and Nixon's (2010) five pillars of police adaptation, tactical innovation, technological transformation, external partnerships, community orientation, and continuous HR development, highlight that HR development is the foundational pillar upon which the others depend.

The Four Dimensional HR Capacity Model

Based on the synthesis of field findings, this research proposes an analytical model of investigator HR capacity comprising four interacting dimensions: technical competence, integrity, professionalism, and adaptability. These dimensions do not operate independently: high technical competence without strong integrity risks producing investigators who exploit legal knowledge for personal gain; good integrity without adequate technical competence produces well motivated but ineffective investigators; and low adaptability progressively erodes the relevance of existing technical competence.

Table 1. Summary of Research Findings by HR Capacity Dimension

Dimension	Actual Condition	Primary Gap	Inhibiting Factors
Technical Competence	Adequate for conventional cases; uneven distribution; many lack certification	Digital forensics competence severely lacking	Minimal digital training; unequal training access
Integrity	Normatively assessed as good; positive culture	No formal whistleblowing mechanism; reactive supervision	Economic pressures; superior demands; weak active oversight
Professionalism	SOP followed; community communication adequate	Excessive workload; training insufficient for field demands	Case distribution not always competency based; HR shortage
Adaptability	Informal learning from seniors operational	Digital readiness very low; learning mechanisms reactive	Inadequate digital infrastructure; no proactive anticipation system

Source: Compiled from Interview Data (2026)

Strategic Improvement Model

Based on the synthesis of all research findings, this study proposes a three layer HR capacity improvement strategy that must be implemented synergistically.

The first layer concerns reformed recruitment and placement systems. Reskrim personnel recruitment needs to be redesigned to place competence, motivation, and integrity as primary selection criteria, rather than mere personnel availability or seniority. As Brigpol Wendi Setyawan articulated, personnel entering Reskrim should genuinely want to be there, as intrinsic motivation substantially reduces ethics violation risk. multidimensional assessment instruments, including behavioral event interviews and ethical situational judgment tests, should supplement or replace cognitive only testing.

The second layer involves structured, customized competency development. The most pressing priority is comprehensive digital forensics training accompanied by adequate technological infrastructure. IPDA Taufan Prabowo specifically recommended training focused on digital based investigation and the tools needed for case resolution. Beyond technical training, existing case review (gelar perkara) and FGD mechanisms with the Criminal Justice System should be formalized as regular organizational learning forums, expanding to include ethical dilemma discussions that build both competence and integrity simultaneously.

The third layer concerns strengthening the integrity and accountability system through three concurrent components: (1) establishment of a protected, structured internal whistleblowing mechanism; (2) transition from reactive to proactive supervision capable of detecting early integrity risk indicators; and (3) investigator welfare improvement as preventive strategy against economically motivated misconduct. Aiptu Yubaidi explicitly identified investigator welfare improvement as the priority intervention for strengthening integrity.

This three layer model is consistent with Stone and Ward's (2000) capacity based police reform approach, which identifies that structural and procedural reforms alone fail without genuine development of personnel competencies, values, and capabilities. Tyler's (2006) procedural justice theory further supports the model's integrity component, demonstrating that public trust in police institutions is built primarily through consistency, neutrality, transparency, and dignified treatment, outcomes dependent on investigator integrity and professionalism.

CONCLUSION

This research concludes that investigator HR capacity at the Satreskrim Polresta Semarang is characterized by three primary findings. First, an asymmetric capacity condition exists: the unit is relatively adequate for conventional crime handling but faces serious gaps in contemporary criminal challenges, especially digital based crimes. Workload imbalances, uneven competency distribution, and technological infrastructure limitations compound these gaps structurally.

Second, ethics violations cannot be reduced to individual moral failures alone; they reflect systemic conditions including budget shortfalls, inadequate supervision, and occupational pressures. The absence of structured whistleblowing mechanisms represents the most critical institutional vulnerability. The four dimensions of HR capacity, technical competence, integrity, professionalism, and adaptability, are interdependent, meaning optimization requires simultaneous attention to all four rather than sequential or isolated interventions.

Third, a three layer HR capacity improvement strategy is proposed: competency based recruitment reform, customized and structured competency development with digital forensics as the immediate priority, and an integrity and accountability system strengthening encompassing whistleblowing mechanisms, proactive supervision, and investigator welfare improvement. This model offers both theoretical contribution to police studies scholarship and practical guidance for Polresta Semarang policymakers seeking to enhance law enforcement effectiveness in a complex metropolitan context.

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