

Assessing the Effectiveness of Preventive Oversight by the Regional Inspectorate in Combating Corruption in South Papua, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of the Regional Inspectorate of South Papua Province in implementing preventive oversight as a strategic measure to combat corruption from the early stages of institutional development. As a newly established autonomous region, the reinforcement of internal control systems is critical to building transparent and corruption-free governance structures. The findings reveal that the effectiveness of corruption prevention remains hindered by structural challenges, such as a limited number of certified auditors, underdeveloped digital infrastructure, and insufficient budget support. Moreover, bureaucratic resistance and weak inter-institutional coordination have further constrained the impact of oversight functions. The study recommends a transformation of institutional capacity and bureaucratic culture through the enhancement of inspectorate competencies, the adoption of risk-based audits, and stronger political and regulatory backing. With the right strategies, preventive oversight can serve as the frontline defense in promoting public accountability and integrity in South Papua. This research contributes a novel perspective by focusing on the preventive supervision practices within a newly autonomous province, using a contextualized evaluative framework grounded in the principles of good governance. The findings provide both theoretical insights and practical recommendations for strengthening internal control mechanisms in regional bureaucracies, particularly those in transition.

Keywords: Corruption Prevention, Preventive Oversight, Regional Inspectorate, Structural and Cultural Barriers, Local Governance.

Introduction

Corruption represents one of the most serious threats to clean, transparent, and accountable governance. In many developing countries, including Indonesia, corrupt practices not only hinder economic growth but also weaken public institutions, erode public trust in the state, and contribute to systemic social inequality (Smidova et al., 2022). Corruption is defined as any act by an individual or entity that intentionally violates the law for personal or corporate gain, resulting in losses to the state's finances or economy.

As such, anti-corruption efforts have become a strategic priority in national development, closely tied to the strengthening of internal oversight systems aimed at preventing deviations from the outset. In this context, the Regional Inspectorate—as part of the Government Internal Supervisory Apparatus (APIP)—holds a critical mandate to conduct supervision, capacity building, and outreach through a preventive approach targeting local government organizations (Organisasi Perangkat Daerah/OPD).

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Supervision in the implementation of regional government affairs, particularly by the South Papua Provincial Inspectorate, reflects the vital role of oversight in promoting transparency and accountability at the subnational level. Despite facing numerous challenges, this function remains essential for reinforcing good governance.

As Janda and Masango (2024) note, the success of local government administration in fulfilling its responsibilities is highly dependent on full support from regional authorities, particularly in terms of resources and policies that enable effective oversight. This role becomes even more relevant in the context of South Papua, a newly established province resulting from territorial expansion, which is currently in the process of developing governmental infrastructure and urgently requires robust governance to avoid the pitfalls of maladministration and structural corruption.

In the early stage of institutional development, there is a significant opportunity to instill values of integrity through a robust and responsive oversight system to ensure effective corruption prevention (Kuipers, 2022). Despite its limitations, the Regional Inspectorate plays a crucial role in ensuring that the trajectory of bureaucratic development in this province remains aligned with the principles of good governance. Therefore, it is essential to critically examine how this institution formulates its supervisory strategies and aligns its role with the demands of local bureaucratic reform.

The core problem addressed in this study is the extent to which the Regional Inspectorate of South Papua Province is capable of effectively carrying out its preventive oversight function in deterring acts of corruption. This research is based on the assumption that the effectiveness of internal supervision is not solely determined by the existence of legal and institutional frameworks but is also heavily influenced by institutional capacity, the integrity of supervisors, and the responsiveness of local agencies to the guidance provided (Ulnicane et al., 2021).

Accordingly, this study seeks to answer several fundamental questions: Are the current supervisory mechanisms aligned with the principles of good governance? What are the structural and cultural barriers faced by the Inspectorate in fulfilling its duties? How do bureaucratic actors respond to preventive interventions? In addition, it is important to explore how the Inspectorate builds collaborative relationships with key oversight stakeholders, such as the Financial and Development Supervisory Agency (BPKP), the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK), and the Indonesian Ombudsman.

The success of preventive oversight cannot be achieved in isolation; it requires inter-institutional collaboration and adaptive approaches that are sensitive to local socio-political dynamics. According to Article 1(3) of Law No. 31 of 1999 in conjunction with Law No. 20 of 2001 on the Eradication of Corruption, "every person," including legal entities and public officials, may be held accountable under anti-corruption laws. Therefore, a holistic approach to addressing this issue is essential to fully understand the dynamics of oversight in newly established autonomous regions.

The objective of this study is to critically evaluate the effectiveness of oversight conducted by the Regional Inspectorate in preventing corruption in South Papua Province. This evaluation includes an analysis of the mechanisms, strategies, and impacts of the supervisory and advisory functions carried out by the Inspectorate. In addition, the research aims to identify systemic and technical barriers that affect the performance of oversight and provide applicable policy recommendations to strengthen the role of the Government Internal Supervisory Apparatus (Aparat Pengawasan Intern Pemerintah/APIP) as the front line in corruption prevention at the local government level.

This study also seeks to map the extent to which preventive approaches are effective in fostering an anti-corruption work culture within local bureaucracies. Given the complexity of development challenges in a newly established province—such as limited human resources, underdeveloped institutional infrastructure, and unique socio-political dynamics—evaluating the role of the Inspectorate becomes increasingly critical.

The findings of this research are expected to contribute not only theoretically to the development of governance and public oversight studies but also practically to the formulation of more accountable and integrity-driven regional policies, particularly in the context of new autonomous regions that are still in the process of institutional identity formation.

Studies on the effectiveness of the Regional Inspectorate's oversight in preventing corruption remain limited in academic literature, particularly those focusing on the implementation of oversight in newly autonomous regions like South Papua Province. Previous research has largely focused on the

prosecutorial role of law enforcement agencies or highlighted regulatory weaknesses without thoroughly examining the dynamics of APIP's internal operations in promoting an anti-corruption bureaucracy.

Singh (2022), for instance, frames oversight merely as a formal administrative function, without considering the cultural, social, and institutional dimensions that also determine the effectiveness of preventive supervision. This reveals a significant gap in our understanding of how internal oversight can be optimized as a sustainable anti-corruption tool.

This study seeks to fill the existing gap by offering an empirical analysis grounded in rich field data and a contextual theoretical framework, aiming to understand how institutional structures, bureaucratic behavior, and oversight effectiveness interact in practice. By doing so, it contributes to expanding anti-corruption discourse within the framework of decentralization, as reflected in Law No. 32 of 2004 on Regional Governance and Law No. 33 of 2004 on Fiscal Balance, which emphasize local authority and financial autonomy in Indonesia.

The primary novelty of this study lies in its focus on preventive oversight in a newly established region that is still undergoing institutional consolidation, as well as in the use of an evaluative framework grounded in the principles of good governance to assess the effectiveness of supervision. Good governance, at its core, is a concept of accountable decision-making and a collective consensus among government, society, and the private sector in managing public administration.

This study provides strong justification for strengthening the role of the Regional Inspectorate as a strategic actor in local-level bureaucratic reform and anti-corruption efforts. By positioning the Inspectorate not merely as an administrative executor but as a facilitator of integrity-based governance, this research seeks to enrich academic discourse while offering practical implications for regional oversight policy development.

The distinctiveness of this approach also reflects an awareness of the need to reconstruct the paradigm of public supervision—from one that is reactive and repressive toward a model that is proactive, participatory, and rooted in the cultivation of bureaucratic ethics. Through the case study of South Papua Province, it is expected that adaptive and context-sensitive oversight models may be identified and replicated in other regions facing similar challenges in the development of local government institutions.

Research Methodology

This study employed a **qualitative descriptive approach** with a **case study strategy** to explore, in depth, the effectiveness of preventive oversight implemented by the Regional Inspectorate in preventing corruption in South Papua Province. This approach enabled the researcher to investigate the social, cultural, and institutional dynamics that shape the implementation of preventive supervision within the context of a newly established autonomous region.

The **research setting** includes the South Papua Provincial Inspectorate and selected Local Government Organizations (Organisasi Perangkat Daerah/OPD) under its supervision. The **research subjects** consist of structural officials within the Inspectorate (auditors, inspectors, heads of audit divisions), OPD officials, and other relevant stakeholders, including members of the local legislative council (DPRD), representatives from civil society organizations (CSOs), and supervisory institutions such as the Financial and Development Supervisory Agency (BPKP) and the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK).

A total of **18 informants** were selected using **purposive sampling**, based on the inclusion criterion of having a structural role or direct involvement in internal supervision or institutional coaching. Informants who had served in their positions for less than six months were excluded. The composition of informants is as follows: 6 from the Inspectorate (including auditors and officials), 5 OPD officials, 3 DPRD members, 2 from BPKP, and 2 from local CSOs. This number was deemed sufficient given the **limited population of key supervisory actors** within the regional governance structure and allowed for representation across institutional levels.

Data were collected through **semi-structured interviews**, **direct observation** of audit and coaching activities, and **document analysis**, including quarterly audit reports, internal control (SPIP) documentation, and inter-agency coordination records. The data were analyzed using **thematic analysis** following the Braun & Clarke (2006) framework, which involves familiarization, coding, theme development, and interpretive synthesis to identify key patterns and relationships.

To strengthen the **credibility** of the findings, triangulation was applied across data sources, and cross-verification was conducted among informants. **Internal validity** was maintained through member checks and reflective notes, while **external validity** was enhanced by contextualizing the findings with relevant national oversight policies and comparing them to prior studies in similar governance settings.

This research also adhered to **ethical research principles**, including obtaining **informed consent**, maintaining **confidentiality and anonymity** of participants, and ensuring voluntary participation without coercion. All procedures conformed to accepted norms for qualitative research in the public sector.

To assess the effectiveness of the Inspectorate's role in preventive oversight, this study adopted an **evaluative framework inspired by the CIPP model (Context, Input, Process, Product)**. This model allows for a comprehensive assessment that connects the institutional context, available supervisory resources, implementation strategies, and observed outcomes. In addition, the study refers to the **APIP oversight framework** as outlined by BPKP, which emphasizes the maturity of internal control systems and the integration of risk-based audits in the prevention of corruption.

Results and Discussion

• General Conditions of the Regional Inspectorate of South Papua Province

The findings of this study indicate that the Regional Inspectorate of South Papua Province is currently in the early stages of institutional consolidation. As a newly established province formed through regional expansion, it is still in the process of developing governmental infrastructure and formalizing institutional arrangements. Within this context, the Regional Inspectorate bears a substantial responsibility for ensuring bureaucratic accountability from the outset of its formation, particularly in terms of auditor availability, digital infrastructure, and operational activities during the time of study, is summarized in the following table:

Table 1: The condition of the Regional Inspectorate, Papua Selatan Province

Aspect	Key Findings
Number of Auditors	20 (certified)
Digital Infrastructure	Minimal, no risk-monitoring dashboard in place
Average Quarterly Audits	8 audits per quarter (mostly non-risk-based audits)
Budget Allocation	Inadequate

The study further reveals that while the organizational structure of the Inspectorate has been formally established, substantive challenges persist. The limited number of auditors and the insufficient certification of Government Internal Supervisory Apparatus (APIP) remain major barriers to effective oversight. Of the total 20 auditors at the Inspectorate, only 7 individuals (35%) are certified at APIP Level 2, creating capacity constraints for serving all four regencies within the province.

Internal audit activities average eight audits per quarter, yet only three of these adopt a risk-based approach. Additionally, the Inspectorate does not yet have an integrated risk dashboard, relying instead on manual Excel-based reporting systems.

To enhance agency performance, the implementation of a structured Government Performance Accountability System (SAKIP) is essential. However, current institutional capacity limits progress toward such a system.

Interviews with structural officials within the Inspectorate highlight a shortage of auditors with formal training in public sector auditing and oversight. Furthermore, supporting infrastructure—such as audit software, IT networks, and institutional documentation—remains either under development or in the procurement phase. These limitations directly impact the effectiveness of supervisory functions, particularly in covering all Local Government Organizations (OPDs), which are geographically dispersed and difficult to access.

Moreover, in terms of budget, the Inspectorate has not yet received adequate funding to carry out comprehensive oversight activities. Budget constraints have led to a reduction in the frequency of internal audits and the postponement or downsizing of planned capacity-building activities. As a result, the effectiveness of preventive oversight is highly dependent on program prioritization and coordination with the Regional Secretariat and the Regional House of Representatives (DPRD), which determine budget allocations.

This situation illustrates that structural challenges in internal oversight are not limited to human resources or physical infrastructure. They also extend to strategic planning and long-term fiscal commitment. Without a well-calibrated institutional roadmap and sustained resource allocation, the performance of the Inspectorate will likely remain marginal. Therefore, integrating regional development policies with the institutional strengthening of oversight bodies is imperative. This will ensure that internal control functions move beyond mere administrative formalities and instead serve as a foundational pillar of accountable and transparent governance.

- **Implementation of Preventive Oversight Functions**

The preventive oversight function is carried out through several mechanisms, including regular audits, financial report reviews, budget implementation evaluations, as well as coaching and outreach activities for Local Government Organizations (Organisasi Perangkat Daerah/OPD). Audit findings are typically the result of discrepancies identified during inspection processes, where auditors uncover issues that deviate from generally accepted accounting standards.

Field observations and document reviews reveal that most of the regular audits conducted by the Inspectorate remain procedural and administrative in nature—primarily limited to assessing the conformity between budget realization reports and the official budget implementation documents (DPA). A risk-based audit approach has yet to be fully implemented due to limitations in both data and human resource capacity.

The initiatives have been undertaken by the Inspectorate leadership to strengthen preventive oversight by organizing SPIP workshops and risk management training for OPDs. These activities have been positively received, as several OPD informants reported a better understanding of good governance principles. However, such initiatives are not yet routine or structured and often depend on OPD requests or quarterly budget availability.

An evaluation of these coaching functions reveals that their impact on transforming bureaucratic behavior is still limited. This is partly due to OPDs perceiving the Inspectorate as a control body rather than a strategic partner, and the absence of post-intervention feedback mechanisms.

In the context of modern oversight, coaching functions should aim to foster an organizational culture that is risk-aware and accustomed to self-evaluation. Therefore, it is essential for the Inspectorate to develop monitoring and evaluation instruments to assess the outcomes of its coaching and capacity-building programs. A systematic evaluative mechanism would help reposition these activities from being perceived as ceremonial to being recognized as continuous learning processes for OPDs.

On the other hand, the use of digital technology to support preventive oversight remains extremely limited. The Inspectorate lacks a risk-monitoring dashboard or an integrated oversight information system. Such systems are essential for identifying potential deviations early and promoting efficiency in supervision. The digitalization of oversight functions is becoming increasingly urgent if the Inspectorate is to play a strategic role in the era of data-driven bureaucracy.

- **Structural and Cultural Constraints**

The study finds that the main challenges in the implementation of preventive oversight arise from a combination of structural and cultural constraints. Structurally, these include the lack of internal technical regulations, the absence of standardized operational procedures (SOPs) for risk-based auditing, and the weakness of the oversight information system. Several informants noted that many of the Inspectorate's working documents have not been updated since the province was established, rendering them misaligned with the current local bureaucratic context.

Cultural constraints are reflected in bureaucratic resistance to coaching and oversight efforts. In several cases, OPDs were found to be reluctant to share data transparently with auditors or delayed the implementation of audit recommendations. Such defensive behavior indicates a low level of accountability and transparency, as well as a persistent culture of closed governance. Accountability significantly influences perceptions of corruption.

This problem is exacerbated by strong patronage values embedded in bureaucratic relationships, where loyalty to superiors often takes precedence over adherence to organizational norms. The lack of a clear system of rewards and sanctions further diminishes motivation for improvement. In some cases, OPDs that made significant governance improvements received no formal recognition, while those that failed to follow up on audit findings were not subject to any sanctions. This fosters a perception

that audit results carry no real consequences, thereby weakening the role of oversight as a driver of institutional change.

To address these challenges, there is an urgent need for **organizational culture change**, initiated from the top levels of local government. Regional leaders must model integrity and accountability, and provide full support to the Inspectorate in carrying out its oversight functions. Furthermore, a reformulation of technical oversight regulations is necessary to ensure they are adaptive to local conditions and responsive to the evolving dynamics of regional bureaucracy.

- **Coordinative Relationships and Interagency Collaboration**

The effectiveness of oversight cannot be separated from the Inspectorate's ability to foster interagency synergy. The study found that a working relationship between the South Papua Regional Inspectorate and the Financial and Development Supervisory Agency (BPKP) has been established, particularly in providing assistance for the development of the Government Internal Control System (SPIP) and in evaluating the maturity level of internal supervision. However, such collaboration remains technical in nature—focusing on administrative assistance—without advancing toward strategic cooperation such as joint oversight policy formulation or integrated cross-agency training.

At the national level, the Government of Indonesia has attempted to eradicate corruption through several initiatives, including the establishment of oversight bodies such as BPKP, aimed at preventing abuse of power. Yet, collaboration with the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) remains limited, mostly revolving around the reporting of public officials' wealth (LHKPN/LHKASN) and anti-corruption value campaigns. There is currently no systematic or sustained data-sharing infrastructure that supports ongoing cooperation, despite the great potential for synergy through digital technologies.

Interaction with the Ombudsman has also been sporadic and mostly reactive—centered on public complaints—rather than being part of a comprehensive prevention mechanism. To overcome such fragmentation, this study recommends the formation of a **Provincial Integrated Oversight Coordination Forum**. This forum could serve as a collaborative platform for the Inspectorate, BPKP, KPK, the Ombudsman, and other internal oversight units.

The forum's objectives would include not only avoiding audit overlaps but also collectively developing data- and risk-based supervision strategies. This would help enhance oversight efficiency and interagency accountability as a cohesive ecosystem. Moreover, the forum could serve as a platform to promote a collective narrative on the importance of transparency and bureaucratic integrity while exerting moral pressure on bureaucratic actors who are still unresponsive to accountability values.

- **Perceptions and Responses of Local Bureaucratic Actors**

The perceptions of bureaucratic actors toward oversight significantly determine its effectiveness. Field data revealed varied perceptions and responses from OPDs regarding the role of the Inspectorate. Some OPD officials view the Inspectorate as a supportive partner that helps improve governance and mitigate legal risks. However, others perceive oversight as an expression of distrust from regional leadership or even as a threat to their bureaucratic stability.

Responses to oversight are largely influenced by the leadership style within each OPD. In departments led by progressive leaders open to change, audits and coaching activities are embraced as instruments for improvement. Conversely, in more closed and defensive organizations, oversight is often met with resistance or only superficial compliance.

Interestingly, the study observed the emergence of a younger generation of bureaucrats with a more progressive value orientation. These individuals are more receptive to coaching, aware of the importance of risk management, and display stronger ethical commitments. This group could play a pivotal role in transforming bureaucratic culture. However, they still require systemic support such as participatory space, ethics-based training, and non-discriminatory career advancement opportunities.

The communication style of auditors also proved to be a critical factor. Auditors who are empathetic, communicative, and capable of framing audits as learning opportunities tend to be better received by OPDs than those who focus solely on regulations. This suggests that **auditor soft skills** have a significant impact on the success of oversight interventions and should be deliberately developed through interpersonal-oriented training.

- **Implications for Theory and Practice**

This study offers important theoretical contributions to the discourse on bureaucratic oversight. Conceptually, the findings affirm that public oversight should not be understood solely as a compliance mechanism, but also as a process of value socialization and organizational transformation.

In practice, a purely technocratic approach that focuses on legal compliance is insufficient without an understanding of sociological and organizational dynamics. In South Papua Province, dialogic, coaching-based, and educational approaches are more effective and better received than coercive ones. Therefore, oversight theory must expand to include factors such as social interaction, actor perception, and organizational communication.

From an implementation perspective, the Inspectorate must transform into a **change agent** that not only enforces regulations but also inspires institutional change. This requires a shift in paradigm—from **compliance-oriented inspection** to **development-oriented supervision**. In other words, oversight must contribute to capacity building, the formation of a healthy organizational culture, and the diffusion of integrity as the foundation of governance.

A further practical implication is the importance of **blended capacity development**—that is, developing both technical and non-technical competencies simultaneously. Auditor training should go beyond audit skills to include communication, conflict resolution, and organizational learning facilitation. This holistic development approach is crucial for strengthening the role of the Inspectorate as a proactive driver of reform and good governance.

- **Contextual Reflection: South Papua as a Newly Autonomous Region**

An autonomous region is defined as a legal community unit with clearly defined territorial boundaries, authorized to govern and manage public affairs and local interests based on its own initiative and in accordance with the aspirations of its people within the framework of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. As a newly established autonomous region, South Papua presents both unique challenges and opportunities. As a nascent bureaucratic entity, it offers a rare chance to build an oversight and governance system that is more adaptive and free from the bureaucratic pathologies commonly found in other regions. At the same time, the transitional nature of its formation creates vulnerabilities to abuse of power, conflicts of interest, and the emergence of closed and elitist bureaucratic relationships.

In this context, the Regional Inspectorate holds a strategic role as an early ethical safeguard and institutional counterbalance. With its institutional framework still in a formative stage, the Inspectorate has the opportunity to establish a responsive, transparent, and integrated oversight system aligned with regional development planning. However, such a vision is only attainable with sustained political support from regional leadership and a commitment to allocate resources consistently over time.

This reflection also emphasizes that institutional design for oversight mechanisms must take into account the specific local context of South Papua, including its socio-cultural, geographic, and historical dimensions. Bureaucratic reform and oversight strengthening efforts must be participatory, inclusive, and sensitive to the diverse values held by local communities.

If these principles can be implemented consistently, South Papua not only stands a strong chance of developing an effective oversight system but also has the potential to serve as a **laboratory for contextual bureaucratic reform** in Eastern Indonesia.

Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussions presented in this study, it can be concluded that the effectiveness of preventive oversight conducted by the Regional Inspectorate of South Papua Province still faces a range of structural, cultural, and institutional challenges.

First, **structural barriers**—including the limited number and capacity of auditors, inadequate infrastructure and tools for oversight, and insufficient budget allocation—have significantly affected the implementation of oversight functions. Second, **cultural constraints**, such as bureaucratic resistance, a weak culture of accountability, and entrenched patronage relations within the local bureaucracy, have hampered the optimal implementation and follow-up of audit findings. Third, **coordinative relations** between the Inspectorate and other oversight institutions, such as BPKP, KPK, and the Ombudsman, remain at a technical level and have yet to evolve into a more strategic synergy for integrated supervision. Fourth, there is significant potential to develop a more proactive and communicative

oversight function through coaching, education, and the enhancement of auditors' soft skills, which can contribute to transforming organizational culture and promoting more transparent and accountable governance.

Finally, as a newly autonomous region, South Papua holds strategic opportunities to embed integrity and accountability values from the outset, provided it is supported by strong political commitment, improved human resource capacity, and reforms to internal regulatory frameworks.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions above, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance internal oversight development in South Papua Province:

- **Strengthen the Human Resource Capacity of the Inspectorate:** Priority should be given to accelerating the training and certification of APIP auditors to improve oversight competencies and enable effective implementation of risk-based audits.
- **Improve Oversight Infrastructure and Tools:** Local governments must allocate sufficient budgets for procuring information technology systems that support digital oversight, allowing real-time monitoring and evaluation.
- **Develop a Proactive and Communicative Oversight System:** The Inspectorate should adopt an educational and participatory approach to supervision by establishing risk-based audit SOPs and enhancing feedback mechanisms to ensure sustained implementation of audit results within local agencies (OPDs).
- **Strengthen Inter-Agency Oversight Synergy:** The establishment of an integrated oversight coordination forum involving BPKP, KPK, the Ombudsman, and the Regional Inspectorate is essential to prevent duplication, promote data sharing, and improve overall oversight effectiveness.
- **Ensure Political Support and Regulatory Reform:** Regional leadership must provide full support for the Inspectorate's independence and encourage the reform of internal regulations that are adaptive to local dynamics to foster good and transparent governance.
- **Transform Bureaucratic Culture:** Long-term strategies to instill integrity and accountability should be integrated into civil servant recruitment, training, and career development processes to build a professional bureaucracy oriented toward public service.

By implementing these measures, it is expected that internal oversight in South Papua Province will become more effective, make a tangible contribution to corruption prevention, and reinforce a clean and accountable governance system.

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