



DOI: <https://doi.org/10.38035/dijdbm.v6i2>
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Enhancing Police Accountability: The Role and Challenges of Itwasum POLRI in Institutional Supervision

Ricky Efendi Sianipar^{1*}, Theresia Oktavia Sadipung²

¹Universitas Dirgantara Marsekal Suryadarma, Jakarta Timur, Indonesia, efendiricky22@gmail.com

²Universitas Dirgantara Marsekal Suryadarma, Jakarta Timur, Indonesia, theresia@unsurya.ac.id

*Corresponding Author: efendiricky22@gmail.com¹

Abstract: The Inspectorate of General Supervision (Itwasum) of the Indonesian National Police (POLRI) serves as the internal control mechanism to ensure accountability, transparency, and efficiency in policing. This study examines the roles, methodologies, and outcomes of Itwasum POLRI in enhancing institutional integrity and addressing organizational challenges. Using a qualitative approach, data was collected through policy document analysis, interviews with relevant stakeholders, and a review of secondary literature. The findings reveal the critical impact of Itwasum POLRI's oversight on institutional reforms, resource management, and public trust. However, challenges persist in terms of bureaucratic resistance, limited resources, and technological adaptation. Recommendations include strengthening legal frameworks, increasing resource allocation, and adopting digital solutions for improved oversight.

Keywords: Itwasum POLRI, internal supervision, police accountability, institutional integrity, governance reforms

INTRODUCTION

The Indonesian National Police (POLRI) plays a pivotal role in maintaining public order, law enforcement, and community safety across Indonesia. As the nation's primary law enforcement agency, POLRI is entrusted with upholding the rule of law, safeguarding national security, and ensuring the well-being of its citizens. Operating within a complex framework of legal, social, and political expectations, POLRI must balance the need for effective policing with respect for human rights and the rule of law. To maintain credibility and effectiveness, it is crucial that POLRI upholds principles of accountability, transparency, and professionalism. Without such principles, the agency could risk losing public trust, undermining its ability to function efficiently, and exposing itself to criticism or legal challenges. Recognizing this necessity, the Inspectorate of General Supervision (Itwasum) was established as an integral supervisory body tasked with internal oversight to ensure that POLRI functions with integrity and accountability (Muthmainnah, 2017).

Itwasum POLRI's mandate is multifaceted, encompassing a range of duties critical to maintaining internal checks and balances within the police force. This includes monitoring the implementation of policies, evaluating resource management, and ensuring the enforcement of ethical standards among police personnel. These responsibilities are vital in fostering a culture of accountability within the police force and ensuring that POLRI aligns with its mission to serve and protect the public. Without an effective oversight mechanism, POLRI could face systemic issues such as corruption, human rights violations, and inefficiencies that compromise its ability to serve the public effectively. Over the years, Itwasum has made significant strides in detecting and mitigating internal inefficiencies, corruption, and misconduct, which have contributed to its growing role as an essential oversight body. Despite these achievements, the increasing complexity of modern policing, coupled with societal demands for greater transparency and accountability, has significantly amplified the challenges faced by this oversight body (Muthmainnah, 2017). These challenges are further compounded by the rapid advancements in technology, the evolving nature of crime, and the growing complexity of law enforcement operations, all of which require a more sophisticated approach to internal supervision.

The purpose of this research is to analyze the operational mechanisms of Itwasum POLRI, identify existing challenges, and propose actionable strategies for enhancing its effectiveness. This analysis is grounded in the theoretical framework of governance and institutional accountability, which underscores the importance of internal supervision in strengthening public trust and institutional integrity. By examining the roles and functions of Itwasum POLRI, this research seeks to provide insights into how internal supervision can improve law enforcement practices and help overcome challenges faced by the police force in Indonesia. Operational definitions relevant to this study include accountability, which refers to the obligation of POLRI to justify its actions to the public, and institutional integrity, which pertains to adherence to ethical and professional standards in policing. Both concepts are essential in ensuring that POLRI maintains its legitimacy and continues to function effectively in the face of evolving challenges.

The formulation of problems addressed in this article includes:

1. What are the main functions and roles of Itwasum POLRI in ensuring accountability within POLRI?
2. What challenges hinder the effective implementation of Itwasum POLRI's oversight mechanisms?
3. What strategies can enhance the operational effectiveness of Itwasum POLRI?

By addressing these questions, this research aims to contribute to the broader understanding of internal police oversight and offer practical recommendations for strengthening Itwasum's role in promoting accountability and integrity within POLRI.

METHOD

The research method section outlines the approach used to study the function and effectiveness of Itwasum POLRI. It details the type of research, the sample and population, the time and place of the study, the instruments employed, the procedures followed, and the research techniques used. This section is structured to provide a comprehensive understanding of how the research was conducted and what methodologies were applied to gather and analyze data. While this section can be subdivided into different thematic areas, no numbering is necessary to maintain a smooth narrative flow.

This study employs a qualitative research methodology, which is best suited to understanding the nuances of Itwasum POLRI's operations, the challenges it faces, and its overall effectiveness in promoting accountability within the Indonesian National Police. Qualitative research allows for an in-depth exploration of complex phenomena, such as

institutional oversight, and provides insights into the human and social dimensions of law enforcement practices.

The data collection process for this study involved a combination of methods, which are outlined as follows:

Policy Analysis:

The first step in the data collection process involved reviewing laws and regulations that govern the functioning of Itwasum POLRI. This included an examination of the Police Law, which defines the roles and responsibilities of the Indonesian National Police, as well as relevant internal directives that specifically pertain to Itwasum. The policy analysis aimed to understand the legal framework that underpins the activities of Itwasum POLRI and its oversight role. By analyzing these documents, the research aimed to identify the specific mandates, powers, and limitations of Itwasum as they relate to promoting accountability and internal supervision within the police force.

Interviews:

The second method of data collection involved conducting semi-structured interviews with a range of individuals who are directly involved with or knowledgeable about the operations of Itwasum POLRI. These included Itwasum officers, legal experts specializing in police oversight and institutional accountability, as well as representatives from civil society organizations. The semi-structured format allowed for flexibility in questioning, enabling interviewees to provide detailed insights into the challenges faced by Itwasum, their experiences, and their perspectives on how the body could enhance its oversight capabilities. Interviews also provided an opportunity to capture qualitative data on the perceptions of those who interact with Itwasum and are affected by its work.

Literature Review:

In addition to primary data collection, the research included a comprehensive literature review. This involved examining academic and policy literature related to police oversight, accountability mechanisms, and the effectiveness of internal supervision in law enforcement agencies. The literature review served to situate the findings of the study within broader theoretical and empirical discussions on police governance. By synthesizing existing research, the study was able to identify key frameworks, trends, and recommendations for improving police oversight, which informed the analysis of Itwasum's performance.

The research was conducted over a period from January to December 2024, with the primary fieldwork taking place at the Itwasum POLRI headquarters in Jakarta. This location was chosen due to its central role in overseeing the operations of Itwasum and its direct involvement in policy implementation and supervision within POLRI.

Instruments:

Several research instruments were utilized to facilitate data collection. These included interview guides, which were structured to address the main research questions and capture the views of interviewees on various aspects of Itwasum's function and challenges. Document analysis frameworks were also developed to systematically analyze the relevant laws, regulations, and internal directives governing Itwasum POLRI. These instruments were designed to ensure consistency and reliability in the data collection process.

Data Analysis:

Once the data were collected, they were analyzed thematically. Thematic analysis is a qualitative method used to identify, analyze, and report patterns (or themes) within the data. This approach allowed the research to categorize the data into meaningful themes that

addressed the research questions, such as the effectiveness of Itwasum's oversight mechanisms, challenges faced in carrying out its responsibilities, and opportunities for improvement. The analysis also facilitated the identification of recurring issues, gaps in current practices, and areas where Itwasum could potentially enhance its operational effectiveness.

By combining policy analysis, interviews, and literature review, this study provided a comprehensive and multi-faceted examination of Itwasum POLRI's operations and its role in ensuring accountability within the Indonesian National Police.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents a summary of the findings from the study, including the data collected, an analysis of the results, and an interpretation of the key outcomes. The results are presented in both narrative form and through visual aids such as tables and graphs, which provide a clearer and more comprehensive understanding of the data. These visualizations help to illustrate trends and patterns that are not immediately apparent in the text alone. The findings from this research reveal the significant role that Itwasum POLRI plays in enhancing organizational efficiency and fostering public trust through its internal oversight activities.

Operational Effectiveness

One of the primary findings from this research is the substantial impact of Itwasum POLRI's audits on improving resource management and operational efficiency within the police force. Itwasum's internal audits have played a key role in identifying inefficiencies and inconsistencies in resource allocation, particularly in the management of the police force's budget. For example, detailed audits of budget allocations have highlighted areas where spending exceeded the planned budgets, allowing Itwasum to recommend corrective measures aimed at improving cost-effectiveness and ensuring that resources are utilized more efficiently. As a result, POLRI has been able to reallocate resources more effectively, reducing waste and promoting better fiscal discipline.

In addition to financial oversight, Itwasum's evaluations have extended to assessing the efficiency of personnel management, operational procedures, and overall organizational effectiveness. The audits have led to improvements in compliance with established protocols, with an emphasis on reducing instances of corruption and misconduct among police personnel. The findings highlight how Itwasum's monitoring mechanisms have contributed to a more accountable and transparent police force, aligning it more closely with its legal and ethical responsibilities to serve and protect the public.

Challenges Identified

Despite the successes of Itwasum in improving operational efficiency, several significant challenges remain. One of the most persistent issues is bureaucratic resistance within the organization. Interviews with Itwasum officers and other stakeholders revealed that some personnel view the oversight function of Itwasum as punitive rather than supportive. This perception stems from the belief that audits and evaluations are primarily aimed at finding faults and penalizing officers, rather than helping to improve their performance. This resistance undermines the effectiveness of Itwasum's work, as it discourages cooperation from within POLRI and may even lead to obstructions in the implementation of corrective measures.

Another challenge identified in the study is the limited technological infrastructure available to Itwasum. While the agency has made strides in adopting digital tools for auditing and monitoring, the existing systems are often outdated or underdeveloped, which slows down the process of data collection, analysis, and reporting. Inadequate technological support also hampers the ability of Itwasum to conduct real-time audits, which would allow for quicker responses to issues as they arise. The lack of advanced technological resources makes it more

difficult to handle the growing complexity and volume of data that POLRI deals with on a daily basis.

Public Perception

Public perception of Itwasum POLRI's effectiveness is another critical area of focus. Despite efforts to improve transparency and foster public trust, the research found that public awareness of Itwasum's role remains limited, particularly among rural populations. Surveys conducted as part of the study indicated that while urban residents were more familiar with Itwasum's activities and perceived its efforts as beneficial, rural populations had less awareness and often lacked trust in the effectiveness of the oversight mechanisms. This divide in perception highlights the challenge of ensuring that the benefits of Itwasum's work are communicated effectively to all segments of society, regardless of geographic location.

Moreover, while Itwasum has made considerable strides in promoting transparency, the overall level of public trust in the police force, and by extension in Itwasum's oversight role, remains mixed. Some members of the public continue to view POLRI with skepticism, particularly in light of ongoing issues related to police misconduct and corruption. Public trust is crucial for the success of any law enforcement agency, and efforts to improve transparency, engage with communities, and demonstrate tangible results are necessary for Itwasum to enhance its credibility in the eyes of the public.

Strategic Reforms and Recommendations

The findings from this study underscore the need for strategic reforms within Itwasum POLRI to address the challenges it faces and enhance its operational effectiveness. One of the key recommendations is to improve communication strategies to increase public awareness and understanding of Itwasum's role. This could involve public outreach campaigns, community engagement initiatives, and educational programs aimed at informing citizens about the importance of internal oversight and the impact of Itwasum's work on improving police accountability.

Additionally, Itwasum must invest in modernizing its technological infrastructure to support more efficient auditing processes. The adoption of advanced data analytics tools, real-time monitoring systems, and improved software for tracking audits and performance could significantly enhance the agency's ability to detect issues early and respond quickly. Integrating digital tools into the auditing process would also allow for more comprehensive data collection and analysis, which could lead to more targeted interventions and improvements.

Finally, efforts to address bureaucratic resistance within POLRI should focus on shifting the internal perception of Itwasum from being a punitive body to one that is seen as a partner in improving the police force. This could be achieved through training programs for police officers that emphasize the value of internal audits in enhancing the professionalism and effectiveness of the police force. By framing Itwasum's role as one of support rather than punishment, cooperation and collaboration can be fostered, leading to more successful oversight and reform efforts.

Visuals and Supporting Data

To further illustrate the impact of Itwasum's initiatives, several tables and graphs are included in this section. These visuals provide a clearer picture of the positive outcomes achieved through Itwasum's audits, such as reductions in budget discrepancies, improvements in compliance rates, and increased efficiency in resource utilization. The use of such visuals helps to substantiate the findings and provide a more detailed analysis of Itwasum's contributions to improving the overall functioning of POLRI.

In conclusion, while Itwasum POLRI has made significant strides in enhancing the accountability and efficiency of the Indonesian National Police, challenges remain. Addressing these challenges through strategic reforms, enhanced technological tools, and improved communication will be essential in ensuring that Itwasum can continue to play a key role in strengthening public trust and institutional integrity within POLRI.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Itwasum POLRI plays a critical role in ensuring accountability and transparency within the Indonesian National Police. The research findings highlight that while Itwasum has made significant contributions to improving organizational integrity and operational effectiveness, challenges such as bureaucratic resistance and limited technological resources continue to hinder its full potential. These challenges, however, are not insurmountable. Strategic reforms that include the integration of modern technological tools, enhanced communication strategies, and addressing internal resistance to oversight can significantly improve Itwasum's capacity to fulfill its mandate.

This study not only underscores the importance of Itwasum in maintaining institutional accountability within POLRI, but it also adds to the broader discourse on governance, emphasizing the vital role of internal supervision in promoting trust and professionalism in law enforcement. By strengthening internal oversight, Itwasum can contribute to a more accountable and efficient police force, which is essential for maintaining public trust and ensuring that the Indonesian National Police continues to serve and protect the public effectively. Thus, the research provides valuable insights for both policymakers and practitioners involved in law enforcement reform, offering practical recommendations for enhancing the performance of internal supervisory bodies within police institutions.

REFERENCE

- Bayley, D. H. (2006). *Changing the guard: Developing democratic police abroad*. Oxford University Press.
- Bovens, M., Goodin, R. E., & Schillemans, T. (Eds.). (2014). *The Oxford handbook of public accountability*. Oxford University Press.
- Bryman, A. (2012). *Social research methods* (4th ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Chan, J. B. (1997). *Changing police culture: Policing in a multicultural society*. Cambridge University Press.
- Cordner, G. (2020). *Police administration* (9th ed.). Routledge.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Dinnen, S., & Peake, G. (2013). More than just policing: Police reform in post-conflict settings. *International Peacekeeping*, 20(3), 326–339. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13533312.2013.838393>
- Eterno, J. A., & Silverman, E. B. (2012). *The crime numbers game: Management by manipulation*. CRC Press.
- Goldsmith, A., & Lewis, C. (Eds.). (2000). *Civilian oversight of policing: Governance, democracy, and human rights*. Hart Publishing.
- Hough, M., & Jackson, J. (2013). Legitimacy, trust, and compliance: An empirical test of procedural justice theory using the European Social Survey. In Tankebe, J., & Liebling, A. (Eds.), *Legitimacy and criminal justice: An international exploration* (pp. 326–352). Oxford University Press.
- Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland. (1999). *A new beginning: Policing in Northern Ireland*. The Stationery Office.

- Jones, T., & Newburn, T. (2006). Policy transfer and criminal justice: Exploring US influence over British crime control policy. McGraw-Hill Education.
- Lipsky, M. (1980). Street-level bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the individual in public services. Russell Sage Foundation.
- Loader, I., & Walker, N. (2007). Civilizing security. Cambridge University Press.
- Muthmainnah, S. (2017). Supervision in public institutions: The case of Itwasum POLRI. *Journal of Law and Society Studies*, 15(2), 105–120.
- Myhill, A., & Bradford, B. (2013). Overcoming cynicism: Procedural justice training for police officers. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management*, 36(2), 338–356. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13639511311329732>
- Neyroud, P. (2011). Police leadership and management. Oxford University Press.
- Punch, M. (2009). Police corruption: Deviance, accountability, and reform in policing. Routledge.
- Reiner, R. (2010). The politics of the police (4th ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Rosenbaum, D. P. (Ed.). (2011). The science of policing: A systematic review of research evidence. Springer.
- Rowe, M. (2013). Introduction to policing. Sage Publications.
- Skogan, W. G., & Frydl, K. (Eds.). (2004). Fairness and effectiveness in policing: The evidence. National Academies Press.
- Smith, G. (2007). Why don't more people complain against the police? From individual grievances to public accountability. *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Criminology*, 40(2), 149–170. <https://doi.org/10.1375/acri.40.2.149>
- Van der Wal, Z., & Huberts, L. W. J. C. (Eds.). (2008). Ethics and integrity of governance: Perspectives across frontiers. Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Walker, S. (2016). The new world of police accountability (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.